

Shri Sadhan Gupta: There has been a decision of the insurance employees to go on strike, which must be averted. If, after discussion, we can persuade the Government to take some steps which will avert the strike I think that is worth-while. In that sense a discussion becomes a matter of great public importance. We can anticipate that the decision will be carried into effect, as it normally happens, unless Government change their decision on the appointment of the All-India Tribunal. Therefore, from that point of view, after the opinion of the House is expressed, something may emerge which will make them revise their decision and which will settle the matter amicably.

Mr. Speaker: We need not argue this point. Anyway I feel very clear that because a decision is taken it does not necessarily follow that it will be given effect to. The situation is developing and not a definite one today to admit of an adjournment motion. It may equally be argued that a situation which could never arise perhaps may arise as a result of discussion in this House. There can be argument both ways. Therefore, the safer course is not to admit this motion at this stage.

DEMANDS* FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS FOR 1954-55

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed with the further discussion and voting on Supplementary Demands Nos. 83A and 132 for grants under the Control of the Ministry of Production moved on the 27th of September, 1954.

The time available is one hour and thirty-four minutes. There are also further demands to be put to the vote of the House, 34, 71, 78, 86, 123, 124 and 133, to be moved by Mr. M. C. Shah within the time-limit that is allotted.

After these demands are disposed of, the Appropriation Bill will come

in and after the Appropriations Bill there will be discussion for one hour on fall in prices of food and agricultural raw materials. The Appropriations Bill will not take long. It is merely a formal matter and no discussion is generally allowed on that.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I was referring to the slow progress at the Neiveli Lignite Mines in South Arcot. As everybody is aware, though these mines contain only inferior quality of brown coal, Government, undertook to work these mines. In the Report issued by the Ministry of Production last year (page 24, paragraph 13) it was said:

"The South Arcot Lignite Pilot Scheme which was inaugurated on the 5th of March 1953 by the Government of Madras is in progress. The Government of Madras expect the pilot scheme to be completed by August 1954"

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Only the other day in reply to a question it was stated that the pilot project has not yet been completed. Sir, I need not elaborate upon the importance of these mines for the industrial development of the south. The only colliery which is near-by which could supply coal to South India is the Singareni Collieries. It is producing only 13 to 14 lakhs of tons a year, whereas the requirements of South India is about 25 lakhs. So, unless and until the lignite mines of South Arcot are developed quickly, there will not be any industrial development of the South.

There are many integrated problems connected with the working of the lignite mines. Special wagons have to be constructed for carrying this coal from the mines to the different places. I do not know what steps are being taken in this direction. I now understand that they have deputed some foreign companies to go into the whole scheme

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

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and find out whether it is an economic one. I cannot understand how at this stage the economics of the working of this mine arises. It has been decided to work this mine because the coal that is now obtained by the South Indian factories from the Bangal-Bihar collieries costs as much as Rs. 70 per ton. There is a big bottle-neck; wagons are not easily available, with the result that the coal has to be brought by sea. Whereas the Indian coal which is landed in Chittagong cost only Rs. 50 to Rs. 54 per ton, the South Indian factories have to pay Rs. 70 per ton. This is all the more reason why the lignite mines of South Arcot should be developed as quickly as possible.

I would in this connection like to know from the hon. Minister whether any Indian mining experts or Indian engineers were ever asked to study the possibility of working these mines, before the help of foreign experts were sought. This is a serious problem. There are Mining Engineers who are very well off in this industry, they have engineering skill in working mines. We have introduced the latest working methods of mining in Singareni Collieries, Kathagudium. Why was this entrusted to foreigners? May I know whether Indian mining engineers were appointed to go into this question and whether they have given a report that they cannot do it?

Shri B. Das (Jajpur-Keonjhar): There are no Indian engineers knowing anything of lignite.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Next I come to the government collieries. Now the ownership has changed. With that I think the captive nature of this colliery has also changed to some extent. It was previously owned by the Railways. Now it is owned by the Production Ministry. The living conditions of the workers in these mines is very miserable. As it is, the living conditions of coal miners is bad all over. Government should be an ideal employer at least

in terms of giving certain amenities to the workers and setting up standards. But they have not gone any far in this direction. For example, though the government collieries realized a profit of Rs. 61 lakhs during 1952-53, what do we find? They have not spent more than Rs. 18 lakhs on amenities for the workers in these two or three years. How are we going to house these workers with this paltry sum of Rs. 18 lakhs. I do not know what is the profit for 1953-54, but we are told that the anticipated profits will be Rs. 40 lakhs. So I would strongly appeal and urge upon the Minister of Production to allocate more money for this purpose.

Another point is retrenchment in these collieries. The Railways require annually 1 crore tons of coal for the running of the railways. And the government collieries are producing only 30 lakhs tons a year. Not only that. Out of these thirty lakhs of tons of coal, a good portion is metallurgical coal which could be utilised for better purposes in our country. So we should immediately put a stop to the utilisation of this metallurgical coal by the railways. I have to refer to another aspect of the matter here. When I had been to the Bihar Collieries and Dhanbad recently, some trade union leaders approached me and said that there is going to be an enormous retrenchment and that about two thousand people are going to be retrenched. These collieries can be improved and the production could be increased. I am told that the requirements of the Railways alone are 1 crore tons of coal a year, and, as I said, our production in government collieries is only 30 lakhs tons. So by increasing the production by opening new pits these workers who are threatened with retrenchment could be employed. I would make this appeal to the hon. Minister. Of course, I have written to him in this connection, to stop this retrenchment and see that they are

all entertained in the new pits that are likely to be opened.

Lastly, I wish to say that I would like the Government not to be a party to this Industrial Tribunal. We have got the Central Pay Commission's recommendations. Those things could be implemented to all. As this is a tribunal appointed by the Government of India, I would very much like that Government which are owning these collieries should not be a party to the tribunal. Let the tribunal decide whatever it likes. Then we shall see whether we should apply it or not, if the Industrial Tribunal gives an award which is more favourable than what is obtaining according to the Central Pay Commission's recommendations. But let not the Government be a party to the tribunal which the Government itself has appointed.

I commend my cut motion to the House.

The Minister of Production (Shri K. C. Reddy): The hon. Member who has spoken just now has referred to three very important subjects. The first relates to the Lignite project at Neiveli in South India. I am willing to say at the very outset that the Neiveli project in South India and its results are of a far-reaching significance to the industrial development of South India. There can be no two opinions either about the utter necessity of that project to be pushed through or about the pace at which it should be put through. Government are of the opinion that every assistance should be given to this project and that this project should be brought to completion in stages as early as possible. But as the hon. Member has admitted, the pilot project, that is, the experimental quarrying project, now going on at Neiveli is being handled by the Government of Madras. In other words, it is not the direct responsibility of the Government of India so far as the progress of the experimental quarrying project is concerned.

It is true in the initial stages there was not as rapid a progress as one would have wished. But latterly, during the previous few months I am glad to say that quick progress has been registered, and if the present pace of progress continues it is very likely that the experimental project will be completed by the end of this year.

It is true, as the hon. Member has pointed out, that in the Annual Report of the Production Ministry it was said that this project would be completed by about August, 1954. But owing to reasons beyond one's control it has not been possible to do so. There is one unexpected feature there in the working of this project, namely, the water difficulty. Though the water difficulty has not yet manifested itself in an aggravated form, still the difficulty is there and one has to recognize it. But on all accounts even now it is hoped that this experimental project would be completed by the end of this year, as I have indicated. Every step is being taken both by the Government of Madras and the Government of India to see that this project is completed at as early a date as possible. In fact, Government are very anxious that this project should be pushed through as I indicated at the beginning of my remarks.

Before I go to the second point made by the hon. Member, I would like to say that though the Government of Madras is handling the project now, the Government of India have come to their help and given assistance in several directions for the progressing of this experimental project. They have given some machinery worth about Rs. 13 to Rs. 15 lakhs. They have also secured help through the T.C.A. They have sanctioned amounts for the drilling operations that are going on there at present.

So far as the main scheme is concerned, which has got to be finalised

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after this experimental scheme is finished we have got to process it very carefully. It is true that there has been, if I may say so, an omnibus decision that full scale operation should be taken in hand after this experimental project is completed. It is true. But when a big project of that kind has to be taken in hand, several preliminaries have to be looked into carefully and finalised. In other words, a project report has got to be prepared on a very careful basis. It is for the preparation of this project report that the services of a British firm have been requisitioned under the Colombo Plan. The report of that firm is expected to be in our hands by the end of this year. After that report is received, we will give thought to the financing of this scheme, the agency through which this scheme has got to be worked out and other important aspects like that.

The hon. Member was displeased or asked a query as to why Indian talent was not being made use of in this connection. It is the policy of the Government of India to make use of Indian talent wherever available to the maximum extent and only where it is absolutely necessary that the Government of India looks across its borders for help. In this case, there have been one or two committees—technical committees—which are manned by Indians. It is true that there is a United Nations expert also. But, in addition to him there are Indian experts who are already in the field there. In addition to that, recently, a few months ago, a committee was appointed by the Government of India consisting of three Indians—two of them are technical people—in order to go into certain aspects of the working of that scheme. They did submit a report and that report has been taken into consideration by the Government of India. It is not as if our technical talent is not made use of, and we simply rush into the lap of foreigners for tech-

nical advice or help. It is in addition to what our Indian technicians have done. It is in addition to their report that we have gone to the British firm under the Colombo Plan for a project report. After that report is received, there will be quick progress in regard to the full scale working of the lignite mine. I would like to reiterate that the Government are very keen on this scheme, which means not only so much for South India, but also to the entire country. I would like to assure the hon. Member and the House that no efforts will be spared on the part of the Government of India and also, if I may speak for the Government of Madras, on the part of the Government of Madras, to take this scheme to a stage of fruition with the maximum speed.

The next point that the hon. Member referred to, relates to the Government collieries. He confined himself to the unsatisfactory condition of the employees there. He characterised the conditions as being very miserable. He was good enough to concede that the conditions of workers all over the collieries are bad. But, he wanted, naturally, that the Government who owned these collieries should be model employers. I would like all employers to be model employers in this country. I would like the working conditions of the employees not only in the collieries, but all over India to be improved to a large extent, so that there would not be any legitimate grievance on the part of anyone so far as welfare is concerned. That is the policy of the Government of India as well. So far as government collieries are concerned, it will be the special responsibility of the Ministry of Production to locate any grievances wherever they exist, study them, and plan for the removal of such grievances, bettering the conditions within a reasonable distance of time, when the Ministry could claim on a just basis that they have improved the conditions to a very appreciable extent. I think the measuring rod for this would be less-

and less criticism on the part of the opposition there about the unsatisfactory conditions of labour in these collieries.

He made specific reference to the housing conditions. I am free to confess that so far as housing conditions are concerned, we could do much more than what we have been doing. It is true that we have got certain schemes in hand. It is also true and it should not be forgotten that out of the 29,000 or 30,000 labourers working in these collieries, nearly 20,000 have some kind of accommodation or other. It may not be all to the expectation of hon. Members of this House or my expectations. It is a fact that two-thirds of the employees have got houses. It should not also be forgotten that some labour working in these collieries are what is known as casual labour. That is to say, they are agriculturists and they carry on their agricultural operations living in their own houses in their own villages. Wherever they are working in our collieries, it is only by way of casual labour that they come here and work. To that extent, the housing requirements are mitigated. That is a different matter altogether. I would like to say, in this connection, that I stated on the floor of the House last year when a similar supplementary demand came up and when hon. Members referred to the working conditions in these collieries, that we are going to intensify and expand our programme for housing in these collieries. Now, we have got a programme for 1954-55 and even later years. I would like to mention this specially. At the instance of the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply, a revised housing programme has been drawn up in which there is provision for the construction of as many as 5752 miners quarters at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,43,90,000. This programme is under consideration in consultation with the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply. If this programme goes through, as I hope it will go through,

it will solve to a major degree, the question of housing labourers in these government collieries.

I may also add that the Labour Ministry have recently sanctioned a revised subsidising housing scheme which stipulates payment of a loan of 37½ per cent. of the actual cost of construction or a sum not exceeding Rs. 1102 besides a subsidy which is payable up to 25 per cent, subject to a maximum of Rs. 735 for a house constructed according to the plans and specifications of the Labour Welfare Fund. The above scheme will be availed of to the extent possible. These are the two major schemes that we have in view. In addition to these schemes, the Ministry of Production have got a programme of building houses for these employees.

Water supply arrangements in the collieries are generally considered to be inadequate. Except in the case of three that are situated in Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, the main sources of water supply are generally rivers and during the summer months, difficulty is unavoidable. Steps are being taken to improve the water supply. Though this point was not raised, I thought I would do well to refer to this as there was some grievance about it.

By and large, as I said in the beginning, I share the dissatisfaction of the hon. Member to some extent that the living conditions of labourers are not quite what we all want and expect them to be. It will be our endeavour to improve them by and by, only commensurate with the limitations of our resources and not on account of any limitations in our intentions and effort.

The other matter to which the hon. Member referred, relates to retrenchment of surplus labour in Government collieries. This has a very long history and it is not necessary for me to go into that history at the present stage. Suffice it to say that at one time, the quantum of surplus labour that was assessed to be

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retrenched in these collieries stood at the huge figure of 5500 or nearly 6000. That was 2 or 3 years ago. In fact, a decision was taken by the Government of India that this retrenchment should be given effect to from the 1st January, 1953, that is to say, about 2 years ago. But, certain technical difficulties intervened—one need not be sorry about them now—and we could not retrench the whole number at that time. What is the position today? Today, instead of about 600 employees who had to be retrenched, in the light of a Fact Finding Committee which went thoroughly into the question, we have got the figure—I am giving the approximate figure—of 1200 to be retrenched. Why do we want to retrench them? Not for the love of it. It is not good for any industry, leave alone collieries, to have surplus labour. It demoralises the workers, if I may say so, and it results in loss to the industry. I had something to do with the trade union movement in my part of the country. In fact, I was very closely identified with labour in the Kolar Gold Fields, and I do know very well what retrenchment means in mass and to each individual worker in any industry. That is why we were not very keen or we did not rush forward to effect this retrenchment in the beginning of 1953 when we had practically decided to go in for this retrenchment. Well, various factors have crept into the situation and today, as I said, instead of five thousand and odd, we have got only one thousand and odd to deal with.

It is true the industrial tribunal is considering this question. We are awaiting the result of the industrial tribunal, but the hon. Members has given me a broad hint that whatever the decision may be there, we have got to take a decision of our own and see to it that no worker is retrenched. Well, so far as the wish of the hon. Member is concerned, I share his wish, but we have got also to take into account

other aspects which are relevant to a proper consideration of this subject. Even if retrenchment takes place, it is the policy of the Government of India that those who are retrenched should be found alternative employment.

May I, Sir, in this connection make an appeal to my friends on the opposite side that wherever alternative employment is offered, they should advise the employees—such employees over whom they have got control and influence—in the interests of the industry and in the interests of the employees themselves to avail themselves of such alternative employment and not be doctrinaires, if I may say so, saying: "Give us employment here, or you shall not retrench. If you retrench, we shall give notice. There shall be a strike. There shall be a paralysis of the whole industry." I put this suggestion across in all humility and as responsible leaders of labour, I do not think they will fight shy of assuming the necessary amount of responsibility in this connection and advise the labourers properly even though for the time being, for the moment, there may be the apprehension that they may be unpopular with the employees.

It has been my luck or ill-luck to have advised labour on some critical occasions when they wanted to go on a general strike of a very huge magnitude. When the excitement was very high, it was given to me to advise them: "No, the strike is not proper on an issue like this. Your conduct must be different." And in the end they found themselves profited by such advice which I had the opportunity to give.

So, while I am not in a position to commit myself irrevocably to any statement that there shall be no retrenchment in any circumstances whatsoever, it shall be my endeavour to avoid retrenchment to the maximum possible extent in the collieries. This subject is still an open one, and I would not like to say anything more

about it. And I hope that whatever step the Government of India will be called upon to take ultimately in the light of all relevant factors, the decision would be of a kind that will be acceptable both to the employees and to the Government.

No other point was made, and I hope that after this explanation the cut motions will be withdrawn by the hon. Member.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is the attitude of the hon. Member regarding the cut motions?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Except the cut motion about housing, I withdraw the rest of the cut motions.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Let me deal with Demand No. 83A first. Has the hon. Member the leave of the House to withdraw his cut motion No. 5?

Hon. Members: Yes.

The cut motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, I shall put the Demand to the vote of the House:

The question is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 4,36,13,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Government Collieries'."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Then I have to take up the cut motions relating to Demand No. 132. The Hon. Member is not pressing his cut motions Nos. 10 and 12. I shall put cut motion No. 11 to the vote of the House.

The cut motion was negative.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Has the hon. Member the leave of the House to withdraw his cut motions 10 and 12?

Hon. Members: Yes.

The cut motions were, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 2,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Production'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 86—EXPENDITURE ON DISPLACED PERSONS

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, we take up demand No. 86. Shri V. G. Deshpande and Shri Rajabhoj. Both of them are absent.

Now, the question is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 7,29,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Expenditure on Displaced Persons'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND NO. 123—PURCHASES OF FOOD-GRAINS—

DEMAND NO. 124—OTHER CAPITAL OUTLAY OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, I take up Demand No. 123.

Shri Tulsidas (Mehsana West): Demands Nos. 123 and 124 together.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Demands Nos. 123 and 124 will be taken up together.

Motion is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 1,31,15,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Purchases of Foodgrains'." **Mr. Kelappan.** Is he moving his cut motion?

Building up of a Central Reserve of Foodgrains

Shri Kelappan (Ponmani): Yes, Sir. I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,31,15,00,000 in respect of Purchases of Foodgrains be reduced by Rs. 100."

Purchase of Rice from Burma

Dr. Rama Rao (Kakinada): I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,31,15,00,000 in respect of Purchases of Foodgrains be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Demand No. 124.

Motion is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture'."

Mr. Gurupadaswamy, Absent; Mr. Sreekantan Nair and Mr. T. K. Chaudhury, Absent; Mr. Tulsidas.

Sugar Import Policy

Shri Tulsidas: I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 in respect of other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Mr. Madhao Reddi, Absent;

Mr. Sivamurthi Swamy. Moving?

Shri Sivamurthi Swami (Kushtagi): Yes, Sir.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What number?

Shri Sivamurthi Swami: Nos. 31 and 32.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Not 30?

Shri Sivamurthi Swami: No.

Failure of Government to Control and regulate Sugar Factories

Shri Sivamurthi Swami: I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 in respect of Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture be reduced by Rs. 100."

Proper Supply of Fertilizers to Villagers

Shri Sivamurthi Swami: I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 in respect of Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture be reduced by Rs. 100."

Import of Sugar

Dr. Rama Rao: I beg to move:

"That the demand for a supplementary grant of a sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 in respect of Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture be reduced by Rs. 100."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, both the demands as well as the cut motions will be discussed by the House.

Dr. Rama Rao rose— (11)

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Shri Tulsidas. I am coming to him.

Shri Tulsidas: I refer to demand No. 124. It is in connection with the sugar import policy of the Government.

The House knows very well the reason why sugar is imported into this country since the last two or three years. At one stage, in 1952, sugar

was surplus in this country, and actually we exported sugar from this country. At that time when there was a debate with regard to the reduction of the excise duty and also subsidising sugar for export, I remember that a warning was given to the Government not to fritter away the stocks of sugar which was considered as surplus in the country. Now, Sir, at that time we felt that the prices of sugar would come down very much, and it was better that the surplus was exported. It was also felt, and it was mentioned in the House, that sugar should not have been allowed to be exported, that the surplus sugar should be kept as a buffer stock. Unfortunately, Sir, sugar has been allowed to be exported and to my mind this sugar stock was frittered away. Further, in next year the production of sugar was considerably less. There are two reasons why the production went down. There was a certain amount of psychology in the country that there was too much sugar in the country and therefore, to a certain extent the sugar factories began their production much later than usual in order to reduce the production. This resulted in lesser production in the subsequent year. In 1953-54 there was still less production—of course, this was due to the bad crop conditions. This is only a history as to why sugar is imported into this country and I only hope that the sugar that is imported today in such large quantities will be reduced very much in a few years to come.

To my mind this is a serious problem as we are frittering away our foreign exchange to a considerable extent. We are today importing sugar—at least in this year we are going to import sugar—to the extent of Rs. 50 crores. It is all right that we are in the happy position today that we have our foreign balance of payment in our favour; but, it is a very serious thing that to the extent of Rs. 50 crores we are sending money outside the country. This would be much more useful for the requirements of our capital goods and other requirements.

I know that the lesser production is not merely due to the sugar policy of the Central Government. There is a considerable blame, to my mind, on the State Governments. They have not made any efforts to see that the sugarcane production in the country increases so that the sugar production can be maintained at a higher level.

Again, we are faced with the situation that the consumption in the country today is gone up considerably because at the time when the sugar was controlled the taste of the people turned to the consumption of sugar instead of *gur* or *khandsari* sugar. Today, we have a consumption per year of about 18 lakh tons, which only a few years back was only about 12 to 13 lakh tons. I do not know how we will be able to reach the production of 18 lakh tons within the next couple of years. Efforts have been made to put up new factories, but I do not know whether the new factories will be able to come up and the production will be brought up to the level of our requirements.

Now, Sir, I come to the question of import policy. At present, we import sugar on the basis of tenders invited. To my mind, this is all right to the extent that we get our sugar, but the psychology in the country that there is scarcity of sugar remains and continues to remain because we import sugar to the extent of our monthly requirements and, therefore, there is always scarcity of sugar. The external price of sugar is about Rs. 17 to Rs. 18 or sometimes Rs. 20 per maund C.I.F. We have an import duty of Rs. 5 per maund.

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri Kidwai): No; it is much more.

Shri Tulsidas: It is Rs. 5 per cwt.

Shri Kidwai: It has been increased this year. It is now Rs. 8/2/- per maund.

Shri Tulsidas: Actually speaking, the imported sugar, including the duty, will cost Government about Rs. 27 to Rs. 28 and we are selling sugar at about Rs. 30. I can well understand the hon. Minister's intention that if the prices

[Shri Tulsidas]

of sugar come down very much, then there is again the question of increasing production of sugarcane. But, there is always the psychology; there is always the blame on the sugar industry that they are the people who try to shoot up prices saying that there is scarcity in the country and unless that psychology is changed I do not think that this continuous shortage of sugar will ever be removed. To my mind, when the Government is importing to the extent of 18 lakh tons of sugar this year, it would be as well that the sugar is allowed to be imported freely, and even if, supposing, a couple of lakhs of tons more come in the country, it would be serving in future as a buffer-stock. As I pointed out, we have to continue import of sugar for the next 5 or 7 years. I do not think we will be able to reach our production to the extent of 18 lakh tons which is our requirement now; perhaps, in the next couple of years our consumption will go up to 20 lakh tons. Therefore, import of sugar will have to be continued for a very long time. If the price of sugar in outside countries is low and if that is allowed to be imported here and sold at a lower price, then the fear is that the price of sugar will go down to such an extent that the agriculturists will not get the price of sugarcane. I can well appreciate that point of view. But, the point is, if the sugar is allowed to be imported freely and the duty can be raised up to such a level so that the price of sugar does not come down below a certain level, then there will be free import of sugar and there will not be the question of psychology of scarcity of sugar all the time. If the sugar is allowed to be imported freely, the usual trend is that the import of sugar takes place in much larger quantities. I am not afraid to do that because even if sugar is imported in very large quantities the price will not go down to that extent because the sugar duty is raised up. Then there will be enough of sugar and the sugar imported will cost to the importer about the same price as it is supposed to be maintained.

The one reason why I feel that a change of policy is necessary is that today we import only a lakh tons per month. Sometimes the shipments may not come in time and there is always the scare of scarcity of sugar. The other thing which happens is that, when tenders are invited, even though the tenders are invited to the extent of 40 or 100 thousand tons, it is known all over the world that India is a purchaser of sugar. The enquiries that go from here are not for 100 thousand tons only but hundred persons make enquiries about 100 thousand tons each, which multiplies to the extent of a million tons or even more. Therefore, the price immediately goes up in the external markets and in spite of India being in need of 100 thousand tons only for that month, the world market gets the idea that India is in need of about a million tons or more. Therefore, if sugar is to be allowed to be imported and we shall have to continue to import sugar to this extent, then it is in the fitness of things that sugar should be allowed to be imported freely. Let the sugar import duty be raised so that the price of sugar does not go down below a certain level. I think that should be followed at present. Otherwise, I feel the position will continue and the price of sugar will continue to remain high and there will always be a scare that sugar is not available in certain parts of the country. On the one hand, we have completely de-controlled sugar and on the other we are keeping sugar imports at State level to continue a very marginal stock in the country. I can appreciate that during the crushing season there is an enormous amount of sugar. There again the Ministry can order a certain amount of release so that all the sugar is not sold out at a particular time and there may be scarcity of sugar. With regard to import policy, I think sugar can be allowed to be imported for some period after the crushing season is over so that sugar comes in as large quantities as it is required. Even if the import takes place in larger quantities, I do not see why the prices should

not go down because, as I pointed out, the import duties can be raised or lowered. In other commodities, the present trend in the Government policy is that the import or export policy is kept free and the adjustments are done by duties—export duties or import duties. I do not see any reason why the same policy should not be adopted with regard to sugar. That is what my feeling is; I hope the hon. Minister will consider this.

Dr. Rama Rao: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, first of all, I want to mention briefly about Burma rice.....

Shri Kidwai: We have left from sugar to rice.

An Hon. Member: We are taking up both together to make it sweeter.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Minister has got the privilege of giving sweet things to the House.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: It is a costly privilege.

Dr. Rama Rao: You know we have contracted to import 9 lakh tons of rice. (*Interruptions*) We propose to cover this in three years. The Burmese people who are not well known for their shrewdness have beaten our Government and they have accepted the very liberal proposal to supply the whole rice in the first year.....

Shri Kidwai: Not the whole rice.

Dr. Rama Rao: The entire quantity of rice is to be supplied at a price of £48 per ton which is fantastic. I do not say that because just now our rice position has become better; I do not want to be clever after the event. I just want to remind the hon. Minister that in 1953 he went to Burma and refused to buy rice at more than £30 a ton. If I am right he refused to buy but one year later.....

Shri Kidwai: I think there is some mistake. We purchased that year 1,50,000 tons of rice at £60 a ton.

Dr. Rama Rao: I stand corrected, but any way it appears the difference in price between 1953 and especially the

beginning of 1954 seems to be fantastic.....

Shri Kidwai: £60 and £40 is a fantastic difference!

Dr. Rama Rao: The position was different. At present moment, the position as it exists is that a cash price of £33 is very high and much higher than what we hear. Now I come to the other £15 which was credited towards the so-called debt.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This seems to work out to Rs. 300 per ton.

Dr. Rama Rao: It is more; it comes to nearly Rs. 440 per ton.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is stated here on page 28 that in all Rs. 84-88 crores were paid for 10 lakhs of tons purchased by the State—it is in the footnote here.

An Hon. Member: That is the internal price.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What was the price internally?

The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri M. V. Krishnappa): It would be Rs. 14 or Rs. 15 per maund whereas imported rice would be Rs. 20 or Rs. 22.

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): We are taking it from the Central pool.

Dr. Rama Rao: That is, in addition to cash we are giving £15 credit towards this. I want to mention very briefly about the debt. Burma owed us Rs. 48 crores originally and the accumulated interest was Rs. 24 crores and this whole amount of Rs. 72 crores is being written off with one stroke of the pen. We ought to collect this debt from the British Government which transferred the debt to us instead of asking the British Government to hold at least part of it.

An Hon. Member: Why should we discuss it on the rice question?

Dr. Rama Rao: This is only part of it; this covers a good part of the debt

[Dr. Rama Rao]

.....(Interruptions) The Rs. 72 crores which Burma owed us.....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Member says that the price paid is heavy.

Dr. Rama Rao: It is very heavy.

Shri Kidwai: But it is the debt question that he is discussing.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: But he says it is included.

Dr. Rama Rao: They say that it is our gift to Burma; the debt is being written off instead of collecting it from Britain. We are now still getting the 1952 stock from Burma which even after re-washing does not get fineness.....(Interruptions).

Shri Kidwai: It is very popular.

Dr. Rama Rao: I am coming to sugar and I hope that he will do something about it. You remember they were paying Rs. 1-12-0 a maund for sugarcane and at that price we were able to export a little sugar. Then the Minister, instead of seeing who had got the greatest profit, instead of tackling the real cause of the high price of sugar in the market, namely, the millowners, got hold of the cane producers.....

Shri Kidwai: You have just heard the millowner.

Dr. Rama Rao: He reduced it from Rs. 1-12-0 to Rs. 1-5-0 and the result was that the cane growers cut down the area and the peasants lost much, with the result that the mills were idle for a long time. The crushing came down. Now we are paying Rs. 52 crores to foreign countries. Just now, Shri Kilachand pointed out.....

Shri Kidwai: He is a millowner.

Dr. Rama Rao: On that point, I agree with him that instead of frittering away our foreign exchange on sugar we can very easily produce here—to that extent I agree with my hon. friend, Shri Kilachand. Now I am coming to the other point....(Interruptions). I request the hon. Food Minister to raise the price of sugarcane

and have a control on the sugar mills. The hon. Minister, whatever be his intentions, has no control on the sugar mills and their owners; that is the whole trouble.

An Hon. Member: They have no control on him.

Dr. Rama Rao: If not on him, many of them are important Congressmen and they can influence the Congress Party. So much so, the officers who have to carry out the orders of the Food Minister are a bit afraid of tackling this big class of millowners. It is a real fact because even if you pay at Rs. 1-12-0 per maund of sugarcane and even if the yield of sugarcane comes to near about 9 per cent—whereas the average yield is more than 9.73 per cent—you can sell—including the cost of production and profits—at the rate of Rs. 30 per maund and the Government can easily sell at Rs. 31 or Rs. 32. But in this case, I am talking of the low-yield sugarcane. If they have proper control over the sugar mills, they can pay a higher price for the sugarcane, give profit to the peasants and the millowners, and at the same time, save our foreign exchange also. In fact, if our rice position is satisfactory, we can have much more sugarcane in parts like Andhra.

I P.M.

But what is the hon. Food Minister doing? He is not tackling the problem properly. He is just strangling the peasant. You know the well-known story. I do not mean to offend any community, but there is a story in my part which is as follows. A Mussalman and a Chettiar were going out on the road, and they were caught by rain on the way; finding no house for shelter, they got into a small temple dedicated to a deity or goddess. As the rain continued, they closed the doors, and slept inside. For want of space—I do not mean offence towards anybody—the Mussalman put his legs on the deity. The goddess could not do anything. So, she woke up the Chettiar and said, will you make him remove his legs from me, or shall I throttle

your throat. The point that I am trying to make out is that while the hon. Minister is helpful so far as the mill-owners and the big sharks are concerned, he is just throttling the peasants, like that goddess, and he is actually strangling the peasant today. It is not an impossible thing to increase the price of sugarcane. He can easily increase the price of sugarcane to at least Rs. 1-9-0. But there is a rumour about it—I do not know how far it is true—that he is going to cut it down.

Shri Kidwai: I have said that.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: You are going to reduce it?

Dr. Rama Rao: I do not know what he said. I do not know whether he is going to accept Rs. 1-9-0 or reduce it still further.

There was a time, you remember, when next to cloth, sugar used to be the biggest item of foreign import, and we were practically helpless. But now conditions have changed. We cannot only produce our entire requirements, but we can export also.

In this connection, I want to say a word on what Shri Tulsidas has said in regard to the free import of sugar. For goodness's sake. I would not ask the hon. Minister to allow it; and if there is any small credit that he gets, it is on this. Though he is unable to handle the millowners, at least he is able to supply—I must give him that credit—sugar at a reasonable price, though at the expense of the poor peasant. If we allow this free import, and allow the millowners to have a free time as usual then the poor peasants as well as the poor consumers will be at the mercy of these millowners and these big merchants.

Shri Jhunjhunwala (Bhagalpur Central): I congratulate the hon. Food Minister on his policy of import. By adopting this policy of import, he has proved himself to be the greatest industrialist.

Shri Kidwai: You are giving a certificate?

Shri Jhunjhunwala: You have surpassed them all.

Ours is a Welfare State. Ours is not a state where Government should take up the role of an industrialist, and show profit, and then say, well, we have made so much profit, by importing sugar, and therefore, our policy is all right. It is a shameful thing; when the industry has been controlled from top to bottom, for the last twenty-one years, with what face are Government coming today and saying that they are importing sugar to the tune of 50 crores worth? When they laid down this policy, and when they gave protection to this industry, they had some programme before them, namely, that India will be self-sufficient within such and such a time, and they had thought that they would be self-sufficient by then. The Planning Commission, whether it was their premature judgment or a mere guess work whatever one may call it, became very jubilant, and this Government also became so very jubilant, took pride saying, what the Planning Commission had thought of achieving in 1954, they have achieved in 1952. I would like to know from the hon. Minister on what basis he had come to that conclusion. But do they not go deep into the matter and find out what is happening? Should they not find out what the high sugar production in 1952 was due to? If there were certain circumstances which had given us more sugar in that year, did the hon. Food Minister try to find out what those circumstances were? Why did he not allow that policy to continue?

It is often said, just as my hon. friend Shri Tulsidas has said, that whenever there is anything wrong, it is the industrialists who are to be blamed. If there is less sugar production, the industrialists are blamed and it is said that the fault lies on the industrialists. They are regarded as exploiters. I agree with those who say like that. But here the exploiters were not only the industrialists, but three elements combined: and the worst exploiter was Government. In 1933, when they gave protection to this industry,

[Shri Jhunjunwala]

they levied a cess of one pice on sugarcane, and said that about fifty per cent of this cess—I do not exactly remember the percentage—would be utilised for the development of cane.

Shri Kidwai: Who said it?

Shri Jhunjunwala: It was the Government that levied the cess. I do not know whether you were at that time in Government or not. I think it was the State Government, and probably you were in Uttar Pradesh at that time.

Shri Kidwai: I was born there. That is correct but I was not in any Government. I may inform the hon. Member that there is no tax or cess today. He will not find it in the Constitution. Therefore, what was possible in 1933 is not possible today. There is no cess now. People call it cess, as it was called cess before. It is a State tax that the Constitution allows them to have, without any regard as to whether sugar is developed or not.

Shri Jhunjunwala: Whether it is a cess or a tax or whatever it is, my point is that Government have been the worst exploiter, and they have stood in the way of the development of this industry, instead of trying to help this industry. In the beginning, they had given us an assurance that the cess is being charged for development of the sugarcane. It was said, we shall produce sugarcane which will in a way give us more turnover, and there will be more sucrose in sugarcane. But compare that time with today. Now you are getting three annas per maund as cess, or as tax, as the hon. Minister says.

Shri Kidwai: As the Constitution says.

Shri Jhunjunwala: Whatever you may call it, whether the Constitution says or somebody else says it, now you are taking protection under the Constitution for this levy. The Constitution was framed in its draft form in 1947, and even before that you had raised the cess to two annas and six pias.

You were there in U.P. at that time, and the cess was raised to 2½ annas. Now, you say that because there is the Constitution, therefore, we do not call it cess, we call it tax.

My point is that in India, we can produce sugar at a competitive rate. But here instead of there being only one exploiter, there are three exploiters, and the greatest exploiter is the Government which does not perform its duty, charges cess on a particular promise and then diverts it as a sort of revenue and utilises it for some other purpose. Now, if the sugarcane producers cannot get sufficient price simply because there is no good output per acre.....

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Is the hon. Member in order in criticising the State Government who are not here to defend themselves against these accusations?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The hon. Member can say it carefully.

Shri Jhunjunwala: I will now proceed with the greatest care. My hon. friend, Dr. Deshmukh, has said that it is a State subject; otherwise, they would have taken some precaution. Here I would like to ask one thing. You have been thinking of rationalising the sugar industry.

Shri Kidwai: Who has been thinking?

Shri Jhunjunwala: If you are not thinking so, then leave the cultivator free, leave the industry free, charge whatever you like, and then you can say: 'Well, who it is who is thinking?' Yesterday, the Commerce and Industry Minister said: 'Well, we are not nationalising industries. But we are controlling the industry'. Controlling an industry amounts to a better way of nationalisation. I quite agree with him: I do not differ from him at all. But here they have totally failed. Whatever my friend, Dr. Deshmukh, may say, that it is a State subject and it is the State's concern, now it is the Central Government who have taken upon themselves the responsibility for fixing the price of cane, for fixing the price of

sugar, for fixing everything, for importing sugar, for charging a high price on sugar, for distributing sugar and for making profit. My friend, Mr. Tulsidas, has said: 'Well, you should allow free import of sugar and you should give licences to everybody who comes for importing sugar'. Probably, the Food Minister will not agree to it and I too do not say that he should agree to it.

Shri Kidwai: I would ask your advice.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: I am not fit to give you advice. You will follow the advice of, say, Mr. Tulsidas.

Shri Kidwai: Very good.

Shri Jhunjhunwala: Though they will not be importing sugar, they will be distributing sugar and in the same way they will be making their own profit. You are saying: 'I shall specially distribute sugar in the State of Delhi'. I understand he is calling for tenders from people who will distribute sugar. There are so many conditions that only "Mr. Tulsidas" can take that agency of selling sugar and nobody else. (*Interruption*) Therefore, it is no concern of his whether he gets licences for importing sugar from outside or whether he gets agency for selling sugar here. (*Interruption*).

As there is no time, it will not be possible for me to give you facts and figures. In the end I say only this, and this can be proved by facts and figures that India is in a position to produce sufficient sugar to compete in the market if these three exploiters take it into their heads to see to the country's interest and not to their personal interest, and they discharge their duty.

Shri Kidwai: I agree with you.

Shri Kelappan: At the time of the presentation of the Budget, the deficit of sugar was considered to be 3.8 lakhs tons. Now, it is 6.9 lakh tons. I do not know what it will be by the end of the financial year. The Ministry do not seem to know their own mind about this question.

Pandit S. C. Mishra (Monghyr—North-East): The more profits they get, the more they import.

Shri Kelappan: Now they are going to import sugar to the tune of Rs. 50 crores. The country was self-sufficient in sugar for the last few years.

The Ministry once thought that they had even a surplus to export, and they lost about Rs. 3 lakhs in the gamble.

Shri Kidwai: We did not lose anything.

Shri Kelappan: Sugar was subsidised so that it might be sold in the world market at a lower price.

Shri M. V. Krishnappa: We made a profit of Rs. 3 crores out of sugar.

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (Gurgaon): At whose expense?

Shri Kelappan: It is said here that a subsidy of Rs. 3 lakhs was given by the Government to the sugar magnates...

Shri Kidwai: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the hon. Member referring to fertilisers?

Shri Kelappan: No, no. I am referring to sugar.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Because I find in the note here some subsidy has been given for fertilisers, and side by side, I find mention about sugar.

Shri Kelappan: If you will kindly look to page 15, it says "Compensation paid to sugar factories on account of export of sugar at reduced price—Rs. 2,23,000". This amount was paid to the millowners.

"A provision of Rs. 3,50,000 was made during the financial year 1953-54 for payment of compensation on export of about 6316 tons of sugar during 1952-53 as a result of the Government's decision to release sugar for export at a reduced price, the reduction being not more than Rs. 2 per maund. Out of this sum, only Rs. 53,304 could be paid upto 31st March 1954 as the question

[Shri Kelappan]

of the admissibility of the pending claims could not be finalised by that date. A sum of Rs. 2.23 lakhs is now required to be paid during the current financial year...

Shri Kidwai: There is no export in the current financial year.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This is only the balance of the previous year. That was in connection with export. That was a different policy, of exporting when there was sufficient stock here at a reduced price.

Shri Kelappan: What I said was that the Government had to pay Rs. 2 lakhs and odd to subsidise the sugar that was exported. The shortage of sugar, I am afraid, is more imaginary than real. Even if there is a shortage now, it can be only a temporary phase and it can be made up without resorting to imports. If the cane growers are paid an economic price, the production of cane will certainly shoot up. Moreover, I want the Government to realise that sugar is not a staple food like rice or wheat. Sir, there are people in the villages who do not take any sugar at all. It was only after the villagers acquired the habit of tea-drinking that they have taken to the use of sugar. Even if there is shortage of sugar, I cannot understand why we should import Rs. 50 crores worth of sugar. Only a fraction of this amount will be enough for subsidising small production units for making sugar from palm juice. It will supply the need and also provide work for thousands of people and will go a long way to solve the problem of unemployment. We are short of ever so many things. This unrestricted import is the remedy which the Britishers adopted. They had a very soft corner for the consumers in this country. Shortage, I believe, must be the incentive for increased production and must not be an excuse for enhanced import.

With these words, I commend my cut motion to the House.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi (Nellore): Sir, I have very few observations to make. It is evidently due to the large import of rice from Burma there was a reduction in the price of rice in India.

Shri Kidwai: Sir, if we import rice at very high prices, as it is said we do from Burma, then why should the price of cheaper rice go down?

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: The very fact that there is a large stock of rice available in the country gives a downward trend to prices in the market.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The reserve is intended for the purpose of keeping down the prices and when prices soar up the stocks would be released.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I am only trying to point out the plight of the rice growers. Between last year's prices and this year's prices there seems to be a variation from 15 to 20 per cent downward.

I have one little doubt to be cleared with regard to the import of rice. Large stocks of rice from Burma are purchased and imported into India and also large stocks of rice are purchased in the surplus districts and are stored up. I have got my own doubts whether we have got sufficient storage facilities to store up all these stocks purchased. If there are not such facilities in cities or the headquarters of the deficit States, such storage facilities can be secured locally in the surplus districts and stocked there.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: They are building granaries at a cost of two crores of rupees.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: Before they thought of building up stocks, before they thought of purchasing large stocks of rice from elsewhere and stocking them they should have thought of building up these granaries. When they are importing in the form of rice, there is every possibility of the rice getting deteriorated much more quickly than if it is in the form

of paddy. If there is any possibility of importing either from Burma or from the surplus districts to the deficit districts, it must be in the form of paddy and not so much in the form of rice because rice deteriorates even within a period of two or three months if it is in the polished state. If it is unpolished, probably, the keeping quality will be longer. But, what prevents the Government from importing paddy and not rice, so that whatever we purchase from outside or from the internal market might be kept on for a longer period without being attended to and without having the necessity of removing the weevils etc? This policy has been pursued for a long time and I have reason to doubt that a large amount of deterioration has set in and large quantities of rice have to be thrown out or, probably, dumped upon the poor consumer who could not afford to get it from elsewhere.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is it rice without husk that is imported?

Shri Kidwai: It is rice without husk. I may inform the hon. Member that last year when we tried to export some paddy from Orissa and also from Andhra, the State Governments and the millers protested that we are taking away their income.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I am also coming to that point. That is why I suggested that storage facilities may be secured internally in the surplus districts so that when that rice is required elsewhere, the paddy can be dehusked and exported in the form of rice, instead of taking the stocks in the form of rice and storing them. It is much better to store them in the surplus districts themselves and then exporting them in the form of rice after dehusking such quantities as are required from time to time. The present policy seems to be pursued without having an eye on the quality of rice that they are finally distributing to the consumer and without having a proper appreciation of the position of the consumer in that respect. We often hear that very

large quantities of rice were thrown out or were sold in the market and, probably, it is the lot of the poor people to take the deteriorated quality rice.

It is said that some one lakh tons of sulphate of ammonia are going to be imported or have been imported. It is already known that large quantities of sulphate of ammonia produced internally are available and not disposed of. When that is the position, there is no meaning in importing.

Shri Kidwai: This was the position in 1952. In 1952, we had surplus of sulphate of ammonia and we found it difficult to store it. Because in 1952 this was the position, you cannot say, 'why are you importing in 1954', when there is hardly any stock with us.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I do not know, Sir, how the production figures will compare with what has been now said by the hon. Minister for Food.

Shri Kidwai: I did not say anything about production.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I would like to say that today there may not be any surplus stocks of ammonium sulphate. But whether the offtake of ammonium sulphate this year will be the same as of last year or whether next year the offtake will be the same as this year in view of the falling price of foodgrains.

Shri Kidwai: It is much more.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: In regard to this sulphate of ammonia there seems to be a mania.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: It is a very good mania.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I would like if the hon. Minister would understand whether this mania is good or bad.

An Hon. Member: Mania or megalomania.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: I would only suggest to the hon. Minister that some investigation should be made into the products that are grown with the aid of sulphate of ammonia. I have grave doubts, if there is a chemical analysis of the grains that are produced with the aid of sulphate of ammonia or of the vegetables that are produced with the aid of that, there may be something which may have some harmful effect on the human organism and human health. I would only suggest that a scientific investigation might be made and that the people should be assured, that further use—or rather indiscriminate use—of sulphate of ammonia would not in any way affect human health.

Just a word about the import of sugar, Sir. It is very unhappy that the Government of India should think of large imports of sugar. While we were promised last year that there is a large surplus of sugar in India which has to be or can be exported out of India, and we all felt very glad that sugar production has increased and that the sugarcane grower's position is also going to be improved. In 1954, we see just the reverse of it. We are going to import several lakhs tons of sugar which is going to affect not only the internal consumer but also—in a way—the productive capacity of our sugar mills. While I do not very much appreciate any attack on the sugar mills.....

Shri Kidwai: Of course, not.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi:....I would suggest that the grower's position must be taken care of. We have known that in 1953 there has been a 25 per cent. reduction in the cane prices and I am told that there might be a further reduction. I do not know what the present policy of the Government is.

Shri Kidwai: To reduce it further.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: The hon. Minister assures us a further reduction and thereby assures that the con-

dition of the sugarcane grower will be further reduced. There has been a clamour both in North India and South India that there must be an appreciation of the sugarcane prices, which unfortunately the Government is not able to appreciate very much. There has been not a mere agitation but a real feeling that the Central Government is not treating the sugarcane growers well. On the other hand, it is pursuing a policy of reducing the sugarcane prices and thereby affecting the sugarcane cultivator both the owner of the land, who is the tiller of the land, as well as the tenant suffer on account of this reduction in prices or further reduction of sugarcane prices.

In last week's Madras papers I have seen that there has been a slight appreciation of the extent of sugarcane acreage, but that should not delude us into feeling that everything is all right in South India and that the mere fact that there is an appreciation in the acreage of sugarcane means an appreciation on the part of the sugarcane grower that he is able to put up with the reduced prices and, as such, he can sustain himself. On the other hand, we have to consider in what areas such appreciation of sugarcane acreage has been there and in what areas it has not been there. Probably, the appreciation of sugarcane area seems to be more in places where there are no sugar factories and we have yet to know whether there has been an increase in the sugarcane area in places covered by sugar factories in South India. The SISMA formula, no doubt, helps the cane grower to some extent, but in actual working, there seems to be a loud noise against that also.

Shri Kidwai: I have not heard any.

Shri Ramachandra Reddi: The deaf man hears nothing, and as long as the Government wishes to be deaf, there is no possibility of making them react to any agitation that is going abroad. Though the position in South India is, according to the Government

of India, encouraging, the position in North India seems to be worse. They do not seem to have any benefit out of this formula and their cost of production seems to be much higher than in South India. In the circumstances, it behoves the Government to reconsider the entire situation in the light of the sugarcane growers' plight and to see that the appreciation of the former price of 1952-53 is revived, namely, Rs. 1-12 per maund. It has been said by the hon. Member, Shri Jhunjunwala, that we have to think of the welfare State. The welfare of the sugarcane manufacturers alone should not be taken into consideration; the welfare of the sugarcane producers, since sugarcane is the basic material for the production of sugar,—has to be thought of more closely. There is no use of simply snapping at the position of the sugarcane grower and much has to be done to revive his enthusiasm and to see that we do not import any sugar in future years.

Finally, I would only urge upon the Government the need to look into the question of exporting or importing paddy and not rice, and if there is a possibility of or if there is a need for agitation in favour of importing only rice from a surplus district to a deficit district, the storage facilities should be found out locally in each district and whenever rice is wanted for export, then and there it must be de-husked and sent abroad. Otherwise, the percentage of deterioration of rice will be greater and the consumer ultimately will suffer on account of it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava may now speak. I will then call upon the hon. Minister.

पंडित ठाकुर दास भार्गव : जनाब डिप्टी स्पीकर, मेरा इस सम्बन्ध में बोलने का कोई विचार नहीं था, लेकिन जो कुछ बहस में सुनी और श्री झुनझुनवाला की जो स्पीच अभी सुनी, उन सब को सुन कर मुझे कुछ कहने का साहस हुआ है। मैं इस मौके पर जब कि

कटमोशन पेश हैं, यह अर्ज करना नहीं चाहता कि सरकार कल्टीवेटर के लिये क्या प्राइस मुकदर करती हैं और जो शुगर मैन्युफैक्चर्स हैं या शुगर फैक्टरीज वाले हैं उनको कितना फायदा रहता है या साउथ के अन्दर नुकसान है या नार्थ के अन्दर कितना नुकसान है। मैं जो कुछ इस वक्त आपके सामने अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ वह इन सब से मुस्तलीफ है।

सन् १९२२ में जब सरकार ने शुगर इंडस्ट्री को प्रोटेक्शन दिया और जो आज तक शुगर इंडस्ट्री की सूरत रही है और जैसी हालत शुगर की हमारे सामने गुजरी है उससे हमें यह उम्मीद थी कि हिन्दुस्तान थोड़ा ही असें में शुगर के मामले में सेल्फ सफिशियंट हो जायगा। पिछले तीस वर्षों में हमने देखा कि शुगर की यह हालत थी कि दश में शुगर सात, आठ रुपये मन के हिसाब से बिक रही थी और हम यह सोचते थे कि सात आठ रुपये मन के हिसाब से बेच कर हम किस तरह सारी शुगर फैक्टरीज को उठा सकेंगे। करीब तीन वर्ष हुए शुगर इस दश के अन्दर इतनी पैदा हुई कि शुगर एक्सपोर्ट भी की जायगी और अगर वह बाहर नहीं भेजी जायगी तो न मालूम शुगर किस भाव पर जाकर बिकेगी, लेकिन हम क्या देखते हैं कि बजाय बाहर भेजने के पिछले दो वर्ष के अन्दर तकरीबन् ६, ७ लाख टन शुगर बाहर से मंगवायी जा रही है। मैं अपने आनरबल मिनिस्टर साहब की खिदमत में बड़े अदब से अर्ज करूंगा कि जहां सारे दश भर में यह तसल्ली है और संतोष है कि हमारे आनरबल मिनिस्टर साहब ने इस खुराक का मसला हल कर दिया और करोड़ों और अरबों रुपया इस दश का बाहर जाने से बचा दिया। लेकिन मैं अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि यह जो करीब ५२ करोड़ रुपये की शुगर बाहर से इस दश में आती है, वह शुगर यहां नहीं आनी चाहिये, अगर हम ने पूरे तौर पर अपनी पासिबी में कामयाब होना है। मैं जब इस हिसाब को देखता हूँ और पढ़ता हूँ कि ५२ करोड़ रुपये की यहां पर तकरीबन् शुगर आयेगी Against the total expenditure of Rs. 52-66 crores provided for during

[पीठित ठाकुर दास भार्गव]

1954-55, recoveries of Rs. 56.47 crores are anticipated during the whole year on account of sales of sugar.

गवर्नमेंट समझती होगी कि बसूली ५६ करोड़ रुपये की होगी जब कि शुगर बाहर से ५२ करोड़ रुपये की आयेंगी, तो इसमें करीब तीन करोड़ रुपये का फायदा रहेगा। फायदा रहेगा या नहीं, स्टेट को कितना फायदा होगा और सेंट्रल गवर्नमेंट को कितना फायदा होगा, मैं इससे कंसर्नड नहीं हूँ। हमारी हालत तो उस क्यूरे की तरह से हो रही है जिसके मुँह में हड्डी है, उस हड्डी में से खून आ रहा है तो उसको यह स्थाल दूर कर देना चाहिये कि वह खून उस हड्डी में से आ रहा है। दरअसल उस हड्डी में से खून नहीं आ रहा है, बल्कि उसके मुँह से ही निकल रहा है। यह ५२ करोड़ रुपया हमारा देश का दूसरे देशों में जा रहा है, मुझे इससे वास्ता नहीं कि गवर्नमेंट इस शुगर की बिक्री पर करीब तीन करोड़ का मुनाफा कमायेगी, मरं नजदीक यह इम्पैटीरियल है। मैं तो यह चाहता हूँ कि हमारे इस देश में जो शुगर के लिहाज से शायद दुनिया भर में सबसे अच्छा मुल्क है जहाँ शुगर पैदा हो सकती है, मैं तो चाहूँगा कि इस देश के अन्दर इतनी शुगर पैदा होनी चाहिये कि हमें बाहर से न मंगवानी पड़े। वह भी एक वक्त था जब सन् १९५६ और १९६० में हम करोड़ों मन शक्कर इस देश की दूसरे देशों में भेजा करते थे। सन् १९३२ में बड़े जोर शोर से सारं फिगर्स शुगर के मुताल्लिक गवर्नमेंट के सामने रखे गये थे और उस समय जो पुरानी गवर्नमेंट थी उसने इस इंडस्ट्री को प्रोटेक्शन दिया था इस उम्मीद में कि यह देश शुगर में जल्दी ही सेल्फ सफिशियेंट हो जायगा। मगर आज हालत यह बन रही है कि करीब ५० करोड़ या ५२ करोड़ की शक्कर बाहर से आती है, तो हर एक हिन्दुस्तानी का सिर शर्म से झुक जाना चाहिये कि जो चीज हम अपने देश के अन्दर पैदा कर सकते हैं वह हम बाहर से क्यों मंगवाते हैं। हम लोगों को, हमारे कन्सिडेंट्स को, हमारे मैनेजिंग्जर्स को, हर एक को शर्म महसूस होती है कि एक एसेन्शियल चीज जो हमारे देश

में पैदा हो सकती है और हमारे देश का रुपया देश के अन्दर रह सकता है, उसे हम उस चीज को बाहर से मंगाने में खर्च करते हैं। इसीलिये, मुझे ज्यादा जोर से कहने की जरूरत नहीं है, मैं महसूस करता हूँ कि हमारे आनरबल मिनिस्टर साहबान इस बात को खुद अच्छी तरह महसूस करते हैं कि किस तरह से देश का रुपया डूब हो रहा है।

पीठित श्री सी० शर्मा (जिला मेरठ—दक्षिण):
वह शर्मिंदा हैं।

श्री किष्किर्ण : नहीं, हम शर्मिंदा नहीं हैं।

श्री नंभू लाल शर्मा (सीकर) : उन को शर्म आती ही नहीं है।

पीठित ठाकुर दास भार्गव : मैं बहुत अद्ब से अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि यहाँ पर अक्सर कहा जाता है कि हमारे देश में पहले के मुकाबले में बहुत ज्यादा जमीन बाईं जाती है। पिछले दो साल हुए जब तक खुराक का मसला हल नहीं हुआ था, उस वक्त लोग फिगर्स कोट करते थे कि हमारे यहाँ जमीन ज्यादा बाईं जाती है, लेकिन पैदावार कम होती है। यह तो उसी तरह से हुआ जैसे कि कहा जाता था :

“फतेह सरकार की होती है, कब्जा जर्मन का होता है।” हम लोग अब क्या समझें कि हम खुराक के लिहाज से तो सेल्फ सफिशियेंट हो गये हैं लेकिन शुगर में कमी वाकय हो गई है ? मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि जो खुराक के अन्दर बेहतर है दुई थी क्या वह शुगर की कास्ट पर दुई थी ? आखिर यह किस चीज की कास्ट पर दुई है ? अगर अब लोग शुगर ज्यादा खाने लगे हैं, तो बड़ी खुशी की बात है। लेकिन ताहम अगर शुगर खाने से हमारा रुपया इस तरह से बाहर जाता है तो इस मुल्क में गुड़ भी तो पैदा होता है। आप को चाहिये कि आप इस मामले में रिवर्ट बैक करें।

मैं अर्ज करूँगा कि जब हमारा ५२ करोड़ रुपया इस तरह से बाहर चला जायेगा तो हमें वही मुसीबत नजर आयेगी जो कि खुराक के

अन्दर नजर आती हैं। मैं अदब से अर्ज करूंगा कि इस पर गौर फरमाया जाय और जितनी जल्दी हो सके दश के अन्दर इस का इन्तजाम किया जाय। इस दश के अन्दर आप ने पानी का इन्तजाम किया, जमीन आप ने बहुत तोड़ी है तो कोई बजह नहीं है कि हम शुगर आइन्दा भी बाहर से मंगवाते रहें और इतना शुगरकेन पैदा न करें जिस से कि हम शुगर के मामले में सेल्फ सफिशियेंट हो जायें।

मेरी गुजारिश यह है कि जहां हम गवर्नमेन्ट को क्रीडिट देते हैं कि उस ने इतनी अच्छाई में फूड प्रोब्लमस को साल्व किया है, वहां शुगरके मामले को देखते हुए उस में डिस्ट्रिक्शन होता है और उस क्रीडिट में कमी होती है जो आप ने कमाया है।

Shri Kidwai: Sir, the supplementary demands cover the purchase of rice, import of sugar and import of fertilisers. These three items have been attacked from different angles of views.

When Mr. Tulsidas Kilachand started speaking and spoke of frittering away the foreign exchange of the country, I thought he was thinking on the lines on which Pandit Bhargava expressed himself in the end. But, no. All that he wanted was that instead of Government importing it, the private traders should be allowed to import it. Then the foreign exchange will not be frittered away and it will serve the purpose of the country.

Then another hon. Member said. If you raise the price of sugarcane, now that the price of rice is going down in Andhra, the cultivators will grow more of cane and will grow less of rice. I agree that that danger is there. He hopes it: I fear it, because I come from that part of the country where sugarcane is cultivated over large acreages. Whenever the prices of alternative crops are low, next year there is more sugarcane and less alternative crop. And what is the result? The price of *gur* goes down to an extent that it becomes unecono-

mic. The House will remember what happened in 1952. The cane crop was so very good that all the factories together could not crush it; *gur* prices came down from Rs. 19 to Rs. 5½, and the poor cultivator had to suffer. Therefore, whenever you give a higher price to sugarcane than the alternative crop justifies, it happens that sugarcane has to be burnt. The U.P. Government made a special request to the mill-owners to continue crushing in May and even in the first week of June; the poor cultivator had to be content with a lesser price. Instead of Rs. 1/8 or Rs. 1/12 that was the price at that time, the millowners paid only Re. 1/- and also kept something back, because it was agreed that the payment would be according to recovery. So, all these things happened.

It was said that in 1952 we produced about 15 lakhs tons of sugar. True. But imagine the sufferings of the peasants who cultivated the sugarcane. Some had to burn their crop; some had to convert it into *gur* and sell it at Rs. 5/8. We should, therefore, keep these things in mind before fixing the price of sugarcane.

Then there is the question of imports. People say that we should not import. We have got money accumulated in London and it is growing every year, while we here are short of several essential things we need. How are we to bring it here. You can bring it by importing the things that this country requires. Of course, I do admit that we should not fritter away our resources. Mr. Kilachand said—when he was thinking of private imports, not Government imports,—that these should be used for the import of machinery and other things. But what is the money that we have spent in importing machinery during the last five or six years, Pandit Bhargava may be content with investing this money at half a per cent in some London Bank. But I would like this money to come here and to be spent for the things we need.

[Shri Kidwai]

Another hon. Member suggested that this money could be utilised for developing cottage industries which will give employment to a number of people. That money is with us. We have got surplus money with the consumer.

Much has been said about rice stocks. Whatever rice stocks Government possesses, it means that that stock has been taken away from the market and hoarded. That is keeping the price of rice high. And whatever we have imported from Burma is also in Government stock. Therefore, it should not affect the market. But if the prices are still going down, it is because the country has got more rice in stock with the merchants than the country can consume. There has been so much of calamity, floods, scarcity of rain, and still you find that the prices of rice are going down and not going up. This is an assuring feature which the country should welcome.

In regard to fertilisers an hon. Member asked, last year or in 1952, we found it difficult even to store our production: why is it that we are importing this year? From the State from which the hon. Member comes there is talk of shortage of fertilisers and fertilisers being sold at higher prices in the black market. That is why we are importing. The cultivators of this country have taken to using fertilisers and, therefore, we will have to import it in larger and larger quantities for the next three or four years till we have established one or two additional factories.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What about the cut motions?

Dr. Rama Rao: I should like to withdraw mine.

Shri Kelappan: I also.

The cut motions were, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 1,31,15,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Purchases of Foodgrains'."

The motion was adopted

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The cut motions moved are No. 28 by Shri Tulsidas, No. 31 and No. 32 by Shri Sivamurthi Swami and No. 35 by Shri Kelappan and Dr. Rama Rao. Need I put them to the House?

Shri Tulsidas: I beg leave of the House to withdraw my cut motion.

The cut motion was, by leave, withdrawn

Shri Sivamurthi Swami: My cut motions may be put to the House.

Dr. Rama Rao: My cut motions may also be put to the House.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Very well. I shall put cut motions Nos. 31, 32 and 35.

The cut motions were negatived

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The question is:

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 34,79,80,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Other Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture'."

The motion was adopted

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The other Demands with respect to which there have been no cut motions, I will put together.

Order, order. I will not go on. Hon. Member has no rules and regulations in this House.

The question is:

"That the separate supplementary sums not exceeding the sums shown in the third column of the order paper be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof:

Demands Nos. 34, 71, 78, and 130."

The motion was adopted.

[The motions for Demands for supplementary Grants which were adopted by the Lok Sabha are reproduced below—Ed. of P.P.]

DEMAND NO. 34—CURRENCY.

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 76,31,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Currency'."

DEMAND NO. 71—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 21,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Administration of justice'."

DEMAND NO. 130—CAPITAL OUTLAY OF

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 3,50,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Scientific Research'."

DEMAND NO. 130—CAPITAL OUTLAY OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR

"That a supplementary sum not exceeding Rs. 4,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the

charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1955, in respect of 'Capital Outlay of the Ministry of Labour'."

APPROPRIATION (NO. 3) BILL

The Deputy Minister of Finance (Shri M. C. Shah): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1954-55.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1954-55."

The motion was adopted.

Shri M. C. Shah: I *introduce the Bill and beg to move:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1954-55, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

...That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of the financial year 1954-55, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now we will take up the clauses.

*Introduced with the recommendation of the President.