

समिति नियुक्त की थी और उस समिति ने उनको निर्दोष साबित किया, लेकिन इन सब प्रश्नों पर जब जूडिशियल इन्क्वायरी हुई तो ये सब दोषी पाए गए। इसी प्रकार राज्य सरकार और भारत सरकार जो प्रश्न चल रहा है उस प्रश्न को दरगुजर करके श्री ललित नारायण मिश्र को बचाना चाहती है, जैसे कि पंजाब केस के अन्दर एम०आर० दास ने कहा था कि वह एक्स-पार्ट इन्क्वायरी थी, उस प्रकार को इन्क्वायरी करके आप इस मामले की दवाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। क्या सरकार इस सम्बन्ध में सीधे-सीधे जूडिशियल इन्क्वायरी एपोइन्ट करने की तैयारी नहीं है?

श्री राम निवास मिर्धा : माननीय सदस्य ने कई बातें कही, तर्कों की बातें कहीं। मैं उनका उत्तर देना ठीक नहीं समझता, न वे इस सवाल से सम्बन्धित है। जहाँ तक इस जांच का सम्बन्ध है, जो उत्तर रेल मंत्री जी ने भेजा है उस पर विचार किया जा रहा है और जैसा उचित समझा जायगा आगे कार्यवाही की जायेगी।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Niren Ghosh, last question.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, besides this, the Karnataka Export Corporation is making an illegal profit of Rs. 50 lakhs with the connivance of this Minister and has not fulfilled any part of its obligations. Moreover, the files have also disappeared. In view of these allegations, I would like to know why the Prime Minister is departing from the tradition set by her father in the case of Shri Pratap Singh Kairon and even in the case of Shri K. D. Malaviya, whose offence was not as serious as the offences now being reported to this House time and again.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Sir, the Prime Minister is not departing from any convention or practice. The practice,

as I said, is that the allegations are referred to the Minister concerned, his reply is received, the reply is scrutinised and only when some substance is found in those allegations that a Commission of Inquiry is appointed.

The tradition is not to send them blindfold or without any scrutiny and this tradition is being followed in this case also.

Resignation by Or. Lahiri on Coal Technology

•213. SHRI OP. TYAGI:

SHRI N. G. GORAY:†

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

la) what are the reasons given by Dr. Lahiri for resigning from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research;

(b) whether Government have seen a statement made by Dr. Lahiri that appeared in the "Tribune" of 4th April, 1974 wherein he is reported to have stated that most of the technologies on coal were developed at the Central Fuel Research Institute during the last twenty years despite numerous foreign collaboration agreements on coal technology and that there has been a delay in switching over from oil to coal; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): la) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

This question was covered by the Minister of Industrial Development and Science and Technology on 25th April, 1974 in the Rajya Sabha while replying to the debate on the working of the Ministry of Industrial Development and

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri N. G. Goray.

Science and Technology. The Statement made by him is reproduced below:

The Director-General (Vigilance) CSIR had on 31st January, 1974 forwarded to the CSIR his Investigation Report containing allegations of nepotism and favouritism against Dr- A. Lahiri, Director Central Fuel Research Institute, Jealgora. as a result of the inquiry conducted by him on the basis of complaints received by him. The allegations referred to favouritism shown by him in the matter of appointment/promotion of four of his relatives in the CFRI, Jealgora during the period 1952-69 when Dr. Lahiri was functioning as the Assistant Director/Director in the CFRI, Jealgora. According to the DG (Vigilance), the facts of the four cases taken together would indicate that Dr. Lahiri was in the habit of indulging in favouritism and nepotism and, in consultation with the CVC, it was recommended that proceedings as for a major penalty may be initiated against Dr. Lahiri.

The case was being processed for initiating disciplinary proceedings against Dr. Lahiri, as advised by the CVC. In the meantime, Dr. Lahiri submitted an application dated 26-2-1974 seeking permission for voluntary retirement from CSIR service on 26-5-1974 giving three months' notice. His normal date of retirement is 24-5-1976. While seeking permission for voluntary retirement, Dr. Lahiri also requested for permission to accept a UNDP assignment from 15-3-1974 as an Expert on Fuel & Power for an Iron & Steel Plant to the Government of Chile for a period of six months.

The entire matter was considered in the larger interests of Science and reputation of CSIR as an organisation. It was decided that disciplinary proceedings against him need not be pressed in view of Dr. Lahiri's notice of voluntary retirement and that he may be allowed to voluntarily retire from CSIR service with effect from 26-5-1974. It was also proposed- that he may be permitted to accept the UNDP assignment in Chile. The CVC was consulted in the matter and they agreed to the above proposal- The Commission, however, felt that Dr. Lahiri was trying to extricate himself from a diffi-

cult situation by offering to voluntarily retire without having to face departmental action. In view of this background, the Commission did not find it desirable to agree to further concessions like granting of terminal leave etc., to Dr. Lahiri and was of the opinion that any period of leave that can run concurrent with the period of notice may only be granted to him.

The above recommendation of the CVC was accepted, and accordingly Dr. Lahiri was allowed to hand over charge at the CSIR Headquarters with effect from 30-3-1974 (AN) with permission to retire from CSIR service with effect from 26-5-1974, the Intervening period being treated as leave due and admissible to him. He was also permitted to accept the foreign assignment.

Having sought permission to voluntarily retire from CSIR service and to accept the UNDP assignment, it would appear that just before his departure from India, Dr. Lahiri has sought to give an erroneous impression through Press- interviews/statements that he is leaving the country on account of his differences with the Government's policies on Fuel and also due to his disappointment over the numerous foreign collaboration agreements on coal technology which India had signed, although most of these technologies had been developed at CFRI in the last 20 years. This is to be interpreted more as the outburst of a scientist who has had to vacate his post under unsavoury circumstances rather than a cool and objective assessment of either past trends or of future programmes in this field.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: Sir, this statement makes a curious reading. According to the statement, the Director-General (Vigilance) had found out that in four cases Shri Lahiri had indulged in nepotism and other things and the Government was considering proceeding against him for a major penalty. Now, when the Government thought of proceeding against Mr. Lahiri, he offered to retire voluntarily and the Government accepted his plea and allowed him to retire voluntarily. At the same time, Sir, the Government allowed him to proceed to Chile as a big

officer. Now, Sir, while proceeding to Chile and after having retired and after having got clearance from the Government he made a statement that he was leaving due to his disappointment over numerous foreign collaboration agreements, how to convert coal into fuel and that sort of a thing for which no foreign know-how was necessary. Now, Sir, in this statement the Government says

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you going to put the question?

SHRI N. G. GORAY: . . . that this should not be taken as anything except the outburst of a scientist who felt hurt. Now, I would like to know, Sir, which position is true. Is the statement of Mr. Lahiri, before he proceeded to Chile, true or is the statement of Government that there is no merit in that statement and that it is only an outburst of a man who felt hurt because of Government action, true?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Sir, the statement makes it quite clear that this is only the outburst of an offended scientist. Sir, as far as his scientific merit is concerned, I have known him for quite some time, not only now but even earlier also when I was Minister for Mines from 1962 to 1964. He is one of our outstanding scientists. It was unfortunate that there were lapses on the administrative side and this was on the basis of a report given to the Sirkar Committee. The Sirkar Committee referred these reports against him to the Director-General of Vigilance and an inquiry was made. And perhaps, it is my weakness for the scientists which made me take a more generous view of this thing and allow him to proceed to Chile on UNDP assignment so that his scientific talent may not go waste. This is only a six months' assignment and, perhaps, he may be return-in" to India. Apart from administrative responsibilities, the scientific talent could have been utilised.

SHRI N. G. GORAY: My question is that again and again the Minister has accepted this fact that Mr. Lahiri is an outstanding scientist. If that is so, I would request the Government not to confuse his outburst with what he said. It may be

that in an outburst he said something but at the same time he has said that there is sufficient knowhow in this country and it is not necessary to import it from outside. Now, without taking into consideration that he behaved in such a way that there was some laxity so far as the administration is concerned, etc., will the Government examine, what he said, on merits and if it is really something that is worthwhile, would they accept it?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: All that technology which has been awarded in CFRI not necessarily by Lahiri but when he was Director, is being utilised to the extent possible particularly in the present context of oil crisis where we have to use coal as much as possible for various uses. Therefore, I respectfully submit, it is not as if we are discarding the technology that has been developed in the CFRI. Even before his statement, many of these technologies were being utilised when he made certain suggestions for utilisation of this technology conversion of this laboratory into a Corporation and various other things. This was to a Committee headed by Mafatlal which was appointed in 1967 in which he also was a member. But ultimately the Committee did not find favour with the various suggestions made by Lahiri and they made certain other recommendations which had been considered by the Government. Therefore, while there has been an outburst, the Government on that score really are not neglecting the technologies that had been awarded in the Institute either by him or by any of the scientists of the CFRI.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: I am glad that he has taken a very rational view of the whole thing. It was before Dr. Lahiri that Mr. Ghosh who was member of the Planning Commission, also stressed the necessity of liquefaction and gassification of coal and conversion of coal into oil but because of a very big oil lobby in the country, this technology has not been utilised and if Dr. Lahiri has complained because of certain things that this aspect of the project has not been implemented, may I know from the hon. Minister even now whether any investment is being made or any decision has been taken for gassification of coal or for converting coal into petrol?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I am in full agreement with the hon. Member that we did not attach sufficient importance to the development of coal technology in spite of the fact that various recommendations had been made at various stages by very eminent scientists that we should go in for it. That is not due to oil lobby. But unfortunately it is due to the cheap oil which was available at that time and, therefore, from the economic point of view, taking into account what it would cost if we made fuel out of coal or gas or even liquefaction of coal (or which the cost involved was tremendous and out of proportion when compared to the oil prices at that time, we did not take those steps. We are misled by the temporary phase where these things are available at cheap cost and, therefore, we missed the bus also. Taking this into account therefore, we are now commissioning two projects, one at the CFRI where Lahiri was working and the other at Regional Research Laboratory at Hyderabad. These are two complementary projects for gassification, liquefaction and for the development of coal technology. I am sure the hon. Members are aware and I think I mentioned it here or in the other House, we have taken a decision that we will have supply of gas for domestic fuel and for industrial purpose to the 7 major areas: Calcutta region is number one; Bombay region is the second and the third is the Central region including Delhi. And the fourth will have to come somewhere in the south, based on the Singareni collieries. Looking to the oil prices ruling at this level, these projects are much more economical than the projects based on oil. That is why we are attaching sufficient importance to this now. I wish we had developed this technology in any event earlier but as I said we have missed the bus.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: I want to know whether the assignment to Dr. Lahiri in Chile was given by the earlier Chilean Government or it was offered after the takeover by the military junta.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: This is a UNDP assignment and not a Chilean assignment. The UNDP are assigning various experts to various and his appointment is on that basis.

SHRI SHYAMLAL GUPTA: Does the hon. Minister mean that there is a possibility of getting coal for this purpose? It is true that the coal deposits are lying in the earth but are we able to meet the demand by digging them out? What is the Ministry doing about it?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Sir, this question should be put to the Minister incharge of the Mines but still I want to assure the hon. Member that all efforts are being made to improve production and I may tell the hon. Member that the production has increased even though he might like to say that the production after nationalisation is going down. It is not a fact and, therefore, there is no question of our inability to get the coal which is lying under the earth.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: I read the Minister's statement and I have also heard him earlier. I was looking at it from the policy angle of the statement and it seems that the Minister has decided to crack down on nepotism which is a...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you going to put a question or you want to take time of the House like this?

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: All right. I will ask a specific question. With due deference to you I was trying to tell the hon. Minister...

CHAIRMAN: No, no. I cannot allow that. I have to call other Members also. If you take time of the House like this I will not be able to call any other Member.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: The question is this— Will the Minister consider holding an enquiry into the cases, for example, the Chairman of the Cost Committee, Dr. Nag Chaudhry, appointed his son into the Indian Institute of Technology as Assistant Professor. He is the Chairman there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow you to ask for probes and enquiries.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: The Secretary of the Department of Science

and Technology, Dr. Ramachandran, was appointed to the IIT Madras when his father was Chairman of the Board of Governors. Will he consider to hold an enquiry into such cases of nepotism?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: All that falls within the purview of the Education Ministry. I am quite sure the hon. Member would have taken up with the Education Ministry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Sir, we should have an Half-an-Hour Discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not want a discussion on that. You give me a notice and then I will consider it.

Fifth Five Year Plan

- *214. SHRI LOKANATH MISRA:†
 SHRI M.S. ABDUL KHADER:
 SHRI K. P. SINGH DEO:
 SHRI K. L. N. PRASAD:
 SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:
 SHRI GURMUKH SINGH
 MU-SAFIR:
 DR. Z. A. AHMAD:
 SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR:
 SHRI KALJ MUKHERJEE.
 SHRI V. B. RAJU:
 SHRI KRISHAN KANT:
 SHRI I. S. TILAK:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to postpone the finalisation of the Fifth Five Year Plan for another three months in view of the present economic crisis; and

(b) if so, by when the Plan is likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission is undertaking various exercises to determine what adjustments are necessary in the Fifth Five

Year Plan. At this stage it is not possible to indicate the exact time by which the Fifth Five Year Plan will be finalised.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: We thought that we shall be having a holiday of the Plan for only three months or so but from the reply given to this House by the hon. Minister of State, it seems it is intended to plan for the 'Holiday Plan'. [Interruptions]. May be for good, Sir, may I know what will happen to the planning during this indefinite period when there would be absolutely no planning or no implementation of the Fifth Five Year Plan? Would they do anything about the project in the core sector during the 'Holiday Plan' to boost up power energy in the core sector of the industry?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: There is no question of having any plan holiday. The House is well aware that the core sector is being taken care even in the annual plan for the year 1974-75. If I may quote: For irrigation the amount provided is of the order of 385 crores of rupees which is 100 crores of rupees more than that of last year; for power it is 765 crores which is 121 crores more; for industrial minerals it is 1093 crores which is 341 crores more than what was provided last year and for transport and communications, it is 1026 crores which is 317 crores more than that of last year. Sir, because of the various difficulties, the oil crisis and the rise in prices, it is true that we have taken up several exercises. But we have actually taken care of the core sector in the very first year of the Fifth Plan. There is no question of plan holiday. On the 9th of May, the full Planning Commission will be meeting and we shall take stock of the exercises that are in progress and further decision will follow.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Since this price hike is most uncertain and everything would depend upon the international fuel price, is the Government thinking of switching over to an alternate fuel during the Fifth Plan so that the economy of the plan would not be affected?

SHRI MOHAN DHARIA: The hon. Member has put a very valid question. As was stated by the hon. Minister for Industrial Development, all possible en-

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Lokanath Misra.