

## (Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

## OFFICIAL REPORT

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## HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Tuesday, 16th December, 1952

*The House met at Ten of the Clock*

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(See Part I)

11 A.M.

## MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

## DEATH OF POTTI SRIRAMULU

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I have received a short notice question and two adjournment motions relating to the death of Potti Sriramulu in Andhra. Has the hon. Prime Minister to say anything in this matter?

**The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):** Sir, all of us, I am sure, will deeply regret this ultimate consummation, in death, of the fast undertaken by Sriramulu. That is a matter entirely apart from what political views one may hold about it or what differences one may have on the subject. Any person who is prepared to inflict suffering on himself for some cause which he espouses is entitled to respect so far as that matter is concerned, although, as the House well knows, we have expressed our opinion on various occasions about the extreme undesirability of adopting that course for furthering any cause. I will not go into that now.

But, in regard to the matter for which this fast was undertaken, that is to say, the constitution of a separate Andhra State, only a few days back, I had occasion to say something in the other House and to make the position of the Government clear. I am glad that on the whole what I said on that occasion has met with a fairly

considerable measure of public approval. I cannot say that every one has agreed to it; I am not sure of that. But, anyhow, I think, many people interested in the cause of the Andhra State have recognised that we are earnest and serious about this matter and that we are perfectly prepared to go ahead with it on the conditions laid down in a report that was published some two and a half years ago, called the Linguistic Provinces Report or shortly known as the JVP Report. The Report was not a Government official document. It was issued by a Committee of the National Congress. But the Committee consisted of some eminent Members like Sardar Patel, of the Government at the time, and they went into this question. I am only referring to the Andhra State question, not others at the present time, in some detail and I am only repeating what I said in the Council that we were perfectly prepared to proceed as early as possible on that basis. I would not again go into details. But, the basis essentially was that steps should be taken to constitute an Andhra State in regard to the unchallenged, uncontested Telugu areas of the Madras province, and it being clearly understood that the city of Madras was not included in this. Because, if we take a matter for acute controversy right at the beginning, then, you cannot go far to the settlement of the question. That is what I said then.

Some other suggestions have also been made vaguely about Madras being separated entirely from either major province and constituted into a separate small State, called a Chief Commissioner's State. In regard to that also, in the JVP Report something is said and we entirely agreed that that would be unfortunate and bad for Madras as well as for others. However, the position as I said then remains and in fact, since I made that statement, we have been trying to pursue this matter and it is possible and I hope probable that some steps would be taken which might lead to more

[Shri Jawaharlal Nehru]

formal steps later on. Some such steps may be taken fairly soon.

I must express my deep regret again that a matter of this kind should have become rather entangled with the self sacrifice of this gentleman Mr. Sriramulu and should have thus got rather entangled also with a highly emotional approach to this question which is a difficult question, and which, all of us in this House naturally wish to resolve in a manner as satisfactory as possible to all the parties concerned.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee** (Calcutta-South-East): May I suggest the sentiments of sorrow and sympathy expressed by the Prime Minister may be conveyed to the members of the bereaved family, and be endorsed by the House, by standing for a minute in silence?

**Shri Jawaharlal Nehru**: May I say something, Sir? I agree that the sentiments may be conveyed. In regard to the other part of the proposition made by hon. Member, I would only submit that we have certain conventions and rules which we have followed. As far as I know, all the time, this is done only in regard to Members of the House, regardless of politics, old or new. It would be a precedent which may bring us into difficulties in future if we begin to pick and choose. The only exception that I am aware was Mahatma Gandhi's case and I think that that stands on its own special footing. Without meaning the slightest disrespect to any individual, I would submit that it would be a precedent which would create difficulties in the future.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: It is highly regrettable that the last event should have occurred and Sriramulu could not have been saved. He could have been easily persuaded to break his fast after the statement of the hon. Prime Minister. Anyhow, he died a martyr to the cause and I hope that his soul will rest in peace.

As regards conveying the message, certainly that would be done. As the hon. Prime Minister has observed, I do not want to create a precedent which may involve us in difficulty in the future. Our sympathies go forth to the departed soul and we hope he will be there in peace.

I do not want to allow any more discussion. I have not admitted this question and the adjournment motions: in view of the Statement made by the hon. Prime Minister that soon

steps will be taken and will be pursued later, I think all discussion on this matter must cease now.

**Shri H. N. Mukerjee**: (Calcutta North-East): Should not we, in deference to the agony of the Andhra people, not stand on ceremony and break a minor convention and make a gesture of our sympathy for the Andhra people, Sir?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: Expression of sympathy is enough. I think that could be done in a number of ways. Expression of sympathy is there, I will convey the sentiments of the House to the members of the bereaved family.

The House will now proceed.....

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram** (Visakhapatnam): May I have your permission to say a word.....

**Some Hon. Members**: No, no.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram**: I am not making any demonstration.....

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: I wanted to treat this matter as closed. Enough has been said on this matter.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee**: There is another aspect of the Prime Minister's statement. He did not refer only to the sad death that has taken place. He referred only to certain aspects of the question, and to the merits of the case. I thought today was not the occasion when we should discuss these matters. Shall we get an opportunity of discussing that aspect of the question some day: that is, the point of view expressed by the Prime Minister and the action to be taken in future? If I may just remind the Prime Minister of a similar case in this particular House when Shri Jatin Das died after 65 days hunger strike in the Lahore Jail in 1929, on 14th September, 1929, the then Leader of the Opposition Pandit Motilal Nehru brought up this question before the House. Two or three questions he put to the then Home Minister. He said:

"For days and days the news came that his life was ebbing away and that any moment he might breathe his last. The news came that there were hunger-strikers who were in a precarious condition. What were the Government doing all the time? It is said, Sir, that Nero fiddled while Rome was burning. Our benign Government has gone one better than Nero. It has fiddled on the death-bed of this young man."

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker**: I thought the hon. Member was quoting a precedent

for such practice even in respect of persons who are not Members of the House, who have given away their lives for a holy cause or a good cause. I was waiting to see if there was any precedent.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** I was referring to one aspect of the matter which the Prime Minister stated in his statement.....(interruption). You will just hear me, Sir. If the Prime Minister referred only to the matter of death, there would have been no occasion for my making any remark at all, but along with that sentiment, he went on dealing with the steps which Government have taken to prevent this catastrophe taking place. I am saying a similar situation arose in 1929 when due to the delay on the part of the Government in taking action, it resulted in the death of Jatin Das. Will we have an opportunity of discussing this matter early?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I think it has been started with the due solemnity that the occasion requires. Let us not mar this occasion with any controversy over this matter. As I understand from the Prime Minister's speech, very soon some steps will be taken, and the matter will be pursued.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** What steps?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Now it is not the occasion to ask for those steps.

**Shri Nambiar (Mayuram):** Even after the death, if it is not the occasion, when is the occasion?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** And, therefore, I have not admitted either the short notice question or the adjournment motions. I do not propose to admit them in view of the statement made by the Prime Minister today.

**Dr. Lanka Sundaram:** We, Andhra Members, have a special responsibility on this occasion. (Interruption.) We desire to withdraw from the House with the deepest regret.

**Dr. S. P. Mookerjee:** We would like to go out.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The House will now proceed with other matters.

**Shri Raghuramaiah (Tenali):** In view of the grave situation in Andhra I welcome the statement made by the Prime Minister that very soon steps will be taken for the formation of the Andhra province and I would like to place on record our deep gratitude for it.

## MESSAGES FROM THE COUNCIL OF STATES

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Secretary to read the message.

**Secretary:** Sir, I have to report the following two messages received from the Secretary of the Council of States:

(1) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 125 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, I am directed to inform the House of the People that the Council of States, at its sitting held on the 13th December, 1952, agreed without any amendment to the West Bengal Evacuee Property (Tripura Amendment) Bill, 1952, which was passed by the House of the People at its sitting held on the 27th November, 1952."

(2) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 125 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, I am directed to inform the House of the People that the Council of States, at its sitting held on the 13th December, 1952, agreed without any amendment to the Influx from Pakistan (Control) Repealing Bill, 1952, which was passed by the House of the People at its sitting held on the 6th December, 1952."

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## RESOLUTION RE. FIVE YEAR PLAN—contd.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The House will now proceed with the further consideration of the following Resolution moved by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru on the 15th December:

"This House records its general approval of the principles, objectives and programme of development contained in the Five Year Plan as prepared by the Planning Commission."

Some amendments were tabled yesterday. Those amendments were moved. I said yesterday at 12 O'clock when the motion was moved and when the first amendment was read out to the House, that I will not allow any more amendments to come in after that date. To those amendments which had been tabled earlier and copies of which had not been circulated to hon. Members, my ruling does not apply. I have allowed them to be circulated to hon. Members. Let me find out if any of those hon. Members are present here who have tabled those amendments.