

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

RESIGNATION OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE JABALPUR CANTONMENT BOARD

Sardar A. S. Salgal (Janjgir): Sir, under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Defence to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

“The resignation of five elected members of the Jabalpur Cantonment Board and the situation arising therefrom.”

The Minister of Defence (Shri Krishna Menon): Sir, the information the Government have at present is that, on the morning of the 19th August 1957, which was a holiday on account of Janmashtami, a deputation of about 25 to 30 people called at the residence of the President of the Cantonment Board. They wanted to represent against the “show-cause notices” served by the Cantonment Executive Officer for the erection of stalls on the platforms over the Cantonment drains in contravention of the Bye-laws. The President told them that as it was a holiday he could not do very much in the matter on that day. However, noticing that one of the elected members, Shri N. C. Agarwal, was also among the deputations, the President agreed to discuss the case with him and took him inside his bungalow and discussed the matter. The President states that he requested Shri Agarwal to stay further proceedings in the matter, if it was possible, and to put it up at the emergent meeting which had been fixed for the 24th August 1957. It appears that Shri Agarwal in answer to his question told the President that he was satisfied. On the same day 5 of the elected members of the Cantonment Board intimated to the President that they were resigning from membership on the ground that the President had behaved “in an ungentlemanly and discourteous manner” towards the elected members of the Board and also towards the public of that Cantonment who had gone in deputation to

represent against the “autocratic and unsympathetic attitude” of the Cantonment Executive Officer, Jabalpur.

The G.O.C.-in-C. Southern Command, has been directed by Government to make detailed inquiries into the incident and submit his report to Government for orders at an early date. Decision regarding the acceptance or otherwise of the resignations tendered by the 5 elected members, and such further action as may be necessary, will be taken by Government after receipt of his report.

The elections in the Jabalpur Cantonment are due to be held in October, 1957.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Speaker: The Committee on Absence of Members from the sittings of the House in their Second Report have recommended that leave of absence may be granted to the following members for the periods indicated in the Report:—

1. Shri Balasaheb Salunke,
2. Shri Lachman Singh,
3. Shri Uma Charan Patnaik,
4. Shri S. C. Choudhury,
5. Shri Joginder Sen-Mandi,
6. Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani,
7. Shri S. C. Balakrishnan,
8. Shri Chapla Kanta Bhattacharya,
9. Thakor Shri Fatesinhji Ghodasarsar,
10. Shri Chowkhamoon Gohain,
11. Shri Bishanchandar Seth,
12. Shri T. R. Neswi.

I take it that the House agrees with the recommendations of the Committee.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): Sir, I want to seek one clarification in this connection. Supposing a Minister is absent, should he not also apply