

SHRIMATI YASHODA REDDY: I am very glad that Mr. Raghunatha Reddy, the Minister of State, said when this thing was discussed, that the Congress Members of that side had accepted this. May I remind him that there were some Members who opposed it, and I was one of the few, not because the idea was not good but we said that the whole danger would be that whatever was coming openly, clearly, would now be coming underhand and would be used not for party or national purposes but of groups within the parties and for personal things. Can he tell us today whether it is not a fact or whether they have realised it or not that what has been coming openly now is coming underhand? If so, it does not matter which parties are getting it underhand, can he tell us that the money is not coming that way? Let him say that.

SHRI K. V. RAGHUNATHA REDDY: Violations of law and morality are of various kinds. As an eminent jurist Mr. Chairman, you know, all penal laws we make deal with the criminal acts committed by persons. With the ingenuity that the human being is capable of we make laws, and, if there are violations thereof, ultimately it is the Society's will that should prevail, and it is social control and social pressure that should prevail. It is difficult for any law to mend everything.

*154. [Transferred to the 3rd December, 1969.]

PRICE OF STEEL

*155. **SHRI CHITTA BASU:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING be pleased to refer to the answer to the Unstarred Question No. 440 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 28th July, 1969 and state:

(a) whether Government have since taken any decision with regard to the revision of the price of steel; and

(b) if so, what is the nature of the decision taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND HEAVY ENGINEERING (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know from the hon. Minister whether there were

some representations made by some industrialists of steel for the upward revision of the steel prices and Government has already rejected such proposal of upward revision? I want to know whether they have totally rejected the idea of upward revision.

SHRI K. C. PANT: Certain representations were received from the steel plants, both in the public and in the private sector, for revision of prices. These are under the consideration of Government.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know from the hon. Minister whether the Government would assure this House that, in view of the fact that if there is any increase in the steel prices there would be a chain reaction on the vital sectors of our economy, that there will be no increase in the steel prices in the near future, because there was already an increase in the year 1968?

SHRI K. C. PANT: I can give an assurance that the impact of the increase of steel prices on other sectors of the economy will be taken into account in taking a decision.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: You have not answered my question. I want to know whether the Government is in a position to assure the House that the Government is not considering or contemplating any increase in the near future in view of its repercussions. That you are not replying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Mahavir.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: May I know if the Government are aware that according to some Press reports some Ministries of the Government want the steel prices to be revised upwards, particularly the Ministry of Steel, whereas the other Ministries which are concerned with economic development as such, Ministries of Industrial Development and Railways are worried about the impact of further revision on various development plans, and as such the reports are that there is some sort of tussle between the different Ministries of the Government itself? If that is so, may I know whether the Government will give thought before taking a decision on this to the important fact that our steel which used to be the cheapest in the world today is said to be the costliest because of various heavy taxes and high cost of production?

Before taking a decision may I know whether this fact will also be kept in mind ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Seeing the steel prices in the world today I would not say that our steel is the costliest, but apart from that if my hon. friend would compare steel prices today at home and abroad, he would see the difference. But as I have already said, the main question is that all these relevant factors should be taken into account. Within the Government there are different points of view, but I hope my hon. friend will concede that the Steel Ministry is as much concerned with economic development as other Ministries, and the Government will take a united decision. Ultimately the Government will take a decision as a whole.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: May I know from the Government whether it is a fact that the effective installed capacity is about 9 million tonnes whereas we are producing round about 6 million tonnes? In view of this, any proposal for increasing the prices should not be considered, but the Government must see that the steel units are kept in order. Particularly will they take care of the large unemployed capacity due to labour strike and other inefficiencies in the public sector units, and for that purpose may I know whether the Government will take stringent measures to avoid labour strikes and inefficient working of the public sector units and not accept any proposal for increasing the steel prices, which is due to unutilised capacity?

SHRI K. C. PANT: Regardless of the question of steel prices, it is very desirable that the steel plants should function up to their optimum capacity. I would request the hon. Member and other Members who have influence in this matter to help the Government in maintaining good industrial relations in the steel plants.

SHRI M. K. MOHTA: May I know whether the Committee of Economic Secretaries of the Government of India while opposing the rise in the price of iron and steel felt that increase in productivity and performance of the steel plants was more important in this context, and whether the Government proposes to go into the question of productivity in a much more intensive way than they have done at present ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: The question of productivity again is one in which naturally the Government wants to increase productivity to the maximum.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Referring to the Minister's reply to the question from this side that Indian steel is the costliest in the world, may I ask him to give a comparative idea of the steel prices in advanced countries of the world like the U. K., Belgium, France and Japan ?

SHRI K. C. PANT: That does not really arise out of this question.

श्री प्रेम मनोहर : क्या हमारे मंत्रालय को मालूम है कि इस समय जिस लोहे का रेट 1200 रु. प्रति टन हमारी गवर्नमेंट ने रखा है वही लोहा बाजार में 3600 रु. प्रति टन इस समय मिल रहा है। तो हमारा मंत्रालय इस बारे में क्या कान्क्रीट स्टेप ले रहा है। लोहे की शार्टेज की वजह से कितना बड़ा अंतर है कि कहां 1200 रु. और कहां 3600 रु.। तो इस शार्टेज को मार्केट से हटान के लिये हमारा मंत्रालय क्या स्टेप ले रहा है जिससे हमारी औद्योगिक प्रगति न रुके।

श्री के० सी० पन्त : एक तो उसका उत्पादन जितना बढ़ा सकें उतना बढ़ाना है। जहाँ शार्टेज हो वहाँ इस्पात को आयात करने की कोशिश की जायगी और यह भी कोशिश की जायगी कि जो दाम बढ़े हैं उसका फायदा उत्पादक को मिले न कि दूसरे को।

APPLICATIONS FOR INDUSTRIAL LICENCES

*156. **SHRI R. P. KHAITAN:** †
SHRI KRISHNKANT :

Will the Minister of **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNAL TRADE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS** be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that large number of applications are pending with Government since long for the grant of industrial licences;

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri R. P. Khaitan.