

16.03 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: RECOGNITION TO
NEWLY DECLARED STATE OF PALESTINE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO): The House will be happy to know that Government have decided to accord full recognition to the newly declared State of Palestine. The denial to the Palestinians of their just rights and the illegal occupation of their homeland have been strongly condemned by successive Parliaments. All shades of public and political opinion in India have been united in expressing solidarity with the Palestinian people and their legitimate aspirations.

The establishment of an independent Palestinian State has been our cherished and singleminded objective all these years. We share the happiness of the Palestinian people on this auspicious day. We are conscious that it is not the end of the process. It is nevertheless an important milestone on the path to meeting the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians within and outside the occupied territories. We wish the Palestinians all success in the task of achieving the logical culmination of this declaration—the restoration of Palestinian land and the assertion of Palestinian sovereignty.

16.05 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

[English]

Commission Reported to have been Paid by M/s Bofors in Howlzen Gun Deal—Contd.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI (Guwahati): Mr. Chairman, Sir, since yesterday in this debate a number of important Members of both the sides have participated. It is one of those rare debates in which a number of top

functionaries of the Governments have participated; Ministers and also top party functionaries. I wish that a completely uncensored and unexpunged version of this debate should go before the people of this country, so that the people of this country may know to what level the ruling party can go down in debates on important issues. It is not that we cannot reply abuses by counter-abuses, but I have prayed since yesterday that in the worst of provocation and anger I may not be tempted to use such words against the mothers, sisters and sons of hon. Members as has been done by the ruling party Members since yesterday. This debate will remain as one of the most blackest debates in the Parliament, where we have reduced the level of debate to virtually the worst kind of debate.

I can see a panick reaction in the ruling party to Shri V.P. Singh and I am not surprised. They feel that if they can tarnish the image of Shri V.P. Singh, they may somehow survive. But political survival is never dependent on tarnishing the image of another party. Political survival is dependent on the strength of your own party and the way you have tried to tarnish the image of Shri V.P. Singh is not going to help you.

What are the issues in this debate? I thought for myself that the members of the ruling party would reply to some of the issues and cut across party lines and will strongly stand up against Bofors on the issues that we have brought forward. What are the issues? May I recall what the Defence Minister and the hon. Prime Minister said in the early part of 1987. I can quote the Prime Minister as quoted by JPC. He made it very clear that there can be no middlemen or agents involved in the dealings with Bofors. That was the confirmation which he got from Mr. Olof Palme that there would be no middlemen involved and then he put across to the opposition: "Show us any evidence that there has been involvement of middlemen or payoff or commission. Give us some material that there has been payment of commission". And what would they do? His reply was: "We will take action and we will see that