

them being the heavy cost of this project—it is a very, very expensive project—it could not be undertaken. I cannot say that it has been given up, but for the present it is not being undertaken.

Shri Sarangadhar Das: May I know, Sir, if the proposal of Shri Vijaynanda Patnaik to make synthetic petrol from Talcher coal in Orissa will be taken into consideration?

Shri K. C. Reddy: There were various proposals regarding the starting of this synthetic oil plant, one of which has been referred to by Shri Gidwani, viz., the proposal made by Mr. Saha. The other proposal perhaps has been received from Mr. Patnaik, but they are all past history. Early in 1952 we got a project report on this industry and we could not go ahead with it because of financial considerations. The matter was left over, but the whole thing has been revived now, and preliminary considerations are going on. Very soon it may be possible for us to invite two or three firms to give us fresh project reports, and when such project reports are received, we will give further attention to this very important industry.

Seth Govind Das: With respect to...

Mr. Speaker: I am going to the next question.

CAR ASSEMBLING FIRMS

*1118. **Shri Viswanatha Reddy:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state the total number of declared Car Assembling firms in India?

(b) How many of them are proposed to be closed?

(c) What are the reasons for the proposed closure?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Seven.

(b) Five out of these seven assemblers may wind up their operations by the middle of next year. The remaining two are engaged in the assembly of jeep type vehicles and will continue to do so.

(c) Government have on the recommendation of the Tariff Commission, decided to concentrate all future demands for vehicles on firms who have a manufacturing programme. The pure assemblers, therefore, have been asked to close down their operations.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: May I know whether Government has any idea as to the minimum number of vehicles that will be required for an economic manufacturing unit?

Shri Karmarkar: It depends on particular types of vehicles and particular units.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: What I want to know is: what is the minimum manufacturing capacity that is required to keep the assembly lines going economically.

Shri Karmarkar: I should like to have notice about it.

Shri Viswanatha Reddy: May I know whether it is a fact that the high taxation on transport vehicles as well as the high taxation on petrol is a major contributory factor for a contraction in the demand for the vehicles in this country, and if so, what are the proposals that the Government are considering to obviate these difficulties?

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid he is going into an argument about the whole question of this particular industry.

Shrimati A. Kale: May I know the number of people that were thrown out of employment as a result of this policy and what is Government's view and what they are going to do with these unemployed people?

Shri Karmarkar: The number of people thrown out will be increasing a little progressively, but our attempt is to absorb as many of them as possible in the existing units.

Shrimati A. Kale: How many workers?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Have the assemblers been asked to close down

forthwith, or has some future date been given by which they have to wind up?

Shri Karmarkar: Not forthwith, but by about the middle of 1954.

BANNING OF LOCKOUTS IN TEXTILE MILL

*1120. **Shri Buchhikotaiah:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to ban lock-outs in textile mills in the country was received from any organisation; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken or are proposed to be taken to check the unemployment due to these lock-outs?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes. A proposal was received from the Indian National Textile Workers' Federation, Ahmedabad, suggesting that Government issue instructions that no textile mills should close down without previous permission of the Government.

(b) An Ordinance was promulgated on the 24th October, 1953 under which provision has been made for compensation to the labour which may be laid off or retrenched. In place of this Ordinance a Bill entitled "The Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1953" has already been passed by both the Houses of Parliament and is now awaiting Assent of the President.

Shri Buchhikotaiah: May I know the number of lock-outs in 1953, the number of workers affected, and the number of days lost?

Shri Karmarkar: At the time of the textile crisis, i.e. 21st October 1953, the number of threatened closures of textile mills was 42, and the number of workers affected 42,791. As to the actual number of workers thrown out at that time, I should like to have notice.

Shri Bhagwat Jha: In view of the fact that a large number of textile mills have already been closed, and a

large number of labourers have been thrown out of employment, may I know what proposals are under the consideration of Government to check such things in future, and what actions are being taken against those mills?

Shri Karmarkar: If I might refer to the earlier question, which is also relevant,—the actual number of workers thrown out of employment I am able to give now—a number of mills closed down, and the number of workers thrown out of employment was 14,764.

Regarding the hon. Member's question put just now, the answer is that the present Ordinance, and this Bill, when it becomes an Act, will meet with the situation, because any mill that closes down will have to compensate the workers retrenched or laid off.

Shri Muniswamy: May I know whether it is a fact that in some mills, they have closed down one shift, and if so, how far the labourers have been affected?

Shri Karmarkar: Some of them have closed down one shift; some of them have closed down two shifts, and some of them have closed down completely. As I said earlier, the number of workers affected by the closure was 14,764.

RUBBER TYRES

*1121. **Sardar Hukam Singh:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps in the matter of reduction in prices of Indian-made tyres; and

(b) if so, what?

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir; the question of fixing fair selling prices for Indian made rubber tyres and tubes has been referred to the Tariff Commission and their report is awaited.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Is it a fact that Indian tyres are being marketed under four different makes, and yet