

तक लगभग १०,८००० उन परिवारों को, जो इस समय दिल्ली में सरकारी और सार्वजनिक भूमि पर अनधिकृत रूप से रह रहे हैं, रिहायशी प्लाट दे दिये जाने की आशा है।

(५) इसके अलावा १८० कटरों और ६० गन्दी बस्तियों में सुधार का काम पूरा हो चुका है, जिस पर हुआ कुल व्यय १२.८३ लाख रुपये है।

(ख) और (ग). तृतीय पंचवर्षीय योजना की अवधि में दिल्ली में गन्दी बस्तियों को हटाने की योजना को कार्यान्वित करने के लिए परीक्षात्मक (टैटेस्टिव) रूप से ७.५६ करोड़ रुपये की राशि का विनिधान किया गया है।

(घ) दिल्ली से गन्दी बस्तियों को हटाना बहुत बड़ी समस्या है और सब गन्दी बस्तियों को हटाने के लिए कोई अवधि निश्चित कर पाना सम्भव नहीं है। परन्तु दिल्ली नगर निगम ने अग्रता के आधार पर गन्दी बस्तियों को हटाने की कुछ महत्वपूर्ण परियोजनाओं को कार्यान्वित करने के लिए एक तीन वर्ष का कार्यक्रम तैयार किया है।

11:55 hrs.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT AND QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

AGREEMENTS WITH OIL COMPANIES

Mr. Speaker: I shall take up the adjournment motion given notice of by Shri P. G. Deb and the question of privilege thereafter. The Minister may make a statement.

The Minister of Mines and Oil (Shri K. D. Malaviya): On 20th March, 1962 I made a statement in the House regarding the implementation of the assurance given to the House on 22nd December, 1959 concerning Government's agreements with oil companies. In this statement I submitted to the House my reasons for keeping some of the terms and conditions of these agreements confidential, as disclosure of such conditions would be prejudicial to the

public interest. Some of the Hon. Members did not feel satisfied with my reasoning and consequently, at my request, you, Sir, reserved your ruling and agreed to my speaking to you in your chamber. I have since had the opportunity to discuss the matter with you and, as desired by you, I am making this statement to explain the position further.

Subsequent to the promulgation of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959, the Government had invited foreign oil companies to express interest in the development of oil in India. About 14 companies expressed interest and specific proposals were received from eight of them. Till now we have been able to conclude agreements with two parties, namely Burmah Oil Company of the United Kingdom and the E.N.I. of Italy. Our negotiations with some of the remaining parties are still continuing and there have been two or three rounds of discussions with them already. We expect that the negotiations will be resumed with these parties shortly.

Some of the terms and conditions of our agreements with the B.O.C. and the E.N.I. are not of a secret nature and details in regard to these have already been made available to the House in answer to questions in the Lok Sabha on these matters and to the Press. I should say that not only some of them, but most of the terms and conditions have been made known to the Lok Sabha and the public through questions and the Press. In this connection, I would draw the attention of hon. Members to the statement made by me in this House on 29th August, 1961 regarding E.N.I. agreement and to questions Nos. 575, 262 and 786, which were answered by me on 5th December, 1961, 9th August, 1961 and 22nd August, 1961 respectively. I would also invite your attention to the fact that a hand-out to the Press was issued on 31st May, 1961, i.e. on the day Heads of Agreement were signed with B.O.C. and that on the following day I called a Press Conference to explain the broad features of the

agreement reached with B.O.C. The hon. Members might have seen the reports of this press conference which appeared in the *Statesman*, *Indian Express* and *Hindustan Times* of 2nd June, 1961. It will be seen that while some of the salient features have been reported by me from time to time, such terms and conditions as are of a confidential nature have not been disclosed for reasons which I have already submitted to the House on 20th March, 1962.

I have to submit that it is with regard to those clauses of the agreements which are of a confidential nature, that I am hesitant to make a disclosure at this stage while our negotiations with some of the parties, who had responded to our invitation extended after the promulgation of our new rules, are still not concluded. It will be appreciated that while negotiating agreements with international oil companies, Government may have to make slight special relaxations in some aspects in order to obtain advantage in other aspects or keeping in view the total advantage in a package deal. Such adjustments which may be peculiar to a particular agreement if made public would enable other parties to take advantage of the knowledge to obtain similar relaxations. Clauses of this nature have to be kept confidential in the public interest while similar negotiations are in progress. I had emphasised this particular aspect of the matter to you, Sir, when I met you in your chamber. You felt satisfied that I may not place the agreements before the Parliament at present. I hope that during the course of the next two to three months our position vis-a-vis the companies with whom we are still negotiating will become clear and after reviewing the position at that time, I shall place copies of the agreements before the House. In my statement of 20th March 1962 I had stated that the terms and conditions of the agreements cannot be made public unilaterally. However, I feel that at the appropriate time I shall inform the other parties

to the agreement that I would be placing copies of the agreement before the House.

12 hrs.

In the end, I may add a word about a press report which has appeared in the *Statesman* of 26th March, 1962 regarding the agreement with E.N.I., and the Government of India's delegation to Italy. I am sorry to state so, Sir, but I would wish to emphasize that this report from the Shillong correspondent of the paper is misleading. The press report purports to say as if the Government delegation had been sent to Italy to finalize plans for the utilisation of E.N.I.'s credit or to settle terms and conditions of this credit. This is not so. The delegation, which is still in Italy, is visiting that country with the object of studying petroleum refining and distribution techniques and to discuss some details regarding the projects included in the agreement. As you are aware, the agreement was finalized on 29th August, 1961, along with all terms and conditions. The source of the press report seems to have obtained information on some of the clauses of the agreement and mixed it up by attributing imaginary functions to the delegation. I feel sorry for the insinuation made in the report about my hesitation to make full disclosures of the agreements. I may submit for the information of the House that it is not correct, as alleged by the newspaper report, that my unwillingness to disclose the details of the terms and conditions of this agreement has been on account of re-payment of credit being in Italian currency and the absence of tenders. I may mention that re-payment of foreign credit in foreign currency is inevitable; and, secondly, it has been provided in the agreement that the competitiveness of price will be determined by International tenders.

It is my impression that some hon. Members imagine as if I am wilfully or arbitrarily withholding information.

[Shri K. D. Malaviya]

After the discussion in the House on 20th March 1962, I thought over the matter and felt like disclosing the texts of the agreements rather prematurely in order not to give any wrong impression about my intentions. But, on second thoughts, I am refraining from doing so, and asking your permission, Sir, to let the details of the remain secret for a few weeks more.

Mr. Speaker: May I know some particulars from the hon. Minister? The newspaper correspondent says that he has given certain details which the hon. Minister wanted to keep secret for some time from the House. Are there any such items disclosed in the newspaper report which the hon. Minister was not willing to place before the House or were they already given to the House by him?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Some points appear to have been referred to by the so-called correspondent from Shillong, or by whatever name you call him, which I did not want to disclose to the House just at present.

Mr. Speaker: So, that news item definitely gives certain points which the hon. Minister wanted to keep secret.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: There are two points which have been incorrectly stated by the correspondent—one is about repayment in foreign currency and the other is about tenders. On these two points, the information is not correct. Therefore, I have referred to these points. With regard to the others, at this stage I would not like to confirm them, much less to contradict them.

Mr. Speaker: How did this correspondent get this information? Was it from any Government department?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: I do not know the source of information of the correspondent, but I find the information has been substantially correctly reproduced. Because, I tried to analyse the disclosures that I have made and the points which have not been disclosed. I find that most of the points have been disclosed already by me. There are only very few points which have not been disclosed by me. For the reasons which I have already indicated in my statement, I would not like to make any comments on those points; but they are very few in number. On those also, some confusion has been created by the so-called correspondent of Statesman. That is why I am hesitant to make further comments which may or may not have been correctly obtained by this correspondent.

Mr. Speaker: Has the other party to the agreement any office here from which this information could have leaked out?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: I am told they have got an office here.

Mr. Speaker: Has he made any enquiries whether it has leaked from that office?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: I have not made any enquiry on this point but my impression is that generally parties with whom we negotiate keep these informations secret.

Shri P. G. Deb (Angul): I would like to ask a specific question. Is it a fact that these details have been leaked out by the Chairman of the Indian Refineries, Gauhati, who today happens to be a Minister in the Assam Cabinet?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: Which details does the hon. Member refer to? Most of these details were referred to by me in my previous statements.

Mr. Speaker: What about the other details?

Question of Privilege

Shri K. D. Malaviya: I do not think any responsible man will say any those things which have been stated here in this news report because most of them are wrong.

Mr. Speaker: Was there any official statement or press release to that effect:

Shri K. D. Malaviya: There has not been any statement to that effect.

Mr. Speaker: So far as the adjournment motion is concerned, it is no doubt unfortunate that a newspaper reporter should have stated that since the hon. Minister has not cared to give it and wanted to keep it from the House "I give it to the House". I wish he becomes a Minister as quickly as possible. The hon. Minister has rightly stated that during the period when negotiations are shaping he does not want to place before the House the details. So, he has asked for more time to place all the information before the House. If, in the meanwhile, some news item appears in the newspaper and he is asked to confirm or deny it, he is naturally in a delicate position. We find that no information has leaked out from his hands. Even if it has happened from his office, he would take steps to see that such leakages do not recur. It is said or alleged that some other person, the Chairman of the Indian Refineries, has leaked out this information. We have not got any authentic information on that point. Even with the best of efforts, it may not be possible for the hon. Minister to plug all the loopholes. Therefore, so far as this adjournment motion is concerned, I do not feel there is anything to condemn the hon. Minister.

But I am really surprised how the correspondent of Statesman has come forward, saying "Yes, I give to the Members of the House what was not given by the Minister". Of course, it is true that democracy thrives on publicity and the newspapers thrive on the proceedings of this House. Therefore, they are mutually helping

each other. But why should this correspondent have gone to the press and stated "here I am giving you this information which was not given by the Minister"? Why should he not have waited for some time?

Shrimati Renu Chakravarty (Basirhat): Then it will not be a scoop.

Mr. Speaker: There are good scoops and there are bad scoops. This is a bad scoop.

So far as the privilege motion of Shri Hem Barua is concerned, it is that the hon. Minister withheld information from the House and gave it to the press. If he had done so, it would have been improper. It has been repeatedly held in this House that hon. Ministers should take the House into confidence and it is through the House, when the House is in session, that information of this kind should come out, and that is the practice which we have been following, irrespective of whether it is a matter of privilege or not. Otherwise, if the Ministers themselves pay little regard to this House, no other persons will pay regard to this House. Therefore, it might be at least an act of impropriety. But, in this case, the Minister does not say that he gave information to the newspaper, nor is it alleged. The newspaper has somehow got this information which the Minister is not prepared to confirm or deny. I can only condemn the correspondent for having come out with this news item. Even if it be true, he is not helping the country by publishing it, when the Minister thinks that in the public interest it ought not to be placed before this House.

I do not think there is any need either of giving my consent to the adjournment motion or of treating it as a matter of privilege now. It is not as if this matter escaped only from the hon. Minister. It has come up here in part. We have been seized of this matter. The matter was refer-

[Mr. Speaker]

red to me to find out whether we should ask the hon. Minister to place the entire matter before the House or not. If it had come out then, I would have said that there is absolutely no impropriety so far as we are concerned. But the hon. Minister has gone further and has refused to give it to the House ignoring the fact that I was wanting to look into it. He did not say unconditionally that he would not place it before the House but he said that if I agreed with him he would withhold it; if, on the other hand, I wanted it to be placed before the House he would do so.

Under those circumstances the correspondent comes out with this. This is nothing short of a bravado. This is a very responsible newspaper. I would urge upon all newspapers not to allow such things to be published. They will take note of whatever is happening here and if, in the interest of the public, it is considered either by the House or by me that an agreement which is made ought to be kept secret, they would also adopt that secrecy in the interest of the country and of proper journalism.

No more action need be taken either on the privilege motion or on the adjournment motion.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): May I say a word in regard to the privilege motion?

Mr. Speaker: I do not give my consent to it.

Shri Hem Barua: May I submit that I do not want to agree with you so far as your remarks are concerned? I am so sorry to say so, but then I have to say it.

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow it.

Shri Hem Barua: I have my disagreement with you. Therefore may I submit just a few words? My privilege motion was on a particular

subject. I did not want to bring in the Special Correspondent of the *Statesman* because I know that the business of the press people is to fish for or scoop news and help us with the news.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. He need not be apologetic. I take upon myself the entire responsibility of saying what I have said about the newspaper correspondent. It is not as if he only wanted to abuse or to take the hon. Minister to task.

Shri Hem Barua: It is not that.

Mr. Speaker: I am giving it up. I would only say that when the matter is before me, the hon. Minister has said that he will abide by my decision and I am looking into it, if a correspondent comes out and says, "You have not decided; I will give the information to the House", this stands on an absolutely different footing. If the matter had not been placed before me and I was not considering that matter I would not have taken any notice of the newspaper report. If an hon. Minister improperly withholds any matter from the House and somebody gives some information, it is for the House to take it up. But he went further. The matter was brought up here and hon. Members wanted to know about it. The hon. Minister said, "I am prepared to give it subject to year decision, but my view is that in the interest of future negotiations I do not want to place it before the House." I was considering that matter. In the meanwhile this man comes and says, "I will give you this information." I say that this is an affront to the House. I do not want to take it up as a matter of privilege because we are sitting only for two or three days more and there will be a new Parliament when automatically it will lapse; otherwise,— I would have certainly referred it to the Privileges Committee to find out whether it has not exceeded its right of reporting. I do not say that the hon. Member wanted to say

anything against the Statesman. I am myself taking it up. I am not going to allow these things to be brought up.

Shri Hem Barua: Are we not interested in knowing the source from where the Special Correspondent got it? My objection is that the hon. Minister was secretive but his office was not secretive.

Mr. Speaker: There is an end to this matter. I will take up the Calling Attention Notice.

12.14 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

RETRENCHMENT OF WORKERS OF THE HORTICULTURE DEPARTMENT

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty (Basirhat). Sir, under rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

The retrenchment of about 300 workers of the Horticultural Department of C.P.W.D. consequent on transfer of certain lawns and parks to NDMC.

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Dr. B. Gopala Reddi): Sir, consequent on the decision of Government to transfer to the New Delhi Municipal Committee with effect from April, 1962 the work and maintenance of.....

Mr. Speaker: Is it a long one?

Dr. B. Gopala Reddi: It runs only to two pages.

Shri Raghunath Singh (Varanasi): It is very long.

Dr. B. Gopala Reddi: Then I will place it on the Table.

Shri Raghunath Singh: It should be laid on the Table.

Shrimati Renu Chakravartty: We would like to know what the answer is.

Mr. Speaker: He may read it out then.

Dr. B. Gopala Reddi: Sir, Consequent on the decision of Government to transfer to the New Delhi Municipal Committee with effect from April, 1962 the work and maintenance of public parks and lawns which has hitherto been done by the Horticulture Department of the C.P.W.D. on behalf of the Committee as a 'Deposit Work', about 370 workers are likely to become surplus to the requirements of the C.P.W.D. The junior-most of the workers have accordingly been served with notices of retrenchment. None of these workers is a permanent employee of the C.P.W.D.

Although the workers have been given notices of retrenchment by the C.P.W.D., the N.D.M.C. has agreed to employ all the surplus workers without any period of unemployment intervening. The Committee has further agreed to give to the workers emoluments which they are now drawing in the C.P.W.D. In addition, the workers will be paid retrenchment compensation as admissible under the Industrial Disputes Act for the period of service rendered in the C.P.W.D. In view of the assurance of immediate reemployment and protection of their existing emoluments, it is clear that no hardship will be caused to the workers.

Earlier during the debate on the Demands for Supplementary Grants the question was raised whether the workers should not be deemed to be transferred from the C.P.W.D. to the New Delhi Municipal Committee. On a similar representation made by the workers' union, the matter had been examined in detail and I take this opportunity of fully explaining the position.

The situation arising from the transfer of workers has to be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act.