

think the Government can take any very positive step with the other countries in this regard because, as I said in reply to a previous query, it is a question of independent countries and what they are doing within their countries. We have expressed our view that we do not think that this would lead to the strengthening of the area and that it will also create tensions.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: It is true that independent countries can do what they like, within their own regions, but I would like to know whether the question of this Islamic Bloc is mainly a religious one or one intended for some sort of alignment in matters other than religion. If the latter, what is the material at the disposal of the Government? May we have it?

SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI: I think different people have different ideas on this. Some would like to keep the group as a forum for discussion purely on religious matters laws and so on, but there are very few matters in the world today which do not have political overtones.

SHRI D. THENGARI: May I know specifically the names of the countries that have already fallen in line with Pakistan on this move? Secondly, may I know whether all these countries are today under the domination of or inclined to a particular power?

SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH: Sir, I have the names of the countries here which are inclined to accept this idea of Islamic Bloc, and they are: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Somalia, Tunisia and Jordan. Sir, if you like, with your permission, I would like to read the names of those countries which are opposed to the whole idea of Islamic Block. The U.A.R., the position is that they would not like to participate in such a conference. Algeria is of the same view. Syria is not likely to participate. Yemen, the same. Afghanistan is opposed to it. Indonesia is not willing to participate in a conference if it is convened at political level.

COL. B. H. ZAIDI: Is it not a fact that because of the withdrawal of the

British forces from the Persian Gulf area a big vacuum is being created and this is why countries which border on the Persian Gulf are anxious to have some alternative arrangement? The interests of several countries are not in keeping with this idea of Islamic Bloc. Iran does not see eye to eye with the Arab countries. The biggest beneficiary of the Israeli-Arab trouble has been Iran. Turkey is a perfectly secular country. Therefore, can we not do something to create forces which may be an alternative to the withdrawal of British forces from the Persian Gulf? It is not enough for us to sit back and say we are not concerned with that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

ABSORPTION OF DEMOBILISED E.C.O's.

*470. SHRI KRISHNA KANT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state the progress that has so far been made regarding the absorption of demobilised Emergency Commissioned Officers?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M. R. KRISHNA): 1558 Emergency Commissioned Officers were released during 1967. Alternative employment has been secured for 721 while 38 have intimated that they have rejoined their parent civil departments; 14 E.C.Os. do not want any rehabilitation assistance; and 75 have either resigned or their services terminated on ground of inefficiency or discipline. As regards the rest, concerted efforts are in progress for their rehabilitation, a lower priority being given to non-optees and lien holders on civil jobs.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Sir, this is a very serious situation. More than 1000 people have been demobilised.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a serious situation, everybody knows. Put your question.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: I am asking the question. Government have got to have a phased programme for this purpose. I want to know whether it is not possible that they could have

a plan for those people who are to be demobilised in a particular year to that they could be absorbed in a certain year in the State Government or Central Government or public sector or private sector. Unless the plans are made they should not be demobilised.

SHRI M. R. KRISHNA: We have not only plans but we have also been asking the State Governments, the public sector industries and the private sector industries to take in these people who have been trained, who have had their share in the defence of this country. Due to the recession last year it was not possible for the private sector and public sector industries to absorb more than 23 officers in each of them. In all at the moment we have to secure employment for 313 officers and with the efforts which the Defence Ministry is making with the assistance of the State Governments, we will be able to accommodate all these officers.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: The hon. Deputy Minister has not particularly replied to my point. I raised the point that they should be demobilised only when you have already got alternative jobs for them. Is it not a fact that this whole policy of demobilisation is contrary to the principles enunciated earlier and that during the last year, in 1967, the persons who were de-mobilised were 500 more than those who came out of the NDA and the Staff Training College? May I know whether it is not also a fact that older persons have been given extensions in service and they have been retained in jobs while younger persons, younger Emergency Commission Officers, have been demobilised? If it is so, is it not a contradiction of its policy? And how is the Government going to clarify this?

SHRI M. R. KRISHNA: I have stated that we have got a plan. The Emergency Commission Officers who are to be released are larger in number. Therefore, we have phased it in accordance with the employment

opportunities that we will be able to get in various sectors for them. Instead of sending them out at a time, we are sending them in batches so that they would be accommodated in various sectors.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: I have asked whether it is not a fact that older people have been given extension and the younger people, the younger ECOs, have been demobilised. And the persons who have been demobilised are 500 more than those who have come out from the Academy etc. What is the policy in having younger and fresher people also?

SHRI M. R. KRISHNA: It is not correct to say that all the older people are automatically absorbed and they are given extension. All these Emergency Commission Officers are given another trial and test. If they are qualified, they can become regular officers. In case they are not able to qualify themselves for the regular Commissions, only then the question of release comes.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : मंत्री महोदय ने यह बताया कि इमर्जेंसी कमिशन ऑफिसर्स को फेज्ड प्रोग्राम के आधार पर हम हटा रहे हैं लेकिन फेज्ड प्रोग्राम के आधार पर हटाने के बाद भी जो मात्रा उनके हटाने की है उसी मात्रा में उनको दूसरी नौकरी देने या दूसरी जगह उनको एडजस्ट करने की चीज वह साथ साथ नहीं चल रही है, तो मेरा यह निवेदन है कि जिस आधार पर आपने हिसाब से फेज्ड प्रोग्राम बनाया इसको क्या कुछ रिफेज करेंगे उसकी इम्प्लायमेंट अवैलेबिलिटी का ध्यान रख कर ताकि इस फेज्ड प्रोग्राम में भी एक ऐसा प्रोसीजर एडाप्ट किया जा सके कि इन लोगों को नौकरी मिलने और यहां से रिट्रेंच करने इन दोनों चीजों का मेल बैठ सके और ये लोग बिना इम्प्लायमेंट के बीच में छः महीने, साल भर, या दो साल तक बेरोजगार न रहे और उनको बेकार न किया जाय।

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: I have every sympathy with this approach. But we have to balance two or three other competing considerations. One is that these officers were taken specifically for the emergency. Secondly, the number in the age group is so large that if we do not shed them in sufficient numbers then there will be blocks at various levels which will create another problem. Thirdly, the efficiency of the Army needs to keep it young. That is also to be kept in mind. I would be quite frank in saying that we will take every effort to help them in resettlement. It will be difficult to make the programme of their being out of the Army to be phases in such a manner that everyone gets employed. We have also to look to the younger people who are also waiting for entry into the Army.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: We have waived all these rules at the time of recruitment. Then why not we waive this time also?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It had to be done to meet an emergency and we should not confuse that with normal conditions.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: May I remind the hon. Minister of the discussion which took place on the floor of the House? May I also remind him that at that time the hon. Minister had assured that he would have discussions with the managements both of the public sector and the private sector and would try his level best to see that these Emergency Commission Officers who were loitering in the streets were employed somewhere? In that direction, may we know from the hon. Minister what efforts have been made so far, how many meetings have taken place and how far assurances have been received by him and how long it will take to accommodate these Emergency Commission Officers?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: It is true, and we have made a very serious effort to get them absorbed in the private sector also. They have said, we would like to do that. But the

general level of economic activity at the present moment is such that scope for any additional employment is extremely limited. We have also taken this matter up with the State Governments. And I would like to remind the hon. House and the hon. Members that it is as a result of these efforts that out of 1,558 ECOs released during 1967, 313 is the number which still requires to be rehabilitated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Sir, I want your protection. I had asked the hon. Minister how many meetings were I held. As per my information, the hon. Minister has not personally invited the representatives of the private sector for such consultations. On the contrary, some of their representatives told me that if they were consulted by the Government, they were here to co-operate. May I know what is the truth about it? Were they invited by the hon. Defence Minister?

SARDAR SWARAN SINGH: If that is the information, I will pursue that. We have written to them officially. Many of them have replied on the lines that I have already replied.

NON-CELEBRATION OF SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF TASHKENT DECLARATION

471. PROF. SHANTILAL KOTHARI:
SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan has not celebrated the second anniversary of the Tashkent Declaration;

(b) if so, whether the Government of India have obtained the correct information from our High Commissioner in Pakistan in this matter; and

(c) if the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative what is Government's reaction thereto?

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sitaram Jaipuria.