

**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE AT  
THE SECOND READING OF THE "VISITING  
FORCES ACT" AT THE DEWAN RAKYAT ON  
23RD JUNE, 1960**

Sir, I beg to move that a Bill intituled an Act to amend and consolidate the law with respect to naval, military and air forces of certain other countries visiting the Federation and to provide for the apprehension and disposal of deserters or absentees without leave in the Federation from the forces of such countries and for purposes connected with the matters aforesaid be read a second time.

Sir, the purpose of this Bill is to consolidate the existing law on the subject of visiting forces with such amendments thereto as are necessary in consequence of the independent status of the Federation. The Bill is based largely upon the Visiting Forces Act, 1952, of the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries which have similar laws.

Part II of the Bill deals with the important subject of jurisdiction. Whereas Clause 6 provides that Service courts and Service Authorities of another country may exercise within the Federation jurisdiction over the members of a visiting force, Clause 7 allows that such persons may be tried in a Federation court for those offences where, by agreement with the Federation Government, jurisdiction has been waived by the Government of the country to which such a visiting force belongs.

Part III provides for the apprehension and disposal of deserters and absentees without leave and Part IV for the attachment of personnel between the Federation Armed Forces and the Forces of any country to which this Act will apply, provided that no member of a Federation Force may be attached to the force of another country without his consent.

This part also provides for the arrest and custody of offenders against Federation law and provides that they shall remain in Service custody until they are brought before a court.

As Hon'ble Members are aware we have many young officers training overseas and this will enable them to be legally attached to the forces of the country where they are training for command and disciplinary purposes. It is obviously inconvenient if any such officers have to be returned to the Federation for disciplinary action to be taken in some trivial matter.

The authorities concerned will in future be able to treat them in exactly the same way as their counterparts in the forces to which they are attached.

Sir, I beg to move.