

(b) if so, what arrangements have been made by Government to ensure prompt service to subscribers specially during the periodical, seasonal and unavoidable absenteeism among the existing staff?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI NARHARI PRASAD SUKHDEO SAI); (a) and (b) The required information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of Rajya Sabha.

Expedition Settlement of Outstanding Provident Fund Dues

730. SHRI SATCHIDANANDA: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Provident Fund Commissioner has no jurisdiction over the autonomous bodies like the Indian Institute of Public Administration, to check the delay in the payment of provident fund dues and gratuity to their employees;

(b) whether Government are aware that the Indian Institute of Public Administration has not paid provident fund dues to a deceased professor's family for the last eight years; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative what action Government propose to take to protect the interests of the employees of such autonomous bodies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. RAM KRIPAL SINHA); (a) Yes. The Indian Institute of Public Administration is not covered by the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.

(b) The Institute has reported that it has its own contributory provident

fund scheme for the benefit of its employees and that the claim of Smt. Uma Narula for the payment of provident fund dues of late Dr. B. S. Narula could not be settled by them for want of a succession certificate from the competent Court of law.

(c) Does not arise.

U.S. Military Base in Micronesia

731. SHRI N. P. CHENGALRAYA NAIDU, Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report which appeared in the Hindustan Times of the 30th September, 1978 to the effect that U.S.A. intends to establish a number of military bases on the islands in the trust territory of Micronesia to bring Asian countries within their striking range; and

(b) if so, what action Government of India propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SAMARENDRA KUNDU); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government are not aware of any evidence to indicate that the US Government intends to establish a number of military bases in the trust territory of Micronesia in the Pacific Ocean where U.S.A. already has military facilities. According to the information conveyed by the Permanent Representative of U.S.A. to U.N. in April, 1978, negotiations are in progress between the U.S. Government and the representatives of Micronesia and other islands in the area for "Free Association" status which, while granting the islands complete internal self-government, would leave responsibility for defence and foreign affairs with the U.S. However, the