

very much like to have high quality coal. But there are other priority users like the steel plants who must be given better quality coal and we have to be content with what is supplied and improve the quality of coal by setting up washeries, and that is a matter which is already engaging the attention of the Government.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: I am glad that the learned Minister has mentioned the improved position of coal movement in the country. But is it not a fact that the coal movement position in the rainy season is always generally good and that it is only during the winter that the conditions deteriorate? May I know if the Ministry has done something to safeguard against that and whether the scheme to build depots where coal is collected for emergency has made any progress?

SARDAR SW AR AN SINGH: I agree that the winter requirements are more than the requirements of rainy season, but I would like to remind the hon. House that we have already passed the last winter and even during those months the supply position was by and large quite satisfactory. There can be a little laxity in the matter of setting up of dumps when the supply position is easy and that process, unfortunately, has already started. When the supply position is tight there is a great urge on the part of the States to establish dumps. Now that process has slowed down, but the Railway Administration are continuing their efforts and are impressing upon the States the desirability of establishing dumps.

SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: May I know, Sir, if the Ministry of Mines and Fuel have already set up a special technical unit in the office of the Coal Controller to survey the coal loading facilities? This was a proposal of the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Mines and Fuel have

announced that they are going to set up a committee of this nature. Has that been done?

SARDAR SW AR AN SINGH: I cannot throw any light on that, but as I mentioned a moment ago when the supply position becomes easy, many of these theoretical considerations disappear.

STEPS TO PREVENT LOCUST INVASION

•214. SHRI FARIDUL HAQ ANSARI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is imminent danger of locust invasion in India; and

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to prevent it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) It is not possible to prevent incursion into India of the exotic locust swarms. However, adequate arrangements have been made as during the last year, to meet the situation should a few locust swarms cross into India from the west this year also.

SHRI FARIDUL HAQ ANSARI: When I put this question last year in this House, I was told that the anti-locust invasion unit had got only one plane for use during an invasion by locusts. May I know whether the Government of India has made arrangements for more planes for this purpose?

SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH: The arrangement is quite adequate, but there has not been any danger this year.

SHRI N. C. KASLIWAL: May I know whether the neighbouring countries fully co-operate with us in the matter of prevention of locust invasion?

SMA RAM SUBHAG SINGH: The anti-locust campaign work that is being conducted under the aegis of FAO is going on satisfactorily. All the countries do participate and we also take an active part in that. But individually there is no such action possible, because if there is any danger in Pakistan or here or in Saudi Arabia, etc., individually no country goes to the aid of the other country, unless and until that co-operation is sought. But under the aegis of the international agency we do actively participate.

SHRI S. C. DEB: When there is an invasion of locusts, it is generally seen that the States are not well-equipped to come to the rescue of the people to drive out the locusts efficiently. May I know, Sir, whether the Government is sufficiently equipped to help the area where the invasion of locusts is there?

SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH: We have a very strong aerial unit for that and wherever there is a great danger we do send them to take proper precautions. Besides, in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Punjab we have about 55 stations, where this menace is suitably fought. In other States whenever there is any danger, they are all having ground units. If the danger is great and if they ask for the aerial unit to help them, we will be too happy to send them.

SHRI BIREN ROY: May I know, Sir, what steps have been taken, as was promised before, for spraying insecticides by aeroplanes, for taking them from flying clubs and other places?

SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH: That is a question which does not come within the purview of this, but if there is any locust menace anywhere our own aerial unit goes into operation.

SHRI FARIDUL HAQ ANSARI: May I know, Sir, which are the States

mostly affected by locust invasion and whether in those States there are permanent units for fighting the locusts.

SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH: As I said before, the danger is largely felt in Rajasthan, Gujarat and parts of Punjab. As I said, 55 stations have been set up there and they are permanent stations. They keep a watch on locust breeding, etc. If there is any breeding, they go into action and take proper steps to eradicate it.

SHRI BIREN ROY: Is the Minister aware that it is only by spraying insecticides from air before the locust-menace spreads to other places, that it can be stopped?

SHRI RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Naturally the hon. Member does not know that this menace emanates from the Middle East and we have no authority over the territories of the Middle East countries. We can take any action only in our area and no flying clubs and other things can be considered. When we have to go to other countries for this purpose, we have suitable arrangements of our own through our aerial unit.

*215. [The questioner (Shri R. S. Khandekar) was absent. For answer, vide col. 1457 infra.]

*216. [The questioner (Shri Ram Sahai) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 1457-59 infra.]

*217. [The questioner (Shri Deoki. nandan Narayan) was absent. For answer, vide cols. 1459-60 infra].

COLLECTION AND SPENDING OF SUGAR-CANE CESS

*218. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of cane-cess collected during the last sugar season in each region of the different sugarcane producing States; and