

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is difficult to give a general answer. Some are export commodities and some are commodities which are produced and used inside the country. I suppose a general answer would be a change in the relation between supply and demand.

Pandit Munishwar Datt Upadhyay: May I know whether it is a fact that the slump was welcome to many sections of people in the country?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I am not in a position to answer that question.

Shri Punnoose: Will the Minister be pleased to state whether the slump is due to the effective steps taken by the Government of India?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I have made it clear in the course of my speech that the so-called slump can be attributed both to international and domestic factors so that only part of the responsibility rests on action taken by Government.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: Was there any marked fall in the retail prices also, and, if so, to what extent?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I do not think, Sir, evidence is at hand so far to enable one to make a definite statement. The expectation is that the fall will, after a time lag, be communicated to the prices in retail trade.

Dr. Jaisoorya: With regard to answer to part (a), could the stock-piling in Western countries reaching saturation point be one of the causes of the slump?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Sir, I referred to international factors in the course of my speech and I might enumerate them here. One is the modification of the U.S. stock-piling programme, then the stretching out of the re-armament programme, then the success so far achieved by the International Materials Conference in allocating scarce raw materials, and increase in the world output of a number of commodities which were in short supply before.

Shri P. T. Chacko: May I know whether the Government have taken any steps to check the precipitous fall in prices in the plantation crops?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Well, so far as tea is concerned—I think it is one of the plantation crops—we are now sending a team to investigate all the economics of the tea industry. I am

not aware of any other plantation crop requiring a special enquiry.

Ch. Ranbir Singh: May I know the causes of the slump in the case of *gur*, jute and raw cotton?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Both, as I said, depend upon the relation between supply and demand.

Shri S. V. Ramaswamy: Has there been any fall in retail prices?

Mr. Speaker: That question was put and answered, not in that form but in a different form.

Shri Munishwar Datt Upadhyay: May I know what is the process that Government propose to adopt for reducing prices, as I think they do want to reduce prices?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: That question illustrates a mixed attitude. I am asked to explain the slump and then I am asked to state the reason for the action taken by Government to induce a further fall in prices.

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

An Hon. Member: I tried to catch your eye several times.

Mr. Speaker: But each Member cannot be guaranteed success. He may try till he succeeds.

PERCENTAGE OF VOTING

*282. **Dr. P. S. Deshmukh:** Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state the percentage of electors who voted in the recent elections according to States for the election to the State Assemblies and for the election to the House of the People?

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): A statement showing the percentage of electorates who voted in the recent elections according to States for elections to the State Legislative Assemblies and for elections to the House of the People, prepared from the figures so far available with the Election Commission, is laid on the Table of the House. [See Appendix II, annexure No. 11.]

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Have any attempts been made to find out the reasons for the low percentage of voting in those States?

Dr. Katju: I imagine it is due to the disinclination of the voters to take the trouble to go to the polling booths.