

Following are two stories, on Indian Human Rights hearing before U. S. Congress and World Bank IDA goals.

Washington, June 24. - A House of Representatives International Relations subcommittee yesterday began a series of hearings on the state the Human Rights in India because, as Chairman Donald M. Fraser, a Democratic Congressman from Minnesota, explained it, "the demise of democratic freedoms in India has serious implications beyond the situation in India itself ... Does the situation in India suggest that traditional civil rights and civil liberties are unworkable in developing countries?" One witness at the hearing, Homer A. Jack, Secretary-General of the World Conference of Religion for Peace who has been involved with Indo-American relations since before Independence, urged that the United States show its displeasure of events in today's India by trying to push through a U.N. resolution declaring that India is violating the very International Declaration of Human Rights she signed. Jack also urged that the U.S. proceed to deny India any favourable trade terms, as well as any further nuclear assistance. He did, however, plead that the U. S. continue its food shipments to India and resume the economic development loan programme which has been in limbo for almost five years.

Jack also said it was his impression after a recent visit to India that Prime Minister Gandhi's opposition now is minimal - but as the base of her Government narrows, "the possibility of a coup d'etat grows greater".

A second witness at yesterday's hearing, Ainslie T. Embree, Columbia University history professor, and Associate Dean of the University's School of International Affairs, said last June 26's declaration of emergency rule and the "drastic attack on civil liberties" was not necessary but that, even so, "the Government of India, up to the present, has remained civilized and has great regard for the opinion of the rest of mankind".

But the professor went on to declare that the policing of the press is so severe that "editors know if they don't follow the censor's guidelines they will be in trouble". And because of the news blackout, he told the U. S. congressional hearing, it is impossible to know who has been arrested and imprisoned. Professor Embree was asked by the congressman about the role of Mrs. Gandhi's son, Sanjoy. He replied: "I think there has been too much emphasis on him and not on who he represents. The son is, in effect, used to be the spokesman for the real roots that hold the power". As for Mrs. Gandhi herself, the Professor declared: "My own gloomy assessment is that if Mrs. Gandhi retains power - which I think quite likely - there will be a struggle from her own party and the chances are that the next government will be equally authoritarian".

Congressman Fraser, the hearing Chairman, then asked the witnesses whether they expected their testimony to be reported in the Indian newspapers. Professor Embree replied: "We will be reported as having denounced the Indian Government".

Congressman Fraser plans to hold two more days of hearings on the Human Rights situation in India next week. The witnesses scheduled to testify then are: Professor Ved Nanda of the University of Denver Law School; Bishop James Mathews of the United Methodist Church; Ram Jethmalani, former Chairman of the Indian Bar Council and an advocate before India's Supreme Court; and Dr. Charles Reynolds, International Secretary of the Ludhiana Christian Medical College Board.

For the past three years, Congressman Fraser has been conducting hearings on the Human Rights situation in Chile, South Korea, the Soviet Union, Indonesia, the Philippines, Brazil, Uruguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador.

Recently, Congressman Fraser had a visit from A. P. Venkateswaran, the Indian Embassy's Political Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission. Fraser said Venkateswaran first warned him not to proceed with his hearings lest they prejudice Indo-American relations. To that, Fraser replied that he could think of no nation which had welcomed his hearings on their Human Rights situation. Then, according to the congressman, the Indian Embassy Minister told him the critical reporting on India's civil liberties was nothing but "a concoction of the Zionist-controlled American press". Congressman Fraser, who is considered to be one of the brightest, most liberal and most respected members of the U.S. House of Representatives, did not take kindly to the Indian Embassy representation.

The House hearings come just on the anniversary of last year's June 26 declaration of Emergency. As yesterday's hearing was about to get underway, members of the audience were circularized with leaflets inviting them to attend a six-hour "vigil for freedom in India" demonstration which the American-based Indians for democracy plans to stage this June 26 at the base of the Washington Monument here in the very centre of the capital.

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Washington, June 25. - Two Indian nationals yesterday told the U.S. Congress that Prime Minister Gandhi's imposition of emergency regulations was having a bad effect on Human Rights, both within India and in the world outside. But one American Methodist bishop said, on balance, he sympathized with the Prime Minister's action.

Yesterday's was the second of three days of hearings on the Human Rights situation in India, an inquiry being conducted by the House of Representatives International Relations Subcommittee on International Organisations under the chairmanship of Congressman Donald M. Fraser, a member of the Democratic party from the State of Minnesota.

The witnesses who testified were: Professor Ved Nanda, Director of the University of Denver's International Legal Studies Programme, and Co-Chairman of the World Committee for Human Rights in India; Dr. Jagit Singh Chohan, a former Punjab State Minister and now, during his exile in England, President of the International Council of Sikhs; and Bishop James K. Mathews of the United Methodist Church, who also is in charge of an Indian ashram in the Himalayas.

Congressman Fraser, noting Prime Minister Gandhi's June 26 anniversary statement three days ago about the threat of subversion to India continuing from the outside, said he was reminded of similar governmental explanations from the authoritarian regimes in Chile and Greece. He added that outsiders are greatly interested in seeing when India will have another election. He also asked the witnesses how they thought the United States might effectively express its concern for Human Rights in India since the United States, nowadays, has only a negligible foreign aid programme and little influence in India.

Professor Nanda, who said he had personal proof during a visit to India earlier this year of torture being conducted against political prisoners - at least as a matter of practice if not outright policy - urged that the United States take advantage of every future international conference to "remind India that Human Rights are being violated". He also suggested that the United States cease its nuclear transactions with India - but maintain both its economic and food aid. Dr. Chohan who said the Indian government had lifted his passport without explanation (prior to the June 26, 1975, declaration of Emergency) frozen his bank accounts in the Punjab and denied him permission to return home to be with his dying mother and uncle, urged the United States to exert pressure against India's Human Rights situation at both the United Nations and the World Bank. Dr. Chohan also said that worse than the physical torture in India was the "mental torture through drugs" which, he claimed, has numbed the thinking of such prominent political prisoners as J. P. Narayan, Ashok Mehta and Lala Jagat Narayan.

Bishop Mathews, on the other hand, advised that the American position should be to help India in her resolve that democracy succeeds - and to do this through "gentle reminders" by the U.S. Ambassador in New Delhi.

The Bishop told the subcommittee: "I've heard from people who are knowledgeable about India that it (the imposition of the Emergency regulations) should have happened long ago .. had they not been imposed, I don't think India could have carried on beyond a couple of months".

Congressman Edward Derwinski, a member of the Republican party from the State of Illinois, then asked the Bishop what his personal involvement might be in India?

The Bishop replied that he personally was in charge of an ashram and that his Methodist church was "represented in 12 different language areas" of India. The Bishop added that though his church's affiliations in India were "very extensive", they have not been "affected by the Emergency".

Congressman Fraser, noting the Bishop's contention that the bulk of India's prisoners were common criminals, asked how it then could be possible that both members of Prime Minister' Gandhi's own Congress party and Members of Parliament had been jailed, and that the Socialist International had informed him that many of India's Socialist party members had been similarly locked up?

The Bishop said he thought the politicians were only under "house arrest" and that what brutality which was exercised against prisoners was primarily against India's notorious money lenders. "Now that group has been brought under control, and that has some advantage", the Bishop declared.

Professor Nanda took issue with the Bishop's contention that the Emergency regulations against Human Rights were only "temporary" by citing the "permanent changes" imposed by amending India's Constitution.

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