

pose has not been served even if that was in the public interest.

The second purpose, that the lure of gold would be reduced, has also been falsified by the fact that people are willing now to play nearly 70 per cent more for gold than they did in 1963.

MR. SPEAKER: You speak on the amendment.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: I was asked by your predecessor to give the grounds.... (Interruption).

The third ground, that the financial resources of the Government and foreign exchange will be helped, is something so fantastic that it has been proved by my colleague that in spite of the financial position improving, in spite of the foreign exchange increasing, smuggling has increased and to that extent both those purposes have not been served.

Now I must ask the Finance Minister what is the interest of the public which has been served. This is a challenge to him. Has the interest of the public been served by making loans more secretive? Has the interest of the public been served by increasing the rate of interest? Has the interest of the public been served by these officials being able to exploit the ignorance and the helplessness of the people? Has the interest of the public been served by suicides which have been taking place? If it is not so, this exception does not arise.

The next provision is about the reasonable restriction.

SHRI BAL RAJ MADHOK (South Delhi): Sir, it is a quarter past five o'clock.

SHRI LOBO PRABHU: I am only filling up the gap.

MR. SPEAKER: You may now sit down. You have done it successfully.

17.15 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: SITUATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with a heavy heart and with a profound sense of concern that I have to report to this House certain events which are currently taking place in Czechoslovakia.

We have always been deeply committed to the cause of freedom everywhere. We have stood for certain principles as guiding and informing our attitude to international events. The principle of non-interference by one country in the internal affairs of another constitutes the very basis of peaceful co-existence. We have always believed that international relations should be governed by respect for the sovereignty and independence of nations, big or small. We have always stood for the right of every country to develop its personality according to its own traditions, aptitudes and genius. India has always raised her voice whenever these principles have been violated.

SHRI J. B. KRIPALANI (Guna): Except in Hungary.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Sir, the House is aware of the reports which have come through the world Press and radio as to the nature of the developments which have taken place in Czechoslovakia. We have also made enquiries from the diplomatic missions of the countries concerned as well as others, and continue to be in close touch with them. The armed forces of the Soviet Union and four of its Warsaw Pact allies began crossing the Szechoslovak borders at about 03.30 hours IST. (Some Hon. Members: Shame, shame). They are now reported to be in Prague and other towns of Czechoslovakia.

In the early hours of this morning, the Soviet Government, through their

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

Charge d' Affaires in New Delhi, informed us that the Governments of the Soviet Union and four of its Allied countries of the Warsaw Pact had decided to send their armed forces into Czechoslovakia. Hon'ble Members have presumably seen the statement which has since been put out by the Soviet news agency, Tass, stating the view point of the Soviet Government.

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY (Kendrapara): Did they inform you anything about Kosygin's resignation?

MR. SPEAKER: No questions please.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: Although it was only after our own independence that we were able to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic of Czechoslovakia, we have a long history of friendship towards Czechoslovakia and its valiant people. I recall, as I am sure many of my colleagues on both sides of the House will remember, the tragic and fateful events of 1938 and 1939. Even then our sympathies were with the people of Czechoslovakia in their travail and my father gave poignant expression to them. I am sure that the House will join me in conveying to the people of Czechoslovakia the profound concern at the turn which events have taken so soon after what appeared to be a peaceful resolution of problems and differences between Czechoslovakia and its allies.

Our relations with the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria are close, and many-sided. We value these friendships and wish to preserve and extend them. However, we cannot but give expression to our anguish at the events in Czechoslovakia. This House will no doubt wish to convey to them our view that they should carefully consider all aspects of the situation which has arisen as a result of the action by their armed forces and its possible consequences.

We are deeply aware of the fears which have gripped Europe, and the conflicts which have raged there leading to two world wars. These fears

still haunt the minds of the European people.

I am sure I reflect the opinion of the House when I express the hope that the forces which have entered Czechoslovakia will be withdrawn at the earliest possible moment and the Czech people will be able to determine their future according to their own wishes and interests, and that whatever mutual problems there may be between Czechoslovakia and its allies, will be settled peacefully. The right of nations to live peacefully and without outside interference should not be denied in the name of religion or ideology.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: *rose*—

SHRI SURENDRANATH DWIVEDY: I only wanted to ask whether she has any latest information about the resignation of Mr. Kosygin? (*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Just now, the teleprinter message was there that Mr. Kosygin and the Deputy Prime Minister have resigned. I do not know if the Prime Minister can give information about it.

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: There is no authoritative news. The P.T.I. has also mentioned something about the resignation of the Soviet Defence Minister.

SHRI RANGA (Srikakulam): Sir, it stands to the credit of those two gentlemen, the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union to have protested against this in stronger terms, in more eloquent terms, in more effective terms, than what our Prime Minister has done. (*Interruptions*) They have the moral courage to resign from their positions. Here is our Prime Minister who does not have the guts to deplore, to condemn, what is happening in Czechoslovakia. (*Interruptions*). I want to request you, on behalf of all our friends here, to give us an opportunity of having a full-fledged debate on this particular question and to express what we feel about this Government and its failure. (*Interruptions*).