

## RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 16th June, 1967/the 26th  
Jyaistha, 1889 (Saka)

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

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

\*301. [The questioner (Shri V. V. Ramaswamy) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 4235-4236 infra.]

\*517. [The questioner (Shri A. D. Mani) was absent. For answer, vide col. 4236 infra.]

\*406. [The questioners (Shri Babubhai M. Chinai and Shri Sitaram Jaipuria) were absent. For answer, vide col. 4237 infra.]

#### TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE ON JOB SECURITY IN FOREIGN OIL COMPANIES

\*518. SHRI NIREN GHOSH†  
SYED NAUSHER ALI:

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND  
REHABILITATION be pleased to  
state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a tripartite conference discussed recently the question of job security in the foreign oil companies;

(b) if so, whether the conference reached any conclusions; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure job security in these oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN  
THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, EM-  
PLOYMENT AND REHABILITA-  
TION (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): (a)  
Yes.

(b) Some suggestions were made and considered at the meeting.

(c) These suggestions are now under the Government's examination

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Niren Ghosh.

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and suitable measures in pursuance thereof are expected to be taken shortly.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: The Minister is aware that in private oil companies the number of employed personnel has been reduced by 10,000 to 12,000 during the past few years, and also in Caltex the entire work was removed from Calcutta illegally during the holidays and shifted to Bombay. After that there was a bipartite enquiry in which it was found that the work is there and it has been removed and the employees have been kept idle for the last six or seven months. At the tripartite conference the idea of a court of enquiry was suggested by the employees as well as the Labour Minister. May I know whether the Government would appoint a court of enquiry to go into the whole question?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: It is a fact that the three foreign oil companies have not been listening to some of the general points raised by the trade union organisations and Government's suggestions, and this complaint is coming from September 1964 from many of the unions. There was a meeting some time in 1965, as the hon. Member knows, and a tripartite committee with Mr. Mehta as Chairman was appointed. We requested the oil companies to implement its recommendations, and we wanted their co-operation. They did not co-operate. There was a meeting again in April this year and some formula was suggested. They did not accept that suggestion. We have decided to set up a commission of inquiry under the Commission of Inquiries Act, 1952, and the terms of reference are almost finalised, and we expect this Commission will start functioning very soon.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Another thing. The Labour Directorate in West Bengal recommended to the company to restore normal work in Caltex. As far as my knowledge goes, the Labour Minister himself expressed his wish to the company to do so, and the company is persistently re-

fusing to do that, to accept that suggestion or do anything about it. May I know whether the Government would think of some method to compel the company to accept the recommendations of the State Government, as well as the Central Government, or are they free agents and they can do whatever they like?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: As I stated earlier, these three oil companies have been very unhelpful. We have been very unhappy about their attitude and conduct in the matter of industrial relations. But, as you know, the industrial relations of the oil companies fall in the State sector and it is for the State Government to take up specific matters with them. As far as the general question is concerned, as I have already said, we are setting up a Commission of Inquiry, and we will await the report of the inquiry.

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: Will the Minister say whether it is a fact that one of the causes for this trouble in the oil companies was introduction of automation? If automation is introduced in this country where there is large-scale unemployment, how will the Government cope up with the problem of unemployment? If the Government agrees to the introduction of automation, what will be the future of the working class in this country?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: We have said that the introduction of automation should be without tears. The scheme of automation was one of their complaints.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: The hon. Minister will agree with me that the security of employment has been threatened with regard to the employees of these oil companies due to their pursuance of the policy of automation and rationalisation, and the hon. Minister gave an assurance in this House that automation shall not bring in its wake unemployment. How does the hon. Minister propose to give effect to his assurance with

regard to the matter of security of employment of these personnel?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: The complaint has been regarding early retirement and reduction in employment due to automation. That complaint is there. As you know, Government's policy is based on the decision of the 15th session of the Indian Labour Conference that there should not be rationalisation which might result in unemployment etc., and we do not approve of such rationalisation which might lead to unemployment. Therefore, I have been telling that we have been trying to persuade these companies, but they have not been helpful in their attitude.

SHRI M. V. BHADRAM: The hon. Minister has stated that rationalisation without tears has been the accepted policy of the Government of India, but the managements are not co-operating. Will the Government invoke the penal provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act against them?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: So far as this particular case is concerned, as I stated earlier, industrial relations are in the State sector. It is for them to take resort to that if they like. But as far as the general policy in regard to the oil companies is concerned, we should wait for the results of the Inquiry Commission, and we expect some good results from them.

SHRI BANKA BEHARY DAS: It is a question of the labour policy of the Government. We know that the Finance Ministry is giving clearance to various companies, including these oil companies, to import this equipment. May I know whether the Ministry is going to decide that whenever any company wants this automation equipment to be imported from another country, the Finance Ministry will first consult the Labour Ministry and after it gets the clearance then only the Finance Ministry may allow the foreign exchange for this purpose? May I know whether the Minister is going to pursue

this policy in view of the fact that these oil companies have always violated the general agreement that has been there after this Labour Conference?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: There is a separate question on this very item, it is 522, and the Member concerned has asked whether this Ministry has been consulted by other Ministries, etc. The hon. Member may find the answer. It has been a fact that there has been retrenchment, and some staff has been declared surplus as a result of the use of electronic computers, etc. We have taken up the matter with the Ministries concerned. As far as the Labour Ministry is concerned, we have been consulted on three occasions, and in future we shall be impressing this point on the Ministries concerned.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How is it that the Government is feeling helpless before these oil companies because the Minister said just now that the attitude of the companies is not very good and that it is not very helpful. May I know why the Government in that case is not proposing a sort of *ad hoc* legislation or even a temporary legislation with a view to stopping automation? I should like to know why the Labour Ministry is not approaching the Ministry of Finance and is not requesting them that no import licence should be given whatsoever till the matter has been gone into and that for the time being automation should be stopped? Finally, do I have an assurance from the hon. Minister that should the State Governments decide to stop automation by appropriate measures within their respective limits, the Central Government will give full power to the State Governments in this matter so that automation does not come about?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: This question of automation was discussed at the last Labour Ministers' Conference and also at the Standing Labour Com-

mittee and there it was decided that we should see that automation is not applied to table work and also that it should be discouraged wherever it seeks to reduce employment. That is the policy and suggestion made by these two conferences.

So far as asking the Finance Ministry is concerned, I have already said that we have requested the Ministry of Finance and they have agreed that in future whenever automation is to be introduced they will take the Ministry of Labour and Employment into confidence.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The State Government does not ask. Will you give backing to the State Government should they stop it by taking appropriate measures?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: I am not coming in their way. It is for them to decide.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: May I ask whether it is not a fact that the conditions which my hon. friend, the questioner, put to the hon. Minister in respect of the Caltex also prevail to the same extent or even to a greater extent, in Burmah Shell Oil Company?

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: I said, three oil companies. I do not want to name them. All the three oil companies.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: I am against retrenchment as a result of the introduction of this automation. But may I know whether the Government could discriminate between public enterprises and private industries so far as retrenchment is concerned because of automation? In the case of the LIC, they do not care whether there is retrenchment or not, in the case of many other public undertakings, they do not care whether there is retrenchment or not because of this automation. But when it comes to the question of Caltex or any other private enterprise, they

seem to be very much caring for it. What is this discrimination?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** There is no discrimination, Sir. In the oil companies, there has been a surplus, there has been retrenchment, there has been almost forced retirement. In the LIC, even though automation has been introduced, there has been no retrenchment so far. The hon. Member must know that, and even if it results in retrenchment, as the hon. Member knows, the maximum will be 50 people per annum. The LIC is on a different footing from the oil companies.

**SHRI ARJUN ARORA:** In this case, the Government has obviously proved to be utterly helpless in the face of the oil companies because there have been bipartite committees and tripartite conferences and resolutions. Yet, there has been retrenchment in all the three Western oil companies operating in the private sector in this country, and the employment potential has definitely gone down. May I know if the Government will realise the futility of conferences and committees in this matter and enforce some law or amend the law relating to retrenchment so that a repetition of this sort of thing can be prevented?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** There is no question about the fact that there has been retrenchment of labour declared surplus by these three companies. But this decision to appoint a Commission of Inquiry has been taken in consultation with the Labour Organisations also, and they have approved of this thing. We want to wait for the Report of this commission of Inquiry before taking action.

**SHRI BALACHANDRA MENON:** In view of the fact that the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry will not have any legal implication but they will remain only as recommendations, will the Government at least see that those who are

retrenched are first absorbed in the Indian Oil Company? Whenever there is retrenchment in the private sector, in the same industry, will they see to it that at least they take the workers in the Indian Oil Company when they are being retrenched by the foreign oil companies?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** I do not want to go into the reasons. But if the hon. Member has cared to know, the presence of the Indian Oil Company on the Indian scene has scared them very much and perhaps the primary reason which they are giving is this. I cannot give any assurance about the Indian Oil Company that they will take all the surplus staff declared as such by these three companies.

So far as the penal action is concerned, you know that there is a Commission of Inquiry. We will have all the facts and if any legislation is necessary or if the State Governments have to do something, they will do because in this thing the State Governments are with us.

**SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:** May I know from the Government if the attitude of certain sections of the House or certain sections in the country against automation is not vitally ruining the competitive capacity of the industry to be cost-conscious for export purposes? And in this respect, may I know from the Government whether they would have a balanced view and introduce automation slowly to have competitive capacity of the industries for export purposes and also to keep the prices of commodities in this country down?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** Sir, our policy has been that the introduction of electronic devices should be on a selective basis and therefore, this point, the competitive aspect, is taken into consideration.

**SHRI P. K. KUMARAN:** For the last two years, this Government and

these oil companies have been playing hide and seek with the jobs of their employees. So many conferences have been held; several tripartite meetings have been held; decisions or suggestions, whatever they describe them, have been given, and the oil companies have defied them, which the Government has described as unhelpful attitude. In view of the fact that they are not in a position to make these companies obey the law of the country, will the Government recommend to the Cabinet that these oil companies be nationalised?

**SHRI L. N. MISHRA:** This is a very broad question and we are not going into it. I am concerned with the industrial relations part of it and I have stated that we are going to have a Commission of Inquiry appointed. I think it will solve the problem for the time being.

(Several hon. Members stood up)

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I think I have asked many hon. Members to put questions on this.

I should like to make a suggestion. I could quite see that Mr. Niren Ghosh was anxious to put another question. He is the original questioner. But hereafter if he wants to ask a further question, he may ask a neighbour of his to do so.

**SHRI NIREN GHOSH:** Sir, the practice was to allow the questioner to put three questions. But you are curtailing one already.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:** Naturally, it depends on the nature of the question—public interest, more knowledge, information, all these things.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you very much. Let us follow the rule.

**SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:** Rule is, Sir, good sense.

### पंजाब में यात्रा एजेंसियों पर छापे

\*519. श्री विमलकुमार मन्नालालजी चौरङ्गिया : क्या गृह कार्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) केन्द्रीय गुप्तचर विभाग ने अप्रैल, 1967 में पंजाब की कौन-कौन सी यात्रा एजेंसियों पर छापे मारे थे ; और

(ख) कितने लोगों को बंदी बनाया गया और उनके खिलाफ क्या क्या कार्य-वाही की गई ?

†[RAIDS ON TRAVEL AGENCIES IN PUNJAB

\*519. **SHRI V. M. CHORDIA:** Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the travel agencies of Punjab which were raided in April, 1967 by the Central Intelligence Bureau; and

(b) the number of persons who were arrested and the details of the action taken against them?]

गृह कार्य मंत्री (श्री वाई० बी० चव्हाण): (क) केन्द्रीय जांच व्यूरो के अधिकारियों द्वारा जलन्धर स्थित नेशनल ट्रेवल मार्विस तथा जलन्धर सिटी स्थित न्यू वर्ल्ड ट्रेवल्स के कार्यालयों में तथा कुछ रिहाइशी भवनों की तलाशी ली गई।

(ख) तीन व्यक्तियों को गिरफ्तार किया गया और बाद में न्यायाधीश द्वारा जमानत पर छोड़ दिया गया। उनके विरुद्ध एक मामला दर्ज कर लिया गया है और उनकी जांच की जा रही है।

†[THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI Y. B. CHAVAN): (a) The offices of the National Travel Service, Jullundur and the New World

†[ ] English translation.