

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON): (a) I have seen a report purporting to imply that I had said that our defences were inadequate. A report which appeared in the Indian Press purported to relay what it said appeared in the 'Times of London' and printed the allegedly relevant part of the report within quotation marks which would convey the impression that it was my words that were being quoted. I have since seen the report of the 'Times of London' which does not purport to quote me, but has the said words as part of their write-up, as their correspondent's report of a speech it said I had made. I did speak in Srinagar at more than one gathering, but none from a script. I have no recollection whether I used the words "inadequate" or not, but even as reported, the reference to inadequacy is coupled with there existing "strong defences". At this distance of time I do not wish to assert that the words "inadequate" may not have been used, but if it was, it would be in a context of urging our people to be vigilant. The report in the Indian Press referred to convey a wrong impression as it purports to quote me.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Has the Defence Minister seen the Press statement, the Press interview of the Prime Minister, where he defended the Defence Minister's statement that the defences of our country were inadequate?

SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON: Yes, Sir. The Prime Minister asked me about it. At that time I had not seen the report of the 'Times of London' and I took the Indian Press report on trust, but they actually had twisted it to give the impression that it was made by me.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: I want to know from the Defence Minister whether we need not have any kind of doubt about the adequacy of our defences.

SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON: It would be a rash Government that would say that a country's defences are totally adequate. There is however, no suggestion of the inadequacy of our defences.

SHRI B. P. BASAPPA SHETTY: May I then know, Sir, as to why the Defence Minister did not issue a statement contradicting that Press report? He could have easily done it.

SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON: The first time I saw it was in the Indian Press. Well, Sir, if I were to contradict everything that appears in the Press, that would require another department of the Government.

SHRI B. P. BASAPPA SHETTY: Is this not an important issue, Sir?

SHRI V. K. KRISHNA MENON: Well, Sir, even the statement that was printed in the 'Times of London' referred to our strong defences, because it said—the report is uncontradicted—that though inadequate, our defences were strong.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: If the words 'inadequacy of defences' rightly express the feelings of the hon. Minister in respect of the defence of India, may I know what steps he has taken to further strengthen the defence of India?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is another question.

*196. [The questioner (Dr. R. B. Gowr) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 910—13 *infra*.]

*197. [The questioner (Shri Dahya-bhai V. Patel) was absent. For answer, vide col. 913 *infra*.]

*198. [The questioner (Shri P. N. Rajabhoj) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 913-14 *infra*.]

STRENGTH OF UNDER SECRETARIES AND OFFICERS ABOVE

199. SHRI B. N. BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to refer to para 25 of the ninety-second report of the Estimate

Committee (Second Lok Sabha) regarding the increase in the strength of Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries in the various Ministries of the Government of India and state whether Government have taken any action to reduce the number of officers and if so, what action has been taken?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA) : Government have noted the view of the Estimates Committee in their ninety-second report that the increase in the strength of Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries is unduly high. Being deeply conscious of the need for economy, Government have taken steps to ensure economy in all sectors of public expenditure. Even before the ninety-second report of the Estimates Committee was presented, Government had imposed, in January, 1960, a ban for one year on recruitment to all posts not connected with the Plan or required for security purposes.

Even with regard to posts connected with the Plan, it was provided that new items of work should, as far as possible, be handled by suitable redistribution of work among the existing staff and not by fresh recruitment.

The Central Economy Board set up some time ago is also keeping a close watch on ways and means of ensuring economy. There is further an Economy Committee in each Ministry for the same purpose. The Special Reorganisations Unit of the Ministry of Finance is continuing work studies in and examination of the organisation of the various Ministries with a view to ensuring the most economical use of staff.

SHRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: In view of the fact that in certain categories the increase is to the extent of about 70 per cent., I know what has been done in

that matter, apart from imposing the ban that within one year further appointments should not be made? I think, Sir, in the case of Under Secretaries, it is more than 70 per cent, in the course of four years. May I know what actually is being done in this regard?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: Sir, in the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan there were some promotions given. Therefore, the number of Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries increased. But from January 1960 the Home Ministry has made it quite clear that no further appointment can be made, and we also reduced our expenditure to the tune of about Rs. 1,50,00,000 per annum by ensuring economy in different ways—different personnel and different units of the Government—

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know, Sir, if any restrictions have also been imposed in respect of promotions?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: Sir, it all depends upon the nature of the work to be done, and Government is trying to do its best not to encourage promotions unless and until they are urgently needed for that particular type of work.

DR. RAGHUBIR SINH: May I know if any steps are taken to see that no fresh promotions are made by creating new posts?

SHRIMATI TARKESHWARI SINHA: Well, Sir, no hard and fast rules can be laid down in this connection, but efforts are made to see that economy is maintained.

*200 to *202. [For answers, vide cols. 904-09 infra.]

EXCHANGE OF BOOKS ETC. BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN ON BARTER BASIS

*203. SHRI JUG AL KISHORE: Will the Minister of SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH