

of the Public Accounts Committee—

(i) Ninety-Second Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-First Report relating to Ministry of Home Affairs.

(ii) Ninety-Fifth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the First Report relating to Ministry of Defence.

#### CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation arising out of Non-function-ing of a Number of Sugar-Mills in the Country resulting in the Crash of Prices of Sugarcane, Gur and Khandsari and the worsening Plight of the Sugarcane Growers

श्री सुलतान सिंह (हरियाणा) :  
श्रीमान्, देश में अनेक चीनी मिलों के काम न करने और उसके परिणामस्वरूप गन्ना गुड़ और खंडसारी के भाव में गिरावट तथा गन्ने के काश्तकारी की विगड़ती हुई दशा से उत्पन्न स्थिति की ओर मैं कृषि और सिंचाई मंत्रों का ध्यान दिलाता हूँ।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): Sir, sugar and sugarcane have been the subject matter of discussions in this August House on a number of occasions and we have had the opportunity of outlining the scope, objectives and policy-frame adopted by the Government in these two important sectors. There have been many decisive factors concerning sugarcane and sugar which made it necessary for the Government to give the situation a detailed appraisal this year. There had been unprecedented production of sugarcane of about 182 million tonnes during 1977-78 which contributed to a record production of about 65 lakh tonnes of sugar in that season. The availability of such a

large amount of sugar made it imperative that the Government lift all controls operating on the prices, movement and distribution of sugar. This momentous step was taken on August 16, 1978. The main objective was to ensure that the natural forces of supply and demand would be allowed to operate and bring the sugar-prices to a stable level without any undue outside interference. At the same time, it was necessary that domestic consumption should also be increased. It may be mentioned that mainly as a result of removal of control, the domestic consumption of sugar in the two months of September and October, 1978 was 9.7 lakh tonnes as against about 7.2 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period last year. Subsequent to decontrol as a result of the operation of the natural market forces, the prices of sugar showed a considerable downward trend, making more sugar at reasonable levels of prices available to the consumers.

However, since the sugar factories are also to be taken into account while determining the pressures operating on the sugar system, it was assessed whether lesser realisations by the sugar factories tended to have an adverse effect on the repayment capacity in respect of 'sugarcane dues'. The arrears of cane price for 1977-78 at the beginning of October, 1978, amounted to over Rs. 53 crores. This had come down during November to Rs. 46.56 crores. But the Government, on careful consideration, came to the conclusion that some specific measures are necessary to ensure the dual purpose of making the sugar factories work for the full period and crush all the available cane and also that they pay the sugarcane arrears without undue delay. Since both these issues were inter-related, the Government decided to bring forward an Ordinance which could give the Government sufficient leeway to ensure the achievement and the twin-objectives with minimum delay. Hence on November 9, 1978, the Sugar Undertakings (Taking Over of

[Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh] Management) Ordinance, 1978, was promulgated. Immediately thereafter, action was taken to frame the necessary rules and start proceedings against the sugar units which either did not begin crushing in time or had an unjustifiable amount of arrears.

However, the Hon'ble Members would appreciate that in a country like ours where the seasonal changes are many and varied and natural factors contribute to a large extent in all human endeavours, it would not be realistic to expect that all sugar factories" would be able to begin operation on the same date. The beginning of crushing by a factory is dependent as much on the local availability of cane as on agro-climatic conditions. Hence while accepting the fact that all the units should start crushing without delay, the Government also had to take note of the local factors in operation at the start of crushing. Despite these local factors, I am glad to inform the House that this year the number of factories which have started crushing as on 30th November, 1978 was 190 as against 185 on 30th November last year. The latest figure available today is: 201 factories are working I would also like to remind the Members that during the last season, in view of the unprecedented sugarcane production, many sugar factories had continued to crush cane right upto beginning of August which had never happened in the past. Under the circumstances, the Hon'ble Members would agree that the Government had ensured successfully the start of normal crushing operations by sugar factories this season in time.

The Government is constantly aware of the problems which are likely to beset the cane growers as well as in the industry and the measures of the Government are always aimed to bring about a situation of harmony in this context. As I mentioned earlier, the Ordinance promulgated during last month is meant to take care of both the factors, while

ensuring that the largest number of factories start crushing at the earliest. It also ensures that the sugarcane dues to the growers are repaid with the greatest rapidity.

The situation created by an excess availability of cane and fall in prices of sugar have created attendant problems to gur and khandsari industries. The former is a completely decentralised industry with little or no control by the Government. Even so, last year, the Government had taken a series of measures, including purchase by public sector agencies, export without limitations etc., and timely measures of support possible, within the limitations of absence of control over this sector, would be rendered this year also. As regards khandsari, the problem is one of fiscal relief mainly and the Government is in consultation with the State Governments on the measures of assistance to be adopted. An early decision would be taken on this.

I would hence assure the House that the Government is keeping a close watch on the problems of sugarcane growers, and the gur, khandsari and sugar situation and it is always the intention of the Government to ensure that all sectors in this field should run smoothly. But there are limits on what the Government can do to help the unorganized sector of the industry in a situation of surplus production of sugarcane. The Government would, however, constantly review and take whatever steps it can to harmonise the interests of the cane growers, the consumers and the producers to the fullest extent.

श्री सुलतान सिंह : श्रीमन् मंत्री महोदय ने अपना बयान दिया। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि मंत्री महोदय व्यक्तिगत तौर पर किसानों की पूरी परवाह करते हैं। उनकी कोशिश भी है कि किसान की काफी उन्नति हो। लेकिन जहां तक मैं समझ पाया हूं जनता पार्टी के अन्दर जो इंटरनल वारफेयर है उसकी सजा किसानों को दी जा रही है। कोई भी तबका ऐसा नहीं कि वह प्रोडक्शन बढ़ाये

और उसको सजा मिले। किसान ने शुगर का, खांडसारी का और गुड़ का प्रोडक्शन बढ़ाया है और उस प्रोडक्शन को बढ़ाने का रिजल्ट यह निकला कि पिछले साल कोई डेढ़ करोड़ टन के करीब गुड़ और खांडसारी पैदा हुई और 1976-77 के भाव का जो फर्क था वह 1 हजार रुपये टन का था। इससे अरबों रुपये का किसान को गुड़ और खांडसारी में नुकसान पहुंचाया गया। इसके अलावा आज तक खांडसारी यूनिट चालू नहीं हुई। मेरे खयाल में मंत्री महोदय इसके बारे में ज्यादा जानते हैं कि बहुत थोड़ा परसन्टेज गन्ने का शुगर मिल क्रश करते हैं बाकी प्राइवेट क्रशर और लोग अपने तौर पर गुड़ बनाते हैं। यह सरकार जब से आई है बार बार कहती रही है कि हम ग्रामोत्थान करेंगे, ग्राम के उद्योगों को गांव की इंडस्ट्री को प्रोत्साहित करेंगे। मैं आपसे पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्या गुड़ इंडस्ट्री गांव की इंडस्ट्री नहीं है, खांडसारी गांव का उद्योग नहीं है, गुड़ और खांड बनाना क्या गांव का उद्योग नहीं है? लेकिन जितनी तबाही किसानों की इस सरकार ने की है इतनी बुरी तरह तबाही हिन्दुस्तान के इतिहास में कभी नहीं हुई। किसान पिछले साल गुड़ और खांडसारी में अरबों रुपये के नीचे रहा। खाली गुड़ की बात नहीं है आप काटन को ले लीजिए। काटन के भाव 100 प्रतिशत डाऊन कर दिए गए हैं। काटन कारपोरेशन खरीदती नहीं है। किसान तबाह हो रहा है। मैं आपकी माफत मंत्री जी से प्रार्थना करता हूं कि व्यक्तिगत रूप से मंत्री जी ने किसानों की मदद करने की कोशिश की है लेकिन जैसा कि जनता पार्टी के अन्दर एक बार चल रहा है, किसानों को तबाह करने की और किसानों को मिटाने की साजिश हो रही है। आज बिगाई हो रही है। आप मेरे साथ चलें। कोई मंत्री चले। आप चल कर देखें, पेट्रोल पम्प पर एक हजार ट्रैक्टरों की लाइन लगी मिलेगी। किसानों को डीजल नहीं मिलता है। काटन मंडी

में कोई काटन उठाने वाला नहीं है। गांव के अन्दर चलें तो गांव में ट्रांसपोर्ट चार्ज भी कोई किसान को देने को तैयार नहीं है। गांव से किसान गन्ना लाए, क्रश करें, गुड़ बनाए उसको मंडी में ले जाए लेकिन उसको ट्रांसपोर्ट चार्ज भी नहीं मिलते—माल की कीमत मिलना तो दूर रहा। फिर आप कहते हैं कि यह सरकार तो ग्रामोत्थान के लिए है। यह अरबों से सारी अर्थ-व्यवस्था को गांव की तरफ ले जा रही है। मैं समझता हूं कि मंत्री जी यह कोई साजिश चल रही है। आप अपने घर को सम्भालिए। यह किसानों को मारने की साजिश चल रही है। आपकी इंटरनल लड़ाई हो सकती है लेकिन किसान का कोई कसूर नहीं है। किसान को क्यों उजाड़ा जा रहा है। अरबों रुपया, जिसने इस देश में बेशुमार चीनी पैदा कर दी, काटन पैदा कर दिया, गुड़ पैदा कर दिया, आप तो उसका हिसाब भी नहीं कर सकते हैं और उनको तबाह करते चले जा रहे हैं। मैं समझता हूं आपके अन्दर पार्टी-बाजी है। मैंने सुना है कि चीन और पाकिस्तान से गुड़ की मांग है, यह पता नहीं यह बात कहां तक ठीक है लेकिन मंत्री जो को पता होगा। चीन और पाकिस्तान को गुड़ नहीं भेजा जाता। पता नहीं क्यों नहीं भेजा जाता। शायद इसलिए कि किसान उसके अन्दर दबा रहेगा और किसान आपके नीचे रहेगा। इसके लिए मंत्री जी बैठे हैं वे एक भी उदाहरण दें कि हिन्दुस्तान में किसी चीज का भाव सिर्फ खेती की पैदावार के सिवाय 100% गिरा हो। गुड़ का दाम 100% गिरा, खांडसारी का दाम 100% गिरा, काटन का भाव 1976-77 में पांच-साढ़े पांच सौ रुपये क्विंटल था जो अब 250-260 रुपये में बिकती है पूरा 100% दाम गिरा लेकिन कपड़े का दाम 4-5% गिरा, स्टेनलेस स्टील का दाम बढ़ा है, लोहे का बढ़ा है, ट्रैक्टर का दाम बढ़ा है। इसलिए मैं यह कहना चाहता हूं कि किसान आज तबाह और बरबाद हो रहा है। मैं समझता हूं कि यह कोई साजिश है। मैं प्रार्थना करता हूं

[श्री सुलतान सिंह]

इस साजिश का शिकार किसानों को मत बनाइए। लड़ाई मोरारजी भाई और चौधरी चरण सिंह की हो, इसमें किसान का क्या कसूर है, किसान को क्यों मार रहे हैं। मैं यह कहता हूँ कि आज तक कोई सरकार किसान की दुश्मन इस तरह नहीं आई जिस तरह की यह सरकार बँठी है। उसके प्रमाण मौजूद हैं। आप कोई चीज का दाम बता दें जो 100% गिरा हो। कोई चीज हिन्दुस्तान की बता दें। आपने गुड़ का दाम गिराया तो ट्रेक्टर का भी 100% गिराइए। आपने काटन का दाम गिराया है, कपड़े का भी गिराइए तो हम मान सकते हैं कि आप इन्साफ करने वाले हैं। आप ट्रेक्टर का दाम तो बढ़ाते चले जा रहे हैं, कपड़े का दाम बढ़ाते चले जा रहे हैं, काटन बाजार में कोई पूछता नहीं है गुड़ को कोई पूछता नहीं है, खांडसारी को बाजार में कोई पूछता नहीं यह किसान कितने दिन तक दब सकेगा मैं इतना ही निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ। मंत्री जी आपस की लड़ाई की, घर की लड़ाई में किसी एक सेक्शन को बरबाद करने के लिए इस्तेमाल न करो आज आपकी पार्टी किसानों को बरबाद करने पर तैयार हुई है। आप का कोई मंत्री मेरे साथ चले पेट्रोल भी मैं दूंगा, गाड़ी भी मैं दूंगा। मेरे साथ बैठ कर चले मैं काटन की मंडी में ले जाऊंगा, गुड़ की मंडी में ले जाऊंगा, डीजल के तेल के पम्प पर ले जाऊंगा जहाँ किसानों की लाइन लगी मिलेगी। गुड़ की मंडी में गुड़ उठाने वाला कोई नहीं। काटन उठाने वाला कोई नहीं मिलता, काटन की मंडी में जाओगे तो काटन को उठाने वाला नहीं मिलेगा। अगर किसी मंत्री को तसल्ली न हो तो मेरे साथ बैठ कर चल सकता है। मैं अपना पेट्रोल खर्च करूंगा जा कर दिखा के लाऊंगा। मैं यह बात कोई क्रिटिसिज्म के लिए नहीं कह रहा हूँ। मैं यह बात इसलिए कह रहा हूँ कि आज किसान को बर्बाद किया जा रहा है। तीस-पैंतीस साल के बाद पूँजीपति के हाथ में सत्ता आई है, वह जातिवाद खड़ा करके लोगों को लड़ा कर ऐसा

वातावरण पैदा करेगी कि जो प्रोड्यूस करे उसको इनाम मिलना चाहिए, यहाँ उल्टे बांस बरेली को हैं। जिसने पैदावार बढ़ाई है, उसको सजा दी जाती है, तबाह और बर्बाद किया जा रहा है। व्यक्तिगत तौर पर मैं मंत्री जी से नाराज नहीं हूँ। वे खूब कोशिश करते हैं कि किसान को ठीक दाम मिले। लेकिन वे तो किसान हैं। सरकार तो उन लोगों के हाथ में है जो बहुत हिसाब-किताब जानते हैं। वे कपड़े का दाम, लोहे का दाम, ट्रेक्टर का दाम नहीं गिरने देंगे, खाली दाम गिरावेंगे, गुड़ का, काटन का और आप लोगों को अगूठा भी उसी पर लगवायेंगे। केवल मैं मंत्री जी को होशियार करना चाहता हूँ इस बारे में।

श्रम तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय  
में राज्य मंत्री (डा० राम कृपाल सिंह) :  
आप अच्छा भाषण दे रहे हैं।

श्री सुलतान सिंह : मैं इस्तीफा दे दूंगा अगर मैं ने डीजल के लिए लाइन नहीं दिखाई, काटन के लिए लाइन नहीं दिखाई। आप मेरे साथ चलिए। यह बात क्रिटिसिज्म के लिए नहीं कह रहा हूँ। आपका पेट्रोल भी खर्च नहीं होगा।

श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह : प्रश्न तो केवल उठाया गया गन्ने, गुड़, खांडसारी और चीनी के विषय में। परन्तु डीजल आयल, कपड़ा, लोहा, स्टेनलैस स्टील और पता नहीं क्या क्या विषय ले आये हैं। उन प्रश्नों पर उपयुक्त अवसर पर ही मैं उत्तर दे सकूंगा। इस समय जो प्रश्न सदन के समक्ष है उसी तक ही मैं सीमित रहूंगा। गुड़ की चर्चा की गई और उसमें संकेत यह भी किया गया कि पाकिस्तान और चीन में गुड़ की मांग है और भारत सरकार उसको रोके हुए है। श्रीमन्, मुझे इसकी कोई जानकारी नहीं है। अगर माननीय सदस्य को जानकारी है और कोई इसके पीछे ठोस बात है, केवल प्रचार के लिए नहीं कहा है तो मुझे बड़ी खुशी होगी और मेरी से बड़ी मात्रा में जहाँ

कहीं भी चाहें हम उनको ही लायसेन्स दिलाने के लिए तैयार हैं। संसार के किसी भी देश में अगर वे गुड़ भिजवा सकते हैं तो मैं स्पष्ट कहना चाहता हूँ कि भारत सरकार उसमें बाधक नहीं होगी बल्कि सहायक होगी।

दूसरी बात यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि जहाँ तक गुड़ के इस वर्ष भाव गिरने या पिछले वर्ष गिरने का सम्बन्ध है यह कोई पहला अवसर भारत के चीनी इतिहास में नहीं है। अनेक अवसर आये हैं पहले भी आये हैं जब मिट्टी के भाव गुड़ बिका है और जब इनके दल का शासन था इन्होंने क्या किया था ? श्रीमान्, मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि यह परिस्थिति ऐसी है कि जिसमें कोई भी शासन कुछ नहीं कर सकता है, चाहे हमारा शासन हो या उनका हो, क्योंकि उसकी मांग न तो विदेशों में है और न ही उसको लम्बे अर्थ तक सुरक्षित रखा जा सकता है। इसलिए उसका कोई उपाय नहीं है। मैं भी आपको चुनौती देता हूँ, आप बड़े हितैषी बनते हैं, मुझे कोई भी एक उपाय बता दीजिए जिसके द्वारा गुड़ उत्पादकों के हितों की रक्षा हो सके निवाए इसके कि आप कहें कि इसको खरीदते चले जाइए सौ रुपया प्रति क्विंटल और उसके बाद उसको भारतीय महासागर में डूबो दीजिए। अगर इसके अलावा कोई आप के पास सुझाव है जिससे कि गुड़ वालों की सहायता की जा सके तो मैं उस पर सहानुभूतिपूर्वक विचार करने के लिए तैयार हूँ। लेकिन वास्तव में इस स्थिति...

श्री सुलतान सिंह : सब चीजों का उपाय है दुनिया में। यह कोई ऐसी बात नहीं है।

श्री मानु प्रताप सिंह : खांडसारी के विषय में मुझे यह कहना है कि खांडसारी के बारे में यह कहा जाता है कि यह ग्रामीण उद्योग है। इसमें कोई शक नहीं है। लेकिन ग्रामीण उद्योग को क्या अधिकार है कि वह किसानों का शोषण करे। हम से तरह-तरह की सहूलियत मांगी जाती है। हम सहूलियत देने को भी तैयार हैं, टैक्स कम करने को भी

तैयार हैं, पंचेज टैक्स राज्य सरकार कम करने को तैयार हैं लेकिन खांडसारी उत्पादक बदले में यह कहने के लिए तैयार नहीं हैं कि व छ, साढ़े छ, सात या साढ़े सात रुपया गन्ना उत्पादकों को भी देंगे। हमारी सहूलियतों का अगर लाभ किसान तक नहीं पहुँचता है और केवल एक प्रचार करके, लावो बना कर सारी सहूलियत तो ले लें और उसके बाद चार रुपया प्रति क्विंटल किसान को दें, तो इसके लिए कम से कम मैं तैयार नहीं हूँ। जहाँ कहीं भी खांडसारी उत्पादकों ने स्पष्ट आश्वासन दिया है कि हम किसानों को गन्ने का इस मूल्य से कम अदा नहीं करेंगे वहाँ उन को सारी सहूलियत देने के लिए हम तैयार हैं।

अब सरकार की बात आती है। इस सदन में मैंने पिछले सत्र में कहा था कि जिन्होंने गन्ना सप्लाय किया है उन के हितों की रक्षा की जाएगी और गन्ने का मूल्य अदा करवाया जाएगा। किसी भी उपाय से सरकार ने अपने वचन को पूरा किया है और यह आर्गुमेन्ट निकाला है कि अगर गन्ना का मूल्य किसी मिल में 10 प्रति शत से अधिक बकाया है और उस की अदायगी नहीं कर देता है, तो उस मिल को अपने प्रबंध में ले लिया जाएगा, इस प्रकार से कि सब से अधिक मिल केवल उत्तर प्रदेश में थीं, 42 मिलें थीं, जिन्होंने 10 फी सदी से ऊपर बकाया रख छोड़ा था, और आप को यह जान कर प्रसन्नता होगी कि इन 42 में से 29, जो या तो राज्य सरकार के प्रबंध में हैं या कोऑपरेटिव्स के प्रबंध में हैं, उन के बकाया का प्रबंध किया जा चुका है और शीघ्र ही सारा बकाया अदा कर दिया जाएगा। बाकी 13 मिलें जो हैं उन में से 2 पहले ही सरकारी नियंत्रण में लायी जा चुकी हैं, 11 पर विचार हो रहा है। अगर उन्होंने कोई तरीका, कोई रास्ता नहीं दिखाया तो उन का भी अधिग्रहण कर लिया जाएगा। तो इस प्रकार हम किसानों को, जो उनका बकाया है, वह शीघ्र से शीघ्र अदा कराने के लिए तत्पर हैं। यह भी मैं स्पष्ट कर दूँ कि जो मिलें सरकार अपने

[श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह]

नियंत्रण में ले लेगी उन पर जो किसानों का बकाया है वह बकाया भी सरकार अपने प्रतिबंध में लेने के बाद जल्दी से जल्दी अदा कर देगी।

तो इस प्रकार से जो कुछ संभव है और जो उचित है सब कुछ किया जा रहा है गन्ना किसानों के तथा उपभोक्ताओं के हितों की रक्षा के लिए।

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Sir, I have heard the conventional type of reply from the hon. Minister of State for Food about sugar. I am aware of his difficulties. It is not that I do not know what difficulties he is facing, I am very well aware of the difficulties. But there is a way out. Sir, my hon. colleague, Shri Sultan Singh, made certain points besides sugarcane, i.e. about cotton, etc. But, by and large, it is for the Minister to understand and appreciate the feelings of the agriculturists. The Government and the people of this country really want a progressive farmer to produce more. But when we produce more and when we are at the feet or at the mercy of either the traders or the Government or the bureaucracy, then the farmer gets frustrated. This is the general approach and in this I am not going to have a dialogue with him because I know what are the views of his party and what are the views of our party. We are totally for the farmers. They are taking certain steps. It is not that they are not taking steps. But those steps are falling short. Limiting myself only to the present Calling Attention about sugar, I would only like him to give some specific answers instead of generalising the whole matter. He said that some factories have been started. That is right. Some factories have been started in Uttar Pradesh. In the southern States, there is no problem because many of the factories are cooperative sugar factories and they already started crushing. What I want to know from the Minister is

this. As per the order of the Government of India, for a certain percentage of recoveries, certain price has to be paid. Very recently we made an exercise in Maharashtra, particularly of all the co-operative sugar factories. And looking to the overall recovery of 11.5 to 11.7, the minimum price payable to the sugarcane growers comes to about Rs. 115 to Rs. 130. And the co-operative sugar factories cannot give them a price of more than Rs. 95 to Rs. 110. So, he comes under the mischief of the law. This is not the intention of the Government. I can understand it. This is none of our intentions that the sugarcane growers, who are the very members of our sugar factories, who are the foundation of our sugar factories should come under the mischief of the law for no fault of anybody. So, what steps do you propose for this purpose? Otherwise, the sugarcane growers, the sugarcane co-operatives and the private sugar factories are violating the law enunciated by the Government of India. Secondly, because of this also, in the new crushing season, we are not able to give him an advance of not more than Rs. 80 to Rs. 85. That is also a discouragement for the sugarcane growth, and for growing sugarcane in the next crop. That is why, you have to say specifically as to what type of relief you would like to give, and whether the law will be suitably amended. Otherwise, this cannot work. Secondly, Sir, I want to suggest one thing, Shri Sultan Singh has properly stated that. Very recently, there was a delegation here. And in Uttar Pradesh, particularly in the eastern UP—whatever may be that part, he knows it better—the sugarcane grower is able to dispose of the sugarcane at a price of even Rs. 4 to Rs. 7 per quintal. This is because he wants the land to be emptied for the next crop so that he can grow at least wheat or some other crop. So, what steps the Government is proposing to take in this regard so that the sugarcane is quickly disposed of.

Sir, I am making only very specific points. I am not giving any lecture

or any sermon on this. My next point is this: Sir, the daily price in London is moving between 92 and 97 pounds sterling per tonne. You have got a very large stock of sugar. Even taking for granted that the worst comes to the worst, if you allow between 10 to 15 lakh tonnes of sugar to be exported—the quotas are there, and even if they are not there, you can plead with the foreign countries—the staggering pressure on the present stocks will come down because the buffer stock proposal is not being accepted. I know your Ministry has suggested the buffer stock proposal to the Government but the Cabinet is not giving its approval. That is why, the buffer stock proposal is "in the cold storage. So, if you don't want a buffer stock, then export it. And a loss of Rs. 18 to Rs. 30 crores in this transaction is not very much because previously the sugar exports have earned Rs. 400 to Rs. 465 crores for the general revenue of the Government during the last two years.

Now, I come to my last two points. In reply to a question during the last one or two weeks, you yourself admitted that Rs. 46 crores are still to be paid. You said that cheap credit is made available. Actually, it is not coming out of the banks' counters as yet. At what stage it is being held up or who is throttling it or what the Reserve Bank is doing about it, I do not know. But you have to take every precaution. Unless this credit comes forth, the old dues cannot be paid and further payments cannot be made on a liberal scale. Then the rate of interest is also there. Very recently, Sir, a sugar delegation came here.

It included representatives from Karnataka, Andhra, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, etc. The Prime Minister agreed that the rate of interest has to be lowered. But he said, "What can I do? The prices have gone down." You know Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh that the conversion cost of sugar is between 45 and 55, taking a view of the scale of economics etc. and the present realisation equalises barely Rs. 100 to Rs. 125 for the sugar-

cane grower. Out of that, after deducting whatever dues have to be recovered, the sugarcane grower's take-home package comes to roughly between Rs. 72 to 80 and Rs. 85 and, as you have yourself said, that you are also a grower, you will appreciate that this is nothing which will give any encouragement whatsoever and, therefore, for this purpose cheap credit and minimum credit has to be given.

Another point in this connection that I want to mention is that we requested the Prime Minister for the staggering of releases. Why should you not show at least that much of sympathy? How is the Government going to be affected by the staggering of releases? The consumer is not being affected either. You yourself had promised in this House that you would do it, when the matter was raised by some radical Members like Bhupeshji and Lakshmana Mahapat-roji, if the prices rose and sharks took benefit of it. Whether the sharks are taking the benefit or not, that is another thing but we co-operatives are suffering and We are selling sugar roughly between Rs. 165 and Rs. 180. Leave aside Rs. 3, we are selling it between Rs. 1.65 and Rs. 2. We are not shedding tears if the consumer is going to be benefited. We do not mind that. But, Sir, the input prices, the cost production is not coming down commensurately and it will not come down overnight. So, the staggering of releases and the export of sugar are some of the minimum things which you can do. Otherwise this entire effort goes waste and the image of your party will be tarnished. I am not giving you an advance because you yourselves are better knowledgeable persons and matured politicians but you yourselves are digging the grave at least in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar because if once the sugarcane grower faces this problem, nobody can salvage your party. At least, that much of advice I can give you.

Then the basic question comes whether you will export sugar? That is

[Shri Arvind Ganesh Kulkarni]

the best way. Staggering of releases will be another way. Immediate grant of credit and the lower rates of interest will be the third way of doing it. Fourthly what about the khandsari? He has said that they can work it out. Very recently the costs have been brought down, I know your Ministry is alive. But the difference seems to be that your Ministry is not able to make a convincing case either with the Finance Ministry or with the Cabinet, whatever it is. But the sum total of all this effort and the basic question is that the impressions of farmers, representatives of farmers, sugarcane grower and cotton growers are that this Government is anti-farmer Government. That is a very wrong thing. Actually that might not be the case and that is not the case. I also know that that is not the case because you have announced many decisions by increasing the support prices be they in wheat or in anything else. In the case of jowar you announced a support price of Rs. 85. It is selling at Rs. 65 on the roads but there are no buyers. The State Government is not coming forth because they are not getting the money. So, what is wrong with it? In the case of sugar—I am limiting myself only to sugar—I ask these four particular and specific questions. Do not dillydally. If you cannot reply, please say so, say that this is beyond your competence. Let not the entire sugarcane co-operatives and the sugar industry always be anxious to know what their fate is and what is going to happen to them, which will affect further production. These are the only things that I want to bring to your notice. 3 P.M.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I would like to make one point very clear that no factory whether in the private sector or in the co-operative sector will be allowed to violate the law which requires them to pay the minimum statutory price. Every factory will have to pay the minimum statutory price and if they do not, stern action will be taken. In the

*urgent public importance*

meantime; a difficulty has arisen because the sugar price in the open market has declined very steeply. We had anticipated, as this House will recall, that the price of sugar in the open market will stabilise at about Rs. 275 but it has gone down to Rs. 230 and Rs. 240 a Kg...

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO (Orissa): Here I have got the ration shop receipt. In Delhi itself I purchased it at Rs. 2.70 per Kg. How does he say this?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I have got all-India figures. The prices have ranged between Rs. 2.20 to Rs. 2.80...

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: You tell him the price inclusive of excise duty.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I can tell you the retail prices. The retail price of sugar in Delhi market is Rs. 2.45; in Kanpur it is Rs. 2.40; in Calcutta it is Rs. 2.80; in Bombay, it is Rs. 2.35; in Madras...

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: What is the quantum of excise? You tell this to Mr. Mahapatro.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: It is known to everybody, I think. It is 17A per cent *ad valorem*.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: But how much does the cane-grower get?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: As I was saying, Sir, due to steep fall in the sugar price, some difficulty has arisen. We are aware of that and very soon we are going to take certain steps which will remove this difficulty. But till that decision is taken, I am not in a position to say what steps we are going to take but we are conscious of the difficulties.

As regards exports, I may inform the hon. Member that we are exporting the full quota that is available to us under the international sugar agreement. It is 6.5 lakh tonnes. We have already contracted for export of 6.5 lakh tonnes relating to 1978 and in



the next year also we propose to utilise the full quota.

As regards the khandsari I will repeat what I said earlier that if the khandsari manufacturers are willing to give an undertaking that they would pay to the cane-growers a certain level of price, then I will personally go to the Finance Ministry and plead in their behalf—of course, it is not within my Ministry—that they get some concessions. But so long as they insist that they should get all the concessions and give nothing to the cane-growers, I am sure, I cannot sympathise with them.

SHRI ARVIND GANESH KULKARNI: You have not said anything about the staggering of releases and cheap credit. What have you got to say about that?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I cannot indicate what measures the Government is going to take but within a few days some measures will be taken which will change this situation.

**श्री शिव चन्द्र झा (बिहार) :** उपसभापति महोदय, मैं मानता हूँ कि चीनी की कीमत गिरी है और आम जनता को अब चीनी आसानी से उपलब्ध होने लगी है। यह एक अच्छी बात है। लेकिन मंत्री महोदय ने दिल्ली में चीनी की जो यह कीमत बताई है कि दिल्ली में चीनी की कीमत 2 रु० 45 पैसे है, यह बात सही नहीं है। मंत्री महोदय साउथ एवेन्यू की किसी भी दुकान में चले जायें तो उनको पता चलेगा कि चीनी की कीमत 2 रु० 70 पैसे से ज्यादा है। इस वक्त दिल्ली में चीनी की कीमत 2 रु० 70 पैसे निर्धारित है। आम तौर पर चीनी के संबंध में आम जनता को जो दिक्कत थी वह काफी हद तक दूर हुई है और जनता को राहत मिली है। यह समस्या यहाँ पर खत्म नहीं होती है। इससे दो तीन बातें संबंधित हैं। एक समस्या जो उन चीनी मिलों की है जो बन्द पड़ी हुई हैं और दूसरी समस्या जो गन्ना उत्पादक हैं उनकी है और तीसरी समस्या चीनी कीमतों को कंट्रोल करने से संबंधित

है। ये तीन समस्याएँ हैं जिन पर गौर करने की आवश्यकता है। इस काल-एड्रेशन में यह सवाल पूछा गया है कि—

“Non-functioning of a number of sugar mills.”

अभी हमारे देश में स्थिति यह हो गई है कि कई सुगर मिलों की हालत खराब हो गई है और परिस्थितियाँ ऐसी हो गई हैं कि सरकार को तुरन्त तमाम सुगर मिलों को अपने हाथ में लेना पड़ेगा। ऐसी हालत में मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान में ऐसी कितनी मिलें हैं जो नान-फंक्शनिंग हालत में हैं और जिनको आप समझते हैं कि नोटिस देकर अपने मातहत ले लिया जाय ? इसके साथ-साथ मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान में ऐसी कितनी मिलें हैं जिनको आप नोटिस देना चाहते हैं और दृष्टिकोण में आपने कितनों को नोटिस दिये हैं। यदि आपने उतनी मिलों को नोटिस नहीं दिया है जितनों को देना चाहिए था तो कम मिलों को नोटिस देने का क्या कारण है ? जहाँ तक नान-फंक्शनिंग मिलों का संबंध है, ऐसा लगता है कि लगभग 201 मिलें नान-फंक्शनिंग अस्था में हैं, लेकिन आपने उनकी संख्या 76 या 77 बताई है। ऐसी स्थिति में मैं यह स्पष्ट रूप से जानना चाहता हूँ कि आपने जो कम मिलों को नोटिस दिये हैं उसका क्या कारण है ?

दूसरा सवाल मेरा यह है कि जिन मिलों को सरकार अपने मातहत ले रही है उनको आप किस तरीके से मोडरेनाइज करने जा रहे हैं? आम तौर पर यह कहा जाता है कि महाराष्ट्र और आन्ध्र प्रदेश में जो सुगर मिल हैं वे अच्छी हालत में हैं और उनके मुकाबले में बिहार और यू० पी० की मिलों की हालत अच्छी नहीं है। सारे देश में सुगर मिलों की मोडरेनाइजेशन की हालत दूसरे मुल्कों से बहुत पीछे है। यही कारण है कि हमारी सुगर मिल दूसरे मुल्कों के मुकाबले कम्पीटीशन में पीछे रह जाती हैं। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह हमारी एक बुनियादी

[ श्री शिव चन्द्र झा ]

समस्या है। इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जिन मिलों को आप अपने मातहत लेंगे उनको आप कहां तक मॉडरेनाइज करेंगे और कहां तक आप उनको इंटरनेशनल लेवल पर ला सकेंगे? आप स्पष्ट रूप से यह बताइये कि इन मिलों को आप कितने समय में मॉडरेनाइज कर पाएंगे?

तीसरा और आखिरी सवाल मेरा यह है कि हमारे देश में जो केन प्रोवर्स हैं और उनकी गन्ने की कीमत की जो समस्या है उसको आप कितना फिक्स करना चाहते हैं? यह एक मानी हुई बात है कि हमारे देश में जो आर्थिक सिलसिला चल रहा है उसमें पूँजीवाद बढ़ा है। उद्योगों में जब पूँजीवाद बढ़ता है तो वह कृषि के क्षेत्र में भी हमला करता है। भारत में भी यही हुआ है। हमारे देश में जो केन क्रोप्स हैं, जैसे जूट है, सुगर है, मूँगफली है, उनमें भी केपीटेलिज़्म घुसा है। हमारे देश में गन्ने की जो कम कीमत है उसका कारण यही पूँजीवाद है। हमारे देश में जो गन्ना उगाने वाले लोग हैं उनको गन्ने की उचित कीमत नहीं मिल पाती है। ऐसी स्थिति में मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि जब आप सुगर मिलों को अपने हाथ में लेने जा रहे हैं तो गन्ने की कीमत कितनी फिक्स करने जा रहे हैं? दूसरा यह जो केन प्रोवर्स हैं उनके दामों को स्टेबल करने के लिये, फिक्स करने के लिये आप कौन सी सुविधा देने जा रहे हैं ताकि वे नये ढंग से केन का उत्पादन कर सकें? यह मैं जानना चाहता हूँ, यही मेरे सवाल हैं?

**श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह :** श्रीमन्, पहले तो मैं स्पष्ट करना चाहता हूँ कि नोटिस देने में हमारी तरफ से कोई रियायत नहीं करती गयी है और न कोई कमी है। 294 मिलों में से 160 मिलों को नोटिस दिये गये थे उसमें से 120 को इसलिये नोटिस दिये गये थे कि वह समय से यानी 15 नवम्बर तक वे नहीं चली थी। बाकी 40 मिलों को इसलिये नोटिस दी गई थी क्योंकि उनके यहां 10 प्रतिशत से ज्यादा बकाया है। इन नोटिसों के बावजूद और आर्डिनेंस की वजह से आज की स्थिति यह है

कि 294 में से 201 मिलें चल रही हैं जो की पिछले साल की अपेक्षा अधिक हैं। मेरे पास आंकड़े मौजूद हैं प्रति सप्ताह के, पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले में और पिछले वर्ष के मुकाबले में इस साल हर सप्ताह में मिल ज्यादा चल रही है। इसलिये ऐसा कहना कि मिलें इस साल नहीं चली है यह ठीक नहीं होगा। जैसा मैं पहले कह चुका हूँ कि हम कार्यवाही कर रहे हैं आर्डिनेन्स के अनुसार लेकिन संख्या जो हमारे शिकंजे में आने वाली है उसकी संख्या कम होती जा रही है। क्योंकि कुछ तो कोआपरेटिव सेक्टर की थी तो कुछ स्टेट के कंट्रोल में पहले से थी। वह तो उसमें नहीं आई है हमारे आर्डिनेन्स के अन्दर। जैसा कि मैंने उत्तर प्रदेश का बताया कि 42 मिलें थी जिनके यहां बकाया ज्यादा था उनमें से 29 मिलें कोआपरेटिव या स्टेट सेक्टर की थी। सिर्फ 13 मिल प्राइवेट सेक्टर की थी। इन 29 मिलों के द्वारा बकाये की अदायगी का इन्तजाम हो गया है और जैसा कि मैं कह चुका हूँ वे बकाया शीघ्र अदा कर देंगी। अब इन 13 में से 2 पहले ही ली जा चुकी है बाकी 11 का अवलोकन हो रहा है। अगर कोई व्यवस्था नहीं होगी तो उनको लेकर किसानों का पेमेंट कराया जायेगा।

जहां तक यह कहना कि हमारे देश की चीनी मिलें दुनिया के स्टैंडर्ड से नीचे हैं, यह बात सही नहीं है। कुछ पुरानी मिलें हैं पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार में। कई ऐसी हैं जो 1930-35 के बीच बनी थी उनका रिनोवेशन नहीं हुआ है। लेकिन हमारी जो नयी मिलें हैं, आधुनिक मिलें हैं वे दुनिया की मिलों के मुकाबले में अच्छी रिकवरी दे सकती हैं, उनका परफार्मेंस अच्छा है। हम उनका जो अच्छा मुकाबला नहीं कर पा रहे हैं उसका कारण मिलों की इन-एफिसियेंसी नहीं है बल्कि उसके दूसरे कारण हैं।

जहां तक किसानों को गन्ने का उचित मूल्य दिलाये जाने का सम्बन्ध है मिनिमम स्टेटयुटरी प्राइस जो 10 रुपये है, साढ़े 8 प्रतिशत रिकवरी पर वह हर एक को दिलाई जायेगी

और यदि मिलों ने साल के अन्त में कोई मुनाफा किया तो उसका भी 50 प्रतिशत गन्ना उत्पादकों को उसमें से शेयर मिलेगा। यह फसला अब तक तक का है।

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA PATRO: It is strange for a Minister of the Janata Government, which started with a very solemn pledge of giving top priority to the small sector, the rural sector and also the agriculturists, to come and say that they are not able to attend to this work because there has to be, what is called, a harmonious treatment of the various other problems. I am unable to agree that his whole effort is to 'bring about harmonious conditions as far as the concerned parties are concerned. But I can very well prove that he has been pending before the sugar barons and that is the reason why the whole thing is in such a mess and that is why we are facing such a deepening crisis so far as the sugarcane-growers, mill-workers and also the consumers are concerned. Sir, I may tell you for your knowledge that the whole sugar policy is framed in a wrong way. The whole thing is conducted with a view to pleasing these sugar barons who are very influential persons as far as politician the Northern States of India is concerned. That is why they are pleased. Whenever some important situation arises they take very lenient steps against them. Even now what has been done? After this Government came into power concessions after concessions have been allowed. The first concession was in excise duty and in reducing the quantum of levy. Then they came forward for two other things. Therefore, they were blessed with decontrol. The hon'ble Minister says that decontrol is a measure which has benefited many. It has only benefited that section which has betrayed the sugarcane growers. Is it not true that 65 per cent, of the sugar was being released as levy sugar at Rs. 230 per quintal? And is it not a fact that sugar has to be purchased at something more than Rs. 270 from the ration shops in Delhi itself? In other

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States it is still worse. This is the reason for not opening the mills. This is all because they are whetted in their appetite by decontrol measures. Now for the same reason they are having a second round, of attack.

Now you refer to take-over. Takeover of a mill in the absence of a particular recovery is a big fraud on the nation. I will presently tell you what it is. The whole scheme is to attend to such defaulting mills, take them over, rehabilitate them, then see that the price goes up and then give them a safe landing later on. What is the object of the Bill? Hand it over to them after three years of its takeover. That is all. This pricing and everything after the three-year period is a good game.

My friend was questioning about the number of mills that have been given notice about take-over. Sir, last year in U.P. itself 16 lakh hectares of sugarcane remained on the field un-crushed. Now it is bound to be much more. The whole sugarcane that has been grown by the grower will not be crushed. This delayed process has not only affected the sugarcane grower but the sugar mill owners are interested in having the season shortened and thereby pay less to the worker. Are you aware of that? It is not true that the whole effort is to jack up the prices by this process? Sir, I am very much ashamed at this hypo-critic talk. They say that the prices have crashed and the mill-owners are put to heavy losses. If that is true what prevents them from handing over their mills to the Government? The Government are anxious to take over the mills and they know how to face the loss. But they will not allow the Govt. to touch them. They are running to the High Courts simply because orders were made in Bihar against sixteen mills which are behaving in a nasty way. Now stay orders have been brought. From that are you not able to understand what they are up to? Is it true that they are facing losses? And you say that so much of accumulation of sugar is there, the production of sugarcane is too much. Sir, have you ever refer-

[Shri Lakshmana Mahapatro] referred to the Bhargava Commission's report and the Tariff Commission's report? Have they not projected that 181 million tonnes of sugarcane is not sufficient? It is much more than that. Is it true that the Bhargava Commission's report has also said that 65 lakh tonnes of sugar is far below the requirement of the country? What do we do? 65 lakh tonnes of sugar in a year for 62 million people gives you hardly 10 KG per head in a year which is half of what is being consumed by our Punjab friends; they are consuming 20 KG a year which is one-fifth of the international consumption per head. So this is the way they are yielding to their sweet talks and their demands. So this take-over or giving all sorts of concessions is not going to solve the problem. Sir, the whole misery of the people surfaced in the year 1962-63 when you linked up the price of sugar to recovery in the sugar mills. Have you seen any person in the whole world or even in our own country where a person is not paid for what he produces but instead somebody else gets it? Sir, is it not right that I should be required to be paid a price for the variety of sugarcane dependent on the sucrose content of my sugarcane? But I am paid on the basis of the recovery in the mills. Sir, the recovery in the mills is dependent on so many things. As has been rightly pointed out by my friends, the whole of North India is full with 70 per cent of them, old, out-dated and dilapidated mills, and efficient crushing is not there. There is leakage in the mill; there is leakage in the vacuum pumps and everything else is in such a bad shape that you do not have the full recovery. It has been clearly said by the Bhargava Commission that as the sucrose content goes up the recovery decreases. That is the paradox. This is there in pages 113, 114 and 118 of their Report. Let him refer to the table there. He will find that in Maharashtra, in spite of the fact that the percentage of the sucrose content is near about 13, the recovery is only 9 per cent. How is it? Similarly, in

the eastern areas of U.P., whereas the sucrose content is 12 per cent, the recovery is only 8 per cent. Therefore, they should have made the correct linkage and should have overhauled the whole working. My first question is: Are you really attending to the problem? Could you say that the sugarcane price will not hereafter be linked with the recovery in the mills but will be linked with the sucrose percentage. That is the first thing. The second is that this take-over, as I told you, is not going to be the final solution in the whole matter. Every unit, every mill that is there, needs diversification. They have their bagasse, press-mud and other things. They are to be used as by-products. Bagasse are to be put in paper. You can have the press-mud for the bagasse and similarly you can also have molasses converted into power alcohol. We are very much short in oil. Is it not true that already Brazil has done it? Why are you not prepared to do it? These are the things which are very necessary. You cannot have these outmoded mills modified and diversified unless you take them over. Therefore, nationalisation is the real solution; take-over is not the solution. And tinkering with the problem, as it has been done, is not going to do any good to the cane-growers. Sir, sixty per cent of the sugarcane area is of the poor and small peasants—that is more disturbing—and these people are yet to get Rs. 50 crores. Now it is Rs. 50 crores; it had touched the level of Rs. 100 crores earlier. Sir, these people are suffering. And he says he is going to harmonise. Harmonise between whom? You are not harmonising. You are interested to pay those very persons who pay you and run your administration in these States. That is why this sort of thing is happening. Last year, Rs. 100 crores to Rs. 200 crores had to be suffered by the cane-growers; and in the matter of gur and khandsari also, since prices are regulated by the mill prices, they also had to suffer a loss of Rs. 300 crores. So the total loss was about Rs. 600 crores. And Sir, we, the consumers, by paying 50 paise a kg. more

than what we were required to pay by having the levy sugar, will be required to pay Rs. 200 crores more. That is the benefit he has given to the consumers and the cane-growers! And into whose pockets has all this money gone? It has gone into the pockets of the sugar barons. Sir, the ordinance was promulgated and it is intriguing to note that after the ordinance they were having these clandestine negotiations and cajoling them to start crushing. Sir, 15th was the last date and he says...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Sir, I am closing. He says that on 30th some mills are opened. Is that solace? Are you satisfied with that? Is it not true that they have delayed intentionally, that a deliberate conspiracy has been hatched and that in view of this this has happened? Therefore, Sir, he should not be happy about the situation. It is really disturbing and distressing. He should go and request his Prime Minister primarily just not to come with a categorical assurance for the sugarcane growers that even the Bhargava formula which provided for the States to give a higher price if they wanted, will not be allowed. No State will be allowed; this is what the Prime Minister assures the sugar barons. From that you can very well understand for whose benefit all these measures are taken. It is all a hoax, a big hoax, and a fraud on the nation.

These are six questions. Would he ensure these things? He has said that he would have the mills opened forthwith. Will he ensure that all of them will be opened. Will he ensure that not a single acre of sugarcane in the fields will be left uncrushed? Will he ensure that the workers will be getting all the benefits that they usually get and the reasonable off-season allowances? Would he also ensure that sugar would be sold at Rs. 2,30 P., the pre-decontrolled price, through the public distribution system?

Sir, regarding the arrears, the Tariff Commission has very clearly said that the Reserve Bank of India has issued instructions, directions, to all the commercial banks that they should be paying loans, advances, to these mills for the price of j sugarcane in a separate account. That is there in the Tariff Commission report. So, Sir, where is the question of arrears unless the whole money has been diverted otherwise? These are the people who take the money. This is something unlike the one in the British days when the mills were taking loans, and giving to the sugarcane growers and saving them from the money-lenders who loaned at the usurious interests. Now it is reversed. We have to pay for sugar mills in advance.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO: Therefore, it appears as though these are now the times of Henry VIII of England, who was also collecting forced loans from the poor peasants. Therefore, this Government is also possibly happy with such a situation. So, Sir, a paisa should not be there as arrears at the close of the year. Would that assurance be given by him?

Sir, taking them over, doing all this, is of a big drain on our exchequer. We will have to spend a lot of money, set them right and after that make them over. This is something which should be deprecated. And, therefore, would he go in for nationalisation of all these mills outright and save all the three communities, the sugarcane growers, the workers and the consumers?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Sir, the Hon. Member has raised some good points also. But most of his thinking is outmoded, and he seems to be labouring under certain prejudices. For example, when he talks about sugar barons, he seems to be unaware that more than 50 per cent of sugar is now being produced in the co-operatives.

His remedy to all these difficulties seems to be nationalisation. For haa

[Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh] information I will read what the performance of these different sectors is in Uttar Pradesh. As far as the sugar factories in the private sector are concerned, their arrears amount to 9.73 per cent of what they were expecting to pay. In the co-operative sector the arrears are 18.73 per cent. In the State sector, that is in the nationalised sugar factories, the arrears are as high as 27.88 per cent. It may be that in the thinking of certain people, nationalisation is the cure of all evils, but it has not come through as far as the sugar industry is concerned. And, therefore, we are taking all other measures which can put the sugar industry again on a sound basis.

He has put a number of questions regarding cane to be crushed. I can assure him that all the bonded cane will be crushed. I can also assure him that all the factories will have to pay the minimum statutory price plus whatever the cane-growers can get under the Bhargava Committee formula. He has put some, at least two, good ideas also. One is that the sugarcane price should not be made dependent only on recovery. I partly agree with him, but there is another aspect also of this question. When we fix the price, link the price with recovery, we take only three months, I mean the peak period, into consideration. When the recovery goes down, the factories are still required to pay at the same rate. But nevertheless, I am looking into this matter because I agree with him personally that the cane growers should not be made to suffer because of inefficiency of the plant or the management. But this cannot be done overnight. This requires investigation. Also some method will have to be evolved to find out the quality of the cane.

The second point that he has raised is also very relevant, that is, putting sugarcane to alternative uses. That is already under our active consideration. He has referred to Brazil. We have obtained all the information

about what they are doing in Brazil. What we can do in our conditions. All the alternative uses of sugarcane are under consideration. But all this is not likely to be put into effect within six months or even in the next year. It requires research, new installations, etc. In the meantime, I can only assure him that he may shed his fear of the sugar barons. It is not a question of sugar barons alone. As Mr. Kulkarni has pointed out, the most efficient factories in Maharashtra are also in some difficulties. Therefore, we have to take certain corrective measures, which I have assured we will take soon.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPATRO: He does not explain to me why the Birlas have gone to the High Court for stay orders after the Bihar Government decided to take over 16 mills.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: He will not be able to understand it because he must be thinking of conditions of an authoritarian rule. In a free country, every person has the right to go to the court. Nobody can stop it. But that does not mean . . .

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND (Punjab): Every person has the right to be prevented from exploitation. What are you talking? (Interruptions)

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Nobody can prevent anyone from going to the court. That is all I say.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH (West Bengal): When *Mantri mahodaya* was talking about harmony, I thought it was an unconscious irony because the sugarcane growers are now faced with the harmony of the grave. That is the situation. Now it is not going to be so easy for them. Even the harmony is not going to be there in the Ministry. Only lately there was a rally of 50,000 farmers in Lucknow, and the rally represented all the trends represented in this House, all the political parties. It did not exclude the Janata supporters. So, the Government should not be

aware as to where it is leading to. Harmony also is not there. Harmony cannot be there. The farmers will not be taking it lying down. That cannot happen. So the due price has to be given to the farmers somehow or other. The first step—I want to repeat, the first step—must be nationalisation of the industry. The argument that they only hold a small proportion of the industry does not stick. *Mantri mahoday* was saying just now that we should leave it to the natural forces to take their course. In the eighth decade of the twentieth century, any talk of natural forces or *laissez-faire* is something more outdated than whatever can be said here or elsewhere. He is talking of *laissez-faire* which used to be talked of in the early decades of the nineteenth century, more than a hundred years ago. Now, why did the mill-owners want the subsidy for export? Why did they want State help? Then there was no talk of natural forces. Now when it is the question of farmers there is the talk of natural forces, harmony, this and that. Anyway, the first point is that the industry should be nationalised. There are cooperatives and cooperatives. We have to analyse and examine the whole thing. For that we do not require a microscope, but we have to make a microscopic examination.

[The Vice-Chairman, (Shri Ghan-shyambhai Oza) to the Chair]

I am all for allowing the cooperatives every opportunity . . .

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPA-TRO: Even cooperatives should be democratised; otherwise, there will be only 'all for one'.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: So the first step should be to take over *and nationalise* sugar mills. And the monopoly houses, however small they may be quantitatively, can do more harm than the producers, however large they may be, can do. Therefore, nationalisation must be *ttiere*. The Government must be ready to

purchase at a higher price. Now the price is, I think, between Rs. 3.50 and Rs. 4.50, less than the cost of fuel or the cost of transport. If the sugarcane grower has to be helped, then this industry must be taken over and an assured price should be there. How are they going to do it? The excise duty has to be lifted and completely abolished and the price squeezed to the consumer's level: other ways must be found. Why is it that the per capita consumption is only 4 kg compared to 40—46 kg elsewhere? It is an accepted fact all over the world that a given quantity of carbohydrate in the form of sugar replaces a larger quantity of Carbohydrate in the form of starch. It relieves the need for foodgrains to same extent. Sugar consumption has to be increased. I do not want to repeat all the arguments that have been already advanced, but it should be released to the extent that . . .

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPA-TRO: They had 4 lakh tonnes, but they released only 3 tonnes to the market. The whole problem is if they release the whole thing and if there is a free flow, then the prices will fall in the market. It is only because of the high prices that the people could not afford the purchase and therefore the consumption rate came down. The figures are there: From 7.6 it came down to 6.1 in five years.

SHRI SYED SHAHEDULLAH: I do not want to repeat all the things. But these steps that I have indicated, should be taken.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Sir, he has only expressed his opinion and with that I may or may not agree. But he has not put any question. I may only make a few remarks. As far as consumption of sugar is concerned, it is not the only sweetening agency in our country. There are others, gur and khandsari. And taken together our per capita consumption is between 20 and 21 kg. per year. That compares with the

[Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh]

world average. It is true that our consumption does not compare with the consumption of, say, USA or Western Europe. But it is comparable to the world average . . .

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPA-TRO: It is because of the high price.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: It is exactly to increase the consumption that sugar has been decontrolled. The decontrol has brought down the prices and consumers are very happy. On the one hand . . . (interruption) . . . you want to lift the sugar very cheap, even cheaper than what it is, and at the same time . . .

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPA-TRO: The international price is Rs. 150.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I will tell you. In foreign countries farmers are not paid at these prices for their sugarcane. They produce it more efficiently. It is not just that our factories are quite inefficient. But, because our production units are small and because we are using primitive methods, our production per acre is lower and, therefore, we have to give them higher prices.

SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHAPA-TRO: Even where they are using the high-yielding varieties and modern methods, the prices are not remunerative.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Well, Sir, it is not proper to compare our sugar industry with the sugar industry in the other countries. Sugarcane-growing is in most cases under one management and sugarcane production is highly mechanised and, therefore, it would not be practical to compare our conditions with their conditions. Therefore, I maintain that if the consumption is to go up, the price of sugar has to be retained at a lower level and if the price of sugar is to be low, the price of the sugarcane cannot be high. Now, it is not as if we are opposed to the interests of the sugarcane growers. But we are in a dilemma. If we increase the sugarcane price, the price

from Press Commission

of sugar will go up. What I mean is that there must be some sort of relationship between the price of the raw material and that of the end product. Therefore, under the present circumstances, when we are faced with a situation of surplus of a commodity which we cannot consume in our country and also cannot export except at a very high loss to the country, then the area under sugarcane cultivation and the production of sugarcane should be brought down. This I have said earlier and I repeat it. Some honourable Members have asked as to how it is that progressive farmers are being prevented from producing more. I think it is not progressiveness at all if the farmers produce something which is not in demand. There are various commodities which are in demand in our own country as well as abroad and « if the production of those commodities is raised, it would be very much welcome. The farmers should be advised to switch over from sugarcane to those commodities for which there is a demand in the country and abroad.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI GHANSHYAMBHAI OZA): Now, let us take up the next item. Now, Special Mention.

#### REFERENCE TO THE REPORTED RESIGNATION BY SHRI NIKHIL- CHAKRAVARTY FROM THE PRESS ' COMMISSION

DR. V. P. DUTT (Nominated): Sir, I would like to refer to the resignation of Shri Nikhil Chakravarty from the Press Commission appointed by the Government of India. Sir, the circumstances in which Mr. Nikhil Chakravarty has been obliged to resign make a shocking and depressing spectacle. These circumstances raise doubts about the sincerity of the Government and about their concern for independent journalists. Sir, the Prime Minister is reported to have said in a meeting of the Janata Party that he did not know how this ap-