

ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SANSKRIT COMMISSION

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that under rule 153 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I have allotted one and a half hours for the consideration of the Report of the Sanskrit Commission.

ALLEGED LEAKAGE OF BUDGET PROPOSALS

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI): Sir, I was informed that a question has been raised in this House about the leakage of the Budget proposals and in proof of it, a photostat copy of a letter written by one person to another in the tobacco trade has been produced. This letter is only of three or four lines. It is said in this that "I learn that there are chances." (*Interruption.*) Yes, that is what it is here. You may read it if you like.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: "I have come to know."

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Yes, "I have come to know that there are chances." It does not say "I have come to know that there is going to be." He says, "I have come to know that there are chances", that there will be a duty on two brands of cigarettes mentioned in that letter—Gold Flake and another.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Player's.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: This thing shows that the man did not know what the rates were. He did not know that all the cigarettes are being taxed, that duties are enhanced on all the cigarettes, all the brands. Therefore, there is no question of there being any leakage in the matter of Budget proposals. It only shows that somebody tried to have an intelligent anticipation of something, and he tried to do that. It cannot be called a leakage of the Budget at all. But, then again,

there is no original put in here. It is only a photostat copy of a letter which may or may not be existing. That is, it may not even be a genuine letter. I do not know what it is.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I have a submission to make in this connection. Firstly, Sir, you will see in that thing that he is an army contractor, Air Force contractor. Naturally, I take it that he has some connection with the Government and meets Government people. Therefore, it gives rise to reasonable suspicion that something he may have got through the connections he maintained in the course of business with the officials in the Army or other quarters. Secondly, Sir, he says that chances are there. But he says categorically, "I have come to know." Now, naturally, these words should be particularly noted. "I have come to know..... chances." The fact that he has used the word 'chances' should not lead the hon. Finance Minister to under-rate the other expression, "I have come to know." I take it that there is a reasonable ground to suspect that there has been a leakage.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Then, he said that the original letter is not there. Has the Finance Minister made enquiries? Has he made any proper enquiries from Bangalore or from this person as to question here the authenticity and the veracity of the photostat copy? I could have understood that position if he had, after enquiry, found out that this is not genuine. He has not done it in this matter. I demand through you that an investigation should be held. I am not raising a question of privilege at all. A proper investigation should be held and it is most unbecoming on the part of the Finance Minister of the country to say that it has nothing to do with matters here, without even a proper investigation. In England, Sir, when similar things are brought to the notice of the Treasury Benches . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will do.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: . . . what is immediately done is to institute an investigation and an enquiry. I am not saying that I am right. I am not saying that it is not merely an intelligent guess. But here is a *prima facie* case for an enquiry and that enquiry the Government should immediately institute and on the basis of the report of the enquiry, the Government should come and tell us as to what the actual position is. It is most regrettable that the Finance Minister of the country should take such a view of the matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN (*To Shri Morarji Desai*): Do you want to say anything?

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: There is nothing much to say excepting that it would also be a very relevant thing to find out how this photostat copy was obtained.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I take serious objection whichever way it is. It is our duty and our privilege to bring to the notice of the House whenever we come to know that there has been a leakage of the Budget; otherwise, we shall be failing in our public responsibility, no matter how we come to do that. If it is true, then we will have done a public duty; if it is false, all to the good. We are in faith.

12 Noon.

Now, Sir, he accuses me—just imagine. Let me tell you, Sir, that the Finance Minister in England, if he had accused the Opposition by making insinuations against them when they bring to notice certain things, would not have lasted a moment in office after such accusation. How is it . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will do.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: Also in England a Member of the Opposition would not have talked like this.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Again, Sir, if it were the British Labour Party and Mr. Gaitskell, he would have mobilised strength to throw you out of office.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, order

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I mean the Finance Minister, Sir.

SHRI V. PRASAD RAO (Andhra Pradesh): The hon. the Finance Minister said that "it is only a guess". But there it has been specifically stated: "I have come to know." So it cannot be left to guess.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have listened to the Finance Minister. First of all, "I have come to know"; then "chances of enhancement". He emphasises the word "chances". Next he says: He does not mention all cigarettes or all tobacco, but says only Player's and Gold Flake. That is another point he made out. Then he says that this particular letter's authenticity has to be verified. (*To the Finance Minister*) These are the points which you made out in your statement.

THE MINISTER OF REVENUE AND CIVIL EXPENDITURE (Dr. B. GOPALA REDDI): Also the rates are not indicated there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The rates are not indicated.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It may be that they were dealing in these; they are interested in them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will do.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: All that I would request you, Sir, is to ask him to hold an enquiry.

SHRI MORARJI R. DESAI: I am not going to make any enquiry.

THE APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) BILL, 1959—continued

MR. CHAIRMAN: We get back to the Bill. Mr. Gupta to speak. He has taken two minutes the other day, and he will continue now.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I rise to speak with a heavy heart.