

It may be that some mistakes might have been committed. Although the negotiators are appointed by the Government and although they report to Government, still it is necessary to see that no error has crept in or no wrong principle has been conceded. This is the normal practice.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: May we have an assurance from Government that it will not be like the corridor which was demanded by the old Muslim League when Shri Jinnah was alive?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I am surprised at the hon. Member's mentioning the corridor. It shows that his apprehensions relate to something which is entirely unrelated to what is being done. It is a very normal thing between two or three countries to be done. It is giving no right to anybody. It is to facilitate our traffic arrangements and their traffic arrangements. In a normal arrangement it is presumed that both parties profit by it. Otherwise why should this be done? We profit by it and they profit by it in the sense of the convenience of people. It is a matter which, whenever either party wants to revise it, it can revise.

Shri Jaipal Singh (Ranchi West—Reserved—Sch. Tribes): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to seek a clarification. I would like to have some information. Hitherto our practice has been to admit no questions on a calling attention notice. There has been a ruling to that effect from the Chair. Your predecessor at one time had given a definite ruling. Therefore I want to know if there has been a change.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: May I also beg to be enlightened about the present position because we have to deal with these matters and they lead often to a long debate in the House?

Mr. Speaker: What happens is that now-a-days a number of short notice questions and calling attention notices are given. Normally, I do not allow short notice questions at all unless the hon. Ministers agree. So far as calling

attention notices are concerned, according to the importance of the matter, if it agitates the minds of the people, I bring it up. It has always been the practice to allow one or two questions if the Speaker so thinks. I consider that this is an important question and therefore I have allowed some questions. Some hon. Members have got a doubt whether, in view of the tension between Pakistan and ourselves with respect to other matters, this will create some kind of a right or, though it may not be a right, that it may be abused and so on. Therefore I cannot prevent a proper discussion of these matters. Whenever I feel it is in public interest these interests have to be safeguarded. It is not as if there is a rule that I ought not to allow nor is it as if hon. Members can claim it as a right that they should be allowed to ask questions.

12.23 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: INCIDENTS IN CONGO

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): Sir, three or four days ago the attention of the House was attracted to certain events that happened in Leopoldville in the Congo because of which some Indian officers were beaten and suffered injury. I promised then to place before the House such other facts or information as I could collect. I am not naturally at this stage dealing with the entire very complicated question of the Congo but rather with these incidents.

Certain authorities in the Congo—it is rather difficult always to refer to these authorities as to which are formal or informal, or legal or ultra-legal—decided to take steps to have one of the Ghana diplomats to leave the Congo. This gentleman, that is, the Ghana diplomat, did not agree with this order that he had received, or it may be that he was in communication with his Government. Anyhow, he did not carry out that order

[Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru]

and asked for protection from the U.N. Force there. The UN Force apparently agreed to give him some protection. He was staying in his house with some UN Guard round about it when the Congolese armed forces came there and either attacked or tried to rush to positions, whatever it was. There was firing between the UN Guard and these Congolese forces. The firing resulted in casualties on both sides—a few casualties, three, four, five, six or something like that. Among those who were killed by that firing was a certain officer of the Congolese armed forces by name Col. Nkokulu. This Col. Nkokulu was the Second-in-Command after Col. Mobutu and no doubt the killing of Col. Nkokulu gave rise to considerable excitement in the Congolese armed forces.

I should like to make it clear, as I said previously, that India has not got any combat units there at all. India was not involved in this incident of firing either. The Indian personnel that have been sent there, although they are Army or Air Force personnel, are engaged in supply operations, in signalling and in medical work. We have opened a big hospital there and our people there are 770 or thereabouts.

After this incident there were very considerable number of sporadic attacks by the Congolese armed forces on odd people and on diplomats of many countries from the 21st November. On the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd November many of these attacks took place. Just to indicate the nature and number of these attacks, I shall mention a few but there was a large number. I think a report has been presented to the Secretary-General and by the Secretary-General it has been placed before the UN. These instances are taken from his report.

I might add that the instances where there was not much threat of violence have not been mentioned in this. The instances are where there

was actual violence or a threat of violence where, for instance, many people were pushed at gun point and at bayonet point though actually bayonet was not used but there was threat of violence. So, people were threatened and by their threats a large number of automobiles were forcibly seized by these Congolese forces. I do not know their number but some reports said they were 40 or 50 and some said they were 70. It was said that later they would be returned, but as far as I know, most of them have not been returned.

There are the instances about the Indian officers which the House already knows in which two officers were beaten rather badly and three others were not beaten but were pushed about and were made to deliver up their car and some other belongings.

Apart from these, here are some other instances that happened. A car containing four civilian UN staff, one Swiss, two Swedish and one French, was stopped by the Congolese forces on the night of 21st November. The occupants were ordered at gun-point to leave the car, beaten by rifle butts and confined in a small room with a further 24 UN personnel including two women staff. They were released after eight hours. The four UN civilian staff were beaten again after release and their cars were stolen.

A car containing three UN civilian personnel, one Canadian, one Spanish and one American, was stopped the same night. The occupants were forcibly detained and beaten. They were released in the morning.

On the same night a car with two Italian UN civilian personnel was stopped and both were beaten with rifle butts. They were released an hour later.

On the 22nd morning a Canadian Air Force officer was forced out of his car at gun-point and struck several times. His briefcase was stolen.

On the same morning a Ghana officer of the United Kingdom nationality had his car stolen. He was beaten by rifle butts. His watch was stolen and he was confined for five hours. All this happened after Col. Mobutu had ordered his release.

A Swede—the House will notice the variety of nationalities involved—U.N. civilian was arrested and confined for five hours during which his life was threatened many times with guns and knives.

On the 22nd November, a senior Nigerian officer, British nationality, and two N.C.Os, both Indian, were forced out of their jeep by armed Congolese forces. The two N.C.Os. were threatened with death, but were released shortly afterwards.

A Dutch U.N. civilian was threatened with death if he returned to the Congolese radio station.

On November 23rd, a senior Canadian air force officer was forced at gun point out of his car which was stolen.

All these attacks were against unarmed personnel. May be some officers carried revolvers. They were not armed people.

Lately, three other incidents happened. On the 22nd morning, an Indian I.O.R. proceeding to the airport was deprived of his personal belongings. Two Indian military police escorting a Nigerian Brigadier to the airport, took a wrong turn and they were held up by the Congolese forces who deprived them of one pistol and two sten guns. On the 27th evening, one Indian ambulance was stopped and driven off by the Congolese forces. These are the actual incidents that have happened.

Since the 23rd, broadly speaking, these incidents have stopped except the one which I just mentioned about the ambulance car being forcibly seized and taken away. It is stated that relative calm has prevailed in

Leopoldville from the 24th November onwards. The Indian officers who have been injured have been released from the hospital.

The reasons for the cessation of attacks and improvement of the situation are given out as (i) increase in patrolling by the U.N. forces in Leopoldville, (ii) some restraint on the movements of U.N. staff, particularly at night, (iii) pressure on Col. Mobutu by the U.N. Commission in Leopoldville and (iv) pressure on President Kasavubu and Mr. Bomboko in New York, who were present in New York then. The Secretary-General made written protest to President Kasavubu and followed it up with two oral representations. The Advisory Committee which has been meeting consists of representatives of those countries which have sent armed forces, or, as in the case of India, other forces, not armed. This Advisory Committee was formed by the Secretary-General of the U.N. and they also considered this matter and made strong appeals to both President Kasavubu and the Secretary-General.

These are the facts. Recently, some other developments have taken place. As appears from the newspapers, Mr. Lumumba appears to have escaped from the kind of confinement he was in at Leopoldville and no one quite knows where he is. Presumably, he is going to his home town, Stanleyville. Obviously, there is considerable danger in the situation. There have been, and still they are there, dangers of a civil war on a big scale between the various elements in the Congo, that itself attracting outside elements to support one party or the other. But, that is a larger question into which I do not propose to go now.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow questions on this.

Shri Nath Pal (Rajapur): Mr. Speaker, last time, he said.....

Mr. Speaker: We have heard the statement of the Prime Minister. Hon. Members will read the statement once again. I will try to circulate whatever the hon. Prime Minister has said so far. He has referred to a number of details. If still hon. Members have got any desire to make any suggestions, I will consider that.

Shri Nath Pai: Mr. Speaker, when he made the statement on the Congo, he had informed the House that immediate representation was made to the Secretary-General regarding the growing state of lawlessness resulting in violent attacks on U.N. personnel. The whole question he, therefore, posed was the upholding of the authority of the U.N., and the Government of India had seriously taken up the matter with the Secretary-General through our permanent representatives. We should like to know what is happening in that matter regarding establishment of.....

Mr. Speaker: That is what he has said. He wants to know about their security, further guarantee about their security.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: There is no guarantee as such except such guarantee as the forces can give. We made these strong protests to the Secretary-General, not once but twice. The matter was discussed in the Advisory Committee. The matter was referred to President Kasavubu who was there. All that was done. Repeatedly strong pressures were brought and the Secretary-General agreed that it is very serious matter and everything that could be done should be done.

The House will see that—I need not say that—after the 23rd, broadly speaking, there have been no incidents because of the step taken by the U.N. forces there or the U.N. Command there. It has resulted in practical cessation of these incidents except one, that is stealing of the ambulance car which they promised to return.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: (Firozabad): Col. Harmander Singh was forcibly kept out of his house by Col. Mobutu's troops and he had to go away to another's place.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: That is perfectly true. These facts have been mentioned and I need not repeat all these facts. All this happened in the period 21st to 23rd November and as the House listened, about 7 or 8 nationalities are involved in the beating and in the stealing.

Shri Naushir Bharucha (East Khadesh): May I mention, Sir, that on the last occasion, the Government said that they would permit a debate. You at least said that before this week is out, a debate will be held. The hon. Prime Minister has made more disconcerting statements since the last developments. He has distinctly stated that with the escape of Mr. Lumumba and his heading for Stanleyville, there is a possibility of civil war. We are having 770 Indian personnel there, practically unarmed in this area. In the event of the outbreak of civil war, the lives of these people will be in danger. The question is, is this Parliament not entitled to discuss this very important issue, namely safety of our personnel in this disturbed area and convey to the U.N. our apprehensions in this matter.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. Who said that this Parliament has no right? Today, the hon. Prime Minister has made a statement. I think he has given all the facts. Since the 23rd of November, no further incident has occurred. We were not the only victims. Other countries were also attacked by the mob there.

Shri Naushir Bharucha: That is no consolation to us.

Mr. Speaker: No, no. At present some kind of an order is being restored. Of course, one has to be careful. As and when occasion arises, certainly, this House will always dis-

cuss this matter and give advice to the Government and also ascertain from the Government what exactly is happening. Why should any hon. Member presume that we are denying ourselves all that? At this stage, in view of the Prime Minister's statement, is it necessary to pursue this matter?

Shri Naushir Bharucha: Very necessary.

Mr. Speaker: Today, shall we have a discussion?

Shri Naushir Bharucha: Not today; this week.

Shri Khadilkar (Ahmednagar): Has there been conveyed to the Government of India any expression of regret for all these incidents by the head of the State who was recognised by the U.N., Mr. Kasavubu?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Not that I am aware of.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: (Calcutta-Central): I wish to submit that there are many questions which arise in our minds: the question, for example, whether India is trying to move along with countries like Ghana, Guinea and other Afro-Asian States with whom we have proceeded together in the United Nations in regard to this matter. I am not pressing that now. My point is, last time, the Prime Minister had indicated his readiness for a discussion at the appropriate time. Many of us felt that the Prime Minister's hands would be strengthened if there was some kind of an expression of the view of Parliament in regard to this matter at an appropriate time. Today, we have got some facts which give rise to certain questions in our mind and that is what my colleagues are getting up to ask. We would like to have some kind of an understanding in regard to when if at all we will have a discussion of this matter. There are certain questions which are cropping up which have to be thrashed out on the floor of the House and nowhere

else. That is why I feel that the Prime Minister should give us an indication in regard to his readiness for a debate.

Shri Ranga (Tenali): All the Governments whose forces are there in the Congo are represented at the U.N. including our own Government. Their delegation is already seated there. Is it not the proper thing for our Government, if they so wish and if the Parliament also so wishes, to make out our representations to the Secretary-General and the U.N. instead of trying to debate that matter here in this Parliament.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: There cannot be a question now or hereafter about any matter in regard to which it may be said that this Parliament cannot discuss. The only question to be considered is the advisability of discussion, that is all.

So far as this limited question is concerned, these incidents and a certain lack of law and order, it is always there. At the present moment, apart from the major Congo question, the question always has been that there should be a certain measure of security, but we just cannot go about asking for security for our 750 men. I do not think it is either necessary or desirable to talk so much about that. They can look after themselves in any circumstances, and we cannot go about asking for security. There are about 15 countries, and if every one goes about asking for security, if all the chowkidars want the police to protect them, the police want the army to protect them, the army want something else to protect them, it becomes impossible. They have to look after themselves and take the risk. There it is. If anything wrong happens, of course, we must decide in the circumstances what we should do about it. So, I do not think merely discussing this state of law and order helps, because everybody agrees there should be law and order, and this kind of thing should be prevented.

[Jawaharlal Nehru]

The real question, perhaps, which hon. Members opposite have in mind is the broad question of the Congo, what should be done. Again, if the House so wishes, we can discuss it.

Shri Ranga: Why discuss the broad question of the Congo here?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: May I be permitted?

But I confess that I do not myself see in this rather shifting situation there, what profit it can give the House in the near future, unless something happens, to discuss this matter. If we discuss it, well, we either, if I may use the word, condemn the U.N. action, criticise it or commend it—one of the three. And so we sit here and do what we think is the right thing, no doubt, but unfortunately rather interfere with what is happening in the U.N. I do not myself see how that could be helpful at this stage. If at a subsequent stage something happens, the House may discuss it, but at the present moment it is not likely to be helpful. It is a difficult, complicated situation. One does not know how it would develop. Our views are fairly well known, and I repeat that apart from the fact that law and order should be maintained—that is obvious—the second thing is that a firm central authority should function.

Now, the U.N. has accepted President Kasavubu. Naturally a certain prestige attaches to that. President Kasavubu himself was accepted by us and by every country, nobody has challenged him. The point that had arisen previously was not the fact of his presidentship, but the question as to what functions the President should exercise, that is the point, whether the President could go out of the way or exercise only his functions. That was the matter in doubt. There it is. But nobody can say that things in the Congo are firmly established. There is an element of flexi-

bility and all that, and in the U.N. our representatives and others are perfectly cognizant of this fact, and are trying to deal with it to the best of their ability.

There is the question of this commission, a delegation going from the U.N. I understand it is likely to go in the course of a week or so. That delegation will presumably report. So, all these things are happening, and I confess I do not see the advantage of our discussing this in the near future till something further develops.

Shri Hem Barua: May I submit....

Mr. Speaker: This is endless. It is only a question of a statement. Hon. Members have stated whatever they wanted to say, and have also got the reaction of the hon. Prime Minister that nothing has happened since, and that it is in a fluid state. Let us wait and see. The House is always open for hon. Members to discuss every matter which is of great importance. I will also keep a watch. I also felt that inasmuch President Kasavubu had said that the delegation could go and there was no difficulty, and since he was also trying to have a rapprochement between himself and the other elements there, we could wait and see if they settle the matter themselves. If they do not, certainly I will allow a discussion.

12.45 hrs.

COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—
Contd.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up further clause by clause consideration of the Bill further to amend the Companies Act, 1956, as reported by the Joint Committee.

Time taken so far is 14 hours, balance 3 hours 15 minutes. Time taken on clause 98, 1 hour 38 minutes. We have therefore about 2½ hours left.