

have come in. Therefore, if Mr. Venkataraman is interested or if anybody else is interested, they are entitled to go through the entire cost system, the entire input system and you can certainly convince yourselves that what I am saying is not out of my imagination, not out of any political consideration, not decrying any decision of the Government, but purely on economic consideration and our present needs of the country and the constraints of the coking coal.

West Asia Peace Accord

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*63. SHRI S. R. DAMANI:

SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government received any communication from President Jimmy Carter of United States of America seeking its support to the Camp David accord arrived at by Egyptian President and Israel's Prime Minister for peace in the Middle East;

(b) if so, the Government of India's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government's stand has not been well received in the Arab world; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to make its stand clear to them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Prime Minister sent a reply to the US President on October 8, 1978, on the Camp David Agreements. In his letter the Prime Minister reiterated India's declared policy which is that only a comprehensive solution to the West Asian problem would prove durable; such a solution must ensure Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories; recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and the rights of all States in the region to live within secure borders; and that no agreement would

be sustained or stable unless the problem of Jerusalem and Golan Heights is also solved.

(c) No, Sir. The Government of India's stand has been appreciated in the Arab world.

(d) Does not arise.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI: Apart from the declaration of our Government's policy in regard to Israel by the Hon. Prime Minister while replying to US President on 8th October, may I know from the Hon. Minister what other efforts our Government has made or is making to ensure the return of territories forcibly occupied by Israel since the conflict of 1967, especially the return of West Bank and Ghaza to the Palestinians. The Palestinians suffered very much and further suffering should not be inflicted on them. So, what efforts have you made or are making apart from declaring our policy while replying to the U.S. President?

MR. SPEAKER: It does not arise the question is different. The question is merely in relation to the Agreement.

Now, your second supplementary.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI: My point was—

MR. SPEAKER: Your point is very clear and important too, but it does not arise from the question.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI: Then, I would like to know whether President Carter's communication throws any light about the U.S. stand on Jerusalem and if so, what, and what is the Government's reaction thereto?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAJEE: Our traditional policy in regard to the West Asian problem is well-known. I would like to emphasize that there has been no departure. If there are efforts to seek a possible peaceful solution to the problem, we do commend such efforts provided such efforts lead

to just solutions and the establishment of lasting peace.

Mr. Damani wanted to know our attitude in regard to Jerusalem . . .

MR. SPEAKER: No, I have not allowed that question.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: That was the question he put.

MR. SPEAKER: I have disallowed it.

He then asked, has Mr. Carter suggested certain things, and what is your reaction to the suggestion.

SHRI S. R. DAMANI: Please allow me to repeat my question. My question is, does President Carter's communication throws any light on the U.S. stand in regard to Jerusalem; if so, what, and what is the Government's reaction thereto?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Our position on Jerusalem is well-known.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is that? What about the meeting with the President Carter? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: I am coming to that.

MR. SPEAKER: All the while, running commentary goes on. How is it possible for him to answer questions?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: When I met the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance, I asked him what was the position of Jerusalem keeping in view the Camp David Agreements. He said the Agreement was silent. But the question of Jerusalem will be discussed once the process of settlement is set in motion. Obviously, I was not satisfied with that reply. So far as American stand is concerned, America has never accepted Jerusalem as part of Israel.

AN HON. MEMBER: How do you know that?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: They have made it clear. Jerusalem

must go back to Palestinian people. That is one of the main points which our Prime Minister emphasised in regard to the Camp David Agreements. Sir, we would like a comprehensive settlement in West Asia comprising Jerusalem.....

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: You have resiled from your position of support for the Palestinian rights.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: You are not the only protector.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: I may not be the only protector but you are certainly not the protector.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: After the Camp David Agreements, I spoke in the United Nations and I reiterated the principles on which we would like the West Asia problems to be solved. There has never been any compromise so far as the principles are concerned and there will be no compromise.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The communication of the Prime Minister echoes the short-comings of the Agreement, as listed by the External Affairs Minister, namely—

(a) The Camp David Agreement does not concede to Palestinian people the inalienable rights including their right to setting up their national State,

(b) Agreements are silent on the Status of Jerusalem, and

(c) P.L.O. has not been accepted as the representative body of the Palestinian people.

These are three short-comings. Apart from these shortcomings, may I know from the hon. Minister whether there are political and military overtones in the Agreement of Camp David, which is according to me the object of the Camp David Agreement? The principal objects of the Camp David Agreement are:

(1) To extend NATO to West Asia,

(2) To link up Israel and Egypt in NATO against other Arab Nations.

(3) It resembles the Munich Agreement of 1938 which ultimately led to Second World War.

Now, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government of India will take the right position against this Agreement and condemn that it is not for peace but it is for war? Whether this unequivocal position is due to the fact that the Government of India does not want to displease the U.S.A. and oppose the global strategy of the U.S.A. in the South West Asia?

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : The Government of India has taken a very forthright stand. But if my hon. friend is not convinced, I cannot help.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : You convince the House.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Our policy has been not to get ourselves involved in inter-Arab controversy. We have just received a message from the Iraqi President in his capacity as President of 9th Arab Summit held in Bagdad recently. In addition to India, the message has gone to France, Soviet Union, United States, Yugoslavia and China. At the Summit, all Arab nations except Egypt were present. The letter mentions unanimous acceptance of the principle that "no Arab country is permitted unilateral acceptance of any solution of the Palestine question in particular and the Arab-Israeli dispute in general." Mr. hon. friend refers to NATO coming in and then global impact of the Camp David Agreement. If other Arab countries do not accept this agreement, I do not see how this agreement can lead to establishment of peace in West Asia. It might create new tension, but it is not for me to comment whether it will lead to extension of NATO.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI : You are very soft. You are expressing it in your own way. Why can you not express it in a very strong sentimental manner?

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Ravi, I have not called you.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : When I became the Foreign Minister, I decided not to approach questions relating to the foreign policy in a sentimental manner.

MR. SPEAKER : He says: "We do not involve ourselves in other people's disputes."

SHRI RATANSINH RAJDA : I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has conveyed its support to the strenuous peace efforts of President Sadat.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Prime Minister Desai also received a letter from President Sadat and he reiterated the same principles on which we would like the West Asian problem to be solved. Prime Minister Desai did point out that unless there is a comprehensive agreement....

(Interruptions)

I hope that President Sadat will listen to the advice tendered by Prime Minister Desai.

SHRI K. GOPAL : We, as a nation, have always the habit of reacting to any situation in the world, not only reacting but even attending the conferences including Rabat in those days. Sir, as far as Mr. Atal's bonafide is concerned, I do not doubt. He sincerely wants that our relations with foreign countries should be strengthened. He wants to do it with China, but Dr. Subramaniam Swamy came in and stopped it. It does not matter. I would like to know whether it is a fact that, immediately after the conclusion of Camp David Agreement, any call from Uncle Sam from the State Department came to Government of India and asked you to react in the manner you did.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : No, Sir. I emphatically deny it. Nobody came. So, the later part of the question does not arise.

MR. SPEAKER : The Question Hour is over.