

## TRADE WITH U.S.S.R.

8806. SHRI BENI SHANKER SHARMA : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity and value of woollen fabrics, steel, iron ore, mica, leather and leather goods, raw hides, tobacco, oil cakes and coffee exported to the U.S.S.R. and their percentage in relation to the total exports during the last two years; and

(b) the quantity and value of goods imported from the U.S.S.R., category-wise, together with their percentage in relation to the total imports of that commodity during the same period?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI RAM SEWAK) : (a) and (b). A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-3425/70*].

## 12.15 hrs.

## CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

## REPORTED FIRING ON STRIKING WORKERS OF NEYVELI LIGNITE CORPORATION LIMITED AT NEYVELI

SHRI K. ANIRUDHAN (Chirayinkil) : I call the attention of the Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals and Mines and Metals to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon :—

The reported firing on striking workers of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited at Neyveli.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND MINES AND METALS (SHRI JAGANATH RAO) : An industrial dispute existed in the Neyveli Lignite Corporation in regard to wage revision, allowances, fringe benefits and certain other related issues. The Joint Council consisting of the two recognised Unions (Neyveli Lignite Mines Workers Progressive Union and Neyveli Lignite Corporation Staff Union) and all the registered Unions had been formed by the workmen and strike notices were issued by the Unions on the Management in February,

1970. Conciliation proceedings were held by the Commissioner of Labour, Madras in March, 1970. As a result of these proceedings and the intervention of the Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu, a settlement was arrived at on 20-3-1970 between the Management and the Joint Council. The settlement arrived at was binding on all the Unions which took part in the conciliation proceedings and was to be effective for a period of 4 years with effect from 1st January, 1970.

While considering the demands of the workers for revision of pay scales, allowances and fringe benefits, the Management had taken into account the recommendations of several Wage Boards including the Board for Heavy Chemicals and Fertilizer Industries Transport Industry, Electric Supply Undertakings. The final settlement of Rs. 185/- minimum wage is above the levels recommended for Fertilizer Industry (Rs. 170/-), Transport Industry (Rs. 120/-) and Electric Supply Undertakings (Rs. 140/-). The minimum wage of Rs. 185/- is on par with the minimum wage being paid in the region by M/s. Bharat Heavy Electrical Ltd., Thiruverumbur near Trichi in Tamil Nadu. The Bharat Electronics Ltd., Bharat Earth Movers Ltd., and the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd., have also pegged the minimum wage at Rs.185/-. Since Neyveli Lignite Corporation is a multi-unit complex, implementation of the recommendations of the Wage Board for Fertilizer of any other particular industry was not practical as such action would have led to lack of uniformity and to different levels of wages for the workers working in the different units. As stated above, the final settlement of Rs.185/- minimum wage is more favourable than the recommendations of the Wage Boards for Fertilizer Industry, Transport Industries or Electric Supply Undertakings.

Information reached the Central Government that the workers of the Neyveli Lignite Corporation had gone on strike with effect from 12 mid-night on 2-5-1970. The reasons for the sudden strike so soon after the wage settlement which was accepted by the workers, are not clear to the Management. The Management were not given any notice of the strike by the workers' Unions. All the four units of the plant, viz., mining, power station, fertilizer and Briquetting & Carbonisation plant, have had to be shut

down. Power supply to Tamil Nadu from the Neyveli Power Station has been badly affected. No written reports have so far come in from the Corporation. I has been reported by the Managing Director, Neyveli Lignite Corporation that the Tamil Nadu Government has deputed a strong police force and that the Senior Officers of the State Government and the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu are keeping in touch with the situation at Neyveli. Section 144 has been imposed at Neyveli with effect from 8 A.M. on 3-5-1970.

After commencement of the strike owing to violent demonstrations on the part of the workers, the police have had to resort to lathi-charges and firing in the air. It has been reported by the Managing Director that there were three firings, two with bullets and one with tear gas, on the 2nd at 9-30 P.M., 3rd at 2-30 A.M. and 9-30 A.M. respectively. There have been several lathi-charges in which 80 workers are reported to have been injured. Seven officers of the Corporation who were proceeding in a jeep to the master control of the thermal station were stoned and pulled out of the jeep by the workers and were, as a result, injured. The Managing Director has further reported that a police patrol van carrying food packets to the police posted at the thermal station was caught in a road block placed by the workers and was stoned heavily leading to the police resorting to firing in the air during which one of the bullets appears to have ricocheted from somewhere and hit a worker, unfortunately killing him. The name of the worker who was killed is Shri Devendor. He was working as a welder in the thermal unit of the Corporation. He belonged to the Lignite Mines Labour Union, Neyveli, which is a registered Union. It is reported that after post mortem held at Cuddalore the body was transported by Corporation vehicle to Vellore for the funeral. Six policemen and one sergeant were injured in the incident leading to the death of the worker.

The Managing Director has reported this morning (6-5-70) that the strike has ended and the workers have commenced work in the first shift. As a result of tripartite negotiations held between the workers Unions, the Management and the Stat Labour Commissioner, accord was reached on 5-5-70.

**SHRI K. ANIRUDHAN :** Sir, the whole tragedy has occurred due to the strike there. The workers there came forward with their just demands. Now, it has become a new phenomenon in this country that whenever and wherever the workers or the peasantry would come forward with their just demands for their subsistence and for their welfare, in the name of maintaining law and order, certain States—I feel really sorry that it has happened even in Tamil Nadu—let loose their police force and allow the police to brutally lathi-charge the workers and peasantry and set fire on their hutments. About a year back, at Thanjavur, some Harijan workers, particular, and also other peasantry, when they started claiming for some more wages, they let loose the police force and the police resorted to firing and some workers and peasants, numbering 40 to 45, including many women, were shot dead.

Their houses have been burnt and the Government, I am sorry to say, have asked even their goondas to set fire to the houses of workers. Now, the subject matter of the dispute is quite simple. The workers and the trade unions had some genuine differences with the management and the management could have solved this problem by peaceful negotiations. Instead of solving these problems by peaceful negotiations in the conciliatory method, they have resorted or they have rather conveniently used the law and order policy of the State Government in a democratic State and in particular, in Madras State using the law and order, they have allowed the Police even according to the Minister's statement there were three firings and several lathi-charges—to fire and make lathi-charge in which 80 workers reported to have been injured and one worker, by name Mr. Devenbor, was killed and others were seriously injured and are in the hospital. This tragic incident could have been avoided by using available machinery of negotiations and also the good offices of the Madras Government as well as the Government of India as also the Managing Director or the Board of Directors to settle the dispute. In view all these facts, may I know whether the Government of India have received any information that the State Government have started a judicial inquiry into the police firing and No. 2, whether the Minister

[Shri K. Anirudhan]

would furnish me the loss of production suffered on account of the strike and (3) may I know as to what are the main terms of settlement which they have arrived at ?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** It is unfortunate that this incident should have happened on that fateful day but the House will appreciate that on the 20th March an agreement was entered into between the Management and the representatives of 16,600 employees out of 17,000 and the agreement was honoured and was implemented on 2nd April, 1970. There was no immediate provocation for the employees to go on strike. No notice was given. All attempts and steps that were taken by the management to come to a settlement did not succeed and this unfortunate incident took place. When violence erupted, the police had to use tear gas shells and fire which resulted in the death of a worker. (Interruptions) Yesterday night the Chief Minister of Madras spoke to me on the phone and he did not tell me about the judicial inquiry. He said he called the leaders of the Unions and he hoped that the workers would resume duty this morning and it has happened.

The second point the hon. Member wanted to know was about the extent of losses suffered. Every day 12,000 tonnes of lignite, 6.5 million kv of power, Urea—270 tonnes, and Lico—335 tonnes are produced. For four days all the four plants had to be shut down.

Then about the settlement, the latest agreement is :

- (i) Of the strike days, three days will be debited against leave due with wages and one day will be treated as without wages.
- (ii) Penal cut of 8 days wages in terms of the Payment of Wages Act for the illegal strike will not be enforced.
- (iii) (a) No disciplinary action will be taken against the strikers in general.
- (b) Where the criminal cases have been registered against the workers for acts of misconduct, such action will not be revoked.

(c) In respect of those who indulged in acts of misconduct other than those included in (b) above, the Management can take disciplinary action but shall not punish by dismissal or discharge.

**SHRI N. SHIVAPPA (Hassan) :** The project started with an investment of about Rs. 125 crores. The cumulative loss that has already occurred is about Rs. 21 crores for the country, the ideal employer being Government in public undertakings, endeavouring to give us a good profit in all the concerns and they are giving a salvation to the family planning by this kind of killing and firing. That is a separate thing. But, so far as the NLC is concerned 40% of the power is going to be supplied to the whole of Madras State from this particular project. One day's stoppage of the functioning of the project means that it will not only paralyse the life of many cities and villages where electricity is needed but so many agricultural operations and so many industrial operations will be paralysed. So I want to bring one point to the attention of the hon. Minister, apart from other things. The main intention of the persons who started this kind of sabotage methods for some political motivation is this. It may be of any organisation, but here it seems to be the extreme organisation like the naxalites. There is a place Pandurutti which is 12 miles away from this particular place. There is another place called Chidambaram which is also about 12 miles. These two have become first rate centres of naxalites about which the hon. Chief Minister, Mr. Kērunanidhi has written about a month back to the Central Government. He wanted the Centre to take necessary action to put down the high handed activities of the naxalites and to strengthen the hands of the Madras Government. These points have been submitted by a very responsible Chief Minister to a very responsible Defence Minister but which has been put in the dustbin. If not earlier action had been taken this strike would not have taken place. This strike was the offshoot of some demand with regard to compensation etc. The agreement was signed categorically before the Commissioner of Labour and I am thankful to the Chief Minister of Madras who used his good offices to bring the matter to a stop and he

deserves our congratulations when we see the same thing happening in West Bengal and other places. The country has got a great concern in this undertaking. There are various sophisticated machines which are used to pump out water every day. If it is being put to stop for some time I think the whole functioning of the plant and other activities of the industry will be paralysed. It was the intention of the workers and naxalites behind this thing to sabotage the entire thing and they wanted to sink this particular machinery inside the tunnel. If it is going to be sinked the whole project will go to dogs. What steps are the Central Government proposing to take to stop damage to the plant by these elements? Even with regard to the agreement the amount estimated approximately was Rs. 92 lakhs. It was mentioned by the hon. Minister in the Rajya Sabha that it was an autonomous corporation as though it was not the concern of the Central Government, much less the concern of anybody else.

It was an evasive reply given by the hon. Minister. I want to categorically ask the hon. Minister whether the Central Government is going to give a categorical commitment that the entire amount will be paid in lump sum instead of dragging on and further aggravating the problems with regard to these workers and putting a stop to it.

MR. SPEAKER : That is enough.

SHRI N. SHIVAPPA : My last question is this. In all public sector undertakings we have got strikes, lock-outs and gheraos throughout the length and breadth of the country. Are they going to appoint a Committee to explore the reasons why these things are often happening and will the Committee give thought to this matter so as to arrest this situation?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : As regards the first question raised by the hon. Member as to what steps have been taken by Government to safeguard the machinery etc., I would say that the State Government of Tamil Nadu have been giving us all help as and when required by us.

Regarding the second part of the question, the agreement entered into by the management with the representatives of the

*Neyveli Lignite (C.A.)*  
labour on the 20th March, 1970, clause 20 is clear. The manner of payment of the increase has been agreed to and that is not disputed. The manner in which the increase has been laid down in the agreement is adhered to. The workers do not question that. They did not want lump sum payment.

SHRI N. SHIVAPPA : They question that. That is why a strike has taken place.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : No such notice has been served. Out of 17,000, 16,600 workers are represented in this agreement and the remaining 400 consisted of Assistant Engineers. Though they were present at the conciliation proceedings, there is no signed agreement. But, curiously enough these 400 Assistant Engineers have not joined this strike. This is really a mystery. I have not got the information from the management as to how this strike was started and who was responsible.

SHRI RANGA (Srikakulam) : Was there none for the safety at least?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : The police are there, the State Government is there. We do not apprehend any danger. Of course, the conditions vary from one public sector undertaking to another. And there cannot be any uniform yard stick for the settlement of disputes. Steps will be taken as and when the situation arises.

SHRI UMANATH (Pudukkottai) : In such a major strike, when all parties were trying to find out a way to the settlement and restore normalcy, it was deplorable to note that the Governor of Tamil Nadu should have attacked the workers one-sidedly as having been responsible for the situation thereby aggravating the situation.

In the statement I find that the hon. Minister mentioned that the reasons for the strike so soon after the wage settlement which was accepted by the workers, were not known to the management. The hon. Minister was saying that this was still a mystery.

I assert that the management knew the reasons for the strike. But, they have actually misled the House by not giving the proper information. I understand that in the earlier agreement the management committed to Rs. 92 lakhs. There was a discontent

[Shri Umanath]

among the workers regarding inadequacy of even the sum of Rs. 92 lakhs. Despite the fact that Rs. 92 lakhs is committed by the management in the agreement, the agreement also involves cutting down the mines allowance which was existing, from the rate of Rs. 13 to Rs. 11. As per this agreement the factory allowance of Rs. 13 is reduced to Rs. 6.

**SHRI RANGA** : Is there a justification for it ?

**SHRI UMANATH** : The hon. Minister is trying to mislead the House regarding benefits of the new wages rates. New wage rates as per the settlement as compared to others, is less. The net increase was only Rs. 21. The junior engineers and technicians' Unions have refused to sign this agreement. That the entire workers, also did not approve of the agreement is shown by the fact that almost the entire workers are on strike. The mischief of the management of the Corporation was that after this agreement, they gave certain concessions to the Junior Engineers and Technicians which in effect went beyond Rs. 92 lakhs. It was here that the workers' union justifiably demanded of the management that since they have ignored the limit of 92 lakhs in the case of Junior Engineers, the workers' claims also must be accommodated on the same ground. Should an act of co-operation *viz.*, signing of the earlier settlement be turned against the workers to their disadvantage? This was the whole question. The management which reopened the question of 92 lakhs in favour of junior engineers refused to reopen it in favour of the workers. It is this that has led to the whole discontent, and it is this that has led to a major strike, resort to killing of workers. I want to know from the hon. Minister fact whether what I have mentioned is not a namely that it was this that had led to the discontent and it was this that had brought about this situation. The intensity of the workers' feelings can be found out from the fact that the workers compelled the unions which themselves signed the settlement to call for the strike. After the killing of the workers, now I understand, that there has been settlement.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is not a fact that now as per the latest settlement no worker

will get less than Rs. 30 as compared to the Rs. 21 which was the result of the earlier settlement. If it is a fact that as per the latest agreement signed yesterday, no worker will get less than Rs. 30, and other things will be further negotiated upon,.....

**AN HON. MEMBER** : It is not Rs. 30 total increase, but only Rs. 9.

**SHRI UMANATH** : Yes, now they will be getting Rs. 30.

**SHRI RANGA** : They could as well have been wise enough to give it in the beginning.

**SHRI UMANATH** : On April 18, before the strike, there were talks before the labour commissioner, if the management had taken up this position at that time, which they took up yesterday, could not the strike have been averted, and could not the firing have been averted and could not the lathi-charge have been averted? In view of this conduct of the management, since the hon. Minister himself admits that he does not know the details, will he now agree to institute an independent inquiry into the conduct of the management in handling this entire affair so that in future such things need not happen and such huge losses need not take place? I am not dealing with the law and order question, because that question has already been put. But on the question of the conduct of the management, will the hon. Minister now have an independent impartial inquiry into this and fix responsibility on the officers or the board or whoever is responsible for this, and what concrete steps to Government propose to take to see that the management does not repeat such things

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO** : Till today, I have not got detailed reports from the management. Whatever information we have got is in dribbles on the phone. Unless I get a full report from the management, I shall not be in a position to give answer on the issues raised by my hon. friend.

**SHRI UMANATH** : When he has got that much information given to the House now, why did the management hide other informations from him?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO** : The information that I have got is that on 18th April, 1970, the Labour Commissioner had had some discussions with the workers, and had posted the matter for further discussion on 2nd May, 1970,.....

**SHRI UMANATH :** Because the management refused.

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** But on 1st May, they went on strike, and, therefore, the negotiations could not be completed. I am not in a position to say whether this Rs. 9 increase was given as a result of those talks or negotiations. The hon. Member mentioned that Rs. 9 increase would be there for every worker, I am not in a position to say that.....

**SHRI RANGA :** What is he in a position to say now in this House? He has only to say that he has failed completely and consistently.

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** I have been consistent from the very beginning.

**SHRI RANGA :** Consistently, he has been failing.

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** There is no question of failure. There was agreement on 20th March and that was implemented. There was a further demand from the workers and the Labour Commissioner was going into that, but before conclusions could be arrived at, they went on a strike which resulted in those unfortunate incidents.

**AN HON. MEMBER :** Why did he kill a man?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** I have not got any categorical statement from the managing director that they have agreed to the Rs. 30. That is still under negotiation. I can say only to that extent.

**SHRI UMANATH :** My question is whether in view of these developments which he does not know, he will have an independent high-level inquiry into the conduct of the management?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** Unless I get a detailed report from the management, how can I say anything? If I find after getting the report that the management had failed, then we can think of proper steps.

**SHRI UMANATH :** My question was not that. My question was whether Government would be prepared to institute a high-level inquiry into the conduct of the management.

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** Unless I know the facts, how can I commit myself? How can I put the cart before the horse?

**श्री हरबयाल बेवगुण (पूर्व बिस्ली) :** सरकारी कारखानों में सभी जगह मजदूरों में काफी बेचैनी है, उसका एक नया उदाहरण हमारे सामने आया है। हैवी इंजीनियरिंग में हड़ताल हुई, एक-दो कारखाने बन्द भी हो गए हैं। सरकार बजाय आदर्श मालिक बन कर कारखानों को चलाने के यह आदर्श उपस्थित कर रही है कि मजदूरों पर गोली चला कर, उन पर लाठी चार्ज करके उनसे काम लेना चाहती है।

मंत्री महोदय ने जो वक्तव्य दिया है, वह बहुत अस्पष्ट है और उसमें तथ्यों को जान-बूझ कर छिपाने की कोशिश की गई है। मंत्री महोदय ने कहा है कि मैनेजमेंट को हड़ताल का कारण मालूम नहीं है। क्या यह सच है कि 20 मार्च को मैनेजमेंट और जाइंट कौंसिल के बीच जो समझौता हुआ था, उसके कारण कर्मचारियों में असंतोष और अशांति थी? क्या यह सच है कि वहां पर कुछ लोगों को इस आधार पर सस्पेंड कर दिया गया था कि वे हड़ताल का प्रचार कर रहे थे? अगर ये बातें सच हैं, तो मंत्री महोदय यह कैसे कह सकते हैं कि उनको हड़ताल का कारण मालूम नहीं है? जब कर्मचारियों ने हड़ताल कर दी और पुलिस ने गोली चला कर लोगों को मार दिया और अस्सी आदमियों को जकमी कर दिया, तो उसके बाद मैनेजमेंट ने उनके साथ बातचीत शुरू की। मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि उससे पहले बातचीत क्यों नहीं शुरू की गई और उससे पहले समझौता क्यों नहीं किया गया? क्या यह जरूरी था कि कर्मचारियों पर गोली और लाठी चलाने के बाद ही समझौता किया जाए? इससे जाहिर होता है कि मैनेजमेंट ने जान-बूझ कर इस मामले में बंगलिंग की है।

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि वहां पर पुलिस को किस ने बुलाया और किस

[श्री हरदाल देवगुन]

ने गोली चलाने के लिए कहा। क्या मैनेजमेंट ने पुलिस को कहा कि जो लोग कारखाने में जाना चाहते हैं, उन की रक्षा के लिए, या हड़ताल करने वाले कर्मचारियों को वहां से हटाने के लिए गोली चलाई जाये? मंत्री महोदय ने यह बताया है कि पुलिस की गाड़ी सुबह ढाई बजे खाने का सामान ले जा रही थी और उस को रोका गया था। क्या पुलिस सुबह ढाई बजे अपना खाने का सामान ले जाया करती है? इस से साबित होता है कि मैनेजमेंट ने मंत्री महोदय को धोखा दिया है और मंत्री महोदय ये गलत तथ्य दे कर इस सदन और देश को धोखा दे रहे हैं। मैनेजमेंट को मालूम था कि कर्मचारियों में अशांति है, लेबर अनरेस्ट है और कर्मचारियों की कुछ मांगें हैं। उन लोगों को दबाने के लिए और कुछ लोगों को कारखाने में भेजने के लिए उस ने पुलिस को बुलाया और उस से गोली चलवाई और दफा 144 लगवाई।

जैसा कि मैं ने अभी कहा है, मैनेजमेंट ने गोली चलाये जाने के बाद कर्मचारियों के साथ समझौता किया। इस बात का स्पष्टीकरण होना चाहिए कि क्या वह समझौता पहले नहीं हो सकता था और उन की मांगें पहले नहीं पूरी की जा सकती थीं। जैसा कि अभी माननीय सदस्यों ने कहा है, चूंकि यह सारा मामला भ्रम में पड़ा हुआ है, इस लिए क्या सरकार इस बारे में पूरी जांच करने के लिए एक एनक्वायरी कमेटी बिठायेगी, ताकि सारे तथ्य सामने आ सकें?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO:** The immediate cause is not, as stated by the hon. member, the suspension of four clerks attached to the Mines Division. They were suspended on 29 April, and immediately the management agreed to reverse the order. Therefore, that could not have been the immediate cause.

Regarding discontentment, as Shri Umanath has said, the workers wanted something more than was agreed to under the 20th March agreement. That may be so. Even then notice should have been

*Neyvell Lignite (C.A.)*

served on the management. That was not done.

**SHRI UMANATH :** Under provocation, suddenly things happened.

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** The management was having discussing, the Labour Commissioner was having discussion. The case was further postponed to the 2nd May. Unfortunately on the first night, they went on strike and the management could not do anything when this happened. Naturally efforts were continued and the management agreed to whatever the State Government, the Chief Minister and the Labour Commissioner had said. Therefore, it is not correct to blame the management and say that it is responsible for this.

**SHRI UMANATH :** Before knowing the facts why do you say that the management is not to blame?

**SHRI JAGANATH RAO :** Even according to your facts the management is not to blame.

It was asked why the food packets should be taken at 2.30 in the morning. There are 17,000 workers, and if they took it in the morning, they might be obstructed. They wanted to go when the workers were not in large numbers. Also, in South India they take coffee and idli early in the morning.

**SHRI S. M. KRISHNA (Mandya) :** The callousness of the Minister has been amply exhibited by his connecting this tragic incident with South Indians taking idli and coffee in the early morning. I have yet to know a South India who is enamoured of coffee and idli at 2.30 in the morning.

Please read the statement. What a clever exercise in evasion. Are we to swallow the answer from the Minister that no written reports have so far come from the Corporation? There was a calling attention notice in the Rajya Sabha yesterday, and a calling attention notice had been admitted by you for today, and the Minister has the audacity to report to Parliament that no written report has come from the Managing Director. Can there be anything more shocking than this? He says that the information that

he has got is by way of telephonic communication between the Managing Director and the Minister. The Minister needs to be pulled up on this score.

The statement says that after the commencement of the strike owing to violent demonstrations on the part of the workers, firing took place. I would like to know what was the nature of the violent demonstration. If a few stones are thrown against some people who are passing into the factory in a jeep, can that be termed by any stretch of the imagination to be violence? I would like to reinforce and support the plea that has been made by Shri Umanath that there has to be an independent enquiry, whether it be judicial or non-judicial, into the firing against the workers. Secondly, I would like to know if any compensation has been given to the family of the worker who has fallen victim to the brutal firing.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : About this unfortunate incident, I expressed my regret. I am not happy. I am not gloating over the death of a poor worker.

I said that at 2.30 a.m. when the policemen were going there was obstruction on the road. When they tried to remove the obstruction, some stones were pelted. The police were injured. So, they opened fire. The management has no authority to ask the police to open fire. It is the discretion of the police. The I.G. and D.I.G were present. They opened fire when they thought it was necessary. The management cannot be blamed. The management can only regret what has happened.

Till today I have not got a written report.

SHRI S. M. KRISHNA : Why ?

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : Perhaps it is on the way. I have asked them to send it.

SHRI S. KUNDU (Balasore) : Why do the Maharajas of the management take it so lightly ? We are supposed to give money to the public undertakings, and they take it so lightly. People have died.

SHRI S. M. KRISHNA : Are we not within our rights to ask why there is this time-lag ?

SHRI S. KUNDU : They should not take this Parliament so lightly. You are the Speaker, you are the custodian of the people's rights.

MR. SPEAKER : Kindly sit down. Do not lose your temper all the time.

SHRI JAGANATH RAO : You will also appreciate that the Managing Director was busy with the strike situation which was explosive. Till yesterday the strike situation was explosive. You should expect that he was busy in dealing with the situation. I have asked him to send a report. We are not hiding anything. It is for the State Government to order any sort of enquiry.

12.48 hrs.

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