

discuss it at 4.30 We have now only five minutes left. I now go to Question No. 3.

**Purchase of Islands in the Indian Ocean by the British Government**

\*3. Shri Surendranath Dwivedy:

Shri Hem Barua:

Shri Ramachandra Veerappa:

Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sali

Shri D. C. Sharma:

Shri Mohammad Ismail:

Shri Umanath:

Shri B. K. Modak:

Shri Ganesh Ghosh:

Shri Bhagaban Das:

Shri Mohan Swarup:

Shri M. Rampure:

Shri Bibhuti Mishra:

Shri K. N. Tiwary:

Shri N. K. Sanghi:

Shri George Fernandes:

Shri J. H. Patel:

Shri Madhu Limaye:

Shri Sidheshwar Prasad:

Shri Ram Kishan Gupta:

Shri Indrajit Gupta:

Shri Yashpal Singh:

Shri S. M. Banerjee:

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia:

Shri R. S. Vidyarthi:

Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta:

Shri N. S. Sharma:

Shri Sharda Nand:

Shri A. B. Vajpayee:

Shri Brij Bhushan Lal:

Shri Bukam Chand

Kachwal:

Shri Ram Singh Aiyarwal:

Shri Y. A. Prasad:

Shri Hem Raj:

Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya:

Shri H. N. Mukerjee:

Shri S. Supakar:

Shri Manibhai J. Patel:

Shri Samar Guha:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that U.K. is going ahead with her proposal to purchase certain Islands in the Indian Ocean and proposes to establish certain transit bases there conjointly with U.S.A.; and

(b) if so, whether this fact has been brought to the notice of the U.N. as promised by him during the last Session?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The matter was recently considered by a Sub-Committee of the U.N. Committee of 24. The following recommendations have been made:

"(i) The Administering Power should once again be called upon to respect the territorial integrity of Mauritius and Seychelles and to return to these territories the islands detached from them.

(ii) The Special Committee should urge the Administering power to refrain from any military activity in the territories, especially in the Islands detached from Mauritius and Seychelles. Such activity would constitute an act of hostility against the people of Africa and Asia and in fact to International peace and security."

Shri Surendranath Dwivedy: May I know whether the Government of India at any stage was consulted when the U.K. Government wanted to purchase these islands and whether they mentioned which are the Islands they are going to purchase? Also, when they made the request did they give a solemn assurance that these places would never be utilised for military purposes?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs (Shri Surendra Paj Singh): I do not know whether the Government of India was actually informed, but when we came to know about it through newspaper reports and when we got in touch with the U.K. Government, in response to that they informed us that they had this intention of purchasing the islands, but they told us categorically that there was no intention on the part of the U.K. Government or America for that matter to establish any military bases as such on those islands; they told us that they only propose to use

them for staging, refuelling and other facilities for their aircraft. Their intention was not to have any military bases here. This assurance has been given to us by the U.K. Government.

**Shri Hem Barua:** The U.K. Government propose to buy these islands and lease them out to the Americans to institute transport facilities in the islands. That is the ostensible purpose communicated to us. In that context, may I know whether our Government have sought any guarantee or assurance from the U.K. Government that in view of West Asia developing very fast into a theatre of war, these peaceful bases would not be converted by the Americans into fighting bases?

**Shri Surendra Pal Singh:** We have never been informed that these places will ultimately be given on lease to the American Government. That is not in our knowledge. But there is a proposal for the U.K. Government to purchase these islands and turn them into places where they can have staging and refuelling facilities for their aircraft. As I said earlier, we have been assured that no military bases would be actually established on these islands. So, the question of bringing cold war into the Indian Ocean does not arise.

**Shri Hem Barua:** That was not my question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shri Patel.

श्री मन्मथदास शं० पटेल : माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, थापकी मार्फत में माननीय विनिस्टर महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या थापने इस बारे में संयुक्त राष्ट्र से निश्चायकी की है, यदि निश्चायकी की है तो वहाँ से इस बारे में क्या प्रत्युत्तर माया है ?

**Shri Surendra Pal Singh:** In the main reply it has been said that the question was discussed by the Sub-committee of the U.N. Committee of 24. As soon as the sub-committee's

report is received, it will be considered by the Committee of 24 and after that they will decide what further action is to be taken by the U.N.

श्री मन्मथदास शं० पटेल : अध्यक्ष महोदय, . . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** He has given the information he has got.

**Shri Ganesh Ghosh:** Has the attention of the Minister been drawn to the statements made by a few governments to the effect that the real intention of the U.S. Government to acquire those islands is to utilise them as a nuclear umbrella in her policy of containment of China?

**Shri Surendra Pal Singh:** This kind of reports have come to our notice also, but since we have been given an assurance by the U.K. Government and unless and until proved otherwise we must believe in the *bona fide* of their assurance. I think they mean what they have said.

Some hon. Members: Sir.....

**Mr. Speaker:** The Question Hour is over.

#### WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Talks with Mr. Richard Nixon of U.S.A.

- Shri Mohammad Ismail:
- Shri Ganesh Ghosh:
- Shri Bhagban Das:
- Shri B. K. Modak:
- Shri Umanath:
- Shri Mohan Swarup:
- Shri N. E. Laskar:
- Shri S. M. Banerjee:
- Shri Madhu Limaye:
- Shri Liladhar Koteki:
- Shri Indrajit Gupta:
- Shri Bibhuti Mishra:
- Shri K. N. Tiwary:
- Shri R. S. Vidyarthi:
- Shri Onkar Lal Barua: