

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee (Calcutta South-East): Under the Indian Industries Control Act, the Government of India has a responsibility if such a situation does arise. So, on that technical ground you should not rule it out, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid the factory was closed, as I see from the motion, before that Act came into force.

Shri A. M. Thomas (Ernakulam): May I inform the hon. Member that it was discussed as an adjournment motion in the State Assembly?

Mr. Speaker: That is a further reason. So we need not take this up here now.

RISE IN FOOD PRICES CONSEQUENT UPON THE DE-CONTROL POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Speaker: Notice of another adjournment motion by Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee was received. It reads thus:

"That this House do adjourn to discuss a matter of urgent public importance arising out of the exorbitant rise in food prices in various parts of the country, as for instance in Madras, attendant upon the de-control policy of the Government".

I should like the hon. the Food Minister to say something about it. I believe that policy is not yet finalised, but whatever it may be, he may make a statement as to what the policy will be or is.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): I think the House is going to debate on the food question. Therefore, any motion today is unnecessary. I do not think the prices have risen, as has been stated in this. There are two prices: the prices that are in the open market have to be compared with the prices that are in free market today, and everywhere those prices have fallen. The prices at which rice was available in Government ration shops, at those very prices it is continued to be supplied in the cheap grain shops.

Shri Nambiar (Mayuram) rose—

Mr. Speaker: The question whether the prices have gone down or gone up and what that policy is, is not really a matter for consideration at this stage. At this stage, I am only concerned with the admissibility of the

motion. I neither admit nor deny the facts, on the Government side or the Opposition side. They may discuss them here when the question is taken up. I understand from the hon. the Food Minister that Government will allot some time for discussion of this policy.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Certainly, Sir, but not immediately; I would suggest, when we are fully ready with this subject.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee (Calcutta North-East): May I submit, Sir, that in view of the Prime Minister's statement, the urgency of the matter which I am trying to press before the House becomes even more important, because the hon. Minister has made a statement about the ensuing policy of Government in regard to de-control which has brought about a situation in the country which requires immediate discussion in this House. I would like to draw the attention of the House in particular to the pernicious habit of Ministers making statements in regard to policy without taking this House into consultation which leads to extremely deleterious influences.....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The hon. Member is not really speaking on the proposition before us. We are not concerned with the habits of Ministers. Anyway, I think there is no occasion for this adjournment motion to be discussed now. The question of food policy and control is really too large to be discussed within two hours. Even on that ground the adjournment motion should not be taken up.

Dr. S. P. Mookerjee (Calcutta South-East): In view of the Prime Minister's statement just now, may I know, Sir, if the intention of the Government is to discuss the matter in Parliament before there is a major change in the present food policy of Government, or the policy will be announced and Government will give us an opportunity to discuss it—a sort of *post mortem* examination?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, if any major change is intended, the House will certainly consider it first.

FIRING BY PAKISTANI ARMED POLICE ON INDIAN VILLAGES IN PUNJAB

Mr. Speaker: There is a third adjournment motion, notice of