

12.19 hrs.

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

**Mr. Speaker:** I have received a Message dated the 24th February, 1961, from the President. I am going to read it out to the House now. The usual practice is that the Message from the President on the motion of thanks is received by the House standing. Therefore, hon. Members may kindly stand in their seats.

The President's Message is as follows:

"I have received with great satisfaction the expression of thanks by the Members of the Lok Sabha for the address I delivered to both the Houses of Parliament assembled together on the 14th February, 1961."

Members may kindly resume their seats.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad):** Are we following a new practice?

**Mr. Speaker:** After all, we would like to enhance the prestige of the President and of the Parliament.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh:** He is one of us; we are a democracy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Everyone is competent to be a Prime Minister, but there is one Prime Minister. Everyone is competent to be President, but there is one President for the time being. I leave it to the House. There is no harm. It is not a new thing. I am not starting it this year. It was done last year.

12.22 hrs.

[**MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair**]  
**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**  
**STRIKE BY CHIPPING AND PAINTING WORKERS OF CALCUTTA DOCKS**

**Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad):** Under Rule 197 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Labour to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he make a statement thereon:

"Strike by some 5000 chipping and painting workers of Calcutta docks since 3rd February, 1961 demanding direct booking and payment under the Calcutta Dock Labour Board as in force in Bombay since 1958."

**The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali):** I may inform the hon. Member that the strike has since been called off.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh:** What were their demands and were they satisfied? I would like to know all that from the hon. Deputy Minister.

**Shri Abid Ali:** There were three demands—double pay for work on holidays, each worker to be paid Re. 1 more for night work and thirdly direct booking and payment by the Calcutta Dock Labour Board. The third demand was not possible to be implemented because it is not included in the scheme. With regard to the first two demands, negotiations were conducted between the workers' representatives and those of the employers. Just now I received intimation that the strike has been called off. Information in regard to the demands is still awaited.

**Shri Braj Raj Singh:** Is it not a fact that the demands put forth by the dock workers are in force in Bombay since 1958? To get those demands, which are legally operating in the Bombay docks, the workers in Calcutta had to go on strike from 3rd February and the strike had continued till this morning. May I know

why Government did not take any action *suo motu* without the workers going on strike?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Let us have all the facts. If the workers feel satisfied and if they have withdrawn the strike, should we press it further now at this moment without knowing all the facts?

**Shri Braj Raj Singh:** They went on strike on 3rd February and continued to be on strike till this morning. Why was it that the Government was not susceptible to their demands and did not take action, but allowed them to go on strike?

**Shri Abid Ali:** Whenever we receive complaints from workers, we convene a meeting of the workers' representatives and employers' representatives and our conciliation officers do their best to see that an amicable settlement is reached. But if one of the parties becomes obstinate, we have no powers to force them. Our efforts fortunately succeeded and the strike has been called off.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur):** Before the strike, is it a fact that the workers made these demands and if so may I know whether the conciliation officer or the Regional Labour Commissioner did intervene or not? If not, what are the reasons for not intervening in the matter?

**Shri Abid Ali:** I have not got exact information on this point. But as a matter of procedure, it is the duty of the conciliation officers that whenever they receive any complaints, they should enquire into them and try to bring about reconciliation.

**Shri S. M. Banerjee:** But did they actually intervene or not?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The hon. Deputy Minister said that information is not available with him. He will collect it and he will supply the information.

12.25 hrs.

## RELIGIOUS TRUSTS BILL

### EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF JOINT COMMITTEE

**Shri Jaganatha Rao (Koraput):** I beg to move:

"That the time appointed for the presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on the Bill to provide for the better supervision and administration of certain religious trusts be further extended upto the 31st August, 1961."

**Shri Tangamani (Madurai):** I would like to know the reasons for extending time till the next session.

**Shri Jaganatha Rao:** The committee received several memoranda from various organisations and the committee examined several witnesses. The committee is scheduled to meet on 20th March, to examine some more witnesses. This Bill has aroused a lot of controversy in the country and we want to do justice to various organisations to represent their points of view. That is why much time was taken. We hope we will conclude the deliberations before August, 1961.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The question is:

"That the time appointed for the presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee on the Bill to provide for the better supervision and administration of certain religious trusts be further extended upto the 31st August, 1961."

*The motion was adopted.*