

RAJYA SABHA

Wednesday, the 18th November, 1970/
the 27th Kartika, 1892 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of clock,
MR. CHAIRMAN in Chair.

MEMBER SWORN

Shri N. K. Krishnan (Kerala)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*181. [The questioner (Shri K. L. N. Prasad) Was absent. For answer, vide col. 28 infra].

VISAS FOR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS OF TORONTO GLOBE AND MAIL

*182. SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : †
SHRI K. C. PANDA :
SHRI SUNDAR MANI PA-
TEL :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the
Special Correspondent of Toronto Globe
and Mail had recently asked for a visa
to visit India;

(b) whether this visa has been re-
fused by the Government of India; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS SARDAR SWARAN SIN-
GH : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There was an order prohibiting
his entry into India.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : May I
know what are the general criteria for
allowing foreign correspondents into
India and whether it is a fact that some
foreign intelligence agents get into
India in the garb of foreign correspon-
dents? In this particular case I would
like to know what was the bar for this
particular representative of the Toronto
Globe to get his visa for India. He said

something about some bar. What was
the particular bar?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : Sir,
so far as this gentleman is concerned,
he is a US national and he is the special
correspondent of the Globe and Mail
of Toronto, Canada and the Evening
Star of Washington based in Singapore
and it is said that he is covering this
part of Asia also. There is a history of
this case. He was stationed in India as
the representative of these two news-
papers for about two years from 1967
to 1969. During his stay in India he
came to adverse notice as his despatches
were tendentious and heavily prejudiced
against India. He persisted in his biased
writing in spite of numerous warnings
by the Principal Information Officer of
the Government of India. In view of his
persistence in writing malicious and
prejudicial reports on India, it was de-
cided by the Ministry of Home Affairs,
in consultation with the Ministry of
Information and Broadcasting and the
External Affairs Ministry, that he should
not be permitted to stay in India bey-
ond May 1969. Thereafter our External
Affairs Ministry officials got in touch
with the Ambassador of the United
States of America and also with the
High Commissioner of Canada and all
his activities were explained to them.
Then, our officer was informed by the
High Commissioner of Canada in India
that Mr. Van Praagh would leave India
voluntarily by the middle of May 1969.
Mr. Van Praagh shifted to Singapore in
May 1969. In these circumstances, at
that time it was decided not to serve
an expulsion order on him, but an
order prohibiting him from entering
India was passed by the Home Minis-
try and it was in pursuance of that that
the visa was refused to him when the
applied for one.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : What
about the general criteria? There are
some foreign intelligence agents here.

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH : I
thought, while giving this particular
case, I had spelt out the criteria. A
person who persistently sends tenden-
tious despatches surely is not entitled to
it that the courtesy of the host country
should continue to be extended to him.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : I am
not interested in this gentleman getting
a visa, but I wanted to know whether
other intelligence agents of foreign
countries are functioning in this country

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