

Use of Atomic Weapons in Vietnam

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 *877. Shri Umanath;
 Shri B. K. Modak;
 Shri Bhagaban Das;
 Shri P. Gopalan;
 Shri C. K. Chakrapani;
 Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any information regarding the proposed use of atomic weapons by U.S.A. in Vietnam; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take in this regard?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Surendra Pal Singh): (a) No, Sir

(b) Does, not arise.

Shri Umanath: During the last elections in the United States Mr. Goldwater had been repeatedly making a demand on the other candidate—now, President Johnson—that he should accept the position that he will use atomic weapons in Viet Nam, this demand has not been denied by the President, President Johnson, during the elections, which means the question of the use of atomic weapons in Viet Nam is still an open question

Mr. Speaker: This is the Question Hour, Mr. Umanath. What has that got to do now?

Shri Umanath: The point is, it means that as far as the present administration is concerned, the question of the use of atomic weapons in Viet Nam is still an open question. I would like to know from the Government whether our representative in the Control Commission, the Chairman, would take this question up with the United States Government and get an assurance that at no time or at no stage they will use any atomic weapons as far as Viet Nam is concerned.

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): As far as I know,

at no time has any official in the United States either in the Government or in the administration, ever said that they had any intention of using atomic weapons in Viet Nam. I mean there may be private persons, and some people in the press—as you know there are doves and hawks in the United States, and some hawks are very extreme hawks—but officially, that has never been said, at least to my knowledge, that they will ever use atomic weapons in Viet Nam.

Shri Umanath: Recent press reports say that a United States submarine with atomic warheads is moving about in the waters near Viet Nam, and one of them visited Japan and so on. I want to know whether this question will be taken up by our Chairman of the Control Commission, that the movement of the submarine near about those waters poses a treat not only to Viet Nam but also to the South East Asian peoples I would like to know whether this question will be taken up by our Government, as the Chairman of the Control Commission.

Shri M. C. Chagla: *Suo motu*, it cannot be taken up unless it is referred to by someone else. The Polaris submarine fitted with nuclear warheads are on the seas. They are out on the seas, but that does not mean that they are intended to be used against Viet Nam.

Shri Umanath: Does it not pose a threat, according to our Government?

Shri M. C. Chagla: As far as our information goes, there is no threat posed to Viet Nam from an atomic weapon of any sort, either from the land, sea or air

Shri P. Gopalan: May I know whether the Government is aware of the fact that the Seventh Fleet in the Pacific Ocean consists of nuclear-tipped missiles and, if so, whether the Government of India have protested to the United States Government that the stationing of the Seventh Fleet in the Pacific Ocean is a direct threat to India?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I do not see how we can make a protest. The fleet of the United States is entitled to be anywhere on the high seas. So long as it does not come to the coastal waters of our country, we have no right to protest. The high seas are there open to the fleet of any country. For instance, the Russian fleet is there in the Mediterranean. There is the American fleet in the Pacific. What protest can we make to the United States Government? Tell them where they should station their fleet?

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu: The use of atomic weapons in Viet Nam will be dangerous to India also. In the circumstances may I know whether the Foreign Minister or his Ministry have noted what has been published in the *Washington Post* about the use of atomic weapons in Viet Nam sometime in the first week of March, 1967?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I am sorry, I do not at the moment recall what was published in the *Washington Post* of the first of March, 1967.

Shri Chintaman Panigrahi: Is the hon. Minister aware that attempts are being made to start a total war in Viet Nam by the United States and that their Defence Secretary, Mr. McNamara is visiting North Viet Nam for the purpose? Did the hon. Minister get any information about this when he paid a visit to the United States?

Shri M. C. Chagla: Total war does not mean atomic war. The question we are dealing with is whether we have any information about the use of atomic weapons against Viet Nam. I would regret the escalation of war in Viet Nam and I have said so. But the question is specifically directed to the use of atomic weapons against Viet Nam. As I said, we have no information that the United States Government has any intention of using atomic weapons against Viet Nam.

Shri P. Venkatasubrahmanyam: May I know whether our representative and Chairman of the Control Commission has sent any report to this Government regarding this aspect of the matter?

Shri M. C. Chagla: No report has been received with regard to this matter.

Shri Jyotirmoy Basu: If the Government is sincere about collecting this information, why should it ignore what is published in the *Washington Post*?

Shri E. V. Nayanar: May I know whether India as Chairman of the Commission is aware that America is using napalm bombs, poison gas and toxic chemicals against the civilians and patriotic fighters of North Viet Nam when even Hitler was not so cruel as to use poison gas in the concentration camps? If so, have they as Chairman of the Commission, protested to the United States Government against the use of these things in Viet Nam?

Shri M. C. Chagla: The House should realise the limited function of the Commission under the Geneva Agreement. The Commission consists of three members of which India is the Chairman.

Shri Banga: Is it functioning?

Shri M. C. Chagla: Yes, it is. When a complaint is received by the Commission, it calls on the other side to explain the actual facts. Then the complaint is investigated and a report is made, which is confidential, which is submitted to the two co-Chairmen, who are Russia and the United Kingdom.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Now that China has manufactured the hydrogen bomb and is there in Viet Nam by proxy, may I know whether any statement has been made by the President of the United States that, come what may, they will not resort to atomic warfare in that region?

Shri M. C. Chagla: First of all, it does not really arise out of this; we are dealing with Vietnam. Secondly, I did not quite follow the force of the sentence, "Come what may, China having exploded a hydrogen bomb, the United States will never use atomic weapons".

Shri D. C. Sharma: Has the US President made any statement to the effect that they will not have recourse to atomic warfare in that region?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I do not think any statement has been made in the United States with regard to what would happen if China were to use the hydrogen bomb against any country.

Shri Swell: In view of the US Presidential elections that are coming next year, is it a fact that the United States Government, particularly President Johnson, is rather in a hurry to bring the war in Vietnam to a conclusion and the possibility of more drastic measures being used against North Vietnam including the use of atomic weapons cannot be ruled out? Does the Government have information about it?

Shri M. C. Chagla: I do not think it will be right for us to discuss the domestic policies of a foreign country.

Shri Pilo Mody: Are you thinking of putting up a candidate?

Mr. Speaker: In America?

Shri Amrit Nahata: Does the Government expect to be informed if and when the United States decides to attack Vietnam with an atom bomb and what could be the attitude of the Government of India if and when the United States does attack Vietnam with atom bombs?

Shri M. C. Chagla: The very words used by the hon. Member, namely, "if and when", show that the question is entirely hypothetical.

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Dr. Sushila Nayar: Does the Government have any information on the reported preparations for chemical and bacteriological warfare by several nations?

Shri M. C. Chagla: No, Sir; Government has no information.

श्री जगन्नाथ राव जोशी : मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि बियतनाम में शान्ति प्रस्ताव को कार्यान्वित करने की दृष्टि से मूलपूर्व राष्ट्रपति ने जो सुझाव दिया था कि वहाँ इन्टरनेशनल पुलिस फोर्स रखी जाय हम बात को लेकर कौन सा कदम शासन ने उठाया है ?

Shri M. C. Chagla: The question does not arise at this stage because the war is going on and there are no signs of any settlement at present. Our policy is quite clear. After the conflict has ceased the world body will consider as to what steps should be taken to have permanent peace in Vietnam.

Shri Jagannath Rao Joshi: When there was a suggestion made by our President, you ought to have taken it up.

Black-Marketing by Newspapers

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*878. **Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:**
Shri Bhagaban Das:
Shri Umanath:
Shri B. K. Modak:
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:

Will the Minister of Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) how many cases of blackmarketing of newsprint have been reported against newspapers during the last five years;

(b) how many of them are from Calcutta;

(c) the papers so involved and the details thereof;

(d) in how many cases quotas have been cancelled; and