

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) China has trade, economic and technical co-operation with a number of countries in the Indian Ocean. Government have also seen reports of visits of Chinese naval units to some countries bordering the Indian Ocean.

(b) Government's view that the Indian Ocean should be an Area of peace, free from Great Power presence, rivalries and tensions is well-known. India co-sponsored the U.N General Assembly Resolution No. 2832 (XXVI) calling on the Great Powers to enter into consultations with the littoral and hinterland countries with a view to eventual elimination of Great Power presence from this area. China supported this Resolution.

Reported statement by Shah of Iran for having meaningful dialogue with India

1663. SHRI P. M. MEHTA.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOW-DHURY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shah of Iran in an interview to the Indian journalists expressed his desire for a meaningful dialogue with India to avoid the risk of a cold war;

(b) whether Government have conveyed their willingness to discuss the issues with the Shah of Iran and, if so, whether any response has been received from Iran; and

(c) the steps being taken to improve the relations between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) In a recent interview

with an Indian journalist, the Shah-an-shah of Iran, speaking about Indo-Iranian relations, was quoted as having said, "We have no conflict of interests. We have many affinities and above all we have many possibilities of collaboration in the future".

(b) and (c). Government of India's willingness to discuss all matters of common interest with the Government of Iran is well known. The latest such talks took place when our Foreign Minister, in response to an invitation visited Iran from July 19 to 21, 1973 and held discussions with the Shah-an-shah as well as with the Iranian Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and other leaders. Measures to be taken to increase cooperation between Iran and India were discussed, and steps are being initiated to give them practical shape.

Indo-U.S Relations

1664. SHRI P. M. MEHTA:

SHRI V MAYAVAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any improvement in relations between U.S.A. and India; and

(b) if so, what new measures are being considered to improve the relations further between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A continuing dialogue is being maintained by both sides at appropriate levels with a view to further improving relations in political, economic and other matters.