

holiday and I think it should be possible to finish by the 12th.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: 15th is also a holiday.

PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE

STATEMENT SHOWING ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON ASSURANCES ETC.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): I beg to lay on the Table a consolidated statement showing the action taken by the Government on various assurances, promises and undertakings given during the First Session of the House of the People, 1952. (See Appendix XII, annexure No. 5.]

RESERVE AND AUXILIARY AIR FORCES BILL

The Minister of Defence (Shri Gopalaswami): I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the constitution and regulation of certain Air Force Reserves and also an Auxiliary Air Force and for matters connected therewith, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration."

I do not think I need say much to commend this motion to the House. The House is aware that the principles of this Bill were discussed on a previous occasion when the Bill was referred to a Joint Committee of the two Houses. This Joint Committee examined the provisions of the Bill and their report has been circulated to hon. Members of the House. The Joint Committee went into the provisions of the Bill in very great detail. As there was practically complete unanimity of opinion as regards the principles of the Bill, the necessity for the constitution of these Reserves and the general considerations on which these Reserves were to be constituted and worked, the Committee only went into the question of what improvements could be made in the details of the measure.

They have made a number of changes, most of them of a minor character. Two or three of them are of some importance. I do not think it is necessary for me to take the House through all the minor improvements that have been effected in the provisions of the Bill. They have been referred to in the Report of the Joint Committee, but I might refer to one or two of them.

We have first of all provided for the competent authority under the Bill consisting not merely of a single air officer designated for the purpose, but consisting also in suitable cases and in suitable areas of a committee of two or more air officers. Another perhaps important change in the measure is that in connection with the regular Air Force Reserve we have provided for the appointment of any member of the Air Defence Reserve or the Air Auxiliary Force to the Regular Air Force Reserve.

There are a few other smaller changes that have been effected, but I would refer only to one or two major points which have been referred to in the minutes of dissent appended to the Bill. The first to which I should like to make a reference is the suggestion that none of these Reserves should be used or allowed to be used in aid of the civil power. We discussed this matter at great length in the Select Committee and we came to the conclusion that the provisions in the Bill should stand as they are so far as this matter is concerned. The calling out of the Armed Forces in aid of the civil power is a principle which we have accepted in other enactments which provide for the maintenance of law and order, and amongst the Armed Forces are included these Reserves and the Auxiliary Force as well. Such an obligation rests also upon the Territorial Army which has been constituted under the previous enactment. It is not that in every case of a disturbance of the public order these reserves would be called out as a matter of course. Naturally in most cases, wherever the civil authorities are unable to deal with the situation, they will try to use such regular Armed Forces as might be available to them, if it became necessary, and only in very exceptional cases are demands likely to be made on the Air Force Reserves or the Auxiliary Air Force. There are situations, there are places in the country where it might not be possible to make demands on other kinds of Armed Forces simply for the reason that they are not easily available in or near the locality. In such places if these Reserves are more easily available, there should be nothing to prevent the use of these forces if it is necessary for the quelling of disturbance or the preservation of law and order. So, the Committee came to the conclusion, and I think it is a right conclusion that this obligation should also rest upon these Reserves.

The second point of some importance is what is now provided for in regard to the Air Defence Reserve. The provisions relating to Air Defence Reserve go through two or three