

the latter retaliated and threw brickbats and tear-gas shells at the police. At the request of the civil authorities two platoons of troops were called out at the Silchar railway station, but they were not employed to disperse the mobs.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: But where did they go?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Next question.

LAW MINISTER'S SPEECH ON ASSAM TROUBLE

*277. SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will the Minister of LAW be pleased to state:

(a) whether in his inaugural speech at the Seventh Annual Conference of the Madras Union of Journalists on May 27, 1961, he referred to the "Assam Trouble" and the language question there; and

(b) whether he revealed to the conference that he had told the Chief Minister of Assam that peace could not return to the State on the basis of the Language Act passed by the State Legislature?

THE MINISTER OF LAW (SHRI A. K. SEN): (a) and (b) In the course of my speech inaugurating the seventh annual conference of the Madras Union of Journalists on the 27th May, 1961, I expressed grief and sorrow at the unfortunate happenings in Assam. I also disclosed that I had told the Chief Minister of Assam that peace would not return to Assam if a solution was sought on the basis of the Language Act of Assam as the Bengali-speaking Assamese minority would not accept it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: May, I know, Sir, whether he is aware that this statement on his part—it seems to be quite a reasonable one—gave rise to very great resentment among the Ministers there, and the Chief Minister of Assam had to make a statement saying something which was not charitable to the hon. Minister?

SHRI A. K. SEN: I think it is quite a different occasion, but in any event, Sir, whatever statements are made with regard to these unfortunate happenings are bound to please one side, *or* possibly they do not please any side. That is something very unfortunate, and one who is in a position to say something on this subject has almost to take that risk. And I am not surprised at all that what I said 'did not please everyone. I still feel, and the subsequent events have also shown, that if we had amended the Language Act, as it has now been agreed to be done, on the lines of the formula of the Home Minister, we might have avoided a good deal of trouble.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Is it not irregular and unusual for a Cabinet Minister of the Union to make comments on matters primarily concerning the States?

SHRI A. K. SEN: Sir, it is entirely a matter of opinion. If I had thought so, I need not have said all that.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Anyway, Sir, I feel here a good statement was made. Well, Sir, since he revealed this thing at the Conference of Journalists, may I know whether, as a Cabinet Minister, he sponsored these ideas and tried to move the Cabinet over this matter in order to get the Language Act amended?

SHRI A. K. SEN: Sir, as is well known, the Prime Minister himself took the initiative, and the Home Minister himself went there later on. I am very happy to say that the Home Minister's formula has now been accepted by every party and the Language Act is going to be amended accordingly.

SHRI FARIDUL HAQ ANSARI: May I know whether it is a fact that the Chief Minister of Assam protested to the Union Government about this particular speech of the hon. Law Minister?

SHRI A. K. SEN: No, Sir; not this one.