

are to get service in Government offices?

Shri V. V. Giri: There is no such circular.

NEWSPRINT

*1436. **Shri P. N. Rajabhoj:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state whether it is a fact that India is still in great demand for newsprints?

(b) Which are the principal countries that are regularly supplying newsprints?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Austria, Canada, Finland, Japan and Norway.

Shri M. S. Gurupadaswamy: Is it not a fact that the newsprint position has improved, and when is the Government going to remove the price page schedule control?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): The price page schedule control was introduced at the request of the India and Eastern Newspaper Society, on which are represented practically all the major newspapers in the country. Unless they agree to the removal of the price page schedule control, Government would not be able to do anything unilaterally. But we are in correspondence with them to see whether, since the position of newsprint is easier, they still wish the control order to be kept in force.

Shri P. N. Rajabhoj: May I know what is the total quantity of newsprint required by India?

Shri Karmarkar: About 64,000 tons at the moment.

Mr. Speaker: That question was put and answered last week, I think.

Shri P. N. Rajabhoj: May I know whether arrangements are being made to manufacture it in India?

Mr. Speaker: I think that was answered last week or so. It was answered in detail.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: Is Government aware that a substantial quantity of Soviet newsprint came lately to this country, and that the Soviets gave assurances that they were ready to supply newsprint in any quantity at very reasonable prices?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Yes, Sir; Government are aware.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: May I ask if the Government can give us any definite idea as regards the prospects of Indian self-sufficiency about newsprint production?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: I am afraid we cannot give any definite idea.

Mr. Speaker: I think this question was answered last week.

Shri B. Shiva Rao: Apart from the request of the India and Eastern Newspaper Society, which was not a unanimous request, is my hon. friend convinced about the necessity of continuing the price page schedule control in view of the easier newsprint situation that now obtains in this country?

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: The House will understand that the request for fixing a price page schedule came from the group of smaller newspapers. Obviously the bigger newspapers group did not like it, and there was, therefore, no unanimity in regard to the decision of the India and Eastern Newspaper Society. But apparently a majority have requested Government for this facility. It is not a matter of conviction so far as Government is concerned; it is really a matter as to how it suits the smaller newspapers who feel that this helps them. The matter, as I said, is again under consideration. Government will take suitable action when they think that the time is appropriate.

TEA PRODUCTION

*1437. **Shri L. N. Mishra:** (a) Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state whether it is a fact that countries like Indonesia, East Africa, Formosa, Indo-China, Iran and Malaya have sharply increased the production of tea?

(b) If so, do Government apprehend some competition in the world market for our tea this year on this account?

(c) If so, what steps do Government propose to take in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Karmarkar): (a) There has been some increase in the tea production in the countries under reference.

(b) To a certain extent.

(c) Difficulties facing our tea industry at the moment are the subject of investigation by a Special Committee.