profit are, as a rule small, varying between ½ per cent. to 3 per cent. In fact, in some cases like groundnut oil, manioc meal, lemongrass oil, sodium bichromates etc., losses are suffered with the dual object of (a) promoting exports and earning the much-needed foreign exchange, and (b) to give price support to the primary producers of manioc meal, lemongrass oil, tobacco etc.

On imports, the margin of profits varies from commodity to commodity depending upon its availability in foreign markets, its essentiality, the prevailing market prices, the relative availability of the indigenous products etc. In a very large number of cases, the percentage of distribution margin charged varies from 0.4 per cent. to 10 per cent.

Margin of distribution charged is illustrated as under:—

| Items | Distribution margin charges |
|---|---|
| Fertilisers | about 1/2% |
| Copper | about 2% |
| Zinc | about 2% |
| Steel | about 4% |
| Tools and alloy steels | about 1/2% |
| Dye intermediates, pharmaceutical intermediates, sodium and chilean nitrate, caustic soda, sodium sulphate and miscellaneous basic chemicals | Below 10% |
| Newsprint | about 1% |

In some scarce imported consumer commodities in short supplies, whose imports have been canalised through these corporations, the Corporations mop up a portion of the surplus profits which are available in these commodities owing to their short supply and high ruling market prices. Such commodities are betelnuts, cloves, camphor, mercury, etc. In such cases also, the Corporations while mopping up the excess profits fix the release price, which is invariably lower than the prevailing market prices so that the prices tend to stabilise at reasonable levels and unduly large profits are not passed on to private hands without at all benefiting the consumers.

While determining the release prices, the Corporations have also been guided by the considerations that the release prices may not affect the interests of the indigenous producers. For example, India produces about 40,000 tons of betelnuts and imports only 5,000 tons. The State Trading Corporation does not at all interfere with purchase, sale and distribution of indigenous betelnuts which is handled entirely by the indigenous growers and traders of the country. The STC releases the imported betelnuts to distributors at prices somewhat lower than the ruling market prices of indigenous betelnuts. The margin charged by the State Trading Corporation on the distribution of betelnuts has been about 33% over the landed costs.

In such cases of imported consumer commodities whose supply falls short of demand and where due to shortage of foreign exchange, large imports to satisfy internal demand are not possible, the factor which the Corporations take into consideration is that the release prices of such scarce imported commodities do not leave a very excessive margin of profit in the hands of the intermediaries and where no benefit really accrues at all to the consumers by releasing such commodities to the distributors at very low prices. As in the case of imported betelnuts, release prices of cloves, camphor and other canalised imported scarce commodities are also fixed from time to time by the Corporations in accordance with above policy as mentioned in this statement.

SALE OF LAND TO NAWAB OF PATAUDI

*289. SHRI JOGENDRA SINGH: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) the price at which plots of land were sold by Government to the Nawab of Pataudi in Diplomatic Enclave, New Delhi; and

(b) whether the price of the plots was fixed after taking into account the value of Pataudi House, New Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI MEHR CHAND KHANNA): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

The Pataudi House at No. 8, Canning Road, New Delhi, was requisitioned by the Central Government in 1941. This requisition was converted into a lease in 1948. In November, 1954, the Begum Sahiba of Pataudi asked for the release of the property but Government were unable to do so. The Begum Sahiba expressed her willingness to sell the property provided an equivalent area of land could be allotted to her in a developed area of New Delhi and the value of the property paid to her.

2. In 1955, the depreciated value of the buildings was estimated at Rs. 2,00,532 and the value of the land (3 acres) payable to the Pataudi Darbar at Rs. 79,050 on the basis of the price originally paid plus 25 per cent. of the unearned increase in value as had been done in other similar cases. The Begum Sahiba was informed that Government would be prepared to allot her one acre plot of land plus Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 75,000 for the Pataudi House land and Rs. 2 lakhs for the depreciated value of the buildings. The Begum Sahiba pressed for release of at least two acres of land in two or more plots so that she could build a residence for each of her four children. It was decided in June 1955 that in the special circumstances of the Begum Sahiba, Government would be willing to allot her two plots of land of one acre each in Chankyapuri or in some other developed area. This would be in lieu of cash compensation for the land in Pataudi House but she would have to pay ground rent at 2½ per cent per annum on the notional value of the land at Rs. 60,000 per acre. This would be in addition to the depreciated value of the buildings which was initially assessed at Rs. 2 lakhs but later increased to Rs. 2,50,000 on the basis of a further expert assessment.

3. Since the transaction could not be finalised until the young Nawab attained majority, it was decided in 1957 that in the meanwhile, one acre of land may be allotted to the Begum Sahiba at a rate of Rs. 1 lakh per acre plus 2½ per cent annual ground rent thereon with the option to pay premium and ground rent together with 6 per cent. interest within a period of 3 years. This offer was accepted by the Begum Sahiba and Plot No. 33 in Diplomatic Enclave was allotted to her.

4. After the Nawab came of age, the Begum Sahiba expressed the desire to retain Plot No. 33 in Diplomatic Enclave as part of the adjustment of 2 acres of land earlier offered by Government in lieu of the Pataudi House. It was accordingly decided to allot Plots Nos. 8 and 9 in Chanakyapuri to the Nawab of Pataudi in addition to Plot No. 33 already allotted to the Begum Sahiba. The 3 plots together total 9,200 square yards. The Nawab was paid Rs. 2,50,000 being the depreciated value of the buildings in the Pataudi House and Rs. 5,950 on account of 485 square yards being the difference between 2 acres and the area of the 3 plots made available in Chanakyapuri. The amount realised from the Begum of Pataudi as premium for Plot No. 33 was refunded to her. The sale deed in respect of Pataudi House was executed in favour of Government in June 1961, and agreements for lease for the allotment of the 3 plots in Diplomatic Enclave were also executed about the same time.