

(b) if so, the action, if any, taken against them ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) 47 persons have been arrested in connection with the recovery of arms and ammunition. Criminal cases have been registered in respect of these recoveries, and are under investigation.

Production and Requirement of Tractors

*214. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA :
SHRI RAJDEO SINGH :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) Whether Government have decided to stop the import of tractors after 1972 ;

(b) If so, how the needs of the country will be met by the indigenous tractors ;

(c) What is the expected production of tractors in the country by the end of the Fourth Plan period ; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to check the rise in prices of tractors ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY) : (a) and (b). No decision has been taken to stop all tractor imports after 1972. However, all out efforts are being made to step up the indigenous production of tractors with a view to do away with imports as soon as possible.

(c) 60,000 tractors per year.

(d) Selling prices of tractors are fixed by Government after periodical investigations into the cost of production to ensure that there is no unjustified rise in prices.

Issue of Letters of Intent for setting up Scooter Plants

*217. DR. KARNI SINGH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether letters of intent have been given to four parties to set up scooter plants ;

(b) if so, the total production capacity thereof ;

(c) when the said four plants are expected to commence production ; and

(d) the extent to which their combined production is likely to result in the reduction of waiting period for the allotment of a scooter ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY) : (a) and (b). Twenty three Letters of Intent for a total capacity of 534,000 Nos. per annum for the manufacture of scooters have been issued.

(c) and (d). The implementation of these letters of intent are in different stages of progress. It is not possible to indicate at this stage when production in respect of each of these letters of intent will be established. Obviously the shortage will be mitigated and waiting periods reduced substantially if even part of the capacity covered by the letters of intent materialises. It is, however, difficult to indicate precisely the extent to which waiting periods for allotment of scooters will be reduced at any specified future date as a result of new projects coming up.

Fifth National Conference of all India Newspaper Employees' Federation

*224. SHRI DINESH JOARDER : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the decisions and resolutions of the Fifth National Conference of the All India Newspaper Employees' Federation held in Madras on August 21-22, 1971 ;

(b) if so, the salient features of the resolutions ; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY) : (a) and (b). The Federation passed 15 resolutions at the Conference of which a copy of the resolution on 'Press Monopoly', was forwarded by them to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. A copy of this Resolution is laid on the Table of the House,

(c) Certain proposals for the diffusion of ownership of major newspapers and news agencies are at present under Government's consideration. A group of Ministers will go into all aspects of the matter.

**Resolution on the Press Monopoly
All India Newspaper Employees Federa-
tion, New Delhi**

This fifth conference of the All India Newspaper Employees Federation, held in Madras from August 20 to 22, 1971, expresses its grave concern about the growing control of the newspapers by monopoly houses in the country. Organised sections of the newspaper employees, including the working journalists, and the progressive forces have always felt concerned about this dangerous trend in the newspaper industry during the post-independence period.

Not only an overwhelming circulation of the newspapers is controlled by monopoly business houses, such as Tatas, Jains, Birlas, Goenkas and others, but also overwhelming capital assets invested in the newspaper industry, including newspaper printing industry, is concentrated in the hands of these handful of monopoly houses. Profits, which these houses have been making from these monopoly controlled newspapers, are enormous. Particularly during the last three years the profits have gone up by leaps and bounds. Some of them are paying fabulous dividends which are higher than what is paid even by the industries, which are known as high rate of profit-making, like Pharmaceuticals, Oils and Chemicals.

The policies adopted by the monopoly Press in the recent years have made it imperative that immediate steps be taken to divest the control and ownership of newspapers owned by the big monopoly houses. Monopoly Press has been nakedly and openly propagating through their columns anti-people policies. In every struggle carried on by the working people against capitalists and landlords the monopoly Press consistently comes out as the champion of vested interests to suppress democratic movements.

In every measure taken by the Government of India towards nationalisation of banks, life insurance and general insurance or acquisition of land, this monopoly Press stoutly defends the vested interests of the capitalist and land-

lord class. On the issue of the withdrawal of privy purses the monopoly Press solidly sided with the princely clan. On the issue of the amendments to the Constitution of India, so as to vest the amending power with Parliament, the monopoly Press stood with the reactionary forces. Invariably this Press stands on the side of the communalists during communal riots.

Thus, in short the monopoly Press in the country has become the main weapon of the reactionary forces against toilers' movements for democracy and socialism.

Noting these tendencies in the monopoly Press in India as back as in the year 1956, the Press Commission warned the Government to take immediate steps to check the growing control of the newspaper industry by the monopoly houses. Thereafter the Monopoly Commission presided over by a Supreme Court judge also made similar recommendations warning against the grave danger of continuation of monopoly-controlled Press in India. Eminent economists like Prof Mahalanobis also warned the Government of this danger.

All these years the Government of India turned a deaf ear to these recommendations, and the repeated demand from the newspaper employees.

Compelled by the pressure of the demand from the people and the newspaper employees, the Government of India has announced its intention to amend the Company Law to "diffuse" the ownership and control of the newspapers owned by the big business houses. It has been, however, stated by the Union Minister of Company Law that as yet no decision has been taken by the Union Cabinet on the question of amendments to the Company law to curb monopoly control of the Press. It has been said that the draft Bill has not received the approval either from the Minister in charge or by the Law Ministry. This state of affairs clearly raises doubts whether the Government is serious about enacting legislation to curb monopoly Press.

This conference is of the view that a perusal of the proposed draft Bill, a summary of which has appeared in the Press, clearly indicates that there are serious lacunae in the proposed amendments to the Company Law. The propo-