

Mr. Speaker: Rule 41 reads:

" . . . (xi) it shall not raise questions of policy too large to be dealt with within the limits of an answer to a question;".

Shri Jaipal Singh: If there has been a change in policy, that is a fact, and we have to elicit facts.

Mr. Speaker: Hon Members may not agree on whether it is a change in policy or not. One hon Member may say something, while another hon Member may say that it is a substantial change in policy. Are we to go on spending away the rest of the hour in that? Hon Members have got ample opportunities. Why are they nervous about these matters?

Board of Enquiry at Ordnance Factory, Khamaria

*103 **Shri S. M. Banerjee:** Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No 78 on the 4th December, 1957 and state what are the main findings of the Board of Enquiry constituted to enquire into the deficiencies and losses discovered recently in the stores of Ordnance Factory, Khamaria?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Shri Raghuramalah): The findings of the Board of Enquiry are at present under examination by the Director General of Ordnance Factories in consultation with the Controller of Defence Accounts (Factories), Calcutta.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know whether the value of the deficiencies and losses is more than Rs. 2 crores?

Shri Raghuramalah: Until the report is examined by Government, it would not be proper for me to disclose what the contents of the Report are.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: What is the amount involved? Is it Rs. 2 crores or less?

Mr. Speaker: Possibly, that is also part of the Report. Hon. Members may wait.

Defence Production Planning Committee

+

*104. { **Shri A. K. Gopalan:**
Shri S. M. Banerjee:
Shri Jagdish Awasthi.
Shri Bhakt Darshan:
Shri S. C. Samanta:
Shri D. C. Sharma:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 76 on the 13th November, 1957 and state:

(a) whether the Defence Production Planning Committee has since submitted its Report;

(b) if so, what are its recommendations;

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay; and

(d) the approximate date by which the Report will be submitted?

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Shri Raghuramalah): (a) The Defence Production Planning Committee has made a preliminary Report.

(b) The Report is under study and such information as is relevant is and will be utilised by the Production and other departments pending final report.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: May I know the progress made so far in the direction of attaining self-sufficiency by our defence production units and lessening our dependence on foreign countries?

Shri Raghuramalah: As mentioned in the answer that I have just read out, the Defence Production Planning Committee has submitted only a preliminary Report. The answer to the question asked by my hon. friend will be possible only after the final report of the Committee is received by Government.

Shri Ramanathan Chettiar: When will the final report be received?

Shri Raghuramaiah: The work is so enormous that it will necessarily take some more time.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know whether the report will concern itself with production as a whole or with production ordnance factory-wise?

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members can wait and see the Report. Evidently, hon. Members have nothing more to ask on this question.

Sterling Balances

+

*106. { Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri:
Shrimati Tarkeshwari
Shri B. S. Murthy:
Shri Damani:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any further improvement in the recent months in India's sterling balances;

(b) if so, the nature and extent of improvement; and

(c) the main factors that have helped in such an improvement?

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri B. E. Bhagat): (a) and (b). The decline in the sterling balances of the Reserve Bank of India during the last three months has been significantly smaller than in the preceding three months. The weekly averages of decline in sterling balances during November and December 1957 and January 1958 were Rs. 3:52, Rs. 2:96 and Rs. 2:87 crores respectively as against the corresponding figures of Rs. 8:07, Rs. 6:83 and Rs. 6:35 crores respectively for the preceding three months.

(c) The improvement reflects the effect of the measures taken in the last few months to conserve foreign exchange such as the curtailment of imports, the drastic restriction of

allowances for foreign travel, the negotiation of arrangements for deferred payments, and so on.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: What is the latest position of the sterling balances in our reserves?

Shri B. E. Bhagat: I think it was round about Rs. 280 crores at the end of last month.

Mr. Speaker: Are these things not available in the Reserve Bank's monthly statistics returns? Hon. Members should try to refrain from asking questions with respect to which there is enormous material both in the outside world and in the Library. They must only take some pains to go through them.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: I have asked the latest figure that we have today.

Mr. Speaker: This morning?

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Not this morning I wanted the latest figure.

Mr. Speaker: The bulletins appear every month, and the hon. Member knows fully well that the Reserve Bank is giving this information in the bulletins.

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: Today does not mean this morning. I am not such a fool as to ask such a question. I wanted to know the present position in regard to our sterling balances.

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry if I created that impression in the hon. Member's mind. I have always got very great regard for her talents. But with respect to this, the figures could be looked into. Is it a *visa voce* examination here so far as Ministers are concerned, whether they know the details or not?

Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha: How can this information be available to us unless Government inform us? The latest position is not available unless and until it comes out in the bulletin of the Reserve Bank. Periodically we do not know.