

LOK SABHA DEBATES

Dated 27.11.54

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, 21st December, 1954.

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See part I)

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STATEMENT RE ORDERS FOR JEEPS AND OTHER DEFENCE STORES PLACED ABROAD

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): Sir, with your permission I should like to make a brief statement regarding a matter which has been agitating the public mind for some time and on which the public Accounts Committee have made certain observations in their Ninth Report. This is in connection with the orders placed for certain jeeps in London and for certain defence stores on the Continent in 1948 for the Defence Services. The committee have mentioned the various irregularities brought to notice in connection with these contracts and they have suggested that no effective action has been taken by Government against persons who were responsible for transacting such an unbusiness-like deal in disregard of the administrative and financial rules. We have gone into this question over again, and I lay on the Table a statement which has been sent to the Public Accounts Committee on these cases. [See Appendix VII, annexure No. 17.] As the hon. Members are perhaps aware

in 1952, these cases formed the subject-matter of a detailed enquiry by a Committee of Ministers under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister himself, of which the then Defence Minister, the late Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar and I were members. This Committee which was assisted by the then High Commissioner in London and senior officials came to the conclusion that though there had been procedural and technical irregularities, there was no reason to doubt the bona fides of the officers concerned. This was also made clear on the floor of the House by the late Shri Gopalaswami Ayyangar on the 4th June, 1952. Necessary instructions have been issued to set right the procedural and other defects, but so far as the officers themselves are concerned, Government have come to the conclusion there is no need to take any further action. I trust that in the light of the explanation given in the statement sent to the Public Accounts Committee and what I have just said, the House will treat the matter as closed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the statement made by me in this House on 15th December, 1954, I made a request for the inclusion of a new item in the programme of legislative business of this House for the Session. This item was the Delimitation Commission (Amendment) Bill which Government is anxious to see considered and passed in the present Session. On 18th December, the Bill was referred to a Select Committee with instructions to report to the House on 22nd December. In the event of the Select Committee reporting and as the House has already