

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(Part II—Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

OFFICIAL REPORT

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HOUSE OF THE PEOPLE

Saturday, 2nd May, 1953

The House met at a Quarter Past Eight of the Clock

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(No Questions: Part I not published.)

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The Railway Minister to make a statement regarding the accident to the Naini Tal Express. I do not find him here. Very well, Shri Rayasam Seshagiri Rao to present a petition. I find that even he is absent.

Shri C. D. Pande (Naini Tal Distt. cum Almora Distt.—South West cum Bareilly Distt.—North): Will you please allow the Railway Minister when he comes to make that statement? Will you please also ask him to do so?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Yes. I would now request the Finance Minister to reply to the debate.

PEPSU BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION—concl'd.

The Minister of Finance (Shri C. D. Deshmukh): I was somewhat puzzled by the debate of yesterday, although I must admit that the discussion proceeded on a very high level. I got the impression that many hon. Members were trying, so to speak, to flog a dead horse, that is to say, to re-open in some form or the other this question of the circumstances which led to the President's rule in PEPUSU. I have given some thought to this matter and I have come to the conclusion

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sion that perhaps there was some justification from their point of view, and that is, that the elections are not so very far off and it is perhaps right that each party should endeavour to ensure that from its point of view the public gets a right perspective of what has happened, and therefore I do not grudge them very much their observations.

At the same time, I think that one must remember that by the same token, so to speak, we are dealing with an essentially *ad interim* matter. It is true that the Budget bears the impress of perhaps more than one authority. In view of the chronology of events, it could not have been otherwise. But so far as interim authorities are concerned, it is really not open to them—as I conceive their duties to be—to make any very revolutionary or fundamental changes, and that, I think, is the answer that I could give to the hon. Member who spoke last from the Opposition Benches.

That hon. Member characterised the Budget as a very ordinary Budget. My reply is that in the circumstances of the case, it could not be anything but an ordinary Budget. But, as I pointed out in the course of my speech in the Council of States, in a sense it is not an ordinary Budget. It is a Budget which tries to reflect some phase of the Five Year Plan as in the case of the Central Government and the State Government Budgets in India today. It is true that, so far as PEPUSU is concerned, there was hardly any progress under the Plan in the first year of the Plan, and that explains the inconsistency to which one hon. Member drew attention that is to say, the actual work is supposed to have begun in the second year, which was then described as the first year of the Plan. In other words, the PEPUSU Plan will be probably a four Year Plan, which means, I think, that either in the course of this year later, or in the course of the next two years,

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the tempo of expenditure would have to be increased. But whatever that may be, it certainly is a Budget which reflects the pattern of the plan. I shall have occasion to advert to this matter a little later, and before I come to that, I think it is necessary for me to make some general observations in regard to the character of the Adviser's rule.

Some hon. Members on the Opposition Benches have complained that like all Advisers, this Adviser has a much easier task. That is quite true. The difference between an Adviser who exercises, shall we say, individual powers derived from someone else and between a democratic apparatus is obvious to everyone. But even after taking these facts into consideration, I think one ought to try and form a judgment as to the character of the Adviser's rule. So far as Government is concerned—at least so far as I am concerned—it does not matter very much how the Adviser's rule compares with some previous rule, whether of this Government or the Government previous to it, viz. the Congress Ministry. That is not the point. The point is how in this interim period the Adviser carries out the duties that have been entrusted to him, and it is with reference to this consideration that I am constrained to observe that some of the Opposition Members in what I regard as, their natural inclination and perhaps their duty to be highly critical of Government, have lightly given credence to incorrect or frivolous canards and perhaps unwittingly exaggerated incidents. It seems to us that it would have been better if hon. Members had taken greater trouble over the verification of facts before repeating some of these allegations in the House. I submit that the Adviser has a difficult task as it is, and I do not think that any public purpose is served by any party making it any more difficult.

One Opposition Member ventured to say that, as soon as the Adviser took charge, he took punitive action against Sikh officers in pursuance and furtherance of an anti-Sikh policy. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Adviser, in the course of a conversation with provincial Sikh leaders and at two Press Conferences, reiterated the reasons for transferring, promoting or demoting certain officers. Perhaps, it would not be appropriate if I were to discuss the merits of each individual case on the Floor of the House.

One hon. Member stated—and that is a matter, to which I must refer in fairness to the officers—that two Hindu officers, Damodar Das and Prem Kumar, were promoted as Deputy Commissioners even though they were corrupt and enquiries either in regard to corruption charges or in regard to meddling with elections were pending against them.

Sardar Hukam Singh (Kapurthala-Bhatinda): It was said of only one officer.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It was our impression that the first charge was about corruption and I think the hon. Member corrected it by saying that it related to the other charge also.

Sardar Hukam Singh: I mentioned both the charges in respect of one officer only.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: So, it is one officer, perhaps Prem Kumar. Two charges against one officer—thank you. I have looked into this case and I find that this officer was holding the post of Deputy Commissioner—it was an officiating post—when the previous Ministry took office, and that Ministry appears to have had extraordinarily high standards of rectitude in regard to the conduct of their Deputy Commissioners. They found that there were charges against him of being indiscreet in cancelling some arms licences, rejecting some loan applications and, lastly, cutting down some trees standing in his compound. I believe there were a few branches of dead trees which he cut down.

An Hon. Member: Did he himself cut down?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is always a good thing to remove dead wood but apparently this was regarded as a serious offence. There was, I repeat no charge of corruption against him and there is no charge of corruption against him.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Is there no enquiry pending?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: The departmental enquiry started by the previous Ministry only relates to the three complaints already mentioned by me. That is a fact, which the hon. Member must accept from me.

Now, coming dispassionately to the PEPSU scene as it were, I feel that these complaints were not of such a nature as to merit demotion; and the Adviser apparently hard pressed for finding competent officers, took the same view and re-appointed Prem Kumar to act as Deputy Commissioner in, what I may tell is, the smallest district of PEPSU. Therefore, I feel that this is an instance of the importance of a small matter having been exaggerated beyond all proportion.

There was also an allegation that 20 Sikh officers had been removed. Now I find that no Sikh officer was discharged or dismissed. I hope I am right in repeating the word, 'removed'. I have not got the transcript of the hon. Member's speech before me, but this is the impression that I gathered from the notes, that 20 Sikh officers were removed. I say that no Sikh officers were discharged or dismissed. In a few cases, officers who had completed their terms of services were retired. One officer who retired in November 1952 was given an extension of six months. His extension expired on the 2nd May and he was retired on the recommendation of the Director of Education and the Secretary of the Education Department, who were both Sikhs. I am sorry to bring all these communal details into this matter.

Another officer was on contract and there were some charges of insubordination and inefficiency against him. So his contract was terminated on the recommendation of the Chief Engineer by giving three months stipulated notice. It is not correct to say that several school head masters or teachers of schools have been replaced by Hindu head masters or teachers on the orders of Government. Postings were made in the usual routine way. Now, I shall not go into this question of which high offices are held by Sikhs and which are not. But, I shall content myself with a general statement that many high level posts are held as is natural by Sikhs, whether it is engineering or finance or the Secretariat.

I shall come to other matters of various kinds. The first question is of land revenue rates in PEPSU. I think, one speaker mentioned that the rates of land revenue in PEPSU were higher than those prevailing in the adjoining territory of the Punjab. That is wrong. At places, the rates of land revenue are even lower than those of the adjoining territory of the Punjab. There is, however, some

abnormality and disproportion here and there which will be removed by the settlement operations which have already been started in five tahsils.

Next is the question of the sales tax and the alleged increase in other taxes. I think one Member opposite said that there had been an imposition of new taxes and an increase in the existing taxes. In this regard, I should like to point out that the sales tax in PEPSU is at the same rate as in the Punjab, namely, six pies in the rupee and it is a single point tax and exemptions from sales tax in PEPSU are the same as in the Punjab although, it must be conceded that they are not in accordance with the Essential Goods Act, which was passed subsequently by this House. So, it is not correct to say that there have been any increases in tax under the new regime. Taxes in PEPSU are on the line of similar taxes in the Punjab and the whole procedure and method are the same. Excise duties on liquor, tobacco and opium in PEPSU are the same as in the Punjab. Why opium should be bought for Rs. 13 and sold for Rs. seven is a phenomenon, I am sorry I cannot explain at such short notice.

Shri Biren Dutt (Tripura West): Is there scope for smuggling from other areas and selling in the name of the licensee there?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: That may be a grievance on the part of the other areas but not in the case of PEPSU.

In regard to irrigation, many points were raised. Mr. Chinaria mentioned about the lack of irrigation facilities and also the district of Mahindergarh. I believe that there was a complaint from hon. Members from the neighbouring districts as Shri Bansal, joined. It was said in the course of the debate, that the topography of this district does not permit any large irrigation schemes. That is a common factor. The Survey of India has recently completed a contour survey of a part of this district and a provision of one lakh of rupees has been made in the current Budget for preliminary work on the starting of a pilot channel in Dadri tahsil. It is expected that when the Bhakra Dam Project is complete. (The hon. Member is here; it is Bhakra and not Bokara. For people in the south these words seem to be almost the same.)

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Not for all South Indians.

Shri Namdhari (Fazilka-Sirsa): Only Communists.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: It is an area of one lakh acres and the canal will be very much in this district. Six exploratory tube-wells have already been sited in Dadri and Mahindergarh tahsils and if these prove successful, maybe, more tube-well will be sanctioned for this area. A diversion dam is under construction in Nangal for the irrigation of an area of six thousand acres. In this regard, I should like to draw attention to a difficulty which is commonly felt by all scarcity and famine areas in the country under the present Plan. As our first duty was to increase our food supplies or food production as rapidly as possible and as indeed various projects directed to that end had already been undertaken, it is only natural that for the major part of it, the Plan should contain projects in areas which are already favoured. Therefore, unfortunately, it is a case of 'To him that hath shall be given'. But, my colleague need not be so pessimistic about it because attention has already been directed to the other areas including Rajasthan, where a very good project has been sanctioned. And, I have no doubt that in the next round, so to speak more attention is bound to be paid to some of these chronically scarcity areas or areas of chronic scarcity—I do not like to use the words 'famine areas'—the chronically scarcity areas including this area which is a part of a larger area which is situated on the other side of the water shed from the Punjab rivers like Hissar. Hissar will benefit from the Bhakra-Nangal, so also Gurgaon, Rohtak, Rewari and the Mahindergarh district of PEPSU. The difficulty, of course, is that the cost per acre of irrigation in these tracts is very much higher than the cost per acre in those other areas. I believe in very favoured areas one can get an acre permanently protected at a cost of say Rs. 300, whereas here the cost goes up over even Rs. 1,000. A tube-well costs now about Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 54,000 and it irrigates only about 40 acres. Now that means about Rs 1,300 or Rs. 1,400 per acre. So, ultimately it is a question of our resources and of priorities and not certainly lack of sympathy. It is for this reason that you will remember that in old literature these areas were called *dev matrik*—that is to say God was their mother and for a few years God will continue to be the mother of these areas.

Shri Bansal (Jhajjar-Rewari). We want you to be the mother of these areas.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Some Members complained that compensation

for land acquisition was entirely inadequate. As you know, compensation is allowed in accordance with the provisions of law. It is allowed at market rates plus 15 per cent. for compulsory acquisition. Interest is paid at six per cent. per annum from the date possession is taken over up to the date compensation is actually paid. Then there is the usual machinery for appeals and so on. Unless some specific case is brought to one's notice, it is not easy to deal with this particular charge.

Then, I had better come to the most important matter of all and that is law and order and the police. Several Members spoke in somewhat unflattering terms about the PEPSU Police. Some of them stated that most of the police officers are relations of rulers or *biswedars* and that this had an unfavourable effect on the Police administration in the State. Now, it is true that a large number of police officers of various gazetted status are either *biswedars* or relations of *biswedars*. I discovered that a *biswa* 1/20th of a acre.....

The Minister of Home Affairs and States (Dr. Katju): Of a *bigha*.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I am sorry, of a *bigha* and 2½ *bighas* make an acre. Therefore a *biswedar* ought to be a very small man, but apparently it is not so in PEPSU. It is entirely true that they are related to.....

Shri Shoba Ram (Alwar): A *biswedar* is not necessarily the owner of 1/20th of a *bigha*.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I did not say that a *biswedar* is the owner of 1/20 of a *bigha*.

I am sorry for this digression. As I said, PEPSU had to integrate these officers in terms of the Covenant and it is not possible to get rid of them in the summary way suggested by some of the Members. Where an officer has been found dishonest or his conduct unsatisfactory, action has always been taken. At present one superintendent of Police is under suspension on charges of corruption and proceedings have been started on charges of misappropriation, etc., against another. Three were compulsorily retired owing to their unsatisfactory work. Ten sub-inspectors of police have been dismissed from service on either charges of corruption or for other irregularities, and 20 have been compulsorily retired on similar charges. Only two officers were dismissed during the Adviser's regime. That is a point which I should like

hon. Members to bear in mind. It will thus be seen that the present Government are fully alive to the gravity of the problem and every possible step is being taken to improve the general tone of police administration. It will take some time before the general tone of the police force can be brought up to a level which will give satisfaction to everybody. After all it must be remembered that no matter which Government is in power they were called upon to tackle, as the word was used, the legacy received by the new Union from the various covenanting States.

One hon. Member, Shri Kajrolkar read a statement from a news-paper alleging atrocities against Harijans, especially Harijan women, by the police in village Tallanian, Bassi Police Station. Now, as soon as the alleged incidents were brought to the notice of Government, an immediate enquiry was ordered and the result of the enquiry shows that the allegations were not true, that whatever incidents happened were grossly exaggerated. What actually happened was that several Harijans were, I am sorry to say found in illegal occupation of some evacuee houses and by an order of the court they were evicted from the houses by the Rehabilitation Tahsildar with the assistance of the local police. It is not a fact, that the police molested women and stole jewels or other property.

Another incident mentioned by the same hon. Member was about the search of the house of Indar Singh of Samana. Now, it is true that his house was searched and some jewellery, estimated at about Rs 6,000 suspected to be stolen was recovered by the police in the presence of respectable citizens and an inventory of the recovered property was recorded. It is not a fact that the recovered jewellery was misappropriated by the police as alleged. So far as the alleged wrongful confinement of Indar Singh is concerned, the Superintendent of Police, Patiala, is making a thorough enquiry.

Another hon. Member suggested that dacoits are getting shelter, provision and ammunition from biswedars. Enquiries show that there is some substance in the allegation and some of the biswedars concerned have been warned by the District Magistrate not to give any sort of help to dacoits. It was not possible to take any criminal action against them owing to lack of concrete evidence. In PEPSU the judiciary is separate from the execu-

tive and any action taken against any person in the absence of concrete proof would immediately result in a writ application. The police have, therefore, to proceed very carefully in arresting persons and in taking action against them.

It was also stated that some dacoits were sheltered in the farms belonging to the Rajmata of Patiala. There is no question of shelter being given by the Rajmata because that allegation is not true. The farms comprise of a large area of land and it is reported that two employees of the Rajmata had given some shelter to the dacoits. They were promptly arrested—that is to say, the people who gave shelter—and action taken against them.

Then there were some observations, about there being a barbed wire fencing around some 46 villages. There was no barbed wire fencing. There was some, maybe, police cordon thrown round some villages and I do not know if the hon. Member mistook the police cordon for the barbed wire.

Shri Biren Dutt: I meant a fence.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Fencing is quite different from a cordon. There was no fencing. Cordons have had to be thrown round some villages where information was received that dacoits were sheltering.

Another hon. Member suggested that the son of a Harijan woman who was in the company of dacoits was shot dead by the police. I am sorry that it has not been possible to trace this incident for want of necessary particulars. If the hon. Member concerned gives the requisite particulars I undertake that a thorough enquiry will be made and if any police officer is found at fault, well, then, summary action will be taken against him in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure.

Then there was some question of the relative statistics of crimes register. I am sorry that the hon. Member Sardar Hukam Singh thought it fit to suggest that the Adviser had issued instructions to the police or might have issued instructions to the police, not to register serious cases of crime.

Sardar Hukam Singh: I did not say that. I only said that he might have issued instructions that crime should be reduced and stopped, and that out-Heroding Herod, the subordinate officers might have done that. That is what I said. I did not say that the Adviser did that.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I see now what he means. He means that the police

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officers were more royalist than the king himself! Well, with such an allegation it is very difficult to deal, unless one examines all the police officers concerned who are the subjects of such suspicion. But I do not think that the point is of any great importance. I do not think that there is any great advantage in considering what the state of law and order is in PEPSU today in comparison with the law and order situation, say, in the neighbouring districts of U.P. or Rajasthan or Madhya Bharat. It is a fact that in some parts of the country the situation is worse than in others, and I think PEPSU falls, or fell, in the former category.

So far as the dacoits are concerned, I have in my hands a report from the Adviser which shows that a very large number of dacoits have been liquidated, that is to say killed or arrested, and much arms and ammunition recovered from them after the Adviser took charge. It is a fact that most organised gangs have been broken up. There now remain the leaders of two of the more important gangs, but both of them are, so to speak, on the run and are being closely pursued by the forces of law and order. I think it is a fact which can be established that there have been no dacoities since the Adviser took charge. I do not lay stress on the other observation that he has made, that crime of all kinds has fallen appreciably.

Also, the feeling is almost unanimous in the State that confidence is fast returning to the countryside. A batch of nine proclaimed offenders—for various offences—voluntarily surrendered to the Adviser on the 4th of April, 1953. Thereafter, dozens of outlaws and proclaimed offenders have been voluntarily surrendering, some to the Adviser and some to the police. The result is, I think, the villagers who now see that the battle, so to speak, is swinging in favour of the forces of law and order have now the confidence to raise themselves on their side. And that is a feature which is within one's experience almost all over the world, that is to say wherever the public gets some kind of feeling of confidence in the country, then they start co-operating a little more. And this question of dealing with dacoits, in the final analysis, depends on the willing and courageous co-operation of the countryside.

Shri K. K. Basu (Diamond Harbour): Can he tell us the number

arrested and number shot?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Before I give the statistics I should like to deal with one very curious argument that has been raised here and which is probably repeated—although I have not got proof of it because I could not get hold of the proceedings—in the PEPSU Assembly. If dacoits are merely arrested, then the charge against the Ministry or the Adviser or whoever may be the authority is that they have been arrested under some kind of promise to deal with them leniently and therefore the law and order is not being properly preserved. On the other hand, if they are shot, then hon. Members opposite allege that they are shot before they can split on their biswadar or villager or other friends, whoever is giving shelter. In either case, authority is wrong and critics are right!

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Dacoit asre right!

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Unfortunately it would not really benefit the dacoits very much to find that they are right, because many of them are dead. Eleven are dead, five are arrested and, as I said, two are on the run. That apparently gives the total tally, but since hon. Members opposite are not able to give particulars or names and so on it is impossible to verify this.

That is as regards law and order. I would like hon. Member to accept the fact that really this dacoit nuisance has been brought under control in PEPSU. One need not, as I say, concern oneself over much to whom the credit belongs. If hon. Members like they can give all the credit to preparations made, so to speak, by the previous Government.

Now, I will come to a more pleasant matter, that is education. Several Members spoke feelingly about the educational backwardness of PEPSU. This has been realised by the successive Governments but, as elsewhere, dealing successfully with this problem and bringing about an appreciable improvement requires not only concentrated efforts spread over a number of years but also, I find, some kind of decision in regard to policy. I have gone into the figures of the expenditure on education provided for in the plan and to my discouragement, I found that even the sum which is a modest sum that is provided for development of education in the plan has not been spent at an appropriate rate because of some difference of opinion as to whether expansion should be in the direction of

the establishment of basic schools or in the direction of the multiplication of the ordinary primary schools. That matter is again engaging the attention of the Adviser and I have personally drawn the attention of the educational authorities to the need of making up their mind quickly and taking steps to see that there are sufficient schemes of expansion, to absorb now whatever remains to be spent out of this plan in the educational sector. I have a great deal of sympathy with the Member from Kohistan who wanted more primary schools to be opened in his district. I am told that, as a matter of fact, 16 primary schools were opened in 1952-53 in that district and during 1953-54, it is proposed to open 20 more. It should be remembered, that this district, although the terrain is undoubtedly very difficult, is a small district with a total area of about 600 sq. miles with a very scanty and scattered population and without going into any great detail as an outside observer, I should think that the school requirements of this area are being met with in a fairly adequate manner.

Another Member complained about inadequate loans and subsidies for wells and the non-availability of tractors in sufficient numbers in the Hindi speaking area, that is to say, in Mahindergarh district. It is admitted that water is too far below the surface in this district and because of this peculiar terrain, it is just on the top of water shed. The speaker himself admitted that Rs. 5,000 is required for a well in that area. Subsidy has to be, according to the Government of India instructions, given unfortunately at a uniform rate of only Rs. 300 per well and in addition, there is a loan of Rs. 875 per well. As the subsidy is very small in proportion to the total cost of the wells, only a few applications have been received. Nevertheless, in the last two years, subsidies have been given for 99 wells in this district and not a single complaint has been registered so far that there has been any delay in the payment of the subsidy or there is any discrimination as regards other districts. Now, as I have said, drill boring for seeking a tube-well is going on in the Dadri tahsil by the Agricultural Engineering Section.

In regard to tractors, the accepted policy is to meet 50 per cent. cost of the tractor and a person owning a farm having a minimum area of

100 acres is as a rule eligible. In the very nature of things, only well to do farmers think it worthwhile to apply for loans. No complaint, I, am told, has been received from any farmer in the Mahindergarh district that he has applied for such a loan and that the loan has not been granted to him. My own comment on this information would be that this question of subsidies for wells in Mahindergarh requires further attention but I shall content myself with only making this observation.

In regard to backward classes, irrespective of party alignments, many hon. Members referred to the treatment of Harijans in Pepsu. I frankly concede from whatever information I have been able to gather that the treatment of Harijans in the State has not been what it should be but the only excuse one can put forward is that the present position is the result of decades of social and economic factors and it is not possible in the course of a few months or even in the course of a few years to raise their social and economic conditions to that of the more fortunate classes of society. It is of course, platitude that the Constitution guarantees them equal rights with other classes and that every endeavour is being made to raise their standard of living and to improve their general economic condition. The Budget itself during the current year provided Rs. 4,22,000 for the improvement in their condition and this was in addition to the provision of Rs. 2,38,000 provided for schemes for the benefit of backward classes.

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Hon. Members made a reference to the reservation of 12½ per cent. of vacancies in public offices for Harijans in the State. It is true that the strength of Harijans in the services has not yet caught up with this figure but this, I am told, and I have not been able to go very deeply into this matter, is due to lack of candidates with even minimum or less than minimum qualifications. I am assured that no Harijan candidate with any qualifications is ever refused a job for which he has applied. There are 13 educational institutions catering especially to the educational needs of backward classes and recently accelerated promotion over the

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heads of other senior officials was given to a headmaster who was made an inspector of schools merely on the ground that he was a Harijan. A similar promotion was given recently to a Harijan school master who was promoted to the post of a headmaster. I believe also the Finance Commission has made a special grant of Rs. five lakhs for the advancement of education in the State and I have no doubt that a portion of this would go towards the improvement of the educational facilities for backward classes.

Some Members stated that Harijans are not allowed nazul lands or that the 60 per cent. that has been reserved for them is not sufficient. The question of reserving a higher percentage of nazul lands for Harijans will be considered by the Government.

One Member drew attention to the state of roads in Kohistan and stated that undue attention is being paid to the Kandaghat-Chall road. This particular road is the most important road in the district not for the reasons which hon. Members have in their minds. There is a regular lorry traffic and the road connects Kandaghat with the interior of Himachal Pradesh via Chail-Kufri. There is a considerable potato traffic over this road and, as this is a hilly road, particular attention has been paid for its proper maintenance and expenditure for maintaining minimum safety standards has been incurred on the road.

In regard to the district of Kohistan, there is a provision of Rs. 13 lakhs in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a jeepable tract during this year. The expenditure under this head will be Rs. 1.13 lakhs and work has already been started on the Sproo-Gowdhara road. Work on the small Sabathu road has been included in the Five Year Plan and out of Rs. 95 lakhs for roads for the whole of the Union of eight districts set apart in the Five Year Plan, a sum of Rs. 13 lakhs has been exclusively allotted for one district alone which, as I said, is only about 600 sq. miles. Therefore, it seems to me that the suggestion that Kohistan is being neglected has no substance in fact.

Now, a few words about the PEPUSU development plan. The total outlay

of the plan amounts to Rs. 8.14 crores. Of this more than 15 per cent. is on agricultural and rural development and the balance is distributed on other heads of development. As I said, in the first year there was hardly any expenditure. Actually, according to the grants, only Rs. 59 lakhs were spent. In the next, 1952-53 revised estimate the expectation is that the book expenditure will be Rs. 1,05,00,000 and the budgeted outlay in 1953-54 is Rs. 2,53,00,000. Now that comes to nearly Rupees four crores in the first three years. So I think if the rate of expenditure now budgeted for is maintained, there should not be any undue difficulty in the way of the implementation of the plan barring perhaps certain sectors like the educational one to which I made a reference. The bulk of the expenditure in the first two years was on agricultural programmes and minor irrigation and in the budget year about Rs. 1,34,00,000 are being provided for land development, on reclamation and minor irrigation. Programmes for road development, hospitals and dispensaries, and public health also feature in the progress of the plan. There has been a certain addition to the resources of the State owing to the Finance Commission's award. As I say, I have every hope that the State will be able to implement the plan.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is there any difference between the Budget year and the current year?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: We are now in what is known as the Budget year and it has become the current year. That is to say, one discusses the Budget in what is known as the current year. Here, we have the vote on account and the Budget year and the current year are the same.

One hon. Member, I think it was Mr. Hira Singh Chinaria, mentioned that no community project has been started in the Hindi speaking areas of the Union. The criterion adopted for starting community projects was that the area should have a high agricultural potential. Judged by this criterion, as I have hinted before, the prospects of starting a community project in the Normal area do not seem to be bright. Even so, the State Governments have recommended to the Government of India that a project may be started in the

Narvana areas and orders are awaited. I should like to add here that under the new national extension scheme, the details of which have appeared in the papers this morning or yesterday, I think more and more areas will be brought under some kind of extension scheme or intensive development programme and it is only necessary for the residents of these areas to hold their souls in patience just for a few years more.

Lastly, I should like to deal with this question of cash balances to which reference was made by one hon. Member. Here are the actuals of the closing balances: 1951-52—Rs. 3,65,00,000; Budget estimate 1952-53—Rs. 3,23,00,000; Revised estimate Rs. 2,78,00,000; Budget estimate for 1953-54 Rs. 1,41,00,000. Variation between 1952 and 1953 is 42 lakhs. The decrease in the closing balance is mainly due to, firstly, revenue deficit of Rs. 62.66 lakhs and expenditure having been provided at a higher figure: 585 against an ordinary revenue of Rs. 522 lakhs. Maybe, this would be corrected by an almost unconscious under-estimating of revenue that takes place in budgeting. Secondly, provision of Rs. 57.93 lakhs for capital expenditure. These excesses have been partly counterbalanced by more receipts under Debt and Deposit head, Loans from the Central Government and Deposits and Advances. The revised estimate of 1952-53 shows a reduction of Rs. 86.78 lakhs. In spite of a revenue deficit of Rs. 62.66 lakhs, the revised estimate shows a revenue surplus of Rs. 48.68 lakhs. This was wiped by larger expenditure under Debt and Deposit head, by Loans and Advances, and Deposits and Advances on account of investment of the surplus balances in the banks to the extent of Rs. 2,20,00,000. Therefore, what appears as reduction is partly investment. I shall not deal with other figures. I have similar figures for the Budget estimate for 1953-54. But, I am satisfied on an examination of the figures that there is nothing to be frightened of in this movement of cash balances.

I think I have covered most of the points. One hon. Member said that PEPSU was a sick State and another hon. Member said:

करेला
नीम चढ़ा । या नीम करेला पर
चढ़ा ।

डा० काटजू : करेला नीम पर चढ़ा

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: Yes; करेला

नीम पर चढ़ा I cannot think of anything more wholesome than *karela* or *neem* for a sick State. In other words, I think that even the present bitter experience, bitter in the eyes of many people, might be to the advantage of the State. Another Member said something about,

“बोया पेड़ बबूल का आम कहां से लाय”

I do not see anything wrong with

बबूल

A poet has said:

“जून पसन्द है मुझको हवा बबूलों की
अजर बहार है इनके जर्द जर्द फूलों की”

Shri Punnoose (Alleppey): The hon. Finance Minister made a reference to the letters that I referred to yesterday. I would be very happy to place them at his disposal.

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I thank you.

Lala Achint Ram (Hissar): What about help to political sufferers?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I cannot allow this sort of debate.

Kumari Annie Mascarene (Trivandrum): On a point of information, Sir, the Finance Minister in the course of his reply while referring to an allegation against the police unnecessarily molesting and harassing Harijans, said that the allegation was baseless. I wish to draw the Finance Minister's attention to a report in the *Times of India* of yesterday where a sub-inspector was suspended for illegally keeping a Harijan in custody. A *habeas corpus* petition was moved in the High Court and it was declared before the Court that he was not in custody. A petition was sent to the Home Minister—he is here now—and he ordered an enquiry. The inspector was found guilty and was suspended. May I know whether the allegations are really baseless?

Shri C. D. Deshmukh: I do not know what conclusion is to be drawn. Considering that Harijans are about seven lakhs in a population of 35 lakhs, it is possible that there is a case in which the molestation is against some one who happens to be a Harijan. But, when one says that Harijan women are molested by the police, that kind of allegation assumes a general character. My intention was to deny that there was any such conscious or general molestation of

[Shri C. D. Deshmukh]

Harijans as a class. Even so, I should be very glad to have the particulars so that we could follow them up and perhaps visit the offender with the same punishment with which the officer has been visited.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: What is this?

Shri Biren Dutt: I want a clarification of the statement.....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: If any statement is wrong, hon. Members can certainly say. But, to say I would like to bring this statement to notice, where is the end to this debate?

PERSONAL EXPLANATION BY SARDAR LAL SINGH

Sardar Lal Singh (Ferozpur-Ludhiana): Sir, I came to learn that on the 28th April, in answer to a question by a Member, the hon. Minister of Food said that the Director of Agriculture, Punjab, had recommended a firm or factory as of very old standing, doing fruit preservation work and that upon enquiry it was found that no such firm existed. I was the Director of Agriculture in Punjab and I deny the allegations.

Firstly, although it is hardly fair to pick out one case out of thousands disposed of by me in official routine, yet, even in this case, I am prepared to stand by my recommendation.

The facts of the case, to the best of my recollection, are that there was a garden in Simla Hills which was one of the biggest and the best gardens existing for decades, and which, for its highest quality of fruits, was winning prizes in provincial fruit shows for years, and where a lot of fruit used to go to waste. As Director of Agriculture and in charge of fruit industry, it was my bounden duty to encourage garden owners to take to fruit preservation in the national interest. I did induce the owner of this garden to take to this industry, to utilize the fruits and prevent them from going to waste, and I recommended the case to Government. Even now, I cannot conceive of a garden with better facilities to start this industry.

Secondly, it was the Central Government officers who were to see that all conditions were complied with by the owner of the garden before licence was given to start the factory and subsequently to ensure that sugar

given was not misused, and with all these I had no concern.

Thirdly, the case was found to be one of intrigue and conspiracy between certain individuals and non-observance of certain formalities and discreetness involving no question of dishonesty and the accused persons were adjudged innocent by the court and honourably acquitted not only legally but even morally, so much so that the chief man complained against was subsequently selected as the best person to be sent abroad for training at Government expense, and there was no question of dismissal of anybody.

I am sorry that not only in any answer to this question, but during the debate on the Budget last month, the hon. Minister did not correctly represent my recommendation and made it appear that I was to blame in this connection. Soon after the Budget I requested the Prime Minister to go into this matter, and I offered to abide by his own decision and he was to be the sole judge. I very much regret that such an insinuating statement should have been made by the hon. Minister on the floor of the House.

I find further from the proceedings of the 28th April that when the hon. Minister was asked a supplementary question whether the Director was proceeded against or adverse entry was made in his character roll, he replied that it was for the Punjab Government to say, thereby creating an impression that all was not well with my record of service. Even at the risk of immodesty, but to vindicate my honour, I wish to state to the hon. Minister that, what to speak of adverse remarks, not only was I awarded personal pay as also pension, higher than pay and pension previously provided for the Director, but the Punjab Cabinet, presided over by the Governor himself, sent to me a formal resolution of thanks for the valuable services rendered.

Further, I received heaps of encomiums from leaders of all political parties including the Congress in the Punjab Assembly session for meritorious services rendered, and for converting the Province from a deficit to a surplus one. And in support of above, I am submitting herewith the attached papers showing what those in a position to judge my work at