

12.07 hrs.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE
SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: The Committee on Absence of Members from the Sittings of the House in their Third Report have recommended that leave of absence be granted to the following three Members for the periods indicated against each:

1 Shri Karpoori Thakur—20th June, to 8th August, 1977 (Second Session) and 14th November, to 22nd November, 1977 (Third Session)

2 Shri Y Shaiza—18th June to 8th August, 1977 (2nd Session) and 14th November, to 20th November, 1977 (3rd Session)

3 Shri Ram Naresh Yadav—20th June, to 8th August, 1977 (2nd Session) and 14th November, to 22nd November, 1977 (3rd Session)

Is it the pleasure of the House that leave as recommended by the Committee may be granted?

SOME HON. MEMBERS Yes

MR SPEAKER: The Members will be informed accordingly.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
FOURTH REPORT

SHRI C. M. STEPHEN (Idukki): I beg to present the Fourth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on paragraphs relating to Income-tax included in Chapter III of the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the years 1973-74 and 1974-75 Under Government (Civil) Revenue Receipts, Volume II, Direct Taxes.

STATEMENT RE. AMENDMENTS TO
PULSES AND EDIBLE OILS (STORAGE CONTROL) ORDER, 1977

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI MOHAN DHARIA) I rise to make a statement on some amendments the Government propose to issue to the Pulses & Edible Oils (Storage Control) Order, which was notified on 30 September 1977 in exercise of the powers conferred on the Central Government by Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

This Order prescribed *inter alia* the maximum limits of stocks that could be held by wholesalers and retailers in respect of pulses, edible oils and vanaspathi. As for pulses the stock limits prescribed were 500 quintals for wholesalers for all pulses taken together and 25 quintals for retailers for all pulses taken together. Regarding edible oils, the stock limits for wholesalers were 200 quintals and for retailers 5 quintals, as for vanaspathi the limits were 150 quintals for wholesalers and 5 quintals for retailers.

A period of 15 days was allowed to the stockists to give them time to dispose of the excess stocks that might have been held by them on the date of notification of the order. Subsequently, on 14 October 1977, an amendment was issued exempting edible oils imported from abroad from the purview of the prescribed stock limits.

The Stock Control Order was issued essentially as a de-hoarding measure, considering that large stocks of commodities were being held by dealers, anticipating an increase in prices. The ceiling limits were kept intentionally low with a view to ensuring that the cornered stocks came out open into the supply stream quickly, thus improving the availability position and reducing the prices. The Government had intended to make suitable modifications to the limits and also to provide for distinction between larger and smaller consuming centres after sufficient time had elapsed for the completion of the de-hoarding operation.