

I take it that the House agrees with the recommendations of the Committee.

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The Members will be informed accordingly.

12.23½ hrs.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEES

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Shri Dasappa (Bangalore): I beg to move:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 311 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, thirty Members from among themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Estimates for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1961 and ending on the 30th April, 1962."

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 311 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, thirty Members from among themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Estimates for the term beginning on the 1st May, 1961 and ending on the 30th April, 1962."

The motion was adopted.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Shri Barman (Cooch-Bihar-Reserved-Sch. Castes): I beg to move:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, fifteen Members from among themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on the 1st May,

1961 and ending on the 30th April, 1962."

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

"That the Members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, fifteen Members from among themselves to serve as Members of the Committee on Public Accounts for the term beginning on the 1st May 1961 and ending on the 30th April 1962".

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): I want to move an amendment to this Motion. So I request that this may be taken up tomorrow, because I found this in the order paper only today. I suggest this may be taken up tomorrow so that we can give notice of amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Is it amendment to the Motion.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: I will waive notice and allow him to move it now.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I beg to move:

That at the end of the Motion, the following be added:

"and that the Chairman of the said Committee be nominated from the Members of the Opposition".

The nomination of the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is done by you generally. We have been asking in this House for several years that the Chairman of the Committee should be drawn from the Opposition. In several of the State Legislatures, for example, Andhra Pradesh, the Leader of the Opposition is the Chairman.

Mr. Speaker: Does it require an amendment of the rules?—If it requires an amendment of the rules, the rules have to be amended. I am looking into it.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Anyway, my brief point is that the Chairman of the Committee should be nominated from amongst the Members of the Opposition. This healthy practice is already in vogue in some State Legislatures.

An Hon. Member: In Madras also.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: This question was discussed at the Conference of the Chairmen of Public Accounts Committees convened by the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of this Parliament. It was discussed at great length in the Conference. I am told though the proceedings are very confidential, that that this was raised and it was almost to be decided that the Chairman should not be from the ruling party.

So I very strongly make this suggestion to the Government. Or we may amend the rules so that we can have the Chairman of the Committee from among the Members of the Opposition. The rules do not prevent it from being done.

Mr. Speaker: This amendment is before the House.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): I support Shri T. B. Vittal Rao on this point. May I submit that in the State of U.P. also the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee is a Member from the Opposition? In order to create the utmost confidence in the people, this should be acceded to by Government. I think they should have no objection to this. I feel that this does not require any amendment of the rules. It is up to you and within your discretion to nominate the Chairman from the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker: Very well.

The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs (Shri Satya Narayan Sinha): I do not know about this. It is for you to decide. I do not know whether the rules have to be amended for this or it can be done without any amendment. But I would like to submit that this is a convention which

we have been following so far, and no change should be made at the fag-end of this Parliament. (*Interruptions*). Absolutely).

Shri Braj Raj Singh: What is his objection?

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: That is my submission. By interrupting, I do not think they will force me to state my objection. All that I say is that this is my submission. It is for the Chair and the House to decide as they like.

Mr. Speaker: I allowed the amendment without notice. I will put the amendment also to vote. My feeling is that it is not as if the rules stand in the way. It is for the Speaker to nominate the Chairman of the Committee under the rules. On a prior occasion, I considered this matter. According to the practice in the House of Commons, it appears that the person who was the Financial Secretary in the previous Government is entrusted with this task and is made Chairman of the Committee, so that there may be responsible criticism. If there is a chance of the Opposition coming into power, very often their criticism will be very reasonable. I do not mean that the criticism of the Opposition here is not reasonable. But there is no recognised Opposition here. That is my difficulty. My predecessor had ruled in this connection that if any party consisted of at least 50 Members—to form a quorum—he would recognise it as the Opposition. I have been trying to get such an Opposition formed, but it is not in my power to do so. That is why I have not been able to make that appointment, though I find eminent men in the Opposition, who would certainly fill that place properly. I was not able to do so for want of an organised Opposition. Therefore, let us wait patiently until the next elections and see whether an Opposition of this kind emerges.

I am in agreement with the principle because it is in the interest of Parliament. The Finance Minister

is in charge of the finances of this country. To assist him two committees have been appointed: one is the Estimates Committee and the other is the Public Accounts Committee. Originally, the Finance Ministers themselves were in charge of the Public Accounts Committee. It is unfortunate that in some State, in spite of best efforts the Minister seems to be in charge of it. It is wrong; it ought not to be so. It is entirely a matter for the House and the non-official agencies to criticise the Government. The expenditure is done by the Government; the estimates are prepared by them. The wealth of advice and experience of the non-official section must be placed before the House. Therefore, it is quite in keeping with this that the suggestion that non-official Chairman, drawn from the Opposition, ought to be there, has been made. I agree with it in principle, but I have been finding this difficulty.

As the hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs has just now said we are at the fag-end of this Parliament. Let me not make an experiment now. God willing, if we meet next after the General Elections we shall try to give effect to it.

Shri M. R. Masani (Ranchi-East): Sir, I am sure that your statement is eminently satisfactory to all sections of the House and in view of that I suggest the question of pressing that amendment does not arise.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Sir, I withdraw the amendment.

The amendment was, by leave withdrawn

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the members of this House do proceed to elect in the manner required by sub-rule (1) of Rule 309 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, fifteen members from among themselves to serve as members of the Committee on

Public Accounts for the term beginning on the 1st May 1961 and ending on the 30th April, 1962."

The motion was adopted.

12.34 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MOTION RE: ASSOCIATION OF MEMBERS OF RAJYA SABHA

Shri Barman (Cooch-Bihar-Reserved-Sch. Castes): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House recommends to Rajya Sabha that they do agree to nominate seven members from Rajya Sabha to associate with the Committee on Public Accounts of the House for the term beginning on the 1st May 1961 and ending on the 30th April, 1962, and to communicate to this House the names of the members so nominated by the Rajya Sabha."

Shri Sadhan Gupta (Calcutta-East): Sir, I wish to submit that in view of the discussion that was taking place on the last motion, it may not be understood that we have any grouse against the outgoing Chairman or anything of that sort. We wish to thank the outgoing Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. He has done a good job. The amendment was suggested only as a matter of principle.

Shri Barman: I am grateful for the kind remarks made by the hon. Member.

Mr. Speaker: There was nothing personal in the discussion that took place. The outgoing Chairman has done exceedingly good work. I have always appreciated the work done by him.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): We all endorse what you have said.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That this House recommends to Rajya Sabha that they do agree to