

ceed, a new petition comes and we hold it up. We proceed further, another petition comes and again we should stop. That cannot be done. That is not the reasonable construction that can be put upon it.

13.09 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. OIL CONCESSIONS IN IRAN

The Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals (Shri Humayun Kabir): The National Iranian Oil Company offered early in 1963 a large off-shore area in the Persian Gulf for oil exploration and production to interested parties. A number of Companies and organisations from different countries registered themselves as bidders for rights in this area. India did not originally register itself for bidding, but subsequently in May 1964 decided to do so in cooperation with E.N.I. of Italy and Phillips Petroleum Company of U.S.A. The National Iranian Oil Company, acting on behalf of the Government of Iran, declared October 31, 1964 as the last date for receiving the bids and allowed O.N.G.C. to make a bid jointly with AGIP, which is a subsidiary unit of E.N.I., and Phillips, although O.N.G.C. had not registered itself for the purpose within the due date.

2. A joint bid of O.N.G.C., AGIP and Phillips was submitted on October 28, 1964. According to available information, there were several other bidders who had offered much better terms than ONGC-AGIP-Phillips. The NIOC however reopened the bids and gave all bidders a chance of submitting fresh offers. Accordingly, ONGC-AGIP-Phillips made a revised bid for a larger number of structures and I am happy to say that our revised bid has been accepted by NIOC.

3. Under the terms of the agreement with AGIP and Phillips, O.N.G.C. will be an equal partner with them and share equally in the cost of exploration and development. It will also obtain an equal share of the oil produced and have an equal voice in the management of operations. The

entire seismic data of the off-shore area was obtained from NIOC at a cost of \$704,000, of which O.N.G.C. has paid one-third as its share. The total risk for the revised bid we have made involves an outlay estimated at a maximum of \$58 million of which our share will be one third.

4. All oil exploration even in the most prolific oil-bearing regions in the world carries a certain amount of risk, but our partners, who have both long and varied experience in the field of oil exploration and production, are of the view that the structures for which we have bid are likely to contain large reserves of oil. I may add that we have arranged with another party, to cover our entire risk money in case the area does not produce oil. O.N.G.C. will therefore incur hardly any expenditure if the structures prove barren. If on the other hand we strike oil, as we have every hope we shall, we will pay to our insurer with interest the monies he is advancing and a small commission for covering the risk.

5. Sometime ago we have decided to collaborate with NIOC and AIOC in the establishment of a Refinery at Madras which is scheduled to come into operation in the latter half of 1967. This decision along with the acceptance by the Iranian authorities of our bid for exploration and production of oil in the off-shore areas of the Persian Gulf opens out a new chapter in the oil industry of India. Simultaneously it begins a new chapter of close economic collaboration with Iran with which country we have had friendly relations from pre-historic times. I would like to pay a special tribute to the interest that His Imperial Majesty the Shah of Iran and His Excellency Dr. Mohd. Eghbal, Chairman of NIOC and a former Prime Minister of Iran, have taken in these negotiations. I am sure the House will join with me in wishing every success to this new chapter of collaboration between Iran and India and share my hope that this will lead to a much closer cooperation between our two countries in many fields.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): Sir, I would like to seek a clarification. I would like to know who is this AGIP in this partnership. Is he an Indian or somebody else? Then, who is the insurer who is insuring on our behalf against risks? Also, Sir, I wish to felicitate my hon. friend on his quick recovery from his recent illness.

An Hon. Member: That ought to have come first.

Shri Humayun Kabir: AGIP, as I have mentioned in the statement, is one of the subsidiary units of E.N.I. of Italy which is one of the biggest nationalised petroleum organisations in the world. As for the party which is covering the risk I would like to make the statement at a somewhat later date.

13.13 hrs.

GOLD (CONTROL) BILL—Contd.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri T. T. Krishnamachari on the 21st December 1964, namely:—

“That the Bill to provide, in the economic and financial interests of the community, for the control of the production, supply, distribution, use and possession of, and business in, gold and ornaments and other articles of gold and for matters connected therewith, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration.”

The time allotted for general discussion was 4 hours out of which 2 hours and 10 minutes have already been taken. Therefore, 1 hour and 50 minutes remain. Then 2 hours are available for the clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Shri Ranga (Chittoor): Sir, as every one knows it is an important Bill and a controversial Bill also. In the light of the discussion that has already taken

place it would be seen that quite a large number of Congress Members have taken part in the discussion and they are interested in suggesting many amendments to the Bill. They have referred to them in their speeches. I suggest, therefore, that, with your leave, the time allotted for this Bill may be extended from 6 hours to 9 hours so that 5 hours may be available for the clause-by-clause consideration and the Third Reading. For the Third Reading we may have 2 hours or even less than that, so that there may be enough time for a detailed and careful consideration of all the amendments. There are already more than 200 amendments given notice of. I hope the House will agree to the extension of time as suggested by me.

An Hon. Member: More time may be allotted for the general discussion also.

Shri U. M. Trivedi (Mandsaur): Sir, I support the suggestion made by Shri Ranga. This Bill itself is of a controversial nature. It is not only of a controversial nature, but now it appears that the whole House is against it. Excepting the hon. Finance Minister nobody seems to be in favour of this Bill. Under those circumstances it is necessary that it should be well discussed and the time must be extended. (*Interruption*).

Mr. Speaker: That cannot be said. What do the Government say?

The Minister of Finance (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): Sir, I have examined the amendments. Well, many of them repeat what the other amendments have said. The time of the House is also nearing to be over as far as this session is concerned. We have got only 2½ days more. Therefore, it is entirely your discretion what to do. I think the time asked for is rather excessive. If necessary you may extend it by an hour or so. As I said, I leave it to your discretion and I cannot really make any suggestion except to say that the amendments, formidable as they look, overlap con-