

Lok Sabha

30 March 1959

Written Answers to Questions

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS (Contd)

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of some adjournment motions, the substance of which fall under two heads;

1. Chinese news agency statement that Kalimpong is being used as a base for anti-Chinese rebellion; and
2. Chinese troops are near India's border.

A number of hon. Members, Shri Hem Barua, Shri Vajpayee and others have given notice of adjournment motions. Now the hon. Prime Minister.

Shri Hem Barua (Gauhati): I want to say something before the hon. Prime Minister makes a statement.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I have got the statement of the hon. Member here.

Shri Hem Barua: I want to add...

Braj Raj Singh (Firozabad): Mine is not here.

Mr. Speaker: I shall hang up on the notice board the names of all hon. Members who have given notices of adjournment motions. (Interruptions).

Shri Goray (Poona): Please understand our anxiety. It is not for publicity.

Mr. Speaker: I understand that; I am not referring to that.

Shri Hem Barua: My adjournment motion is very specific; first, about the Chinese authorities' official communiqué to the effect that Kalimpong is the centre of the rebellion. I want to ascertain from the Prime Minister whether any correspondence was made by the Chinese Government through diplomatic channels before coming out openly with an official communiqué of the sort, because it establishes in a way the complicity of India in this rebellion, which is not true. At the same time, I just want to know from the Prime Minister whether on any occasion anything of this sort was communicated to the Prime Minister and, if so, whether the Prime Minister made an enquiry into it and whether the Chinese Government was asked to give specific instances of people in Kalimpong connected with this.

Another specific issue is this. In the communiqué we find one thing. The communiqué says that the Prime Minister was not allowing a discussion on Tibet in this House. That I can understand. But what I cannot understand is this; in the same breath they say, in an indirect way, that attempting to discuss Tibetan developments in the Indian Parliament will be considered as an unfriendly act. This is rather.....

Shri Frank Anthony (Nominated-Anglo-Indians): Impertinent.

Shri Hem Barua:impertinent. It may be a sort of hauteur on their part on what this Parliament should do or should not do; because, we have that amount of reason, that amount of sense, whether to discuss it or not to discuss it. We are the representatives of the people who are in this

Parliament, presided over by you, Sir. They did not have that right. I want a clarification on these two broad points from the Prime Minister.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: I wanted to mention only one thing. It is not so simple a matter. Somebody from some other country casts some aspersions on our Parliament. We are an independent country. We are a sovereign body and if some person or some agency outside says that it is not proper for us in this Parliament to discuss any matter concerning anything in the world then I think that is an aspersion on the whole country and we should not remain silent over such remarks. We should protest against these things.

Then, again this New China News Agency have circulated the news-I do not know whether that is a fact or not; the hon. Prime Minister will say something about it-that Kalimpong has been used as a commanding centre of the rebellion. The facts, as have been disclosed by the Press, say that some 18 people of the old Government headed by the Dalai Lama have been dismissed and a new Government has been installed there. Some people sitting here in Kalimpong could not do that. It seems that the whole of Tibet has risen in rebellion. There could not be only some people in Kalimpong. It is a serious matter over which the whole country is agitated. So, we should have some sort of a discussion here. It is not

that we shall be interfering in the matters of China but we shall certainly say something in view of the fact that our relations with the Tibetans have been very cordial all through, whether it was proper that we should have entered into an agreement by which the freedom of the Tibetan people was raped, as has been done today.

Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur): Sir, would you not allow some of us to make a statement?

Shri Vajpayee (Balrampur): May I submit that a new situation has arisen.

Mr. Speaker: If he is going to say the same thing then enough has been said. Is there any new point?

Shri Vajpayee: No, it has not been said. What I want to say is that the whole question of our relationship with China should be reviewed in the background of the happenings and developments that are taking place in Tibet. The garrisoning of Tibet by the Chinese troops and the establishment of airfields in Tibet constitute a direct threat to the security of India. The conduct of China in regard to Tibet can hardly be regarded as friendly to India. After the restraint displayed by the hon. Prime Minister, it was least expected from China that the New China News Agency will come out with sinister suggestion that Kalimpong is being used as a base against the national uprising in Tibet. I think the time has come when the Government of China has got to be told that India will no longer remain a silent spectator to the tragedy that is being enacted on the roof of the world.

Shri B. C. Kamble (Nanded-Reserved-Sch. Castes): With regard to Kalimpong, I shall be very brief. The interested parties, that is, the two countries who are claiming to be friendly with each other are giving rival news. The Government of India is saying, according to the newspapers, that the Government of India had asked the Chinese authorities to cite instances whereupon the Union Government will investigate into the matter. No instances have been cited by the Chinese authorities. That is the stand taken by the Union Government whereas repeatedly the Chinese authorities are

alleging that Kalimpong is made a commanding centre. Now, the position becomes worse because of the friendly relations. Both the countries are saying that we are friendly with each other. Then who is unfriendly? What exactly is the truth? Is India unfriendly or is China unfriendly? That must be ascertained. Therefore, in order to maintain the friendly relationship it is my submission that the truth must be ascertained and whosoever is indulging in false propaganda must be requested to withdraw the wrong allegations, if made either by the Union Government or by the Chinese Government.

With regard to the other observation made in the official communiqué of China, that is, that it would be impolite and improper to have any discussion in this country, I may submit that our discussion in this House.....

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow that. The same point has been made once or twice.

Shri B. C. Kamble: The question is...

Mr. Speaker: There is no question. Shri Mohammed Imam.

Shri B. C. Kamble: The question is ...

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow repetition of the same matter, that is, whether it is open or it is not open for the other Government or somebody to say that we shall not discuss this matter. It has been said.

Shri B. C. Kamble: I will finish it....

Mr. Speaker: No, I am not going to allow discussion on this point so soon. First of all, let me make up my mind whether I should give an opportunity or not. Then I would allow it.

Shri Mohammed Imam (Chitaldrug): A grave crisis has arisen on account of the fact that China has overrun Tibet and it has completely occupied this area. This entire subjugation of this territory is threatening the safety of India. To this effect I have tabled an adjournment motion. This is a very important matter as can be gauged by the concern expressed by various hon. Members of this House except perhaps one section.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member refers to the massing of Chinese troops on the south and south east borders of Tibet. That is a new thing that he refers to.

Shri Mohammed Imam: Yes, a new thing. It has also been reported that the Chinese have fanned out their troops. Their troops are massed on the south and south east frontier. Practically, they are very near to India. This causes a good deal of concern. We know the history of the Communist countries in other continents and in other areas. So, this is a

very dangerous situation. Therefore, what I submit is that the hon. Prime Minister must take the hon. Members of this House into confidence. This is a matter which should be debated threadbare in this House. I think hon. Members are anxious to contribute their views. They are anxious to express their concern and also help the Government and hon. Minister of Defence because these external matters should not be a subject of controversy. It should not be a matter of party politics. We must all be united when the defence of the country is concerned. So, I submit that the hon. Prime

Minister will give us an opportunity to express our views. We shall express our views in all sincerity in the interests of the country. So, I submit that the adjournment motion, if admitted either as an adjournment motion or in the form of a special motion, is certainly not in the spirit of censuring the Government. In this matter it should be left open to the House and the hon. Members must be allowed to express their views on this important matter. It is vital at present to the interests of India.

Raja Mahendra Pratap (Mathura): I have again a word to say because I was in Tibet and I went to Tibet, helped by China and with a Chinese passport. I was touring all over eastern Tibet. Dalai Lama wrote me a letter. It was in 1925. Now, I have a word to say.

Mr. Speaker: I have heard him already once. On the same matter I cannot hear him again.

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru): I take it that I should say something about these adjournment motions.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. I gave an opportunity to all those hon. Members who sponsored the adjournment motion.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: If you will permit me in dealing with these adjournment motions I may perhaps go slightly beyond the range of some of the questions put forward. I do wish.....

Mr. Speaker: It is clear that there is no question of censure involved in this. All hon. Members are anxious to know as to what exactly is the matter.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: These adjournment motions as adjournment motions, if I may say so, can hardly arise. But so far as I am concerned, I do not wish to take shelter under any technical plea for not giving any information that I think ought to be given. Indeed, subject to certain very broad considerations to which Shri Tyagi referred, I wish to place all the information that we get before the House, as it comes in, and I propose to do so in the future too. It is not necessary for hon. Members to demand a statement from me, but I shall do so whenever any important piece of information comes. I shall place it before the House.

At the present moment we have a mass of statements in the press, rumours, allegations, statements of the Chinese Government, from which it is a little difficult to sort out exactly the truth of what is happening. We have one thing on which you can certainly say that there it is. There are press communiqués issued by the Government of the People's Republic of China. I do not understand why hon. Members bring in the news agency in this matter. It is a Government communiqué and the news agency did a completely right thing in placing the official communiqué before us and before the public. You may not like the wording of the communiqué or the content of it. That is a different matter. But it is the duty of a news agency to deal with such an important matter—not to suppress it but to place it before the public.

May I also refer to what for instance, hon. Member Shri Imam has talked about that is, the massing of troops. Now, I am completely unaware of this. In fact, I have not heard a rumour to that effect, leave out the facts. And he wants an adjournment motion because there is "massing of troops on the Indian border"!

Shri Naushir Bharucha (East Khandesh): He said about the fanning out of Chinese troops.

Shri Mohammed Imam: That is the word I used in my adjournment motion.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: All kind of things are appearing in the Press which, again are based sometimes, presumably on reports not from within Tibet but from outside Tibet, whether it is Hong Kong or whether it is any other place. I do not say that any such rumour must necessarily be wrong. How can I say that? But, normally speaking, they are not correct. Anyhow, my information is that there is no massing of troops on the Indian border, so far as I know. How can I discuss it when I do not accept that fact?

But, the major things that we have to consider are, as I said on the last occasion, the contacts of India with Tibet are

very old, geographical, of course, trade, of course, but much more so, cultural and religious. Vast numbers of pilgrims go there from here and some come from Tibet to India. So that, this contact, this relationship is something deeper than the changing political scene. Naturally we are affected by it. Apart from that, as I said on the last occasion, large numbers of people in India venerate the Dalai Lama, respect him very greatly and he was our honoured guest some time ago. Because of these contacts our reaction to anything that happens in Tibet is bound to be very deep, as we see it. It is not for me to object to those reactions. But, we have to bear them in mind.

May I say that all these questions that have been recently put about giving political asylum are, probably, of no service at all to the people who might

seek political asylum in India? It is no good. One has to see the difficult situation as it is and not merely create conditions which make it more difficult to deal with the situation or deal with the persons seeking political asylum. There it is. Whatever I say in regard to that will make it more difficult for these people, I say. So that, on the one side, there is this deep feeling of a certain kinship, if I may use that word, cultural kinship between the people of India and the people of Tibet.

That, of course, does not mean that we interfere in Tibet, in any way. We did interfere, not we, I mean, but the previous Government of India took an expedition to Lhasa under Col. Younghusband, 55 years ago. It very much interfered: imperialist intervention. They sat down there and imposed the British Government's will, acting through the then Government of India on Tibet and imposed our troops there in Tibet, in Yatung, Gyantse. All kinds of extra-territorial privileges were imposed on Tibet because Tibet was weak and there was the British Empire. With some variations, we inherited these special extra-territorial privileges when India became independent.

Regardless of what happened in Tibet or China or anywhere, we could not, according to our own policy, maintain our forces in a foreign country, even if there had been no change in Tibet. That was relic of British Imperialism which we did not wish to continue. We had to withdraw them back. It so happened that soon after this there was a change in the Government in China - about that time, soon after - their armies marched into Tibet. What I am venturing to say is that the policy we adopted towards Tibet would have been adopted regardless of what China did, and we would have withdrawn our forces, etc. that was the main thing we did.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: There, everybody agrees.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Apparently people seem to imagine that we surrendered some privileges in Tibet. The privileges which we surrendered in Tibet were privileges which we do not seek to have in any other country in the world. Tibet or any other. It was patent from the strictly practical point of view, even apart from sentiments, that we could not do anything in Tibet either in law, constitutionally or practically.

Our attitude, and historically, previously- I am not going to the past history of 500 years- the position of all previous Governments in India and elsewhere has been the recognition of some kind of suzerainty or sovereignty of China over Tibet and Tibetan autonomy. That was normally the basis of approach. The measure of the autonomy has varied, because the strength of China, the weakness of China, the strength of Tibet, the weakness of Tibet has varied in the course of the last hundred of years. But, that is the position. Every Government in China has claimed that. Many Governments in Tibet have repudiated that. So, there it is. Anyhow, we could not become judges or interfere or intervene either in law, or in fact, or in the circumstances, we could do nothing. That is just past history.

May I say one thing to the House? When the Premier of the Chinese Government came here 3 or 4 years ago or 2 and half years ago, he discussed this question of this situation in Tibet with me at his own instance. I did not raise it, so far as I remember. He told me then that Tibet had always been, according to him and according to the Chinese position, a part of the Chinese State: that is, they have always claimed it and they have had it, according to him; but yet, Tibet was not China. Tibet is not China; Tibet is not a province of China. Tibet is an autonomous region which has been a part of the Chinese State- that was as far as I remember his words-

therefore, we want to treat it as an autonomous region and give it full autonomy. That is how he explained the Chinese Government's attitude to Tibet. All I could say was that we had to recognize Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. But I was glad to hear Mr. Chou En-lai laying such stress on Tibetan autonomy. I said if this was fully acted upon and was well known to Tibetans, possibly the difficulties would be much less, because, I remember, difficulties had arisen already three years ago.

For nearly three years, there has been what is called the Khampa revolt in China. Khampa region, although it consists of people of Tibetan origin, is not technically Tibet now. About 50 or 60 years ago, the Khampa region in Eastern Tibet

was incorporated into China. It was never really adequately controlled or ruled by any authority, Tibetan or Chinese, because Khampas are mountain people, rather tough people, not liking anybody ruling them.

When the new Chinese Government came in, quite apart from Tibet proper, the Kampa region was in China proper. They started introducing their new reforms or changes, whatever they did in land or otherwise, in the Khampa region. That brought them into trouble with the Khampas in Tibet-not actually in Tibet, but the Tibetans in China, you may say. That trouble started 2 or 3 years ago or more than that-about three years ago, locally confined there. Then it spread to the south and south-east chiefly. Naturally one does not have details. But, it was a kind of guerilla activity which went on causing much trouble to both the parties and damage all that. That has been continuing. When, Premier Chou En-lai talked to me, this Khampa trouble has started. It is not a kind of trouble which is of great military

importance to any Government: not that; it is a nuisance and it prevents things from settling down.

That has been continuing. Nothing new has happened except that in some border some convoy has been attacked or taken away or something has been happening. The new thing, what has happened in Lhasa, may I say, has not flown from that; it is really a completely new development. The very matter was mentioned by me in this House and to the Press here the moment we heard of fighting there. Previous to that, only a few days previously, I had spoken in this House and talked about the conflict of wills there. I thought that expression was a good expression to describe what was happening there because there was no violence at that stage. Nobody had hit anybody. But, this conflict had come out in the open in the sense of people talking in the open. It lasted 3, 4 or 5 days when actual firing began, I cannot say who began it, but it began. Normally, one would say that where it is a question of military might, the Chinese Government is much stronger than some kind of local recruits of the Tibetan Army. It is obvious. So, that has been the background of it.

Now, it is unfortunate that all this damage is done. I do not know what damage has been done, but some considerable damage has been done to some of the old monasteries in Lhasa, and maybe, some valued manuscripts have suffered thereby; and all that has happened, and our sympathies go out very much to the Tibetans.....

Shri Jaipal Singh (Ranchi West-Reserved-Sch. Tribes): Hear, hear.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru:quite apart from the actual incidents, what has happened there, who was to blame and who was not to blame.

In the press today, the Chinese News Agency has published some letters, which, it is said, have been written by the Dalai Lama to the Chinese Governor, the military Governor of Lhasa, just in this month. I would not like to say anything about those letters. I would like to have a little greater confirmation about them, about what they are, in what circumstances they were written, whether they were written at all. It is very difficult; because all these things are being said by various parties, it is exceedingly difficult to sift the truth out of this lot of chaff. And whatever I may say, whatever the Government may do, may have far-reaching consequences.

We talk about Tibet, and we want to have friendly relations with the people of Tibet, and we want them to progress in freedom and all that. At the same time, it is important for us to have friendly relations with this great country of China. That does not mean that I or this Government or this Parliament or anyone else should submit to any kind of dictation from any country, however great or big it may be.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: That is not the point. But it also does mean that in a difficult situation, we should exercise a certain measure of restraint and wisdom in dealing with her, and not in an excited moment do something which may lead our country into difficulties. (Interruptions).

Today is the 30th of this month. It was on the 20th, the early morning of the 20th, that firing began and it is now the tenth day. There isn't any news coming from that country, except rumours. The only news that has come to us or to the wide world - I am leaving out China; they might have some

special ways of getting news-the only news that came to us was from our Consul-General's telegrams to us. We got them pretty rapidly.

But what can the Consul-General report? Remember that too. The Consul-General reports by and large what he sees from the window of his consulate. Obviously, he cannot tell us what is happening all over Tibet. He does not know.

He is in touch with Lhasa, and more or less Lhasa is what he can see from his consulate, just around buildings where firing took place. He can report that. He cannot even tell us all that is happening in Lhasa itself. He cannot tell us precisely and definitely what has happened to our nationals who are spread out there. He can tell us definitely that our staff in our consulate is safe. He can tell us also that so far as he knows our other Indian nationals are safe, but he is not certain, because he just cannot reach them, so that all news has been cut off, and it comes to us in extremely small dribbles, news that we can hardly rely upon. And it becomes difficult for me to make statements or to say that we shall take some action, because of vague rumours which are obviously not always reliable.

Now, may I just say one word-I think I have answered it-about the people from Ladakh? It has been the old custom of people from Ladakh to go to Lhasa, and they do not take any travel papers or anything. They go for courses of instruction. Lhasa is in a sense their spiritual centre, their educational centre, from the Buddhist point of view. So, plenty of people go there. At the present moment, I have been informed that four head abbots from Leh are there, as well as- I forget the number, -about 30 or 40 or 50-or it may be somewhere about a hundred-monks and others who have gone there. We have not got them on our register there, because they simply

come and go, and do not report to us. But as soon as I heard about this two days ago, we are making inquiries about them.

Now, I come to the statements issued, presumably by the Chinese Government. Now, those statements give a narrative of facts according to them, and I have nothing to say to that. I can neither confirm it nor deny it, because it is not in my knowledge to make a firm statement; if it was, I would make it.

As I said, so far as the letters which are said to have been written by the Dalai Lama are concerned, they are rather surprising letter. I cant say more; I should like to know more about them before I say.

There are two things mentioned in this statement of the Chinese authorities. One is about Kalimpong. About that, as soon as that appeared, the External Affairs Ministry, through a spokesman, contradicted that statement or corrected it. I suppose hon. Members have seen it, but I shall read it out or part of it, if they have not.

"Asked for his comments on the description of Kalimpong as the commanding centre of the rebellion' in the news communiqué released.....an official spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs emphatically repudiated the suggestion. He said that a number of people from Tibet have been residing in Kalimpong for many years....."

-many years meaning twenty, thirty, forty, fifty and more-

"...and among them are some who arrived during the last three or four years.". It is not many, it may be in dozens, perhaps.

"The Government of India have repeatedly made it clear to them that they should not indulge in any propaganda activities against a friendly Government on Indian soil. The last warning was given about six months ago and since then these persons have remained quiet. There have been no unlawful activities in Kalimpong or elsewhere either by these people or others. It is, therefore, entirely incorrect to say that Kalimpong is the centre of any rebellious activities. The check-posts on the India-Tibet border are adequately manned and the strictest watch is always maintained on movements between India and Tibet."

Now, an hon. Member wanted precise information as to whether the Chinese Government had complained to us about Kalimpong. I shall tell him, so far as I can remember that in the last few months or maybe a year, there has been no complaint but there were on two occasions perhaps two or maybe three in the last three or four years in which references to Kalimpong was made. It said that some people in Kalimpong were carrying out propaganda activities. Our position has always been the same. We have made it quiet clear to people who came from Tibet and even to some important people that, "You are welcome to come here, but we cannot allow Indian soil to be used for subversive activities or even aggressive propaganda activities against friendly Governments". That general policy of ours applies to every Embassy that is here; maybe sometimes they overstep the mark or we do not object when we might have objected. That applies to every Embassy here or every foreigners here. So, that was the rule that we followed. On two or three occasions in the past, some leaflets came out in Kalimpong, which we thought was undesirable. We drew the attention of the people who had brought it out, saying "You should not do this, this kind of thing from Indian soil". As far as we know, our instructions and warnings had effect. We are not aware, in fact, in the last many months,

of any activity in Kalimpong; it may be in people's minds there; naturally they may have feelings; they may have sentiments. But

I am merely saying that it is wrong to say that Kalimpong was a kind of centre from which activists were organised.

Shrimati Renu Chakravatty (Basirhat): Has the Prime Minister read Elizabeth Partridge's article which has come in one of the papers where she says that she has contacted the rebels? It has come out in papers.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: I have not read that particular article. I do not know which article the hon. Lady Member is referring. In one or two cases, foreign correspondents have gone and talked to people there in Kalimpong or wherever it is. I do not know where, it may be Kalimpong or it may be elsewhere, but they have not mentioned the names or the place or the individuals contacted. And they have given an account from the point of view more or less of those people in Tibet, who were on the site of the revolt. That I cannot catch, I cannot get in, but broadly speaking, it is wrong to say that Kalimpong has been the centre. Certainly, we have very good control of our check-posts, of people coming and going from Tibet to India, and nobody in Kalimpong can easily come or go, and you cannot control something where the movement is not easy.

I am not told that when we enquired about Elizabeth Partridge's article, we found out that she had not gone anywhere near the border; she had written it from far away.

The second point to which reference has been made by hon. Members is to what is said in those press statements about our discussions here. It is not

necessary for me to say that it is open to this House, this Parliament, and it is completely free to say or do what it chooses to discuss any matter it chooses, subject always to the necessities of good sense and wisdom of which you, Sir, are the best judge. Nobody else outside this House is going to judge.

Unfortunately, the methods of government and the way the legislatures and organizations function in China are different from ours. Perhaps they don't quite realize the background or the way of our functioning. Quite apart from what we do, or whether what any hon. Member says is right or wrong, he has the right to say it; he has the right to say the wrong thing, as many hon. Members on the opposite side know very well!

Hem Barua: You enjoy that right equally!

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is, I suppose, a little difficult for people trained in a different tradition for a long time to understand the normal ways in which a parliamentary system of Government functions. We should not be over-eager to find fault with somebody who does not agree with us, who describes our system in a different way, but certainly it should be made perfectly clear to all concerned that this Parliament is not going to be limited in the exercise of its right of discussion, saying or action or anything, by any external or internal authority, whoever it may be. Having said that, obviously that right has to be exercised always with wisdom and always thinking of the consequences, and how that right should be exercised.

Shri Nath Pai: We can always claim to have done so in the past.

Raja Mahendra Pratap: This shows our Government is very weak, powerless to deal with questions all round India, north, south, east, west.

Mr. Speaker: Very well.

In view of the elaborate statement made by the hon. Prime Minister, I do not think, having regard to the situation, it is necessary to allow any of these adjournment motions tabled.

The situation is delicate. Let us see. Nobody can prevent us from discussing. That much I can assure. The hon. Leader of the House also has said that it might be due to the misunderstanding of others. We are an entirely independent and free nation, and this Parliament is supreme as far as that matter is concerned, subject, of course, to the Constitution, a Constitution not laid down by any others. We lay down the Constitution ourselves. We are always watchful and ready. I will never hustle or muzzle this House so far as these matters are concerned.

Shri Nath Pai: We associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed by the Prime Minister with which we are broadly in agreement, but it will be necessary that the House gets a chance to state it, because, on such an occasion, it is necessary that you hear not merely the Government, but you hear the Opposition also, as there is a necessity to create an impression in the world that there is near-unanimity so far as expression of sympathy for the Tibetan cause is concerned.

And one small sentence I want to bring to your notice. It has hurt us tremendously. It is that India is being bracketed with the Chiang-kai-Shek gang. There is a release today in which it is said that they were coming to

India because India was going to show sympathy. These are things of which the Government should take serious note. We want friendship, and we are dedicated to friendship with China, but we are not trying to purchase it by closing our eyes, by gagging our mouth and plugging our ears and drugging our conscience. This needs to be very much impressed.

Mr. Speaker: Even if we have a discussion, nothing can prevent them from going on saying it.

+++++

30 March 1959 Oral Answers to Questions

REFUGEES FROM TIBET

Short Notice Question (S.N.Q.)

Shri M. R. Masani: Shri Asoka Mehta: Shri Frank Anthony:

S.N.Q. Shri Naushir Bharucha: No. 15 Shri Goray:

Shri Shree Narayan Das:

Shri A. M. Tariq:

Shri Nek Ram Nagi: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a news report in The Statesman (Delhi) of March 21 which states: - "The Government of India's present anxiety concerns the movement of refugees towards the long and rambling frontiers. India has taken steps to strengthen the check-posts and the orders are that no refugees should be allowed to cross over."

(b) if so, whether the report is correct; and

(c) if not, what is the policy Government propose to follow in the matter of giving effect to international law and practice of giving asylum to political refugees entering the country from Tibet?

The Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs (Shri Jawaharlal Nehru):

(a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The general instructions issued by the Government of India some time ago were that any persons endeavouring to cross our frontier should be stopped at our check posts and should not be allowed to cross over unless they have the necessary travel papers. The existing strength of our check posts on the borders is sufficient for dealing with normal movements between India and Tibet. There has thus far not been any substantial increase in the movement of persons from Tibet region into India. If necessity arises the strength of our check posts will be increased.

2. The general position under International Law is that a State is free to admit or not to admit a foreigner into its territory. This applies to giving asylum also. It is thus a matter entirely in the discretion of the Government concerned. It is the sovereign right of the State to give asylum when it chooses but no individual can insist on obtaining such asylum. Individual cases have to be considered on merits whenever occasion for this arises.

Shri M. R. Masani: Does not the Prime Minister appreciate that since the Chinese authorities have given instructions to their soldiers to shoot at sight any groups or individual Tibetans who may be crossing the frontier into India and carrying out those instructions would mean in fact co-operating in their butchery?

Mr. Speaker: What is the hon. Member asking?

An Hon. Member: Speech-making.

Mr. Speaker: What is his question?

Shri M. R. Masani: Is the Prime Minister aware that Austria, which enjoys a neutral status and had diplomatic relations with Hungary in 1956, threw its frontiers wide open to receive thousands of Hungarian refugees and why cannot this country follow the same brave policy?

Shri: Jawaharlal Nehru: Primarily because this is not Austria or Hungary and secondly because the question has not arisen. As I have said, we have not had any large numbers, or even small numbers, of people, apart from the normal traffic. The question has not arisen; it is a hypothetical question. Whenever any question arises, it will have to be considered in the context of events and conditions there. It is obviously impossible for me to give an answer to a question which has not arisen.

Shri M. R. Masani: If a group of.....

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member will kindly read Rule 41. Matters involving high policy cannot be asked in a question.

Shri M. R. Masani: Would you allow me to elucidate the answer given by the Prime Minister? Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member is going on giving suggestions. He is not eliciting information. Shri M. R. Masani: I am eliciting information.

Mr. Speaker: What is it?

Shri M. R. Masani: Will the Prime Minister explain what would happen if a party of 25 or 30 Tibetans who are followed in hot pursuit by Chinese forces come to the frontier? Will their lives be protected or will they be allowed to be butchered?

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. Member is also a barrister. This is irrelevant according to all standards. Hypothetical questions cannot be asked.

Shri Frank Anthony: The Prime Minister has said that it is always within the discretion of a sovereign power to admit asylum to those who may seek it. We have a specific context and that is, presumably the Chinese Government have given an order to their soldiers to shoot any Tibetan seeking entry into India. In that context, I want to ask the Prime Minister how he proposes to give asylum to a Tibetan, because he has said each will have to be considered on merits, and the Chinese soldiers have been told to shoot them at sight.

Mr. Speaker: If they are shot at sight, how can they enter India?

Shri Frank Anthony: There need not be any deliberate mis-assumption of my question. When they will be seeking presumably asylum on a large scale, the Chinese soldiers being ordered to shoot them at sight, I want to know how we are going to admit them and consider each case on merit?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: You have been pleased to answer that question, Sir. All these are hypothetical approaches. There has not been any slightest, vaguest approach to us of this kind or any facts indicating that such an approach, such a thing, might happen. How can I answer that? Secondly, if I may say so, I do not know, because there are so many rumours and

statements. If people are shot at sight, surely the hon. Member does not imagine this kind of thing happening on the border: People sitting on the border and waiting for people to approach the border. This kind of thing does not happen; if they are sitting on the border, nobody will go to that border. They will go to some other border or they will be shot down before. This kind of thing does not happen-people being pursued and so on.

Shri Jaipal Singh: May I raise a point of order? I seek your guidance. Since I have not given you notice in regard to it- whether it is a question of privilege or not-I am raising it as a point of order. I want to know how it is that the Chinese Embassy here have issued officially...

Mr. Speaker: We have got some adjournment motions. The hon. Member can wait and see.

Shri Jaipal Singh: I have not finished the question. It is a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: It does not arise out of this. The point of order must arise out of the question. It does not arise out of this question-what the Chinese Embassy has done here. The hon. Member will kindly wait and see. There are some adjournment motions relating to that subject.

Shri Naushir Bharucha: May I know whether the Government have addressed any communication to the Peking's authorities conveying the Government's reaction to the military occupation of Tibet?

Mr. Speaker: How does it arise out of this?

{ÉÉ°É EòÉä<Ç jèð½pÊ®ú°iÉ xÉ½pÒÆ ½èp * nùÉä ®úÉäVÉ
½ÖpB ½p¨É°Éä {ÉÚUÉ MÉªÉÉ, ½p¨Éä Eò½pÉ MÉªÉÉ ÊEò
nùÊ®úªÉÉ}iÉ Eò®äüÆ <°ÉÉäð ¢ÉÉ®äü¨ÉäÆ * SÉÖxÉÉÆSÉä
jòÉä®úxÉ ½p¨ÉxÉä nùÊ®úªÉÉ}iÉ Eò®úxÉä ÊEò
EòÉäÊ¶¶É EòÒ ½èp ±½pÉ°ÉÉ °Éä =xÉEòÒ JÉèÊ®úªÉiÉ Eäð ¢ÉÉ®äü
¨Éä * ¢ÉÉiÉ ªÉ½p ½è ÊEò ªÉÉäÆ iÉÉä VÉÉä Ê½pxnÖù°iÉÉxÉ
xÉä¶xÉ±É VÉÉiÉä ½æp, =xÉEòÒ jàð½pÊ®ú°iÉ ½p¨ÉÉ®äü {ÉÉ°É
®ú½piÉÒ ½èp, ±ÉäÊEòxÉ
{ÉÖ®úÉxÉä VÉ¨ÉÉxÉä °Éä ±ÉqùÉJÉ Eäð iÉ®újò °Éä VÉÉä VÉÉiÉä
½æp, +É¨ÉnùÉä®ú}iÉ ®ú½piÉÒ ½èp, =°ÉEòÒ EòÉä<Ç
jàð½pÊ®ú°iÉ xÉ½pÒ ½èp +Éà®ú xÉ =xÉEäð xÉÉ¨É ½p¨ÉÉ®äü
{ÉÉ°É ®ú½piÉä ½é * ±ÉäÊEòxÉ
½p¨É nùÊ®úªÉÉ}iÉ Eò®ú ®ú½äp ½éþ *

Mr. Speaker: Shri Goray.

Shri B. C. Kamble: May I know whether it is a fact that the Chinese....

Mr. Speaker: I have called Shri Goray.

Shri Goray: The Prime Minister said just now about the refugees, that the policy of the government will be decided upon when the need arises. I would like to say that when the need arises it may be rather too late to decide the policy. You cannot start digging a well when you are thirsty. I am saying that the policy should be decided upon just now.

Mr. Speaker: He has said so. He has already said about the policy in the House.

Shri Goray: I think it is very inadequate, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: That is all right. That is not under discussion now.

Shri B. C. Kamble: Is it a fact that the Chinese authorities have issued orders to shoot? Then, will the Union Government exercise discretion in favour of admitting the refugees in India?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: It is very extraordinary. The Chinese order to shoot, if they issued such an order, has no relation to this question of our admitting people or not admitting people. Nothing has happened on the borders of India. It is in the interior of Tibet that this is happening. And, certainly it is not a question of our not having a policy. We have got a very clear policy. But the implementation of that policy depends upon the circumstances. All our check-posts have been informed of the broad policies that should be pursued in these matters. Obviously, I cannot be expected to say that when a large crowd comes suddenly. I should admit it-or if half the population comes. How can I commit the Government of India to any such thing?

Shri M. R. Masani: Why not?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Because, we will not admit them. I should be quite clear about it, because no country can possibly say, if you take the past history of thousands of years "we will admit everyone".

Shri M. R. Masani: Austria admitted thousands of people.

Shri Raghunath Singh: But we are not Austrians.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: Shri Masani's information on the subject is no doubt very intimate. I cannot challenge that. But I do say that no country can give a guarantee, or should give a guarantee, that "we will admit every person who wants to cross the border".

Shri Tyagi: On a point of order. It has been conventional in all Parliaments everywhere practically that the Ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs and Defence have been enjoying the privilege of keeping away information on matters pertaining to high diplomatic policy for the safety of the nation itself. Shall we not observe that convention here in this Parliament on matters which pertain to our future relationship, that the Ministers concerned may enjoy the privilege of keeping the information from the House?

Mr. Speaker: I am not able to understand the point of order.

Raja Mahendra Pratap: I just want to ask one very important question.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. I will be forced to take disciplinary action against him.

Raja Mahendra Pratap: Only against me and not against others?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. There must be a limit to this. Does the hon. Member, Shri Tyagi, mean to say that the hon. Prime Minister need not have said all that he has said?

Shri Tyagi: I would like to suggest that the hon. Minister in charge of Foreign Affairs and the one in charge of Defence

Affairs may have the privilege of keeping information from the House if the situation so requires.

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of some adjournment motions.

Shri Naushir Bharucha: We still have to ask some questions. I would like to know whether the Prime Minister has communicated his reactions regarding the latest developments in Tibet to the Chinese authorities, any type of reactions?

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir, if he is referring to the statements which were issued yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: I will come to them. There are some adjournment motions on the subject.

Raja Mahendra Pratap: Just one point. I have been abroad for 31 years and I have been often a refugee in a way. The British Government wanted to capture me in Afghanistan. The Afghanistan Government had said, "we cannot give him up". And when I was in Peking, the British Government had extra-territorial rights in China and the British Government wanted to capture me. The French Legation told me: we would inform you if the British take any action against you. So, I was protected all the time in all the countries of the world, non-British countries. Under these circumstances, I can request you, I can beg you that you kindly give asylum to every Tibetan who comes here. There is no harm in it.

Mr. Speaker: I have received notice of adjournment motions.....

Shri Naushir Bharucha: I request you to permit us to put some more questions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, they will not be answered now.