

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY: My difficulty is, they ask questions on technical matters and I may give them wrong information. So it is better to wait for a day more and get correct information rather than my giving wrong information. I do not think within one day anything is going to happen. The Government is not going to take any decision on this issue tomorrow or the day after.

STATE TRADING CORPORATION

♦100. SHRI P. K. KUMARAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question of further increasing the role of the State Trading Corporation in the country's external trade has been considered by Government; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SRI MANTJIBHAI SHAH): (a) and (b). It is continuously increasing. The functions of the Corporation, now bifurcated into two, as approved by Government and which have been publicly stated repeatedly, are as per the functions enumerated in the attached statement which is being laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The functions of the State Trading Corporation are as under: —

- (a) To undertake trading generally with State Trading Countries as well as other countries in commodities entrusted to it;
- (b) to explore larger markets for traditional items of exports and to develop exports of new items with a view to diversifying and expanding the export trade;
- (c) to undertake at the instance of Government import/or internal distribution of any commodity in short supply with a view to stabilising prices and rationalising distribution;

- (d) to undertake canalisation of imports and exports of item* as may be directed by Government from time to time;
- (e) generally to implement special arrangements viz. barter, commodity exchange etc. for import, export and/or internal distribution of particular group of commodities at Government may adopt in the public interest;
- (f) buffer stock operations and price support measures for internal economy.

श्री विमलकुमार भट्टालालजी चौरङ्गिया : क्या श्रीमान् यह बतलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि वे कौन कौन से आइटम्स हैं जिनमें स्टेट ट्रेडिंग कॉर्पोरेशन सी फीसदी के करीब मुनाफ़ा लेती है और अगर लेती है तो उपभोक्ताओं के नुकसान को रोकने की दृष्टि से क्या विचार है।

श्री मनुभाई शाह: यह सवाल तो इसमें से पैदा नहीं होता लेकिन फिर भी ऐसा है कि कोई आइटमवाइज तो प्रॉफिट नहीं दिया जाता। जैसा कि माननीय सदस्य ने बताया था कि एक लौंग और एक बैटिल-नट का जो व्यापार है उसमें एस० टी० सी० जो मुनाफ़ा लेटेड कास्ट और बाजार के भाव में है उसमें से काफी हिस्सा लेती है।

SHRI SITARAM JAIFURIA: Is it a fact that most of the Government undertakings do not like to trade through the STC, unless they are forced to do so?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: The very fact that trade has expanded from Rs. 9 crores in 1956-57 to Rs. 15» crores last year and this year it will be Rs. 175 crores—in iron ore, manganese ore, some tea, fruit juices, and in some cases engineering goods, there are more than 120 items—in both imports and exports, shows that both the Government departments and the private trade are fully co-operating with the Corporation.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: In view of the stringency of foreign exchange, is the Government considering nationalisation of the export and import business and hand it over to the State Trading Corporation?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: No, Sir. I think we have made our intentions clear more than once that there is no intention to nationalise gross foreign trade as such. But in those sectors, as we have mentioned it in the objectives which have been enumerated, if it is found that we have to do bulk handling of critical materials and it is in the public interest to canalise it through the State Trading Corporation, it will be done.

SHRI SANTOKH SINGH: Is it a fact that the State Trading Corporation is expanding its role in the export of more and more traditional and non-traditional items, thus restricting the import entitlement availability of individual importers and the actual traders?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: It depends upon the category of items, but the tendency is, the directive is, to go in more and more for the non-traditional and difficult to sell items which otherwise are losing their ground in the international market. Every year in respect of both the export and import, direct and indirect, trade and also price support to the farmers in respect of some basic agricultural commodities, it is increasing at the hands of both the Corporations.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: May I know whether the socialist countries would prefer to trade with the STC? In regard to exports and imports in both the traditional and non-traditional items, do they give preference to the Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation or do they want to trade with private traders?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: The choice is not left to the foreign buyer always. It is with the common consent of both

the buyer and seller the attitude of both the parties is governed.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I would like to know if they prefer to deal with this Corporation instead of dealing with the private trade?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: Not always.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that our foreign trade is not expanding as much as it should because in many countries we have neither consular representatives nor trade representatives and especially in countries with which our trade is rapidly expanding. Would Government, therefore, consider correcting such a situation and have consular representatives and trade representatives in such countries where our trade is expanding and where we have no representatives at present?

SHRI MANUBHAI SHAH: It is a wide question and it hardly arises out of the functioning of this Corporation, but I can assure the hon. Member that on the whole in the Third Plan the export trade of India is expanding and increasing satisfactorily. As a matter of fact, the total target in the Third Plan was Rs. 3 700 to Rs. 3,800 crores. From the stagnancy in exports in the last ten years, during the First Plan and the Second Plan, of about Rs. 3,000 crores, we are going to reach, even with the present difficulties that we are facing, about Rs. 3,850 crores by the end of this year.

SETTING UP OF WATCH FACTORY WITH SWISS COLLABORATION

SHRI ARJUN ARORA:-

•101. / SHRI D. THENGARI:

[SHRI JAGAT NARAIN:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY A*»
SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any offer of collaboration from Swiss manufacturers for

the question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Arjun Arora.