

private hands, you will not be able to solve the problem in this country. They say they are having social control. I read in the papers that the Congress Party passed some resolution on social control. Read the results of last year's working of the banks. Unsecured advances—clean advances, as they are called—have risen last year more than in any other year. Deposits in the banks have increased and reached the highest last year. The Reserve Bank and many other commercial journals say that clean advances are a method of inflation, bribery, corruption and blackmarket. Yet, you think that social control exercised by the working committee of the Congress Party will work; it will not work. Unless the banks are taken over and managed in a democratic way with the assistance of the employees, and not managed by the same old Directors as they are today, the same Birlas being appointed in the State Bank instead of in a private bank, you will not solve the problem. If you want to correct the economy, this is the only method.

16.06 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

Why should the Government be lenient towards thieves of foreign exchange? Bird Heilgers were found to have stolen foreign exchange and they were fined Rs. 1.55 crores. The Revenue Board or some revision board reduced it to Rs. 48 lakhs, and allowed them to run away with Rs. 1 crore. I cannot understand this leniency. When a known thief is found, how is it that the ministry becomes very generous suddenly towards such an institution? Bird Heilgers are not really the same Birds they look from their names. Actually they have relationship with the great Birla Empire. They have got a European name, but they are no longer European....

Mr. Speaker: He should conclude now.

Shri S. A. Dange: Sir, I had made a pact with the Deputy-Speaker....

Mr. Speaker: I know about it. Even that is over now.

Shri S. A. Dange: Then I will continue afterwards.

Mr. Speaker: I heard it, that you were to go up to 4.15. If you want a little more time you can continue afterwards.

Shri S. A. Dange: Sir, there is nothing sacrosanct about the statement....

Mr. Speaker: She has to make it here and then go to the other House.

Shri S. A. Dange: Let me try to finish as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker: No, no; he can continue afterwards.

16.11 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. DEVELOPMENTS IN WEST ASIA

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shrimati Indira Gandhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, nearly two weeks ago, my colleague, the Minister of External Affairs, made a statement in this House giving Government's assessment of the explosive situation in West Asia and expressing our deep concern at the developments that were taking place there.

Since then, our efforts in the Security Council as well as outside have been concentrated on counselling moderation and lessening of tension and preservation of peace in that area. Our Representative in the Security Council in consultation with the non-permanent members of the Council and others made earnest endeavours to formulate a resolution which might be acceptable to the Council. The resolution aimed at supporting the Secretary General's recommendations contained in his reports to the Council and earnestly

[Shrimati Indira Gandhi]

appealing to all parties concerned to exercise restraint in order to avoid actions which might aggravate tension. Our Representative met with favourable response and it was hoped that in the next meeting of the Security Council, significant progress would be made in this regard.

While these efforts were still continuing, news came yesterday morning of an outbreak of hostilities between Israel and the U.A.R. and other Arab countries.

The Secretary General of the United Nations made a report to the Emergency Meeting of the Security Council yesterday, in which he gave an account of various reports by the UNEF Commander and the U. N. Observers on the UN Truce Supervision Organisation and Mixed Armistic Commissions, of attacks by Israeli aircraft on U.A.R. and Syrian territory.

I do not wish to utter harsh words or use strong language. But on the basis of information available there can be no doubt that Israel has escalated the situation into an armed conflict, which has now acquired the proportions of a full scale war.

The world today faces a disastrous war in West Asia. The armed forces of Israel and those of U.A.R. and other Arab countries are locked in combat, and the situation becomes graver by the hour. If not stopped, this war is likely to expand into a much wider one, drawing into its vortex other countries and developing perhaps into a world war. World peace is in grave peril. Our own national interests are bound up with peace and stability in West Asia. I do not need to expand on this or to describe the horrors and consequences of such a war in West Asia. It is our solemn duty as a Government as also that of the Hon'ble Members of Parliament to help in the restoration of peace in the present perilous situation. It is the bounden duty of all countries,

large and small, to work towards this end.

In the Security Council we are making earnest efforts for a cease-fire and withdrawal of all armed forces to the positions they occupied on June 4th. We shall persevere in these efforts.

Hon'ble Members have no doubt learnt with deep resentment of the wanton Israel artillery attack and subsequent strafings by Israel aircraft resulting in the death and injury of a number of personnel of the Indian UNEF contingent in Gaza. These attacks were deliberate and without provocation inspite of clear and unmistakable UN markings and identification of our contingent.

I have addressed a message to the Secretary General of the United Nations on this subject, expressing our grief and indignation at these incidents and I have asked for effective steps to be taken to ensure their safety and early evacuation from the area of hostilities. Five of our soldiers have died and several have been wounded. There can be no justification for Israel armed forces to have attacked our forces, whose whereabouts, identification markings and intention to withdraw were clearly known to the Israeli authorities.

Government will naturally give adequate compensation to the families of five soldiers who have lost their lives and we shall make sure that the amount is not less than what they would have received had these men lost their lives in active combat. Meanwhile, I am sending a sum of Rs. 25,000/-, i.e. Rs. 5,000/- per family, by way of immediate assistance to the bereaved families from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund.

I am sure the House will unreservedly condemn this cowardly attack on our men, who have been sentinels of peace in West Asia. The Secretary General has lodged a strong protest

with the Israel Government. I should like, on behalf of the whole House, to convey our deep sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families of our soldiers who have gallantly laid down their lives in the service of humanity and in the cause of peace.

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy (Kendrapara): I would suggest that we may stand in silence for two minutes to pay our homage.

Mr. Speaker: If the House wants, we can do it.

Some hon. Members: Yes.

The Members then stood in silence for a short while.

डा० राम मनोहर लोहिया (कन्तीज) :

मेरा खड़ा रहना जो युद्ध में मरे हैं उन सब के लिये है।

Some hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: Instead of too many Members getting up, I would suggest that one member may ask a question from each party.

Shri P. K. Deo (Kalahandi): Besides the party leaders, those who have tabled the Calling Attention Notice should also be given a chance.

Mr. Speaker: That will be difficult because as many as 50 members have done it. I leave it to the leaders of the parties to decide to whom they should give the chance. It is no use arguing with me. Everybody cannot get a chance.

Shri Ranga (Srikaku'am): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the whole House has mourned the death of five precious members of our defence forces, who were there not because of their choice but because they wanted to play their peace-maintenance role that they were called upon to play by the United Nations. The Prime Minister has stated who was responsible for this tragedy. A greater tragedy is taking place there for the whole of the world, and more especially for Asia. In this crisis we ex-

pected the Government to play a role that would fully and satisfactorily reflect the national opinion and attitude of our people. Unfortunately Sir, we have found that they were pursuing a line which was not satisfactory, nor in keeping with the experience we have had during the two tragic wars which were forced upon us. It is not as if the Government did not get any warnings about the feelings of a large number of us in this House as well as outside in regard to the role that they were playing and that they were about to play. We gave them definite warnings. And not being satisfied with it, when we came to know that this escalation of war has definitely resulted in the outbreak of violence on both sides, some of us got together yesterday evening and wrote a letter to the Prime Minister to warn her about attitudes and suggest that she should at least now advise the Government to see that a more constructive and more useful role would come to be played by us.

I quote:

"Whatever may so far have been said and done, we are of the view that from now on the best thing that can be done is for the Indian Government to adopt an objective attitude in this dispute and to abstain from taking sides or apportioning blame at this stage. We feel that if this attitude is adopted by the Government, it will have the support of the country as a whole. Such an attitude could be conducive to Indians playing an honourable part in restoring peace in West Asia."

What is the response that we get to this?

Shri M. Y. Saleem (Nalgonda): Sir, I rise on a point of order . . . (Interruptions).

Some hon. Members: No, no.

Shri P. K. Deo: Quote the rule.