

(b) and (c). Three persons have been arrested so far and five cars have been recovered.

12.02 hrs.

POINT OF PROCEDURE

DEFENCE AUDIT REPORT

Shri Jaipal Singh (Ranchi West—Reserved—Sch. Tribes): Sir, may I seek a clarification, before the House proceeds with the next business? I do not know whether it is a point of order or whether I have to seek a ruling from you about that. The point is, yesterday, in the process of making a correction, the hon. Defence Minister said that he would submit in due course a statement. As a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, I feel that there is irregularity in this procedure. Regardless of what has happened in the past, whenever any audit report is either prematurely submitted here or in the proper way, extracts and everything of that sort—the papers should go to the PAC and then come to this House. I feel that if you admit what had been done yesterday, then it will be a seesaw struggle—there will be a statement and then a counter-statement and the thing will go on eternally. I know that as far as the Comptroller and Auditor-General is concerned, he has his spokesman in the Minister of Finance. So I only want guidance from you as to whether this point can be raised when the Finance Bill is discussed here or whether you would like to give a ruling on that here and now?

Mr. Speaker: Shri Feroze Gandhi also wanted yesterday—

Shri Feroze Gandhi (Rai Bareli): rose—

Mr. Speaker: He need not rise now. He also raised this matter yesterday in a way, saying that it was a point of order and when I asked him how it arose, he said that it arose out

of the other portion in the statement of the hon. Defence Minister—that he would lay some of the statements on the floor of the House in explanation of remarks and other observations made in the audit report. Then I said that unless and until those papers were sought to be placed here, I could not give a ruling. The audit report and such papers, after being presented to the House, are sent away to the Public Accounts Committee. The practice all along has been that as soon as the audit report is placed in the House, it is not discussed but it is always sent to the Public Accounts Committee and thereafter, after the Public Accounts Committee reports on it, the reports of the Public Accounts Committee, with the remarks of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, the appropriation accounts, etc., are placed before the House for the scrutiny of Members and for such observations relating to any one of those items as they wish to make,—irregularities or whatever it is. Of course, they ought not to attack the credit of any of the officials or the Auditor-General.

The hon. Defence Minister included that portion in the statement. Yesterday, it was not the proper time for me to say or even consider whether he can place any statement here,—whether he can place it or not place it here,—and what should be the procedure. I cannot say off-hand now what he proposed to do then. He may or may not do so. How can I anticipate it? He may think, *bona fide*, of stating it or he may himself discuss it or examine this matter. But actually, when it comes up here, then a point of order might arise. Then I would consider what is to be done about it.

Shri Jaipal Singh: My difficulty is this. The Defence Minister's offer obviously cannot be an empty one. Otherwise, he cannot be Defence Minister. He has offered to place the Statement on the Table of the House. My contention is that that is not in order. The offer itself is not in order.

Mr. Speaker: Am I to shut out something which has not yet been placed on the Table of the House?

Shri Feroze Gandhi: Yesterday, the Finance Minister made a reference to the Public Accounts Committee which is a committee of the House, and he said they had authorised him to lay it on the Table of the House;—it was done with their permission. What the Public Accounts Committee had actually said was that wherever the presentation of the papers.....

Mr. Speaker: I will give him an opportunity tomorrow. On the Finance Bill, any hon. Member can speak and if these matters are relevant, I will give the hon. Member an opportunity to speak. Only, I must be satisfied as to the relevance of it. Subject to that, I shall give him an opportunity.

Dr. Sushila Nayar (Jhansi): I understand that the Auditor-General has written to you, Sir. Would you place that letter on the Table of the House so that the position may be clarified?

Mr. Speaker: I am not in a position to answer such questions off-hand. I am put these questions off-hand. It is true that the Auditor-General has written to me also and sent similar letters regarding the procedure and about whatever has happened in this House. I always felt that the Auditor-General presents his reports to the President and the President places these papers on the Table of the House through the Finance Ministry. The Public Service Commission do not place their report on the Table of the House themselves. They act in the House through the Minister. Now, this House has got hold over the Minister. The House can put the Ministers in office and can remove them from office. The Ministers are responsible to us, and the Constitution provides a particular method. I was thinking as to whether all such reports or any further statements on them may not come through the Finance Minister as the agent of the President to whom

these reports are sent. I have not finally made up my mind as to what exactly ought to be done. (*Interruption*). Order, order. The Auditor-General has written to me. He has not asked me to place it on the Table of the House.

An Hon. Member: For what purpose?

Mr. Speaker: Possibly for enabling me to come to a conclusion one way or the other. But, whether I should place it on the Table of the House or not, I shall consider.

Shri Feroze Gandhi: May I invite your attention to a precedent which has taken place in the House earlier, when you were concerned with it? You yourself, as Member, objected to certain procedures adopted by the Comptroller and Auditor-General with regard to submitting the report to Parliament. At that time, he objected to what you had said.

Mr. Speaker: Was I present here as Member?

Shri Feroze Gandhi: The last Auditor-General took objection to what you had said in the House. Then he made a statement to the Public Accounts Committee. This is what I wanted to say.

Mr. Speaker: All these will be taken into consideration.

12.08 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

ANNUAL REPORT OF STATE TRADING CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED

The Minister of Steel, Mines and Fuel (Sardar Swaran Singh): On behalf of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of each of the following papers:—

- (i) Annual Report of the State Trading Corporation of India