



and Kashmir, and out of those 24 tonnes the parties concerned might have got their share.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: May I know, Sir, from the hon. Minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have put one question.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: Yes, Sir, I have put a question, but arising out of the answer given I want to put another.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As an exception.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: I do not want to have an exception, Sir.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: In view of what has been stated and in view of the experience in the States will the Government now evolve a certain procedure, will the Government appoint a committee to probe the actual facts, to assess whether these steel quotas have been properly utilised? It is the experience that the misbehaviour of the manufacturers, particularly the large-scale manufacturers, is evident in their fraudulently importing stainless steel and misusing it and thus making an unauthorised income of lakhs of rupees that way which is not in the interests of the country. May I know from the Government whether they are serious in stopping this fraudulent trade in stainless steel by instituting a certain investigation machinery at the State level and the Central level and finding out whether these stainless steel quotas have been properly utilised?

DR. M. CHANNA REDDY: Sir, on the question of utilisation of this scarce commodity, periodical reports are always being sent from the State Governments to the Central Government. In addition, wherever there are cases in which some misuse has been reported the Central Government has the right to utilise the services of the Special Branch of the Police to make inquiries and take necessary action under the Essential Commodities Act.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Please say when you are going to take action in the matter of stainless steel.

(No reply.)

SHRI SANTOKH SINGH: As the hon. Commerce Minister is also here, I would like to know why the customs duty on stainless steel changes every moment. Is it to suit anybody else's convenience, and where does it stand today?

SHRI P. C. SETHI: It is not for this Ministry to decide it.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: Sir, to me the reply of the two hon. Ministers seems to contradict each other. While one hon. Minister said that the information is being collected that the States send communications to them information, the Cabinet Minister himself said that periodically the States send communications to them about these quotas. If the communications are sent to the Centre by the State concerned, how is it they don't have the information, or those communications do not relate to the break-up of the quotas that are issued and arising out of this may I know, Sir, from the hon. Minister if it is a fact that the United Front Ministry in Bihar, which went out of office recently had issued a quota for stainless steel to a Bombay cinema actress in Bihar? Is it a fact?

DR. M. CHANNA REDDY: I am afraid, Sir, there is some misunderstanding. I said that we can insist on periodical reports and we can get them, and if there are some persistent cases of misuse then the Central Government, under the Essential Commodities Act, has the right to institute an inquiry through the Special Police Establishment. Regarding the particular case of Bihar, if the hon. Member can give me the details we can look into it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.