

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

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(i) line 16, for "four members" substitute "five members"; and

(ii) line 22, add at the end: "and one shall represent the Ministry of the Labour".

The motion was negatived.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That clauses 2 to 5, clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 5, clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed".

Shri S. C. Samanta: Lakhs are being 'spoiled' in the lac industry.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: Your complaint is that we are not spending.

Shri S. C. Samanta: I thank the hon. Minister for this Bill, and I hope that an exhaustive amendment will be brought forward in the near future. He has shown to us the difficulty that the commodity committees cannot spend money on labour facilities and other things. I will request him to see that a certain sum should be with the reserve fund of such committees and the rest only should go to Government for ameliorating the conditions of labour. This is my suggestion.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: I have noted the suggestion.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed".

The motion was adopted.

INDIAN COTTON CESS (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Cotton Cess Act, 1923, as passed by the Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

I am glad that all these two or three Bills are coming before the House simultaneously. The purpose of this Bill also is substantially the same as that of the Bill which has just been passed by the House. Essentially, we want to give representation to Parliament. Here also there is a provision for two Members from this House and one Member from Rajya Sabha to be represented on the Indian Central Cotton Committee. We are also providing for larger representation of the growers on this committee. Originally, we had 9 representatives of cotton growers, 2 from Bombay, 2 from Madras, 1 from Punjab, 2 from U.P., 2 from Madhya Pradesh. This has been very substantially increased to as big a figure as 26; it is nearly 300 per cent. The representation will be, Bombay 5, Madhya Pradesh 5, Hyderabad 4, Madhya Bharat 2, Saurashtra 2, Madras 1, Andhra 1, Bhopal 1, Mysore 1, PEPSU 1, Punjab 1, Rajasthan 1 and U.P. 1.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao (Khammam): How do they relate to the production of cotton in those States?

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: This is roughly according to the acreage under cotton.

So, the main purpose of this Bill was to meet the wishes of this House. They had suggested some time ago—it was in 1953—that the Parliament should be represented on these commodity committees and the growers' representation should be increased. We have done this at the cost of the Government of India's nominees. Originally, we had 15 nominees whom we could nominate on the Indian Central Cotton Committee and we have reduced this to only 6.

Mr. Chairman: Your nominating power is not reduced; it is there.

Dr. P. S. Deshmukh: These representatives are generally recommended by the States and to that extent we do not generally interfere. So, the hon. Members will be able to see that we have carried out their wishes very substantially, if not very fully—probably more than they themselves expected. The total strength of the Committee which was 53 has now gone up to 66; out of which 26 will be growers' representatives, 3 will be Parliament Members. Some of the other members who will be more or less interested in the growers' interest will also support them. Therefore, the interests of the growers will be protected far better.

There was, incidentally, one other difficulty with the original Act. Therefore, we are defining 'managing agent'. There was some difficulty in the collection of the cess according to the original Act. Originally the term used was 'owner' and it was not defined anywhere. So we have taken this opportunity of putting in an amendment in such a way that nobody would be able to avoid paying the cotton cess which goes to the Indian Central Cotton Committee. The word "occupier" is substituted for the word "owner" and the word is defined here. We have also used "managing agent" having the meaning assigned to it in the Indian Companies Act, 1913.

There is nothing controversial in this Bill. One amendment is for removing the difficulty in the collection of the cess and the others are to meet the wishes of the House for larger representation. I hope the House will accept this measure:

5-46 P.M.

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

Mr. Speaker: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Cotton Cess Act, 1923, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sri Sadhan Gupta (Calcutta South-East): This Bill is of rather greater importance than the small time allotted to it suggests. The Bill deals with

the constitution of a committee no doubt, but the committee is charged with the work of applying the cess collected on cotton. The importance of the cess is very much as far as growers are concerned, because the use of the cess is for the purpose of promoting technological and agricultural research as provided under section 12 of the Act, and, of course, assistance to manufacturers is also contemplated as well as assistance for the purpose of marketing. Whatever might have been the importance of the cess previously for the purpose of assistance to manufacturers or for the purpose of marketing, today the importance of the cess is bound to be in the assistance rendered to growers of cotton and in the matter of technological and agricultural research, because manufacturers are hardly likely to be benefited very much and hardly likely to care very much for the relatively paltry sum that is recovered from the cess. I think the latest recovery is about Rs. 50,00,000 or so. I am not equipped with the up-to-date figures, but even if it is Rs. 50,00,000—it could not have been more—the cotton manufacturers in our country are not likely to be interested in so small a sum. That is the importance of the cess. It is the vital concern of the growers.

When we look at the amendments proposed in the Bill, we find that the Committee is heavily weighted with the representatives of industry and trade and not with the representatives of the growers. Although the growers are the most interested party in application of this cess, yet the heaviest weightage is given to industry and trade. For example, if you just look at the new proposed section 4 of the Act, which is introduced by clause 3, there is the Vice-President of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research; I have no quarrel with that. Then there is the Agricultural Commissioner with the Government of India; he may be there. Then there are two persons to be nominated by the Central Government to represent that Government; here, of course, some amount of bureaucracy will come in.

[Shri Sadhan Gupta]

Then there are fourteen persons to be nominated by the Central Government, to represent respectively the Agricultural Departments of the Governments of the States—several States are mentioned. Here also there is bureaucratic weightage. Now, No. 6 is: 26 persons to be nominated by the Central Government in consultation with the State Governments concerned to represent the cotton growers of whom 5 shall be nominated from each of the States of Bombay and Madhya Pradesh, 4 from the State of Hyderabad and two each from some of the other States mentioned. Here also it is the Government who would nominate the cotton growers—I do not know what kind of cotton growers they nominate. Obviously, here in the name of cotton growers some persons congenial to the Government will get in.

Then, No. 7 is: 8 persons to be nominated respectively by the East India Cotton Association, the Bombay Mill-owners' Association, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce, the Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay, the Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association, the Tuticorin Chamber of Commerce, the Upper India Chamber of Commerce and the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation. All these bodies are either interested in the textile industry or are interested in the cotton trade.

Now, the application of the cess in today's context is not likely to assist the textile industry very much. It is also not likely to assist the cotton trade very much. But they have a heavy weightage.

Then again, 4 persons are to be nominated by the Central Government to represent the cotton manufacturing or cotton ginning industry, of which two shall be nominated to represent the industry in the State of Madhya Pradesh and so forth. Now, it is either Government nominating certain interests supposed to be cotton growers or certain officials of the bureaucracy or the trade and

industry nominating their representatives. The net result is that the growers do not get a genuine representation and trade and industry get heavily represented at the expense of the growers.

In this representation of the trade and industry we find firstly the name of the East India Cotton Association. We know how the East India Cotton Association came into conflict with the Forward Markets Commission because they sought to put an end to forward trading by the East India Cotton Association. That happened and in the course of the Rajya Sabha debate on this very Bill the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Krishnamachari, had very bitter things to say about it. Yet we find they have representation, although they do not seem to be very much interested in the matter or rather they should not have very much of an interest in the matter.

Secondly, there is the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation. As far as I know, they have hardly any activity here. Their activities are confined to Pakistan. Yet, they receive a representation here. I object to these two representations and I hope to move amendments for the deletion of their representations.

One welcome feature of the Bill is the representation of Parliament. We have three Members of Parliament on the Committee now, two from this House and one from Rajya Sabha. But then the peculiar part of it is that although parliamentary representation is provided for, the disqualification arising from that representation is not removed. I hope to introduce an amendment to remove this disqualification also.

Therefore, I would strongly urge that this Bill should be so amended as to serve the real interests of the cotton growers, the real interests of the persons who cultivate cotton and that way the cotton growers may be protected.

The committee constituted may be such, which, without being influenced by the interests of trade and industry may make a proper application of the cess, firstly, to help the cotton growers in growing cotton and, secondly, to carry on such technological and agricultural research as to benefit cotton growers and give our country the wherewithal to improve the production of cotton. For this purpose some device should be found by which cotton growers would get wide representation in the committee. Secondly, I would urge upon the Government so to arrange the representation that trade and industry are not too heavily represented and, particularly, interests like the East India Cotton Association, who had been formerly guilty of illicit forward trading in cotton, and also the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, who have practically no interest in India, are not represented on this committee.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): Mr. Speaker, Sir, though the amendment is a very short one and the Minister in the course of his introductory speech tried to pass on saying that it is a very innocuous sort of amending Bill, we think that he should have given some more detailed information as to the manner in which he proposes to improve the functioning of this particular Board.

Sir, you are well aware of the role of cotton in the economic life of the country and more so in our fight for national liberation. You are also well aware, Sir, that India, which was at one time very famous for her textile goods, used to export textile goods to Europe and other countries and her goods had very support in the foreign markets. When the Britishers came, through methods which were, as you know, uncivilised and barbaric, they deliberately tried to stop and injure practically our entire textile trade and the industry collapsed. Then, naturally, with the advent of the national movement, in 1906 the spirit of swadeshi was roused and we tried to

establish at least mills to produce cloth so that the Indian people can put on the cloth made in India and not those brought from Lancashire. After that, in 1920, when Gandhiji came and led the All India National Movement, there was a sort of a new feeling, a new impetus to this movement for the national liberation and to some extent this industry grew up in our country, especially in the western part of India.

Therefore, when we are discussing this provision regarding cotton cess, we should see to what extent the Government, after they came into power, had been in a position to utilise the cess that has been collected under this Cotton Cess Act of 1923.

Sir, shall I continue? I understand there is a half-an-hour discussion at six o'clock. It is already six and I am likely to take some more time.

Mr. Speaker: All right. He may continue on the next day.

FLOOD-AFFECTED DISPLACED PERSONS IN AGARTALA

Mr. Speaker: We will now take up the half-an-hour-discussion. In a half-an-hour discussion the mover takes ten minutes, the Minister takes ten minutes and in between two Members may have five minutes each.

Shri Biren Dutt (Tripura West): Sir, with your permission I wish to raise a half-an-hour discussion on points arising out of answer given on the 16th July, 1956 to Starred Question No. 12.

6 P.M.

I wanted to know how many persons were drowned and how many houses collapsed. I also wanted to know whether any aid was given to the bereaved families. The reply was that that eleven persons were reported to have died and while two persons could be identified, it was found that those two persons were not displaced persons. It is not clear whether the remaining persons were displaced persons or not. It was said in reply to my supplementary question that no