

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Monday, 27th April, 1953

*The House met at a Quarter Past Eight
of the Clock.*

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

9-15 A.M.

PANEL OF CHAIRMEN

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have to inform the House that under sub-rule (1) of Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business, the hon. Speaker has nominated the following Members on the Panel of Chairmen in place of the Members nominated earlier by him on the Panel:

1. Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava.
2. Shrimati Ammu Swaminadhan.
3. Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar.
4. Sardar Hukam Singh.
5. Shrimati Renu Chakravartty.
6. Shrimati B. Khongmen.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE.

REPORT OF EXPERT COMMITTEE
(EXCISE)

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Report of the Expert Committee (Excise), promised in reply to the supplementary to Starred Question No. 1870. asked on the 18th 126 P.S.D.

July, 1952. [Placed in Library. See No. IV. P.O. (25).]

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy (Mysore): What about the Adjournment Motion?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have already sent my remarks on the Adjournment Motion.

Shri Sarangadhar Das (Dhenkanal—West Cuttack): May I make a submission?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I know. Hon. Members should know that whenever an Adjournment Motion is tabled, it has to receive the consent of the Speaker, and if consent is not given and orders are communicated, and if they want to make any further representation, I will weigh it, and if I revise my decision, I will bring it up the next day. Therefore, hon. Members who have got any difficulty or suggestions to make may kindly see me later.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta North-East): May I make a submission? I find on the Order Paper that the Repealing and Amending Bill, 1953 is being taken up today, if there is time for it. The difficulty is that this Bill refers to so many previous enactments, and wants to make certain alterations.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is it first in the list?

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: No.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Then, I will consider it when we come to it later.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: We would like to be more or less reassured that it will not be reached today.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: When does the hon. Member suggest that it may be taken up? After all, he will find that it is only a formal affair.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): Without reading the parent Act, you cannot follow. No extracts are given here.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I would suggest to Mr. Mukerjee that I will look into this matter, and it will not be too late if this matter is taken up tomorrow.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: The point is we want some little information.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: We will do so. I will give ample opportunity to all.

Would the Finance Minister like to take up his motion earlier?

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): I would rather Shri Alagesan takes it up first. There are one or two matters I have got to attend to.

INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Deputy-Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): I beg to move:

"That the Bill to enable effect to be given to an International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, signed in London on the tenth day of June, nineteen hundred and forty-eight, to amend the provisions of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923 relating to life-saving appliances, wireless and radio navigational aids and to other matters affected by the said Convention, be taken into consideration."

As indicated in the title, and as explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons the primary object of the Bill is to effect such amendments in the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, as are necessary to give effect to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1948. The subject matter of the Bill is highly technical and essentially of a non-controversial nature. I shall try to give the back-ground for this Bill and explain some of the salient features of the Safety Convention, 1948, in the language of the lay person.

At present, important matters relating to safety of ships and of those on board are governed by the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1929. This Convention deals with the construction of ships, life-saving appliances and wireless equipment to be carried by them, safety of navigation and issue of Convention certificates of international validity.

This Convention was ratified by practically all the maritime countries including India. This Convention was given effect to by India by amending the Indian Merchant Shipping Act in the year 1933. After the conclusion of the last world war, the United Kingdom Government called a conference to review the 1929 Convention in the light of further experience gained, particularly during the last war, and the scientific progress made since the coming into force of the 1929 Convention. The Conference was held in London between the 23rd April and 10th June, 1948, and was attended by representatives from 30 States including India and the other Commonwealth countries. The new Convention, which was adopted by the conference, came into force on the 19th November, 1952. The Government of India have also ratified the new Convention along with 18 other countries and it applies to India from that date.

Since India achieved her independence, there has been considerable development in Indian shipping and our sea-going tonnage now stands at more than 4,00,000 G.R.T. as compared to only about 1,50,000 in 1946. Indian ships are now regularly plying on international trades and ships of practically all the important maritime countries of the world call at Indian ports. It is, therefore, not only desirable but also necessary, that Indian Merchant ships should be maintained, in regard to safety, at internationally accepted standards. The Indian National Steamship Owners' Association, which is the representative body of Indian Shipping companies, has been consulted and they are of the view that India should subscribe to the new Convention. For this reason, as well as the reason that Indian ships will not be subjected to control at foreign ports, and to ensure that Indian Certificates secure international recognition, it has been decided by the Government of India to ratify the 1948 Convention.

✓ Now, I should like to take the time of the House a little and indicate the salient features of the new Convention, i.e., the 1948 Convention and how it compares with the old Convention, i.e. the 1929 Convention. The new Convention broadly deals with the same subjects as were dealt with in the old Convention, but it is wider in scope and represents an advance over the old Convention. As in the case of the old Convention, the new Convention applies to ships engaged on international voyages, i.e. voyages from a port in a country to which the Convention applies to a port outside that country and vice versa. The