

DRY DOCK AT MANDAPAM

*128. SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to take over the Dry Dock at Mandapam, Madras State, by the Ministry of Defence from the Ministry of Railways has been finalised; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) There is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

USE OF NAPALM BOMB BY AMERICAN TROOPS IN VIETNAM

*129. DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any reports regarding the use of Napalm bombs and poisonous gases by American troops in Vietnam from the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Vietnam; and

(b) whether Government are contemplating for sending a mission to Vietnam for promoting peace in that country?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA): (a) The International Commission for Supervision and Control in Vietnam sends reports of its activities to the Co-Chairman of the Geneva Conference. No report on the use of Napalm bombs and poisonous gases by American troops has been received by the Government of India so far. It is, however, understood that the International Control Commission has received such complaints from the P.A.V.N.

(b) There is no such proposal at present.

DEFENCE PERSONNEL PENSION IN STERLING

*130. SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of ex-defence personnel who are receiving their pension in sterling;

(b) the total amount involved in such pension during 1965-66;

(c) whether Government have agreed to make payment for such pension according to the new rates of exchange after the devaluation; and

(d) if so, the additional amount required for payment per year on account of devaluation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): (a) 341.

(b) Rs. 10-65 lakhs approximately.

(c) Government have decided that, in the case of the Defence Services officers and personnel who were entitled to pension in pounds sterling and in whose cases pension was actually sanctioned in pounds sterling prior to the orders issued on 30th April 1957, the pensions will be paid by converting the authorised amount of pension expressed in sterling at the new rate of exchange after devaluation.

(d) It is estimated that the additional cost of payment will be approximately Rs. 5.62 lakhs per annum, if the pensions in respect of all the Defence Services Officers and personnel referred to above are converted at the new rate of exchange. However, since the Government decision applies only to some specified-categories of such officers, the additional cost involved will be less. Information in this regard is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.