

Shri R. Ramanathan Chettiar: May I know what are the States which have enforced prohibition fully and which are those States who have not yet enforced prohibition fully and what steps will the Centre take to bring home this fact to the notice of those States and have prohibition enforced gradually, in stages?

Shri Hathl: I think Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madras have enforced prohibition fully; so far as other States are concerned, some areas are wet and some areas are dry. We have sent the Tek Chand Committee's report for their comments.

Shri Kapur Singh: Has it ever sunk into the overworked head of the Government.....

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. He can put the question straight.

Shri Kapur Singh: Government are overworked, Sir. Certain suggestions have to be made to them so that they understand.

Mr. Speaker: But no adjectives need be brought in. The question may be framed without them.

Shri Kapur Singh: I only sympathise with the Government.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: "Overworked" is not an adjective; I think it is an adverb here.

Shri Kapur Singh: It is an indication of sympathy.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. He may put the question. (*Interruption*).

Shri Kapur Singh: Yes; I shall not use any adjective. Has it so far sunk into the overworked head of the Government that when the States tell them that they cannot implement the policy of prohibition because of financial difficulties, what they are politely trying to convey to the Government is that the whole idea is puerile and impracticable? No adjectives.

Mr. Speaker: He has given the answer as well.

Shri Kapur Singh: My question was..... (*Interruption*).

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Hathl: This is a matter which can be discussed with the State Governments and we are going to discuss it.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : क्या सरकार यह बतलायेगी कि हमारे देश में विदेशी शराब कितनी आती है और जो अवैध शराब पकड़ी जाती है उस को सरकार किस प्रकार व्यवहार में लाती है ? उस को बेचती है या फक देती है ? इस योजना पर केन्द्रीय सरकार ने और राज्य सरकारों ने कितनी दिलचस्पी दिखाई है ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : इस सवाल की इजाजत नहीं दी जा सकती ।

Shri Basumatari: Since it is found that a large number of people are getting licences on the ground of health and mostly they are found to be high officials, may I know what action the Government is going to take in the matter?

Shri Hathl: Wherever there is a law giving a permit on grounds of health, it is being done; permits are given.

श्री हुकम चन्द कछवाय : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मेरे सवाल का जवाब नहीं आया ।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : वह जवाब देने लायक सवाल ही नहीं है ।

Consumer Stores

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*868. **Shri Kapur Singh:**

Shri P. K. Deo:

Will the Minister of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a Press report

(Hindustan Times dated 31st December, 1965, page 4) that Government of India might bring in a legislation to compel industrial establishments to open fair price consumer stores; and

(b) if so, broad outlines thereof?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Yes.

(b) Broad details of the proposal are:—

- (1) A fair price shop shall be set up and maintained in every industrial establishment employing 300 or more workers, if at least 200 workers agree to buy their stated requirements from this shop for a period of at least 6 months.
- (2) Such shops should distribute to the workers rice, wheat and sugar supplied by the State Governments at the same prices and on the same scales as prevailing in the general fair price shops, if any in the area, and two popular varieties of textiles, dal and cooking medium at prices equivalent to the wholesale prices prevailing in the nearest wholesale market as notified by Government, the cost of distribution being borne by the employer.
- (3) If, within three years of the setting up of such a fair price shop by the employer, a consumers' cooperative society of the employees (with the employer participating) is not formed in the establishment under the relevant State laws, it will not be obligatory for the employer to continue to run his fair price shop.
- (4) The term "Industrial Establishment" for purposes of this Act will be defined in wide terms so as to include

factories and workshops, railway and transport services, ports and docks, mines, plantations, banks and insurance companies, shops and commercial establishments, and also building and construction works including those for roads, bridges, waterways, irrigation and generation of electricity etc.

Shri Kapur Singh: I would like to know how these fair prices, to be fixed by the Government, are going to be correlated to the prices prevailing in the open, competitive market. Will they be the same or will they be different and, if they are different, why and how?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Commodities which are available in the fair price shops in the general local market will be sold by these stores at the same price. For the others, the idea is that the price should be equivalent to the wholesale price.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: Is it a fact that this decision was taken in November, 1962 at the time of the Chinese aggression? Why has the Government delayed it so much? Is it also a fact that some employers have said that they can provide shops but not grains and the grains have to be provided by Government? If so, when is this legislation likely to come? Will it be introduced in this session?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: It is true this idea was first mooted in December, 1963. It has been considered from time to time. It was considered at a very high level in July 1965. The concensus of opinion was that it would be better in the interests of industrial relations that this should be brought about by mutual cooperation of the employers and employees rather than through coercive legislation. We are trying our best to induce the employers to fall in line and open these consumer cooperative societies of their own accord. I am glad the response has been fairly good.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: This decision was taken, he says, in 1963, but the employers have not agreed. Will they bring legislation?

Mr. Speaker: He says in the interest of industrial relations, Government think they should be persuaded to accept it instead of enforcing it by legislation.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: There should be a limit to persuasion.

Shri Priya Gupta: In view of this decision of the Government to open fair price shops, may I know whether the commodities like foodstuffs which they intend to sell through them will be made an exception in all the States, so far as rates and restriction on movement are concerned, whether it is a deficit area or not and whether the Government will undertake supplies of the grains apart from the normal rules which are applicable to the States, since the Government of India has opened them through the Labour Ministry itself?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The intention is that in the areas where there is statutory rationing, every consumer store, if they so desire, will be treated as a ration shop and the rations will be supplied and guaranteed by the State Government. In the other areas, where they have partial rationing, there also we have had meetings with the State Governments and they assured us that they would do their best to make the supplies regular.

Shri Priya Gupta: There is restriction on movement of foodgrains from State to State and from district to district. Since it is an initiative from the Government of India, I want to know whether they will ensure supplies from other areas at least to these shops, because most of the ration shops are going without foodstuffs.

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: The State Governments will be responsible for supplying the rations. Movement of foodgrains within the whole country

is a larger question on which a decision has to be taken separately and not by this organisation.

Shri K. N. Pandey: In view of the fact that several consumer stores which were opened after this decision had to be closed because of inadequate supply of foodgrains, what purpose is going to be served if legislation is brought for opening consumer stores when there is no adequate supply of foodgrains?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: It is true that certain difficulties came to notice on the opening of these consumer co-operative stores. The main difficulty which came out during the discussion was that the workers were working in one industrial establishment and they were living in distant places. The difficulty of carrying rations from the places of work to their places of residence was the main difficulty. We have requested the State Governments to open shops in the areas where they are residing rather than where they are working, and this matter is being attended to.

Shri Ranga: Sir, it is unfortunate that Government has taken four years before it could come even to this—I do not know whether it is any decision at all—statement of policy here before the House. May I know whether it has been considered by the Government, whether any steps have been considered by the Government, to see that no possibilities for exploiting workers would be kept open when these shops are opened by the employers, in view of the fact that in England and other countries also they had had to pass the Truck Acts in order to prevent employers from taking advantage of the sale of these various foodgrains and other usual necessities of the employees and thus keep them under their control and under their influence?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Every care will be taken to ensure that the employers do not exploit the scheme. Although the participation of employers is envisaged in this scheme,

the actual operation and control of running of these consumer cooperative stores will be in the hands of the actual workers.

Shri P. B. Patel: Sir, the industrial establishments when they open these consumer cooperative stores will have to sell foodgrains at a cheap price and thereby incur losses. May I know whether that loss would be allowed to be put in the profit and loss accounts of the establishments concerned?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: According to well established traditions and usages, in certain plantation areas mainly, there was a system of supplying subsidised rations to the workers. That system is still continuing where it is feasible, but in other places where there is wholesale procurement of foodgrains the managements are finding it difficult to supply rations at controlled prices.

Shri Buta Singh: As the Minister told us that items supplied through these shops will be made available on the wholesale price basis, may I know whether Government propose to subsidise these shops?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: Sir, the employers will.

Dr. Ramen Sen: The hon. Minister just now said that since 1962-63 this is being discussed and it has been accepted in principle by all the parties concerned to have consumers stores by the employers. Now, is it a fact that a number of employers have raised the question of linking up dearness allowance with these consumer cooperative stores and have threatened to reduce the dearness allowance given to the workers if they want consumer stores; if so, may I know what is the reaction of the Government in regard to this?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: In the first instance I want to state that out of the establishments which are employing 300 or more workers the overall coverage for consumer cooperative stores and fair price shops for the

whole country is 65 per cent and in the public sector it is over 86 per cent. Regarding the objection raised by employers that the dearness allowance should be linked up with these consumer cooperative stores, this question was raised at almost all the meetings we had with the representatives of employers and workers in different regions and the decision arrived at is that this is quite a separate issue and it shall have nothing to do with this.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: May I know whether in view of the fact that the Standing Labour Committee which met on 12th and 13th February this year, 1966, once again reiterated the demand that legislation must be brought forward, may I know which is the so-called high-powered committee of 1955 which is important enough to brush aside a later decision of the Standing Labour Committee constituted by the Government of India? May I also know whether any legislation is in the making or not?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: As I said, the intention of introducing this scheme is to supply essential materials to the workers at a reasonable price. The participation of employers is envisaged. We thought that it would be in the interests of better relations if it is left to voluntary implementation. All the State Governments and the public sector undertakings had to be consulted to find out their views. It is as a result of their views that the decision was deferred. Now the final date is 30th April, 1966 when the whole thing will be reviewed and if it is still necessary we shall take necessary steps....

Mr. Speaker: Will legislation be undertaken?

Shri Shahnawaz Khan: I was coming to that. I have not finished yet. As I said, we are working on it and 30th April is the date on which we will review it. If it is necessary, we will introduce legislation.

Shri N. Sreekantan Nair: Sir, my question has not been answered. The Minister says he has consulted the

State Governments. The Standing Tripartite Committee consists of the State Governments, the Central Government and the Central Trade Unions. There we decided it when the Minister was present; of course, the Deputy Minister was not present there. It was decided that if 40 per cent of the employers were not making arrangements even after three years, legislation must be pushed through. That decision is very definite.

The Minister of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation (Shri Jagjivan Ram): May I add a word? Certainly, legislation will become necessary if it is found that the response from the employers is not commensurate with the requirements of the situation.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: How long will you wait?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Will you permit me to have my say? As my colleague has already informed the House, 65 per cent of the working population which, according to the standard, has to be covered has already been covered. If during the remaining period it is felt that further coverage will be affected, then there will be necessity for legislation; if it is not affected, then perhaps hon. Members will feel that there is no necessity for legislative measures.

Shri P. R. Chakravarti: In view of the fact that the Mines Welfare Fund is administered directly by the Union Government in a place called Jagjivan Ram Nagar, may I know whether Government are taking effective steps to make available to the half a million workers there all the essential goods?

Shri Shah Nawaz Khan: We have a very good system of consumer co-operative stores and fair-price shops working in the collery areas. The hon. Member would be glad to know that the Fund is working very satisfactorily.

विज्ञान कांग्रेस, चंडीगढ़

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* 870. श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती :
श्री प्रकाशबीर शास्त्री :

क्या शिक्षा मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) जनवरी, 1966 में चंडीगढ़ में हुए विज्ञान कांग्रेस के अधिवेशन में क्या विशिष्ट निर्णय किये गये; और

(ख) सरकार इन निर्णयों से कहां तक सहमत है ?

शिक्षा मंत्रालय में उपमंत्री (श्रीमती सींगम रामचन्द्रन) : (क) और (ख) भारतीय विज्ञान कांग्रेस संस्था (Indian Science Congress Association) के महासचिव ने रिपोर्ट दी है कि जनवरी, 1966 में चंडीगढ़ में हुए विज्ञान कांग्रेस के अधिवेशन में ऐसा कोई विशिष्ट निर्णय नहीं लिया गया था, जिस पर सरकार द्वारा कार्रवाई की जरूरत हो।

श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती : क्या सरकार विज्ञान कांग्रेस के माध्यम पर यह निश्चय करेगी कि ऐसे उपाय बतों जायं शिक्षण संस्थाओं में जिस से कि विद्यार्थियों की शारीरिक और मानसिक उन्नति हो सके। और जिस से कि वह राष्ट्र के उत्तम नागरिक बन सकें ?

Shrimati Soundaram Ramachandran: The Indian Science Congress is an organisation whose objectives are to advance the promotion of courses of science etc. They hold a Congress every year where many papers are read by eminent scientists. They do not form a policy of educating society as such. They send us their report. That is all. I did not really understand it fully.

श्री जगदेव सिंह सिद्धान्ती : क्या यह निश्चय भी किया जायगा कि अध्यापकों के और विद्यार्थियों के सम्बन्ध अच्छे हो कर और