

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

which was received from Mr. Gidwani. It reads thus:

"That this House do adjourn to discuss a matter of urgent public importance arising out of the heavy firing by the Pakistani armed police on three Indian villages, Daoki, Rajtal and Bhauburjpatan in Punjab, backed by troops using mortars, grenades and automatic weapons on the night of 1st November 1952".

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): It is rather difficult, Sir, to find out the correct facts although I have tried to do so. The incident has been discussed a good deal by newspapers both in India and in Pakistan. So far as we can make out, the Pakistani accounts are very greatly in the wrong and even the accounts in the Indian Press are not accurate; naturally because the facts have not been ascertained properly. We have asked the Punjab Government to supply us with the facts. So, I submit that it is difficult to discuss the matter.

It is important in the sense that an affray took place in the frontier, a minor affray with no casualties, so far as we can find out, I speak subject to future correction. On the 22nd October, our Irrigation Department was carrying out a survey in some villages there. So the party had fixed some flags and were digging a channel, when the Pakistani Border Police objected to these flags saying that they were fixing them in the wrong place. There was some controversy about that and some conflict started on that day and there was some firing by the Pakistani people which was replied to. Then there was another occasion when there was firing over a certain area which was supposed to be in dispute and which we say is our area. That is all that we know about it. No casualties occurred and we are trying to get the facts.

Mr. Speaker: Then, perhaps, with the concurrence of the hon. Member who has tabled this motion and the Leader of the House, instead of taking a decision just today, we will out it off for sometime, say.....

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: As you, Sir, direct, as soon as I get the facts I shall make a statement in the House about these facts.

Mr. Speaker: I may inform that there is also a short-notice question on this point. This also may be re-

plied to as early as possible. Till then I keep this pending.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Mr. Speaker: I have to inform the hon. Members that I have received the following letter from Rt. Rev. John Richardson:

"I beg to state that it will not be possible for me to attend at the 2nd session of the House of Parliament which is due to begin on the 5th November, 1952.

While I was in New Delhi, last month of June, I took leave of absence from the House on the 24th of that month on receiving the news of my wife's serious illness. I caught the boat at Calcutta on the 12th July, which landed me on the 16th of the same month, at Port Blair. Here I was held up till the 17th August when a boat was available to convey me to Car Nicobar Island, my destination. By the same boat I have brought over my sick wife to Port Blair for operation. She is now in Hospital not yet free from danger.

Even if I have to go to New Delhi now there is no boat to convey me from Car Nicobar Island to the main land. Transport is a difficult problem here. Owing to that I have been forced to be away from the 1st of May till now i.e., nearly six months from the sphere of my work.

I hope the House will now understand my difficulty why it is not possible for me to attend at all the sessions in the year."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Rt. Rev. John Richardson for remaining absent from all meetings of the House during this Session?

The leave was granted.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE PRESIDENT'S ASSENT TO BILLS

Secretary: Sir, I lay on the Table a statement showing the Bills which were passed by the Houses of Parliament during the First Session, 1952 and assented to by the President.

STATEMENT

- (1) The Saurashtra (Abolition of Local Sea Customs Duties and