

from the US stockpile. We have taken measures at high official level to get in touch with the US Government and see that this offloading is reduced to the bare minimum.

Our exports to the socialist bloc countries are not only high; in fact, they will be higher this year compared to earlier years.

Lock-out in Indian Explosives Limited, Kanpur

*331. SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of fertilizer has fallen because of lock-out in the Indian Explosives Limited, Kanpur; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to settle the dispute?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI G. VENKATSWAMY): (a) and (b). Production in the Indian Explosives Limited Kanpur was adversely affected due to the industrial dispute in this unit. The parties came to settlement on July 16, and normal work was resumed from July 17, 1973.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Is it a fact that the Union unanimously decided to call off the agitation in case the ICI management or the management of IEL agreed to refer the matter to arbitration or to Shri Raghunatha Reddy, Minister of Labour, and Shri D. K. Borooah, Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals? If so, is it also a fact that this suggestion was rejected by the ICI management? If so, what action has been taken against the management who continued this lock-out for more than 90 days which affected production?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY): Having regard to the

importance of fertilizer production for the country at present, when this dispute arose in the IEL, Kanpur, which has a unit producing fertilizer by modern processes, the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals was deeply concerned with this dispute. The matter was referred to the Ministry of Labour. We invited representatives of the labour Union and also of the management. We tried our best to convince the management of the necessity of coming to some kind of understanding with the Union. It is true that as far as the Union leaders were concerned, they were readily agreeable to any of the proposals either in the nature of arbitration or reference to the Minister of Labour and Shri D. K. Borooah, the Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, for their combined efforts. But unfortunately, the management could not see the reason behind it and the necessity of settling this dispute by arbitration immediately.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: Is it a fact this was a deliberate attempt by the ICI group to sabotage the production of fertilizer or urea which is produced in this unit at a time when India needs to increase her food production, and there has been drought everywhere in the country? If so, what action has been taken against this particular concern? Even today, 16 employees are rotting in the street. They have not been taken back even after the arbitration to be done by Shri B. B. Lal, Adviser to the Governor, whom they have accepted but they could not accept the good offices of two Ministers. This is the state of affairs that is going on in the ICI. What action has been taken against this most anti-national and anti-working class move of this concern at a time when India is passing through the worst crisis we have ever met with on the food production front? Also, will this concern be taken over?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: It is difficult for me to go into the motivation behind this attitude of the management, what prompted them to take up this kind of unreasonable attitude. Still the fact remains that agreement has been entered into between the parties concerned.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: After how many days?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: One of the terms of the agreement is that both parties agree to refer the following items for review to Shri B. B. Lal, Adviser to the Governor of UP, or his nominee, and that his findings will be binding on the parties concerned. One of these items is the case of the 16 employees.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: How much time was taken in this...

MR. SPEAKER: No, no.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: I have been trying to raise this question relentlessly. Everytime it was rejected....

MR. SPEAKER: That does not entitle him to go on like this.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE: It is a clarification only. Shri Nahata was also there. A team of MPs went there. They requested the management to come to a settlement, but they had the cheek to refuse the good offices of both the Ministers. How many months were lost in this....

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: I cannot give the exact number of days lost, but I can say that for quite a number of days production has been lost and it has caused a lot of concern. That was the reason why the Ministries of Petroleum and Chemicals and Labour took the initiative in bringing the parties together to arrive at a settlement.

SHRI AMRIT NAHATA: Is it a fact that the management of IEL virtually declared a lockout for more than 4 months on a very petty pretext of an imaginary dispute of manning the shifts? Is it also true that this management is part of an international cartel which also manufactures fertilisers outside India and that this was a deliberate move to create a shortage of fertilisers in India so that

fertilisers from their other producing units abroad could be imported here?

Is it also a fact that the entire local administration were at the beck and call of the management of IEL which was indulging in these anti-national activities? Is it also a fact that the IEL, encouraged by the fact that its distribution agencies are held by powerful persons in the political circles of the country, was further encouraged to launch such anti-national activities? In view of all these, will Government decide to take over this unit which is engaged in the production of a very widely felt necessity, namely, fertilisers?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: I will confine myself to what pertains to the Labour Ministry. It is, of course, true that IEL is a part of the complex of a multi-national or trans-national corporation. The shareholding pattern of this company is ICI, U. K. owns 51 per cent, IFC, Washington 10 per cent and Central Government and governmental institutions only about 12.75 per cent. I am speaking from memory subject to correction; these are not the figures supplied by the Department of Company Affairs. (*Interruptions*). So, this is a subsidiary company of a multi-national or trans-national company, namely, ICI, U. K. Whether this trans-national corporation has got fertiliser plants in other countries is a question which I cannot immediately answer unless I verify it. As regards the attitude of the management of the company, even though the trade unions were willing to cooperate with the Government for solving the problems of industrial relations, I must say with regret that the management did not cooperate with the Government to solve this problem.

SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN: May I know whether it has been brought to his notice that there are specific complaints about collusion between two senior officials of the UP Government and the management and if so, whether he

has informed the State Government or the appropriate authorities here now that UP is under President's rule?

SHRI RAGHUNATHA REDDY: The management and the trade unions, with the help of the State industrial relations machinery and also the good offices of the Regional Labour Commissioner at a later stage had arrived at an agreement. The agreement has been signed and the parties are bound by the terms of the agreement. As far as we are concerned, we also had occasion to discuss it with the officers of the UP Government. I do not think the observations made by the hon. member are warranted with regard to the officials.

Powers trying to bridge Gulf created by withdrawal of British from Indian Ocean

*333. **SHRI BANAMALI PATNAIK:** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the powers which have been trying to bridge the gulf created by withdrawal of the British from the Indian Ocean; and

(b) the efforts made to persuade them to desist from this line of action?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) (a) and (b). Britain continues to maintain a military presence in a number of places in the Indian Ocean. Government are of the view that a withdrawal, even when it takes place, will not create any vacuum which need be filled by the introduction of outside powers. To this end, Government have supported resolutions at the UN General Assembly and non-aligned nations conferences calling for the elimination of Great Power presence from the Indian Ocean. Government have also deplored the establishment in the Indian Ocean of military bases conceived in the context of the Great Power rivalry.

SHRI BANAMALI PATNAIK: Is the Government aware that Iran which had

the ambition to become a great power in the Indian Ocean is building up a heavy military structure and this fact is corroborated by an article published in the *Illustrated Weekly of India*? What is the thinking of Government in that direction?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: It is a fact that Iran is acquiring military hardware including navalcraft. There were questions in this House and I had occasion to express our views in relation to that only a few days ago.

SHRI BANAMALI PATNAIK: May I know whether Government is thinking of associating all the countries which have interest in the Indian Ocean not to allow further power ambitions in the Indian Ocean?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: I have already said that this is a live issue in the UN and a group of countries under the auspices of the UN are discussing the steps that have to be taken to ensure that the Indian Ocean remains an area of peace and tranquility.

SHRI SHYAMNANDAN MISHRA: Does the UN Resolution seem to be having the desired effect? If not, what steps does the Government of India propose to take either individually or in collaboration with other countries?

SHRI SWARAN SINGH: The UN has been seized of this matter. The UN Resolutions have not called upon specified countries to take any specific actions. It is too early yet to say whether the UN efforts have failed. In the context of the UN, efforts should continue to mount pressure against the bigger naval powers to desist from having bases in the Indian Ocean. The other littoral countries in the context of the non-aligned countries also can coordinate their efforts to persuade the big naval powers to desist from establishment of bases in the Indian Ocean.