

they are legible and decipherable. The signatures of female holders of Government Securities, in Indian languages, are under standing instructions, required to be attested to establish their genuineness as such holders are presumed to be *parda-nashin*.

Shri K. K. Das: May I know whether the Reserve Bank accepts the signatures written in English only and whether it is reserved only for people who know English?

Shri A. C. Guha: No, Sir. That is not the practice. But some distinction is made in the case of female depositors signing in Indian languages, because sometimes it is presumed that they may not know the contents of the documents they are signing.

Shri K. K. Das: May I know whether the signatures in Hindi are acceptable to the Reserve Bank?

Shri A. C. Guha: As I have said, signature in any Indian language is accepted. Only in the case of female holders of Government securities some distinction is made.

Shri N. B. Chowdhury: May I know whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the reports in the *Jugantar Patrika* that in Calcutta a large number of people find it very difficult to receive their interest on the loan given in respect of the Five Year Plan and such other loans because of this condition that the signature should be in English and not in Bengali?

Shri A. C. Guha: I require notice of that question.

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES

*2258. **Shri Radha Raman:** Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Custodians of Insurance Companies have either terminated the services or have issued notices of termination of services to the Insurance workers, or have reduced their salaries;

(b) if so, the number of such cases;

(c) whether Government have examined such cases or propose to do

so without further delay to avoid any injustice or harm to the field workers; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take in the matter in view of the assurances given that Custodians would ask the permission of Government before taking any such action?

The Minister of Revenue and Civil Expenditure (Shri M. C. Shah): (a) to (d). Field workers in the Insurance Industry are not similar to salaried employees in other works of life. They are engaged to procure business and serve under definite terms of appointment which are laid down to suit each case. The remuneration offered to them, commonly called salary, is linked up with the business required to be produced by them. The terms of appointment in all these cases contain a specific provision authorising the companies to revise, defer payment of, or withhold the remuneration in case the volume of business brought in is substantially less than the quota stipulated. This practice is a salutary one and it is in accordance with this, and strictly under the terms of appointment that Custodians give notice, either of reduction of salaries or of termination of appointments.

Custodians of Insurance Companies are not required to take prior permission of Government for taking action in accordance with the normal practice in the business, especially where such action is in terms of the letter of appointment of the persons concerned.

It is understood that there have been about 1400 cases of this kind so far. Government have received complaints, individually and through Associations of Insurance employees, of unjust termination of services or reduction of salaries only in respect of 63 cases. In regard to 34 of these cases, investigation has been completed and Government are satisfied that there has been no injustice at all.

Shri Radha Raman: May I know whether it is a fact that the earned increments which are due to many of the

field workers in terms of the salaries that they use to receive regularly have been withheld by the custodians?

Shri M. C. Shah: No; if they are entitled to receive those salaries, they are given those salaries. As I have already explained, there are certain terms of appointment which have been mentioned in the appointment and those terms are carried out. Wherever there is any reduction and any amount is withheld, it is in accordance with those terms.

Shri Radha Raman: Out of the complaints which Government have received from such field workers with regard to the termination of their services or reduction of their salaries, have Government found that any complaint was justified? If so, what is the number of such complaints?

Shri M. C. Shah: I have already stated in my reply that in regard to 34 cases, investigation has been completed and Government have found that there has been no injustice at all. With regard to the other complaints—about 29 in number—the matter is under investigation.

Shri H. N. Mukerjee: In view of the numerous reports regarding the discharge of insurance workers in different parts of the country, will Government tell us if it will consider the suggestion already made in the House that the *status quo* in regard to the employment position should be maintained for the present and that the position in regard to posts and wages shall be carefully and gradually investigated and determined, or, has Government made up its mind that this kind of piecemeal retrenchment will be permitted?

Shri M. C. Shah: If the hon. Member had carefully heard the reply that I had given, he would not have raised this question. There is no question of wages not being paid. It is a question of certain people being employed by the insurance companies to get a certain amount of business done and for that they get a certain amount of remuneration. Also, the stipulation is always there in those

appointment orders that if a certain volume of business is not put through, there will be a reduction in the emoluments that they get. The reduction that has taken place is in the case of those people alone who are employed on that basis.

Shri Kelappan: May I bring it to the notice of the Minister that there are cases where some workers have not been paid for the last three months and they did not even get a reply to the letters addressed to the custodians?

Shri M. C. Shah: Whenever any case has been reported to us, we have enquired into that case individually. So, if the hon. Member has got any such case, he will kindly send it on to me. I will enquire into it and a satisfactory reply will be given to the hon. Member.

Shri V. P. Nayar: I want to know whether Government have any information regarding the number of employees in all categories whose services have been terminated subsequent to the Declaration regarding the nationalisation of insurance and if so, what is that figure?

Shri M. C. Shah: The hon. Member fails to make a distinction between "staff employees" and field workers. We have already given an assurance that all employees will be kept in service and if there is any case of dismissal, we are prepared to look into it. But this question is with regard to those people who are called "field workers". They are not members of the regular staff. As I have already stated, they are employed on certain conditions and the terms of appointment are mentioned in the appointment orders. If you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, I will read out.....

Mr. Speaker: I will not allow; next supplementary.

Shri Damodara Menon: Now that a Corporation is going to be constituted, will Government consider it advisable to leave this matter of retrenchment of field workers to the Corporation?

Shri M. C. Shah: There is no question of retrenchment of field workers. As I have already indicated to the House, this is a normal practice in all the insurance companies. It is not unusual that the custodians have taken action. This practice has been there all these years. The field workers are employed on certain terms and conditions and action is taken according to those terms and conditions.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: May I know whether the Minister received any representation from an insurance company in Bombay where out of 30 employees, 16 have been dismissed a week back?

Shri M. C. Shah: If the hon. Member sends me the information, I will look into it and give a reply.

Shri A. K. Gopalan: I have sent it a few days back.

Mr. Speaker: Probably it is in the course of transmission.

Shri M. C. Shah: I will look into it, if you have sent it to me. I do not remember to have received it.

Shri Matthen: Will the Minister tell the House how many of these custodians have practical experience in insurance management and how many are mere armchair actuaries?

Mr. Speaker: It does not arise out of this question.

Shri M. C. Shah: All the custodians have enough experience of insurance business.

Shri Radha Raman: The hon. Minister just now stated that in the cases of field workers from whom complaints have been received, there are certain terms and conditions attached to their appointment; he also said that if a particular quota of business is not put through by such workers, some action is taken. I want to know whether in the case of those field workers who have been serving an insurance company for a pretty long time, and due to sudden nationalisation, if their business falls, the Government have given instructions to

the custodians that either their services are allowed to continue or alternative employment may be given to them, so that they are not out of employment.

Shri M. C. Shah: We have already given instructions to all the custodians that if the volume of business mentioned in the terms and conditions of the appointment becomes less—not substantially—but somewhat less, then those appointments may not be terminated. We have asked them to deal with those cases with the utmost possible sympathy.

INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATIONS

***2259. Sardar Iqbal Singh:** Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

(a) the names of countries with which the Indian Council for Cultural Relations maintains regular contacts;

(b) the ways and means adopted during 1955 for developing such contacts; and

(c) whether any special effort was made during that year to further cultural contacts with neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, the People's Republic of China and the U.S.S.R.?

The Deputy Minister of Education (Dr. M. M. Das): (a) The Council maintains regular contacts with all countries in West Asia, East Asia and South East Asia; in Africa with Sudan, East, West and Central Africa;.....Here, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I want to correct a serious error that has crept into the cyclostyled copy of the answer supplied by our Ministry. After the words "Central Africa", it is mentioned there "in Europe with Spain and Portugal". This would mean that we have got cultural relations with Spain and Portugal alone in Europe. But, the fact is just the opposite; and we have got cultural relations with all the countries in Europe except Spain and Portugal.