

2 Tughlak Road,
New Delhi 11.

6th August, 1970

The Honourable the Speaker,
Lok Sabha.

1260

Sir,

You will recall that on December 17, 1969, in my capacity as a member of the Consultative Committee for the Ministries of External Affairs and Transport, I had written to you requesting that action should be taken to make these Consultative Committees Parliamentary Committees under Rule 275 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha. The reason why I had suggested it was because of the garbled reports of what happened at these Committees appearing in the press. As it is impossible to stop some members of the Committee from talking to pressmen about what transpired at these closed door meetings, the only way to make these discussions free, frank and meaningful and enable Government to provide information to members which should not leak to the press is to make these Committees Parliamentary Committees whose proceedings are privileged and may not be published. No action was taken on my request at that time.

I am very glad to ^{note} know that you yourself in the Lok Sabha yesterday, following the controversy whether or not proceedings of Consultative Committees should be referred to in the House, said that you would take up with Government the question of converting these Committees into Parliamentary Committees. I trust you will pursue this matter and secure agreement on this point so that from now on the work of these Committees may proceed more effectively and smoothly and without loose references to what happened at these meetings being made either on the floor of Parliament or in the press.

I shall be glad if you will kindly let me know in due course what decision is arrived at.

Yours truly,

(N. R. MASANI)