

अतएव मेरा पेट्रोलियम और ऊर्जा मंत्री से आग्रह है कि मध्य प्रदेश में भोजन बनाने की गैस प्रदाय से हो रहे विलम्ब समाप्त कर प्रदेश के प्रत्येक तहसील मुख्यालय पर गैस वितरण व्यवस्था उपलब्ध करावें। साथ ही उज्जैन तथा इन्दौर में गैस प्रदाय की स्थिति में तत्काल सुधार करने के निर्देश देने का कष्ट करें।

(viii) Need for preserving the culture of the Santhals

श्री शिबू सोरन (दुमका) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, सन् 1855 में संथाल परगना को विशेष अधिकार उपलब्ध है। राज्य सरकार ने बंगाल डिस्ट्रिक्ट एक्ट 1864 के अधिकार का प्रयोग करते हुए इस जिले को चार भाग में बांट दिया है। इसी तरह राँची और सिंहभूम को भी क्रमशः तीन एवं दो जिलों में बांट दिया गया है। इस बंटवारे से तो जनजातियों को औद्योगिक क्षेत्र से एकदम अलग कर दिया गया है। बंटवारे के उपरान्त नये कानूनों के जरिये संथाल परगना टेनेन्सी एक्ट तथा छोटानागपुर काश्तकारी अधिनियम को भी निष्प्रभाव बना दिया जा रहा है। इस क्षेत्र में ट्राइवल एडावाइजरी कौंसिल राज्यपाल, राष्ट्रपति को अलग-अलग ढंग से विकास में हस्तक्षेप करने का अधिकार था जिसको विभाजन के बाद राज्य सरकार ने पंगु बना दिया है।

इस विभाजन के जरिए जनजातियों के आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक, सामाजिक, ऐतिहासिक परम्परा को नष्ट किया जा रहा है। संथाल जाति की कुछ विशेष परम्परायें हैं। इस विभाजन द्वारा संथाल जाति की सारी संस्कृति नष्ट होने की आशंका है।

जहाँ तक अनुसूचित क्षेत्रों का सम्बन्ध है, संविधान के अनुसार भारत सरकार का

विशेष उत्तरदायित्व है। पंचम अनुसूची द्वारा भारत सरकार को उन क्षेत्रों के प्रशासन के लिए राज्यों को निदेश जारी करने की शक्तियाँ प्रदत्त की गई है।

उपरोक्त तथ्यों का तकाजा है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार तुरन्त हस्तक्षेप करे ताकि संथाल परगना की इन जनजातियों की संस्कृति और विशेष स्वरूप पर कोई आँच न आये।

14.53 hrs.

JUTE MANUFACTURES CESS BILL
—Contd.

AND

JUTE MANUFACTURES DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL BILL—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Sangma on the 5th August, 1983, namely :

“That the Bill to provide for the Levy and collection, by way of cess, of a duty of excise on jute manufacturers for the development of production of jute manufacturers and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.”

We also now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri P.A. Sangma on the 5th August, 1983, namely :

“That the Bill to provide for the establishment of a Council for the development of production of jute manufactures by increasing the efficiency and productivity in the jute industry, the financing of activities for such development and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.”

Now Shri Amar Roy Pradhan, and then Shri Rajagopal Naidu. We are very

much behind schedule. We have to take up two more Bills to-day, having one hour each. The time factor is there. I am prepared to sit late in the evening; and everybody will be accommodated. And we will be able to complete both the Bills.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Though the Minister is a good friend of mine, I cannot support these Bills. But I can say very loudly and very strongly that these two Bills will not serve any purpose for saving the poor jute growers, the jute workers and even the jute mills. They will serve the purpose of the jute mill-owners I could have been very happy if the hon. Minister would have come with the Bill to nationalise the jute mills; Then I would have lent my best support to him. I can say that is the only way to solve their problems—the jute growers and the jute mill workers.

The jute—the golden fibre is playing a very important role in the economy of the country, particularly in the rural economy of jute growing States. If you look into it, you will find that jute accounts for nearly 10 per cent of the total foreign exchange earnings. I do share the same views with the Hon. Minister. Over 2.5 lakh of industrial workers are directly employed in the jute industry and more than 40 lakh farmer families of different States are engaged in raw jute production.

14.56 hrs.

[**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE**
In the Chair]

It is for the House to know that about 20 lakh people earn their livelihood from secondary sectors of the jute industry; and in the jute growing States, the ration is 1 to 5. The people are engaged either in the jute growing area or in the jute mills. The jute industry even for decades directly contributed to national exchequer Rs. 200 crores in the form of export duty and Rs. 250 crores by way of excise duty. So, it is not a question of the jute growing States alone; it is a question of the national economy,

how much more and more it will come up. I cannot support these two Bills, because I think that the Bills as manufactured by the Hon. Minister and his government are just to give an eye-wash to the poor jute growers and jute workers. Now, I would like to stress the main point. The issue that is facing hard the country is to nationalise the jute mills. I think that the Bills as manufactured will help to suck the flesh and blood of the poor jute cultivators and workers by the jute barons and jute tycoons. Only those eight families who are controlling the major jute mills—Goenka, Birlas and all that—they will be benefited by these two Bills.

The Bill, as has been manufactured, I think, is going to produce another white elephant just like the Jute Corporation of India. It is no better than that of the Jute Corporation of India.

In the Jute Manufacturers Development Council Bill, 1983, on page 5, against the functions of the Council, you have mentioned only a few lines regarding increasing the yield of raw jute. It says as follows :

‘Evolving an integrated approach to jute cultivation in the matter of formulation and schemes, extension work, implementation and evaluation of schemes aimed at increasing the yield of jute and improving the quality thereof.’

I do not know how can it be possible? You have written only a few lines in the whole Bill.

15. hrs,

But I cannot find it justifying because if you do not give more Price and more incentives to the jute growers, it may not be of much use. The jute grower cannot live long, at this rate of jute price. They have produced before us these two Bills and the Proposed Council is going to be redundant because the earlier Bill that had been placed before the house was enough.

Sir, what is the condition of the jute growers in our country? The jute

growers are living in distress and in a very pitiable condition under the conditions of economic misery. It is evident from the fact that Price of raw jute which was fetching a minimum price of Rs. 447,54 per quintal according to 1977 and 1978 price level. It was the demand of the West Bengal Government that the minimum price of raw jute should be increased by Rs. 300 per quintal. Even after six years, what are you doing now? You are only shutting the doors on the fact of the agriculturists and the poor jute growers by paying them the lowest price. Even the Public Undertaking Committee had recommended a rise of Rs. 447 per quintal in the price level of 1977-78 and in 1983-84 you are paying them only Rs. 192 more. I do not know how this will serve the purpose of growing more jute at this rate. It is a very dangerous joke that you are playing on the poor people. I do not want to say much about this. I would only like to quote something to show how you are going to serve the purposes of the jute mill owners. I refer to the report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (1977-78) (Sixth Lok Sabha) Eighth Report. As in the formation of the Council, we find that no purpose is likely to be served by this Bill. I am reading from page 45, para 104.

"The figures relating to international prices which form the basis of the viability of the jute industry as put forward by the Agricultural Prices Commission, are supplied to the Commission by the Jute Commissioner. The Jute Commissioner has himself admitted during evidence that in the jute industry, there is considerable amount of malpractice."

You are indulging in malpractices. You are going on with them? What is this? I quote again—

"This leaves no doubt that the figures collected by the Jute Commissioner and furnished to the Agricultural Prices Commission are not the true figures and might not, therefore, be relied upon in the

matter of determination of viability of the industry."

So, on the basis of this Report, what can I say? You are dependant on the industrialists and their data and figures, what to speak of the jute mill workers or the jute growers. Are you really sincere in your attempts to help them? I think the answer is 'No'. It is a big 'No', as is evidence from what I am quoting from the Report of the Committee on Public Undertakings (1977-78) (Sixth Lok Sabha) Third Report where it has been clearly stated, *vide* page 37 :

"The Committee regret that the jute growers who are most impoverished cultivators with hardly any other substantial source of income are continuously being ruthlessly exploited by the crafty jute industrialists, traders and their dadandars (people who pay advances against crops) and they are left to fend for themselves. It is a matter of common knowledge that the jute growers get almost no credit from Government agencies for inputs and subsistence and that they have to depend for this purpose upon private money-lenders who charge abnormally high rate of interest (upto 200 per cent). As a consequence of this, the poor jute grower has always to remain under the grip of private money-lenders who make advances on the understanding that the entire produce of his jute will given to them for a fraction of its real value. The poor grower has thus no option but to sell this jute to his creditors at prices dictated by them. This is known to one and all and the Reserve Bank of India and other concerned authorities have, in order to evade the issue, till date adopted a shut-eyed policy which is deprecated. The Committee suspect that it is because of the fact that easy and liberal credit could have given the grower holding power which would have made it difficult for the industry and trade to get Jute at buyer's price that practically no credit is made availa-

able for the jute grower, not to speak of giving it at a concessional rate of interest."

The fantastic prosperity of a handful of persons (about 8 families) behind the jute industry is solely because they are able to fleece the grower at their will and with impunity."

The Government and the Reserve Bank of India, it is regretted have been more or less silent spectators and abettors, I do not know what would be a more harsh language than 'abettor.' It is the 1977-78 Report. You may say that it is a Janta Government report but today what are you doing? You are also an abettor to the jute mill owners and others. You are doing nothing for the jute growers and the jute mill workers. So, I would like to oppose the two Bills.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Chittoor): Sir, I welcome these Bills because the Government is sincerely thinking of setting right the jute industry but I want to say that in formulating the Bills, the Law Department is deviating. There are certain essential features of a Bill. When any Bill is formulated, when there is a Board or a Council, its term of office, quorum must be mentioned in the Bill itself but they are absent here. I do not know why. Why these things should be given to the subordinate legislation? That means these things are placed in the hands of the bureaucrats and the Government can say that rules can be placed before the House and the Members are having the facility of amending them. It is very difficult for the Members because they have to give an amendment and it will become a Private Member's amendment. Then it is very difficult. It must come through tallot and must be discussed in the House and it is very difficult to get the rules amended. Therefore, my request to the Government is when they formulate such Bills, the Law Department must be advised to see that the essential features of the Bill are there.

With regard to the position of the jute industry I would say that it is very concentrated in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Most of the jute comes from West Bengal and the jute mills are also there. Therefore, we have to protect them. The industries which earn foreign exchange are mainly tobacco, jute, coffee, tea and one or two more commodities. Therefore, we must be very careful in seeing that the foreign exchange is not minimised and the exports are large. On this industry, 3.5 lakhs workers and many lakhs of growers depend. Therefore, if we can protect this industry, we will be protecting not only the growers but also the workers. Therefore, the Government must find out a way to increase the exports. Now we find that our exports are decreasing. I will give one or two examples. In 1950-51 the export was to the extent of 75.5 per cent of the total production in our country. In 1979-80 it had reduced to 38.2 per cent of the production. Bangladesh is the competing country and it is increasing its exports. In 1971, the Bangladesh exports were 20 per cent of the total production whereas Indian market has fallen from 53% to 29%. The Government should find out what are the reasons for all these things. Some of our friends say that nationalisation is the solution. I also agree. From West Bengal all parties wanted nationalisation of jute industry.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): Including the Congress (I).

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: All parties, I said. But I ask one question, why not West Bengal Government nationalise? It is not the responsibility of the West Bengal Government? Is it not their authority to nationalise?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Under the Constitutional set-up, can a State Government nationalise a jute industry?

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: Yes, why not? Any industry they can nationalise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is the Central Government who can nationalise.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Basirhat) : They can take over.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : What is take-over ? That comes to the same thing.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY (Calcutta South) : I only wish that my Constituency is saved from a Constitutional pandit.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : But I am not a pandit.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : But you should study it. You are a responsible person... (Interruptions.)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You go on please.

SHRI P. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU : There are certain difficulties and I say them and finish. Export duty must be reduced if we want to increase the exports. Extension of foreign exchange securities up to one year is necessary but now it is not so. Consignment, transfer of jute goods and realisation of dues is given only for 180 days. If it is increased to 270 days, I think it will be easier for them to export jute.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the Minister.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.A. SANGMA) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to the Hon. Members for having taken an active part in this debate & also for having expressed their concern about the present position as well as the future of the jute industry in our country. It is really a matter of great concern for all of us that the jute industry today in our country is really in bad shape. While participating in this debate, most of the Members have accused that these two Bills are not going to solve all the problems of the jute industry. I must make it very clear that I have never claimed that these two Bills are going to solve all the problems of the jute industry. I must make it very clear

that I have never claimed that these two Bills are going to solve all the problems of the jute industry. What I have said is :

“The twin Bills, when enacted, will go a long way in solving some of the pressing and persistent problems of the jute industry.”

Therefore, it is not my case that these two Bills are going to solve all the problems of the jute industry but I do hope that it will certainly help to solve some of the pressing problems of the jute industry. I am not going to speak much on the general conditions of the jute industry. I have already made it very clear at the time of my preliminary remarks when the debate had started. It is because the Government of India has realised that the jute industry today in the country is very much in bad shape that it has appointed a Task Force to go into the problems of this industry.

The Hon. Member, Prof. Rup Chand Pal, referred to the other recommendations and said that there were many more recommendations other than this particular recommendation, and that we have not said anything about them in this Bill. Though he has referred to 40 recommendations, the total recommendations of the Task Force are 58. Except for a few, by and large, the Government are in agreement with the recommendations of the Task Force and of the Empowered Committee, which has been subsequently appointed.

There are three major points on which we are not in agreement with the recommendations of the Task Force. Firstly, they have suggested that the cess should be imposed only on goods which are for export purposes and that it should not be imposed on the domestic sale of the product. We have not agreed with that proposal. We have come forward to say that it should be both on export as well as on domestic sale.

Secondly, they have suggested that the Government should contribute in cash to the development of export.

Our contention is that we are already giving cash compensatory support for export. So the question of further financial help by the Government does not arise.

A third major recommendation was that we should go in for the Jute Board. But we have come forward with a proposal for a Jute Development Council instead. In our view, this Council would be good enough and there is no need for a Jute Board.

Many Hon. Members have referred to the need for diversification of the market. Prof. Rup Chand Pal said that for export we have concentrated on the US market. It is not a fact that we are entirely depending on the US market. Certainly, that has been our major market. But, besides the United States, our jute goods are going to many other countries like USSR, Other East European countries, UK, rest of Western Europe, Canada, Argentina, East Asian countries including Japan and Australia, Africa, West Asia and many other countries. In fact, USSR is taking a major portion of our jute goods. The US has been a good market, which we have been losing for some time now. We are trying to revive our market in the United States and we are hopeful that we would be able to regain our market in that sector also.

The major problem in the industry has been the fall in exports. During the last one decade the production of jute goods has gone up from 1,061,000 tonnes to 1,360,000 tonnes. The internal consumption of jute goods has also gone up in the last ten years. The only problem is that our export has come down very sharply. As far as the domestic consumption is concerned, the Government is taking every possible step to see that there is increase in the domestic offtake. Therefore, we have been taking a number of steps. For example, we have made a policy that our cement industry should use jute bags 100%. We have tried to impress upon our Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers that 100% jute bags should be used. Somehow they have some problem

and it has not come through. I can assure you that the Fertilizers Department will use it more and more. We had an inter-ministerial meeting also in this regard.

Another problem that we have been facing on this front is synthetic substitute. This is a big problem not only in the international market, but also in the domestic market. Therefore, I think it is time when we should examine whether the manufacturing capacity of the synthetic industry could be regulated. I think we have to make this exercise so as to restrict the growth of synthetic industry to give way to more and more internal market to jute goods in our country.

Prof. Pal also spoke about the need to give more importance to Research and Development. I am fully in agreement with the Hon. Member that we must pay attention to research and development. In fact we have two research Institutions. There is Indian Jute Industrial Research Association, Calcutta and Jute Technological Research Institute Calcutta. These two Research Institutes have done a fairly good job. Prof. Pal had given some suggestions. He has cited some of the examples. We have already made achievements in this field. I am not going into its details. Detailed answer about research and development has already been given in Unstarred Question raised in this month in the House. I am not going to elaborate that.

With the passing of this Bill and coming into existence of the Development Council I hope our efforts on the research and development front will also be intensified and we can do much better.

Prof. Ranga has mentioned that the Bill does not make any provision for the representatives of the growers. But it is not a fact. In fact the Bill provides for three representatives from the growers side and these members are to be appointed by the Government and three representatives are to represent employers. It makes six, as against six of the manufacturers and importers.

[Shri P.A. Sangma]

It is a good balance. Mr. Pradhan should not have any complaint and I do not think that you should insist on this.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur):
What about the agricultural workers?

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Jute growers are also owners and they are self-employed people. There are agriculturists, wage earners also.

PROF. N.G. RANGA: 'KHET MAZDOOR'. You have to distinguish between them.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: We have representation of three members.

PROF. N.G. RANGA: I am talking of agricultural workers. That is the blunder that we commit.

They may have this in mind and when they give representation to the growers, they may do so for agricultural workers also.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: In the Bill, there is enough scope for associating members and co-opted members and this suggestion will certainly be kept in mind when we go in for co-opting more members under the provisions of this Act.

Then, many other Hon. Members have also spoken about the need to have an understanding with Bangladesh which has become our competitor. We are very much alive to this problem and in fact we have been trying to have an understanding with Bangladesh on a joint export market strategy. A couple of meetings at the level of Secretary had already been held, one in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and the other at Bangkok. We are on the job. We are trying to convince Bangladesh that we should not try to cut each other's throat but to have a common strategy for our market. Under the UNCTAD, there is also an international jute organisation. Even at this level, we are trying to solve the various problems pertaining to our export.

The most important point that the Hon. Members have raised is about nationalisation. I think, Mr. Gupta and others have raised it. I must say that nationalisation alone may not be the solution to this problem.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY:
Do other things also.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: Mr. Gupta said that there has been nationalisation like NJMC, which is doing very bad. We have all accusations from hon'ble members against NJMC and the Jute Corporation of India. Mr. Amar Roy-pradhan was referring the JCI as a white elephant. So, in your opinion the nationalised mills are in this condition. And at the same time, you come with an argument that the nationalisation is the only solution. Well, frankly speaking, I find there is a lot of contradiction in this proposition.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN:
I have not referred about the Jute Corporation of India's nationalisation. I said, JCI is not doing any job and that is why it is a white elephant.

SHRI P.A. SANGMA: At least, I see there is some contradiction. The Hon. Members are very much aware of the policy of the Government of India with regard to nationalisation or take-over. In fact, nationalisation is the last resort which the Government takes in order to re-vitalise the sick industry. Therefore, we are of the opinion that nationalisation of the whole industry is not going to solve all the problems and that I want to make it clear here that there is no proposal, at present, under the consideration of the Government to nationalise the entire jute industry.

Many Hon. Members have expressed their concern about the closed mills. Shri Gupta was very much vehement on this. I am one with him. He said, "lot of workers are affected". Our figure is 60,000 and he says, 80,000. Whatever may be the figure, they are really in difficulty because of the closing down of 24 mills. But I understand that a Tripartite Committee headed by the Hon.

Labour Minister of West Bengal is on the job and they did have some meetings.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : What is this Government doing? The Central Government has no role in getting these mills opened again? Everything is put on the State Government. These 25 or 29 mills are lying closed and the Central Government has no role to play.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat) : What are you going to do? What do you propose to do about the reopening of the mills?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Our Hon. Labour Minister is here. You can have some sort of exchange of words with him. It is his Department. But I am sharing your concern. They are really in difficulty and we would like to get them reopened.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : The Labour Ministry is concerned with conciliation. But you are concerned with production. And the production is being halted.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : You are concerned that you do not want 60,000 or 80,000 workers who have been thrown out of employment should remain unemployed. Suppose the owners refuse to open the mills and all negotiations fail. In that case, what is the Government of India going to do?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : I think, it is very unfair on his part to lose confidence in his Labour Minister.

SHRI SATYASADHAN CHAKRABORTY : Don't avoid.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : The question is not whether the Labour Minister of West Bengal will be in a position to settle the dispute. The question is that you are representing the Ministry of Commerce and your interest is to see that the production of jute goes up and you can earn more foreign exchange from export. From that context, what do you propose to do?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : As a long-term solution, we have been taking a lot of measures. As I have said in the beginning, the Government of India had appointed a Task Force which has gone into various problems and their recommendations have been referred to the Empowered Committee and the Empowered Committee have in turn, given their suggestions. We have practically accepted various suggestions and we have instructed the various Departments concerned to implement those recommendations. In order to further find out their problems, the Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices is also going into the cost of production aspect of this industry. The Reserve Bank has also constituted a sub-committee to go into financial difficulties. I understand; they have almost completed their report and in a few days' time, they will be submitting the report.

The Central Government trying their best to help the industry. But the problem is, that the workers blame the mill-owners; the mill-owners blame the workers; the State Government blame the Central Government and the Central Government blames the State Government. As Mr. Indrajit Gupta put it very rightly yesterday—I want to quote his language—the political exchanges will not help to solve the problem. This is what Mr. Indrajit Gupta has said. I agree with him that the political exchanges between us will not help. It is only our effort from all sides that will solve the problem.

I think, I have replied to all the major points raised by the Hon. Members.

PROF. RUP CHAND PAL (Hooghly) : When I was speaking, yesterday, I had referred to the recommendations of the Task Force and a major recommendation, was about the Jute Board which was not accepted. One of the recommendations was regarding the lot of workers who are seriously affected by the closing of mills. What is the reaction of the Government regarding that particular recommendation of the Task Force?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Regarding the labour, it is the Labour Ministry who deals with it.

As I have said, all the recommendations have been sent to the concerned Departments/Ministries for taking appropriate action. We take the responsibility of monitoring. It is certainly our responsibility and I can assure the House that we shall do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That the Bill to provide for the levy and collection, by way of cess, of a duty of excise on jute manufactures for the purpose of carrying out measures for the development of production of jute manufactures and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Clauses 2 to 6 and the Schedule. There are no amendments. I put all of them together. The question is :

“That Clauses 2 to 6 and the Schedule stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 6 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P.A. SANGMA) : Sir, I beg to move :

“That the Bill be passed.”

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved : “That the Bill be passed.”

Prof. Sai Fuddin Soz.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ (Baramulla) : Regarding Jute Manufactures Development Council Bill, I would

agree with my friend who said that enough representation has not been provided to larger States having larger number of jute mills. Instead of 6, it could be raised to 8 at least.

Coming to sub-sections, I find the Government rightly has the authority to nominate representatives of workers, producers and other categories.

At (h) on page Clauses 45(4) reads : “five members to be appointed by the Central Government from amongst persons who, in the opinion of the Central Government, are experts in the technological research, jute marketing or agricultural economies.”

In view of this provision which is made for experts, technocrats, there is no need of Clause 3 (7) in which :

“Any officer of the Central Government.....”

is proposed to be put on the Council. What is the need of Central Government Officer to be on the Council? The Council has enough representation. We want technocrats, experts. What is the bureaucrat going to do with this? I think it is redundant and there is no need for this Section Clause 3 (7).

At sub Clause 3 (8) :

“The Council may associate with itself, in such manner, subject to such conditions and for such purposes as may be prescribed...”

Who will prescribe? By the Council or by the Central Government? This needs clarification.

On page 3, sub-Clause 5 (1) :

“The Council may appoint such committees as may be necessary for the efficient discharge of its duties and performance of its functions under this Act.”

Such Committees from among its members or outside the Council? It is ambiguous and I would suggest it should be from amongst its own members;

On page 6, Chapter III, Clause 10
(1) (c) :

“any grants or loans that may be made by any person for the purposes of this Act.”

I do not think any person has ever made any grants. This Clause seems to be unnecessary. I do not know. Prof. Ranga may be knowing whether any person comes forward for making any grants to such Councils.

On page 8 Clause 14 (2) :

“The Council shall furnish a programme of its activities for each year to the Central Government for its information and directions, if any.”

Everywhere we leave some loophole or a bureaucratic practice and redtapism. Why don't you say that at the close of the year the Council will furnish the annual report? We must even define the date. It could be 31st March of that particular year. Why should we make it ambiguous and thereafter no report will be forthcoming and there will be reminders for the same and, therefore, we define as 31st March.

In the financial memorandum, I feel this figure does not seem to be Correct.

Para 6 of the Financial Memorandum says that “it is not possible to indicate precisely the expenditure that may be involved in relation to the above matters”, but a non-recurring expenditure of about Rs. 1 lakh is, however, estimated. I do not know how this figure of Rs. 1 lakh has been worked out. This is non-recurring. What are the details of expenditure? This figure seems to be on the lower side. It cannot be correct. I would have been satisfied if it were Rs. 5 lakhs. But that will be on the higher side; they have indicated a smaller figure to make the Parliament agree. This figure of Rs. 1 lakh is decidedly wrong. As a student of economics I feel that it must be wrong. It can be Rs. 5 lakhs. The Minister knows better.

Can I go to the other Bill which has been clubbed with this?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Restrict yourself only to the Cess Bill for the time being. We are now taking up Bill-wise.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : The Hon. Member has practically read out the words from the Bill. I do not know what he wants ; it is very difficult for me to reply. However, I will reply to a few points. As far as the word ‘person’ is concerned—Mr. Chairman, you are a legal expert and you know—I think ‘person’ also means an institution. An institution is a legal entity. Therefore, an institution if it contributes—can also be called a person under the law.

Regarding technical persons, we have given this provision only to take advantage or benefit of their special knowledge in the industry ; therefore, we have five Members.

PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ : Why bureaucrats ?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : The officers have to run the day-to-day administration; it is the administrative work that they will do. But the technical knowledge of experts is necessary. Therefore, I do not think there is any contradiction in that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That the Bill be passed.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now we take up the Jute Manufactures Development Council Bill, 1983. I shall now put Amendment No. 2 moved by Shri R.L.P. Verma to the vote of the House. The question is :

“That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 21st November, 1983.”

The motion was negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is :

“That the Bill to provide for the establishment of a Council for the development of production of jute manufactures by increasing the efficiency and productivity in the jute industry, the financing of activities for such development and for matters connected therewith, be taken into consideration.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill. Clause 2. There is no amendment given notice of. The question is :

“That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clause—Establishment and Constitution of a Council.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar): Sir, I beg to move :

Page 2, line, 16,

for “appointed by the Central Government” substitute—
“elected by the members of the Council” (3)

Page 2, line 17,—

for “eight” substitute “six” (4)

Page 2, line 26,—

for “six” substitute “seven” (5)

Page 2, line 33,—

for “four” substitute “two” (6)

Page 2, line 37,—

for “three” substitute “seven” (7)

Page 2, line 38,—

add at the end—

“one from each raw jute growing State on the recommendation of the Government of the State concerned.” (8)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do you wish to add anything ?

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Yes, Sir.

My first point is about Chairman of the Council. The Hon. Minister and his Party Members keep on saying that they are democrats. But here the Chairman of the Council is to be appointed by the Central Government. I have given an amendment that the Chairman should be elected by the Members of the Council. After all, they are also your persons. Let the Chairman be at least elected.

My second point is in regard to Clause 3 (4) (b) where it is said, “such number of members not exceeding eight...”. Why eight ? My amendment is that it should be ‘six’. You have already mentioned Agriculture, Commerce, Finance, Industry, Civil Supplies, Cooperation. How many more ? Do you want that all the Departments of the Central Government should be represented ? There should be a stop, and that should be after six.

Who are the Four Members to be appointed by the Central Government to represent the producers of the jute ? Sir, you know very well as to who are the jute Manufacturers, who will be nominated by the Central Government. There are only eight of them such as Birlas, Singhanian etc., etc. And out of 8, only four will be appointed by the Central Government. But, look at the jute workers’ number 2.5 lakhs or so. Out of them you are taking only three. But from out of 8 jute mill owners, jute barons, jute tycoons, you are taking four. So, my amendment is to make it six to be appointed by the Central Government by rotation in alphabetical order to represent the Governments of

Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Orissa, Tripura and West Bengal. Shri Indrajit Gupta has already spoken that more persons should be appointed from West Bengal. My request is that at least this should be done. That is, all the Seven States should have representation. My amendment is that instead of this efforts may be made to see that all the States are represented. Three should be appointed by the Central Government to represent the growers of jute. In this Bill, he spoke very little about the jute growers. They are thirty lakhs in number. Out of them only three are represented here. My amendment is that let all the States be represented there. Why by the Central Government? Let different States nominate the Members. That is my amendment. I hope the Hon. Minister will accept this.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Sir, we are going to nominate more members from West Bengal. Don't worry about that.

About the appointment of the Chairman, we have to see the working of the Development Council. There has been a provision of election to the post of Vice-Chairman. So, I do not think there is any grievance about this. The only problem is about 4(c) regarding the six members to be appointed by the Central Government by rotation in the alphabetical order for the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Tripura and West Bengal. This is by rotation.

PROF. N. G. RANGA : You make it seven.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Our thinking was like this. We have seven States which are jute growing. May be, many more States may become jute growing States. In that case, it will be very difficult to accommodate every state. The only problem is that when the Board will be constituted first West Bengal will be left out. I am sorry. But, I can assure you that when we nominate at a later stage, we shall certainly give adequate representation and shall keep West Bengal in mind.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I shall put all the amendments—Amendment Nos. 2 to 8—moved by Shri Amar Roy Pradhan together to the vote of the House.

Amendments Nos. 2 to 8 were put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Question is :

“The Clause 3 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 3 was added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In Clause 4 to 6, there are no Amendments.

The question is :

“That Clauses 4 to 6 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clauses 4 to 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 7—Functions of the Council,

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : I beg to move :

Page 5, lines 17 and 18—

for “sale of jute” substitute “remunerative price of raw jute” (9)

Sir, if you look into Clause 7(2)(a), it reads :

“Evolving an integrated approach to the jute cultivation in the matter of formation of schemes, extension work, implementation and evolution of schemes aimed at increasing the yield of jute and improving the quality.”

I do agree with it; but how can it be possible without giving incentive to the jute growers, without giving remunerative prices to the jute growers? I think it is not possible. Again I repeat the

Public Undertakings Committee recommendation in 1977-78. They had recommended Rs. 447.54 paise per quintal and now after six years in the year 1983 you are giving them only Rs. 1982 per quintal. So, in the true spirit I would like to put it very categorically, let there be promoting arrangement for better marketing and remunerative price of raw jute. I think it is very simple and the Minister will agree to it.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Sir, as I have said again and again this Bill is meant to seek development of the entire jute industry, not only of the manufacturers—though it is a manufacturers Bill. It is also for the benefit of the growers. I would not agree with Mr. Pradhan that farmers are not getting remunerative prices at this time. In fact, we have received no complaint about the prices of raw jute and the raw jute prices are quite high.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Don't say this thing.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : No, Sir. At least now the raw jute prices are very high.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : No, Sir. I don't agree. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will be astonished to know that when the Central Government i.e. the Jute Corporation of India which is purchasing it, declared the rate at Rs. 192 but now the jute price selling at mill gate is Rs. 305. How is it possible ?

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : Sir. Rs. 192 prices, which has been quoted by Mr. Pradhan is applicable only to a portion of West Bengal. The prices differ from place to place and according to the variety of the jute also they differ. So, there are places in West Bengal, where prices are Rs. 204 and Rs. 202 and there are places where the prices are Rs. 185, as in Assam. In my own State—Meghalaya—the jute price is only Rs. 185, purchased by the Jute Corporation of India. You are certainly getting a price better than that. But I would say that the Jute Corporation of India will enter into the market only when the

prices are very low and it will be only as a support price that we are giving. When prices are already high in the market, there is no question of the Jute Corporation of India coming into the picture. As far as our information goes, at the moment price of Jute in West Bengal is quite satisfactory and the farmers are happy. There is no distress in regard to the price of jute there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I shall now put Amendment No. 9 to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 9 was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That Clause 7 do stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In Clauses 8 to 13, there are no amendments. I put all of them together. The question is :

“That Clauses 8 to 13 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted

Clauses 8 to 13 were added to the Bill.

Clauses 14—Returns and reports of activities of the Council

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now Clause 14, amendment No. 10. Are you moving it, Mr. Pradhan ? You need not speak.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : I am moving it. I beg to move :
Page 8, line 7,

omit “true and” (10)

It says in line 6 of page 8 : “...a report in such form, and before such date, as may be prescribed, giving a true and full account...” I do not know what is the justification for it. Is the Government or the Council in the habit of giving false reports, so that you have to

say that it is a true report. Whenever any report is given, it must be a true report. I think this should be withdrawn.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : I don't agree. It is perfectly all right.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I put amendment No. 10 moved by Shri Amar Roy Pradhan to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 10 was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That Clause 14 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 14 was added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In Clauses 15 to 17, there are no amendments. The question is :

“That Clauses 15 to 17 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clauses 15 to 17 were added to the Bill.

Clause 18—Offences by Companies

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now Clause 18. Mr. Pradhan, are you moving your amendments, Nos. 11, 12 and 13 ?

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Yes. I beg to move :

Page 8,—

omit lines 35 to 38. (11)

Page 8, line 43,—

omit “or other officer” (12)

Page 8, line 44,—

omit “or other officer” (13)

This is about the offences by companies. It is mentioned in line 36 : “...if he proves that the offence was committed without his knowledge.....” I do not know; in this way, they will evade all cases.

Regarding Clause 18 (2), there is no explanation for the words ‘or other officer’. It says in line 42; “any director, manager, secretary or other officer”. You can even write, “a clerk, an upper division clerk or peon”. They can also be liable. It will help the evasive attitude of the company directors, Ultimately, they will escape. I would like you to omit these words.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : These are legal aspects. I don't accept the amendments,

MR. CHAIRMAN : I now put amendments No. 11, 12 and 13 moved by Shri Amar Roy Pradhan to the vote of the House.

Amendments Nos. 11 to 13 were put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That Clause 18 stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 18 was added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : In Clauses 19 to 25, there are no amendments. I put them together. The question is :

“That Clauses 19 to 25 stand part of the Bill.”

Then Motion was adopted.

Clauses 19 to 25 were added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

“That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill.”

The Motion was adopted.

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula
and the Title were added
to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the Minister.

SHRI P. A. SANGMA : I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16. hrs.

DELHI MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION (AMENDMENT) BILL.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING AND
TRANSPORT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : I
beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the
Delhi Motor Vehicles Taxation Act,
1962, be taken into consideration."

As hon. members are aware, motor vehicles taxes are levied and collected by the respective State Governments/ Union Territories. In the case of Delhi, the legislation is to be passed by the Parliament. Delhi Administration has proposed the revision in the rates specified in Scheduled I to the Delhi Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1962 as amended in 1969. The rates of taxes had not been revised for the last about 13 years. While the present rate of taxes are quite low, which have remained static over the last 13 years, there has been enormous increase in the cost of Maintenance, construction and development of roads to meet the increasing traffic demand. In terms of Delhi Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, 1962, the revenues realised through motor vehicles taxes are utilised for maintenance of roads.

During the last decade, there has also been a phenomenal growth in the

vehicle population of Delhi. As against 2.00 lakhs vehicles in 1971-72, the present figure is of 6.60 lakhs.

To meet the increasing cost of maintenance of roads to cater the growing vehicle population, it is necessary that the revenues are enhanced.

Besides this, the present tax rates in Delhi have been found to be very low as compared to tax rates in neighbouring States. To facilitate proper movement of inter-State operations appropriate parity in the tax rates amongst the States is required, lest the disparities should lead to distortion of vehicles getting registered in the low-rate States/Union Territories and their places.

Important provisions of the Bill are follows :—

The Bill envisages an average increase in the rates by about 25 per cent over the existing rates. Important fact to be noted in this is that certain types of vehicles are fully excluded from the proposed increase. These are motor-cycles, scooters, scooterettes, auto-rickshaws and taxies. The hon. members will appreciate that this has been done consciously to ensure that comparatively weaker sections of the society are not at all put to any additional burden. Even in respect of cars and jeeps the increase is a graduated one. The cars and jeeps only with high registered laden weight such as 2 tons are subjected to increase of 32 per cent in tax rate. Such cars are imported ones and normally used by affluent persons. The tax rates on buses are by and large up-graded in tune with the increased maximum seating capacities.

The additional revenue as a result of this increase in the tax rates is estimated to be of the order of Rs. 1.50 crores only.

Another amendment introduced through the present Bill is to empower Administration to revise tax rates to the extent 25 per cent without reference to parliament subject, however, to the condition that the Notification issued in