

ATTITUDE OF PHIZO

*527. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the contribution of Colin Lagum, the Commonwealth Correspondent of "The Observer" of London, in its issue of August last in respect of the attitude of the Naga hostile leader Mr. Phizo; and

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

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The article highlights once again the biased approach of the "Observer" towards the Naga question.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know whether it is not a fact that a number of Naga hostiles still owe allegiance to Mr. Phizo and in view of that fact, what steps the Government proposes to take to say in the clearest possible terms that the followers of Mr. Phizo will not be entertained in the matter of any negotiations?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: We have already declared that Phizo has no *locus standi* in Naga affairs. So we do not give any importance to any of his followers.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: What steps are taken to wean away that section of the Naga hostiles from Mr. Phizo?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: It is true that there are quite a number of followers of Phizo in Nagaland but their activities are being very carefully watched and whenever they indulge in any anti-national activity, suitable steps are taken against them. I do not know what more can be done in this matter.

SHRI A. D. MANI: May I ask the Prime Minister whether the Government will be able to give an assurance, categorical assurance, that whatever might happen in Nagaland, the Government will not countenance any indirect negotiation with Mr. Phizo because there is a good deal of apprehension even among the members of the Ministry in Nagaland that the Government of India is maintaining an ambivalent attitude towards Mr. Phizo?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I have no hesitation in giving this assurance.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know from the Prime Minister whether the parliamentary delegation which recently visited Nagaland has submitted any report and whether they have touched the question of Mr. Phizo in that report?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I have received a letter and we are considering it now. As far as I remember, there is no mention of Mr. Phizo but I cannot say definitely.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : मैं प्रधान मंत्री महोदया से यह पूछना चाहूंगा कि पिछले दिनों में जब कि नागा-उग्रवादियों से बातचीत हुई है तो उसमें ऐसे लोग रहे हैं जो अपने सारे विचार और अपनी सारी स्फूर्ति श्री फीजो से प्राप्त करते आये हैं और उनके रहते हुये पिछले दिनों में बातें हुई हैं। तो क्या सरकार इस बात का आश्वासन देगी कि भविष्य में श्री फीजो से सम्बन्ध रखने वाले या उनके विचारों से प्रोत्साहित होने वाले लोगों के साथ किसी तरह की कोई बातचीत नहीं करेगी ?

श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी : पिछली दफा जो ग्रुप आया था आखिरी उसमें शायद एक के सिवाय बाकी सज्जन ऐसे थे जिनका झुकाव श्री फीजो की तरफ है। हमने तो यह कहा है कि जिस भी व्यक्ति या ग्रुप के ऐसे विचार हैं कि नागालैंड भारतवर्ष के बाहर जाय उनसे हम बातचीत करने को तैयार नहीं हैं और उसमें शायद यह भी आ जाते हैं।

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : उनके साथ बातचीत तो हो गई पिछली दफा जब आये ?

श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी : बात नहीं हुई।

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: I would like to know whether the underground Nagas are still maintaining any connection with Mr. Phizo?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: As has been pointed out by some of the Members, there are a few who may have such contacts.

*528 [The questioners (Sarvashri M. K. Mohita and Sitaram Jaipuria) were absent. For answer vide col. 3791 infra.]