

MESSAGES FROM THE RAJYA SABHA

Secretary: Sir, I have to report the following two messages received from the Secretary of Rajya Sabha:

(i) "In accordance with the provisions of sub-rule (6) of rule 162 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to return herewith the Appropriation (Railways) Bill, 1955, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 10th March, 1955, and transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations and to state that this House has no recommendations to make to the Lok Sabha in regard to the said Bill."

(ii) "In accordance with the provisions of sub-rule (6) of rule 162 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to return herewith the Appropriation (Railways) No. 2 Bill, 1955, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 11th March, 1955, and transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations and to state that this House has no recommendations to make to the Lok Sabha in regard to the said Bill."

HINDU MINORITY AND GUARDIANSHIP BILL.

The Minister in the Ministry of Law (Shri Pataskar): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Report of the Joint Committee in respect of the Bill to amend and codify certain parts of the law relating to minority and guardianship among Hindus.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

TWENTY-THIRD REPORT

Shri Kasliwal (Kotah-Jhalawar): I beg to present the Twenty-third Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions.

REMOVAL OF RESTRICTION ON MOVEMENT OF WHEAT

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. P. Jain): As the House is aware, the new wheat crop is now in sight. The State Governments and the trade are of opinion that there may be sizeable surpluses in parts of the country. The prospect of the crop in Rajasthan, the Punjab, PEPSU and Uttar Pradesh is good and surpluses are expected. It is necessary for protecting the interests of the agriculturist that suitable steps should be taken before the arrival of the crop, so that the prices do not register a sharp decline immediately after the harvest.

One such measure is the removal of zonal restrictions on the movement of wheat. Wheat is the only foodgrain whose movement is now controlled, and what is now proposed is a culmination of Government's policy of de-control.

The country is now divided into three wheat zones, namely, the Northern, the Western and the Eastern, six States forming a separate unit each. The purpose of this division was that, in view of the over-all deficit in wheat, the highly deficit pockets such as Bombay and Calcutta should be cordoned off and supplied from imported stocks, so that the demand did not push up internal prices, and to reserve the markets of these two cities for imported stocks in case India was called upon to take her full quota under the International Wheat Agreement.

There are apprehensions that the price of wheat may come too low in some parts of the country. As for imports, it is unlikely that the obligation to take the full quota under the International Wheat Agreement would be enforced, but even if this happens, such imports will be utilised to build up the proposed reserve. In view of the good crop in sight and the easy surplus position, there is little risk of wheat being in short supply. However,