

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): Perhaps the hon. Member wants to know whether the railways as such provide any financial help.

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: Not financial help. These private agencies bring out time-tables. I want to know whether they have any standing permission to do so.

Shri Alagesan: They are sold in the railway bookstalls also, and they are permitted to be sold.

PAYMENT OF RAILWAY FREIGHT BY
CHEQUES

*2259. **Shri Deogam:** Will the Minister of Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is customary with the Eastern Railway to accept payment of Railway freight from consignees by cheque instead of cash;

(b) the limit up to which cheques are accepted from the parties; and

(c) the procedure under which it is done?

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Shahnawaz Khan): (a) Firms of good standing whose average monthly freight transactions at a particular station are between Rs. 500 and Rs. 3,000 are allowed the privilege of paying freight by cheques.

(b) Cheques upto the maximum limit covered by the security deposit, are accepted.

(c) Firms are required to deposit with the Government as security a sum equivalent to the amount of not less than a month's freight transactions with the Railway. The security deposit may be made in cash, Government Promissory Notes or Bank's Guarantee. The deposit should be made for each booking or receiving point where firms desire to pay the freight by cheque.

UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL TRADE
MISSION

*2260. **Shri Raghuramaiah:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether a United States Agricultural Trade Mission is visiting India;

(b) whether the visit is at the invitation of Government; and

(c) what is the object of their visit?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes. A United States Agricultural Trade Mission visited India in April, 1954.

(b) No.

(c) The object of the visit was to study agricultural situation in India and establish the foundation for an exchange of goods between India and U.S.A. on a mutually acceptable basis.

Shri Raghuramaiah: May I know what are the agricultural surplus commodities in the United States which they want to sell here and whether the mission has shown any interest in our commodities, and if so, which?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: As has been explained in the reply already read out, it was a matter of mutual exchange of information. The articles which the United States of America is probably keen to give us are wheat, butter, cotton seed oil and dried milk.

Shri Raghuramaiah: The second portion of my question has not been answered.

Mr. Speaker: What articles do they want from us?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: We propose mica, shellac, jute goods and tobacco.

Shri Raghuramaiah: May I know whether any deal has, in fact, been effected in respect of any one of these commodities?