

RAJYA SABHA

Saturday, 1st September 1956 The House met at eleven of the clock, MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE**NOTIFICATION PUBLISHING THE INDIAN FRONTIER ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE RULES, 1956**

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR LABOUR (SHRI ABID ALI) : Sir, with your permission, on behalf of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Ministry of External Affairs Notification S. R.O. No. 1782, dated the 11th August 1956, publishing the Indian Frontier Administrative Service Rules, 1956, made under the proviso to article 309 of the Constitution. [Placed in Library. See No. S-364/56.]

NOMINATION TO THE CENTRAL SOCIAL WELFARE BOARD

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that Shrimati Bedavati Buragohain is nominated as a Member of the Social Welfare Board.

THE INDIAN COCONUT COMMITTEE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1956

THE MINISTER FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI A. P. JAIN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Coconut Committee Act, 1944, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is a very simple measure and I need not preface it with any elaborate introduction. The main provision of this Bill is calculated to enlarge the membership of the Central Coconut Committee with a view to giving greater representation to the growers and also to giving representation to some of the States. The present membership of the Coconut Committee is 30. It is intended to raise it to 36. At present there are 10 representatives of the growers. Until recently the number of representatives was 9 but on the creation of Andhra, that number became 10. It is intended to raise that number to 12 so that there will be two more representatives of the growers. Government have, under the existing law, the power to nominate one person. Under the proposed amendment, Government will have the power to 1—24Rajya Sabh,

nominate five persons, that is, an addition of four. Now this power is proposed to be taken because coconut cultivation is increasing in some other States and it should be possible for the Government to give representation to those States either permanently or by rotation. It may also be necessary under certain circumstances, to appoint a person of outstanding qualities, who may help the work of the Committee. It is therefore proposed to raise the number of persons to be nominated by the Government from one to four.

So far as representatives of the State Governments are concerned, it is just a question of readjustment. Under the existing law, five representatives of the State Governments are nominated under clause (d) and three under clause (g). It is proposed to bring all these nominations together under clause (d) so that the State Governments will have a right to nominate 8 representatives. There was at least one verbal error, that is, a representation was given to the Indian Merchants' Association. The name of that institution is the Indian Merchants' Chamber. That error is intended to be corrected. Another difficulty arose not only with regard to the present Act but also in regard to certain other laws. At present the obligation to supply returns etc., is placed by law on the owners of factories. Now, in many cases it has been found that the factory is leased out to a person or a person other than the owner is managing the factory. This difficulty arose in connection with the Indian Central Cotton Committee and there the word 'occupier' was substituted for 'owner' and it was defined as a person who has intimate control over the affairs of the factory and where the said affairs are entrusted to a managing agent, such agent shall be deemed to be the occupier of the factory. That makes the definition more comprehensive so that the responsibility is placed upon the person who is in charge of the factory whether in his capacity as an owner or a lessee or as an occupier. This appears to me to be unexceptional.

These are the principal changes proposed to be introduced by this Bill. Of course it means that wherever the word 'owner' appears, it will be substituted by 'occupier'. It is a very simple measure and I hope that the House will agree with me that it will help in the better working of the Coconut Committee. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Coconut Committee Act, 1944, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI PERATH NARAYANAN NAIR (Madras): Mr. Chairman, as the hon. Minister has explained, the amendment seeks to enlarge the representation of growers and also of such of the States as have taken to the cultivation of coconut of late. The growers have been demanding for increased representation on the Committee and these new areas which have been brought under coconut cultivation of late—the States in which this new cultivation has been taken on, have also demanded representation. So in a way these amendments are all quite to the good and I support them.

Now the Indian Coconut Committee has been functioning for the last 12 years. It was established in 1944 and it has worked for over a *Purushaniara* and it will be appropriate on this occasion if we just broadly review the working of that Committee. Now I need not dilate, especially in this House, on the place which coconut occupies in the national economy of our country in the matter of edible oils, in the matter of vegetable oil and fats, in the matter of soap industry, glycerine and other by-products; but to us in Kerala, in our economy, coconut plays an all-important role. For example, it comes to about 13 lakh acres and I am adding Malabar and Travancore-Cochin together. We have all-told over 50 lakh acres of culti-v able area in that new State of ours, out of which 6 lakhs and odd is in Malabar and 6 lakhs and odd acres in Travancore—all-told about 13 lakh acres, which comes to over 25 per cent. of our cultivable area under coconut; and then there are the other industries like husking, fibre making, coir, etc. A large percentage—and certain calculations put it at about 70 per cent.—of our people in Kerala have something to do with the coconut industry or with the coconut plantation in one form or the other. So the importance of coconut to our economy in Kerala is evident.

Now I am not making any general observations. Let me come to three or four specific points. The work of the

Coconut Committee has been mainly I devoted to both more intensive cultivation of coconut and also to a more extensive cultivation. We know that India is not self-sufficient in the matter of coconut and our demand per annum comes to about—I am quoting the figure which the hon. Minister himself gave in the other House the other day—1,90,000 tons. Our gross production during the last four years has been 1,25,000 tons annually. That means, every year we are deficit to the extent of about 70 lakhs tons which we have been importing mainly from Ceylon. Now we have set the target before us that this deficit must be made up and we must become self-sufficient. I want to know to what extent, as a result of the working of this Coconut Committee, its cultivation has been extended and productivity increased. There are vast areas and production can be increased. In Assam, I am told that coconut outturn per acre is about 7,000 but in Travancore-Cochin it is only 2,250 and in Malabar it comes to about 2,500. The outturn of coconut per acre in Ceylon, so far as I have been able to understand, is very much more, and we have always been hoping that as a result of the work of this Coconut Committee, the productivity in Kerala would be increased. But I have yet to get the figures of production and I would request the hon. Minister to give us a full picture. He has said that 1,25,000 tons have been produced. But has the outturn per acre per annum increased from 2,250 to any higher figure during the course of the last 12 years? After all we have been attempting to teach our people about better manuring, better seedings and so on and we must be able to judge the results of the working of this Committee. Have we been able to increase this outturn by any percentage? Has it gone up from 2,250 to, say, 2,500 or any higher figure? That way alone we will be able to judge the results. Unless we are able to judge the results of these things in that concrete manner we will not know how far it has been beneficial. Has the area of cultivation been increased? In the Planning Commission Report and in the various Reports which the Department has been bringing out and which even the Coconut Committee has been publishing, we find no idea of the results. Malnad, we are told, is an area to be opened up and it is quite good for coconut cultivation; similarly there are other areas in West Bengal, Assam and other places. Apart from the few nurseries that we have been running, apart

from some good seedlings which we have been able to supply to limited people in limited areas, have we worked out a sort of broad plan by which we can say that in the course of the next five or ten years this deficiency could be made up and that we will be able to meet our own requirements?

Then, so much is said about better manuring and protection of coconut trees from the various diseases. We know that everywhere, especially in the whole coastal region, these coconut trees are afflicted by root and leaf disease and white ant disease and we also know that at the two research stations at Kasaragod and Kayamkulam, they have been carrying on researches and investigations into these things. But have the results of those researches reached the growers? The hon. Minister knows that in a vast area in the coastal region of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, about 78 lakhs of coconut trees are afflicted by a very fell disease—root and leaf disease, they call it—and we are told that the researches have made it clear that if we could do proper spraying of borax powder, then the whole area could be protected; but it is not being done. The remedy is there; the researches have established that. But it only gets published in the reports. I think the hon. Minister himself said the other day that there was some little difference between the State Government and the Central Government and the result is, no spraying is done. If 78 lakhs of coconut trees in Kerala are going to ruin, just imagine what will happen to our people. After all, there is this Coconut Committee, there is this cess; and realising the urgency of the problem I should have thought that the Central Government should have gone more than half way to meet the Travancore-Cochin Government and do something immediately in order to help the actual growers. That is not done. So my point is, the researches are quite good but the results of these researches must be taken to the cultivator. Nothing of that sort is being done and, as you know, the cultivators in Malabar are small cultivators. Over 90 per cent of the coconut growers own less than one acre, and so, by themselves, they cannot afford to go in for borax mixtures and such other chemicals and do the spraying that is necessary. Unless the Department organises it on a wide basis, unless some co-ordinated efforts is put through on a wide basis, unless the Central Govern-

ment comes to the rescue of these cultivators, all these researches will be of no use to these cultivators. I want the hon. Minister to tell us—not only with respect to this particular disease which is spread over a vast area but also in respect of different diseases which are almost a recurring phenomenon—what method he would adopt to take the result of these researches to the cultivator. Up till now, the Coconut Research Committee has signally failed in that.

Apart from this, the main thing, as I have already explained, is that a large number of people depend mainly on coconut in some form or other—fibre making, coir making, mat making, etc.—and it is the feeling of the people that the Government have done very little to help the growers and to give them a remunerative price. There is the sales tax; then there is the cess that is levied on copra; then there is the fee levied by the Marketing Committee and then there is the excise duty. All these burdens fall ultimately on the grower. There was a time, in 1947, when the price of coconut showed an upward tendency. Per thousand nuts it was about Rs. 250 but then in the interests of the soap manufacturers, who have a pull with the Government of India, the Government took every care to take steps to stabilise the price of coconuts at about Rs. 125. But then now the prices have gone down and in yesterday's report published from Calicut, the Malabar Marketing Committee which deals with coconut and arecanut, has passed a resolution that the price of coconut in Malabar last week was Rs. 100 per thousand. From Rs. 250 in 1947 it has come to a decision on this thing. I do burdens—the cess, the excise duty, the sales tax and the Marketing Committee fees—how are the growers, especially when they are such small growers, to meet our requirements? Will the Government do anything to fix a minimum price for coconut? Will the Government do anything more effectively regulate the markets of both copra and oil in the interests of our growers? I was told that the Coconut Committee has appointed a certain sub-committee. That sub-committee is going into various problems and this question of fixing a minimum price for coconut has been very much under the consideration of the Government. Sir, I submit that they have taken far too long to come down to Rs. 100. With all these

(Shri Perath Narayan Nair.) not know when the sub-committee was appointed, but this has been hanging fire before the public and before the Government for years together now and it is only proper and fair that the condition of our growers requires immediate relief. It is only fair that the Committee should come to some immediate decision. Now, look at the other side of the picture. Of course, in Ceylon also, coconut fulfils an important place in their economy. Now, they want to encourage exports and they have reduced the export duty. The hon. Minister has the figures, I think. The Ceylon Government has of late reduced the export duty on copra by about 18 per cent, and they have reduced the export duty on coconut oil to the extent of about 40 per cent. That way, they are encouraging their growers, their traders. And here all that falls heavily on the growers and what have we done in spite of repeated representations from the Coconut Committee? The Coconut Committee itself has made representations to the Government more than once. The mill industry in Quilon, in Cochin and other places have made representations to the Government. And as I told you, these marketing committees which are functioning in our area, including Government representatives, including not only grower interests but also trade interests have made repeated representations and you have not thought it fit even to regulate the import in any way. You, have, up till now, acted in the interests of the big soap manufacturers here, not in the interests of the small consumers. I have been told that coconut is an edible and a protective food, that the interests of the small consumers will be affected, and all that. But no. The main consumption is by the soap interests. There are the small soap interests, but there are the big soap interests also—Tatas, Lever Brothers. Now, I know soap is a national industry. I am not against giving adequate facilities in the matter of raw products. But then the interests of the primary producer there, especially in Kerala, must also be protected. That is not being done, and not only no minimum price has been fixed, but no ceiling on imports has been there. What is our record? Of course, we are deficit to the extent of 70 lakh tons and all along during the last three years we have been importing 66,000, 74,000, and 86,000 tons per year. That has

been going on. On the one side, Ceylon does everything in its power to aid export from that country to India, while here we are—I think I am putting it very fairly if I say—just keeping open our doors for this sort of dumping. Now, I know, during the last two or three years the import duty on Ceylon copra as such has not been reduced. I think it is at 15 per cent *ad valorem*. But then, the tariff value has been reduced. That also in a way hits the growers there and aids importers. In effect, that is the result of it. Now, when our own people—especially when coconut plays such an important place in our national economy—when milling interests, grower-interests, marketing committees including this Coconut Committee, make repeated representations to the Government, it is only fair that some heed is paid to their demands. All these things do not directly come within the purview of the amendments, but it is time, it is appropriate that we must review the whole working of it.

And then there is one other thing. I As people in my place came to know ; that this Bill is to come up before this House, I have received certain representation from certain people in the Kayamkulam area. Kayamkulam, the House will know, is one of the research centres run by the Central Coconut Committee. Already a vast acreage of gardens, coconut gardens, are under the management and the control of the research station there and, I can tell, of late fresh acreage is being acquired. All to the good. I have no complaint also against the compensation being paid. It is more than fair compensation. But then, in those coconut gardens, I think my information is that over a hundred acres or so are going to be acquired. And there are small agricultural labourers having their homesteads there. The compensation paid goes to the *jenmis* or the owners and these poor people are evicted from their homesteads. I would appeal to the hon. Minister that at least some alternative sites should be made available to these very poor people. It has been a matter which has caused deep distress to these people and they have made representations and they have informed me that they have made representations to the Minister also. It is an urgent case and such things must receive the attention of the hon. Minister.

Now, some of my points are these. In the matter of more intensive cultivation, manuring and other things, you cannot depend on mere commonsense methods of cultivation. If that were so, the benefits of scientific knowledge need not be pressed into the service of the people. Commonsense cultivation is there. Our people, poor people, have an amount of native shrewdness and an amount of resourcefulness. Only give them some fair price; give them a fair incentive to take to cultivation and they will produce more. It is not done. And then apart from relying on their commonsense, make the benefits of science also available to them. On that I am not competent to speak—about the actual research work carried on—but I must say that whatever benefit is achieved as a result of these researches, must be made available to the cultivators in the matter of prevention of diseases, in the matter of better manuring, etc. These are the points which I have to make.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, in rising to support the Indian Coconut Committee (Amendment) Bill, 1956, I am glad that my hon. friend, Mr. Nair, has given his personal experience of the coconut industry and the House has been very much benefited by his discourse. The hon. Minister while presenting this Bill said that it was a simple Bill. It may be a simple Bill; but it has been presented, I hope, by a lofty-minded Minister to a critically minded audience and it will not be easy for him to get away with the impression that it is only a simple Bill. Coconut has always been a very great industry of India. It serves so many useful purposes for the people where it grows in abundance. It brings us so many useful articles of daily use. Coir is a very important article of our daily life. Coconut in the southern part of India serves the same purpose as whale serves in Lapland for the Eskimos. So, we should not brush aside this coconut business by saying that a Committee is there. Unfortunately, Sir, the present day Governments. . .

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY
TO THE MINISTER FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI
LAKSHMI MENON) : Has Mr. Saksena
seen a coconut tree ?

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: I have seen coconuts and coconuts when twice during the year, in March and in October, on the occasion of the Kali festival and the celebration of it, coconuts are brought. They are in the household. A puja is held and the kernel of the coconut is distributed to the people gathered there. And then I have also used coconut for very delicious *burfis* made out of its kernel. Therefore, for my friend Mrs. Lakshmi Menon to enquire of me whether I have seen a coconut tree or not is immaterial. I hope my friend Mrs. Lakshmi Menon will take me to the South during the recess and show me coconut trees.

Sir, this Government, I was telling the House, has now been reduced to the necessity of governing by committees and commissions and nothing else. These are the committees and the commissions through which the government of the country is being carried on. This Bill is a remnant of the British period. It was passed in 1944. Now, some background of that Bill should have been given along with this Amending Bill. Nothing has been done. We do not know what that Bill deals with. The only thing that the hon. Minister said was that it was intended to give greater representation to the growers. Well and good. But then he also obliged us by giving the number of the representatives today and the increased number which will be there in the future. But we should have been given some summary of the twelve years' working of the committee. That has not been done. So these are serious matters. While on the one hand my friend Mr. Nair has given you the practical difficulties in the working of the coconut industry, the calamity and the catastrophe which are facing the growers there, we on our part in this House have been denied even a summary, a synopsis of the working for the twelve years' period of the Coconut Committee. Now, Sir, we refuse to be treated with such scant courtesy as that, and I hope that in future some more material will be supplied to us in order to enable us to understand things in their true perspective and in their true significance. This representation does not materially help the growers. It does not, because it gives them nothing substantial. Nobody wants them to be represented on the committee. That does not fill their bellies. What they need is financial assistance, greater supervision and more care of

[Shri H. P. Saksena.]

the industry they are engaged in, that is, the coconut industry. I am afraid very little work is being done in that direction. I hope I am wrong, but then there are no figures. Anyway, as I said, I support the Bill.

PROF. G. RANGA (Andhra): Mr. Chairman, I wish to add my voice in support of what my hon. friend Mr. Narayanan Nair has said in regard to the need for fixing a minimum price for the coconut and also for the various by-products of the coconut industry. Many years ago I was touring in Malabar, long before the last World War. Even then the peasants were complaining very bitterly about the same kind of struggle about which they are complaining today—struggle against imports, struggle against falling ' prices, and struggle also against rising costs of cultivation. They wanted immediate protection to be given by Government, and during all these years their plight does not seem to have improved at all. Coconut is an important product not only of Malabar but also of certain districts in Andhra, in Orissa, in Bengal and also in Assam. All these States are interested in the economy of this, industry.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY
(Mysore): Also Bombay and Mysore.

PROF. G. RANGA: Yes, also Bombay and Mysore, more so Kerala. Large numbers of peasants are so much dependent upon what they can get out of their small coconut groves and the coconut crop, and so little has been done by Government by way of trying to help and protect these people from the economics of the coconut imports. It is not enough for Government to say that there is an import duty, an *ad valorem* duty, and so on. You will have to devise a comprehensive schemes by which not only import duties but also a price equalisation scheme would come to be adopted by Government so that by that time the coconut reaches the consumers the price would be such as would not be beyond the capacity of the consumers of this country and which also would yield a minimum income to the coconut producers. In England they had adopted some similar scheme by which cheaper imports of foodgrains were allowed to come into their country but at the same time, the interests of their own home producers

have been protected effectively. Whether Government would like to do it by themselves by being the purchasers of all the imports of coconut into our country and then pricing it also in such a way that the internal price of coconut would not be so very much low that it goes far below the remunerative price for coconut or whether they would devise some other scheme, is a matter which will have to be left to the experts of the Government; but something has got to be done. It is all very well for the Government to say that they have been thinking of devising some scheme on some such lines. They have been thinking for too long a period and they have done so little. What is the earthly use of constituting these Commodity Committees if these Commodity Committees are not given some effective powers to make recommendations which would demand immediate, careful and sympathetic consideration at the hands of the Government? In fact, Sir, this Coconut Committee itself, as has been the case with so many other Commodity Committees, has made recommendations repeatedly in regard to the need for fixing minimum prices in this country, and yet they have all gone overlord. That is all the more the reason why Government will have to come to some decision, not merely in regard to foodgrains and other staple commodities but also in regard to such commodities as this coconut, which happen to play such an important role in the rural economy of certain parts of our own country, and see to it that their producers are adequately protected. Certainly, Sir, I am not satisfied with the quantum of representation that has been given till now, and that is sought to be given, to the growers. My hon. friend said that they want to increase the quantum of representation. By how much? Out of 36 trie growers are to have only 12. Why should it be so? Is it not a fact that the interests of the growers in this industry are very much more significant than those of all other interests involved in this industry? Is it not really reasonable for the growers to expect that they should be given majority representation on a committee like this? We have succeeded in obtaining majority representation on the Oilseeds Committee and it is high time that my hon friend Mr. Jain should accept the general principle that on all these Commodity Committees the growers should be given majority representation, and if he could possibly make a

beginning in this, it would be best. Otherwise I would like him to come to this House at an early date with an Amending Bill providing majority representation for the growers not merely on this committee but also on all these Commodity Committees.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON (Madras): Mr. Chairman, I support the Bill and I support mostly the remarks made by my friend, Shri Perath Narayanan Nair.

. Sir, the Bill is mainly intended to increase the representation on the Indian Coconut Committee to various institutions. I have only to point out one mistake which seems to have crept in. The hon. Minister conceived this Bill over a year and a half ago when the Report of the States Reorganisation Commission had not been prepared at all. The States Reorganisation Bill has become law from yesterday onwards. Now, Sir, in clause 3, sub-clause (a) (ii), it has been stated as follows:

"for the words 'two shall be nominated by the Government of Madras, three by the Government of the State of Travancore-Cochin', the words 'three shall be nominated by the Government of Madras, four by the Government of Travancore-Cochin, shall be substituted ;"

In the first place, Sir, there is no longer any Travancore-Cochin State at all. The new State is the Kerala State. This Bill was conceived when we never thought of the reorganisation of States at all. Sir, the main coconut-growing area is the Malabar district. In fact, except for some coconut areas in Tanjore, we have no coconut cultivation at all in the Madras State.

PROF. G. RANGA: It is there in Tirunelvely.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: That is very little.

SHRIMATI T. NALLAMUTHU RAMAMURTI (Madras) : It is there in the Madras City itself.

SHRI K. MADHAVA MENON: You may be having a few coconut plants in the Madras City. That way, you may have one or two plants in your house and say that there are coconut plants in the Madras City. But the main coconut-growing area in the Madras State was Malabar. So, when the Bill was conceiv-

ed, the idea of the Government was that Malabar continued to be part of Madras. I have no complaint if the Madras State nominates three people. But the whole idea was to give more representation to the coconut-growing areas. When you are increasing the number from two to three in the case of the Madras State, the representation for the new Kerala State should be much more, because Malabar is included in that State. Therefore, Sir, I feel that the representation to the Kerala State must necessarily be much more than what has been proposed. That mistake ought to be corrected at the earliest opportunity.

SHRI KISHEN CHAND (Hyderabad) : Mr. Chairman, as has been pointed out by several hon. Members, there is no objection to this Bill. But I take this opportunity for pointing out some faults in the present working of the Coconut Committee. Hyderabad has no coastal area, and it is not such a big grower of coconut as Travancore-Cochin is, but in Hyderabad, Sir, we have a different way of growing coconut. On the fringe of almost all the fields these coconut trees are grown. At present there is no prohibition in the Hyderabad State, but prohibition is likely to come, and we have got plenty of cultivation of toddy trees and palm trees, and they are slowly and gradually being replaced by the coconut trees. And in such matters I find that this* Coconut Committee is not rendering any help to the Hyderabad State to convert its palm trees into coconut trees. We cannot get even the seedlings in the Hyderabad State. The cultivation of paddy crop goes on, and on the fringe of the field these coconut trees are planted. Therefore, Sir, I only want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that greater attention has got to be paid to the Hyderabad State, when it wants to start coconut cultivation in place of palm trees and toddy trees.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA (Mysore): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the motion before the House.

It is true, Sir, that coconut forms a very important industry, especially in the western part of India. As yet the Committee's work and activities have not been able to reach the growers to any perceptible extent, which is rather unfortunate. But, I think, with the consciousness that is now being roused

IShri H. C. Dassappa.] among not only the growers but also among the officers concerned, there is likely to be a greater attention paid to this industry. In fact, everybody knows that it is called *Kalpa Vraksha*. Once the plant grows up, say, for about seven or eight years—its life is about 60 to 70 years—it goes on yielding fruits without much of an additional expenditure. There are a lot more areas which can be brought under coconut cultivation, which as yet are either lying fallow or which are just being put to use for growing ordinary crops which do not bring in much of a return.

Sir, one of the usual methods of finding out the places where coconut could be successfully grown is to see where the date groves thrive. Wherever we find date groves, it is an indication that there is enough supply of sub-soil water, and we may take it for certain that in all those areas, coconuts also can thrive exceedingly well. With the introduction of prohibition and more or less putting out of use these date groves, I see no reason why a systematic attempt should not be made to replace these groves by coconut, unless of course they have any other use for them. But unfortunately I see no evidence of any such serious attempts being made to get the best out of these date groves. The manufacture of palm-gur and also a number of other cottage industries can easily be built up around these date plants. These are, Sir, the things which have got to be attended to. It looks to me that that is a matter which has, as yet, not attracted the attention of either the Governments or of the people. So, one of the ways by which we can take to rapid development of coconut in the country is to replace these date groves by coconut plants.

Sir, apart from all these things which have very well been placed before the House, one of the greatest difficulties experienced by these growers is with regard to marketing. There are intermediaries who, with their financial strength and stability try to exploit these coconut growers to a large extent. After all, Sir, these growers are always in need of funds, and they have not got other suitable alternate organisations or institutions by way of co-operative institutions etc., with the result that they are driven to these people who advance moneys to them, and they do not get the price that they should get. That is a thing which I

know has also contributed to the fall in prices of coconut quite apart from the other reasons which may be there. There are certain attempts made by some of the State Governments to see that this evil is removed as early as possible. They have got regulated markets to which the growers may go and the coconuts are sold in the open. By this, a fair price is obtained by the growers. As I said, about 70 or 80 per cent, of them still suffer because of the exploitation of the middlemen. I hope this Committee will be able to pay attention to this very important fact.

It is true that the coconut trees have got a number of pests like the beetles and so on. There is no much of an attempt still to find out suitable remedies for them. If a proper attempt is made, it is possible that they will be able to find out suitable remedies for them. It is possible nowadays to find suitable remedies whether by way of spraying or otherwise. For instance, by the spraying of areca trees, which suffer from one of those dread disease known as *kolero-ga*, the loss has been greatly arrested, and the yield of the areca has perceptibly increased. That is where the Areca Committee has justified its existence. I would appeal to the hon. Minister to see that this Coconut Committee also becomes a little more active in this matter and does its best for the industry. I do not want to deal with any other point. I would only say that this Bill deserves our support.

I entirely endorse the idea that Mr. Madhava Menon has put before the House. I think it is obviously a mistake. There is no going back on that, but I see no reason personally why the defect should not be remedied. In fact, the idea of increasing the representation for Madras was because of Malabar being there and therefore the increased representation was justified. With Malabar going out of Madras, there is justification for reducing the number and not for increasing the number. I do not think there is anybody here who wants to reduce the number which it has already. Let them have the benefit of the number which they had with Malabar in Madras, but transfer the additional one that they are now getting to Kerala. That, I think, would meet the ends of justice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister will reply at 12 o'clock.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Chairman, I also come from a State where there is no growing of coconut trees, and my remarks will therefore be entirely outside the technical aspect of the growth and cultivation of these plants.

SHRI JASPAT ROY KAPOOR (Uttar Pradesh): But we are the biggest consumers.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA: Sir, the hon. Minister also comes from the same State as myself, and if one has to judge knowledge of the cultivation or growth of any particular plant from the place from which one comes, then he can be supposed to be as much in the dark about this subject as myself.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Not as much as you are.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA : Sir, I find my friend, Mr. Saksena, has taken objection to a matter to which I also would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister, and that is that the sections of the principal Act which are sought to be amended are not included in the Bill as has been circulated to us after it was passed by the Lok Sabha, although they found a place in the Bill as was originally introduced in the other House. In these circumstances, one has to refer to the Bill or originally introduced in order to find out what changes are sought to be made under the amending Bill. I think it would be a better procedure in such portions of the amending Bill. I think it would be amended are also appended to the Bill as passed by the Lok Sabha, so that Members may easily know the changes intended to be effected.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU (Uttar Pradesh): They cannot be included in the Bill but they should be there in the papers circulated to us.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He knows it, Mr. Sapru.

PANDIT S. S. N. TANKHA : Sir, I find that my hon. friend, the Minister, has manipulated the amending sections so very cleverly as to make it appear as if he has gone a great step forward in the Bill as passed by the Lok Sabha. i But sir, there has really not been very much of a change, but even then the clauses have been so framed as to show

as if greater representation has been given in the amending Bill to the various classes of persons and societies who are sought to be included in this category. For instance, I find that in clause 3, subclause (e):

"for clause (g), the following shall be substituted, namely:—

'(g) three other persons of whom two shall be elected from among themselves by the members of the House of the People and one shall be elected from among themselves by the members of the Council of States'."

If one were to see only this, one would have felt that it has been a great step to give representation to the Parliament on this body, whereas I find that in the original Act also that representation wa* there and the hon'ble Minister has not really given any new, or greater representation in this Bill. I would have liked him, as has been provided in several other Acts, to give greater representation both to the House of the People and to the Council of States. For instance, under the Silk Board Act six persons have been provided for being elected to that body—four from the Lok Sabha and two from the Council of States. Now, it may be asked: "Where is the necessity for Members of Parliament being elected in such large numbers on such bodies?" But I submit, Sir, that the reason is that they represent the interests of the public which include the interests of the growers, the consumers and everybody. Therefore, greater representation to the Members of Parliament is very necessary. After all, the Members of Parliament come from all parts of the country including areas where this particular class of plant is grown. Therefore, greater representation should have been provided for them in the Bill.

I am glad to find, Sir, as the hon. Minister himself has stated that there are some new States which have now taken to the cultivation of coconut and, as such, it is only right and proper that they are being given representation on this body. I expect that some of the other States also will take to the cultivation of this plant wherever it can be found possible to do so, because this is an important industry for the entire country, which will provide a very lucrative cottage industry not only in the South of India where the coconut

IPandit S. S. N Tankha.] is grown now, but also in other parts of India. Therefore it is necessary that greater attention should be paid to the growth and cultivation of coconut.

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Then there was one other thing which I would like the hon. Minister to take into consideration. Clause 3, sub-para (ii) of sub-clause (a) makes the provision that 10 persons shall be members of this Committee as representatives of the growers. But I find that the method for the representation of these persons, as given in the Act, is through nomination. I would like the hon. Minister to devise some means whereby the elective element could be introduced for their representation, because through nomination it is only those particular persons who are either very large growers or very large cultivators of the coconut who will be known to the State Governments and who alone will find representation on this body, but not the others. Whereas if it were possible to devise some means whereby the elective element could be introduced for the representation of this class of growers, then it would work much better and would afford opportunities to the less known growers also to find a place on the Board. I do not know whether there are any societies of these growers in the south. I suggest that if there are cooperative societies or co-operative bodies carrying on this industry, or the cultivation of the coconut plant, then the representation may be given to these growers through those bodies and not by nomination.

These are the few remarks that I have to offer, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thank you. Mr. Jain.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Sir, I must confess that I feel greatly educated after hearing the nice and detailed observations of the hon. Members. Not that I am so ignorant that I have not seen a coconut tree, but I must confess that I come from a State where the coconut tree is not one of the principal trees. In fact, as I was listening to the speeches, I felt a little relaxed, harking back towards my old school or college days and I felt like Rip Van Winkle, with you Sir, presiding as the great *acharya* over this great class room. I must confess that many of the things which have been said by the hon. Members have plainly

of force in them. In particular, Mr. Nair has made a very constructive and useful speech. His first question was: What has been the increase in the area under coconut and whether there has been an increase in the yield per acre? That is indeed a very important question, because a committee like this does not justify its existence if it does not lead to a more and better growth of coconuts. I have got statistics ranging from 1948-49 to 1954-55. In 1948-49 the area under coconut was 14,61,000 acres. In 1954-55 it is 15,77,000 acres, recording an increase of 8 per cent. The increase in production can be judged from the fact that from 3,148 million nuts in 1948-49, it has come to 3,855 million nuts in 1954-55. That is an increase of 22 per cent. It will thus be observed that during this period there has been an increase of 8 per cent in the acreage and 22 per cent in production. In 1948-49, the yield per acre was 2,155 nuts and in 1954-55 it was 2,444 nuts per acre. I do not mean that it is enough. There is plenty of scope for further increase and during the Second Plan period, we have made a bigger allocation of Rs. 92- lakhs. Of this allocation which is divided into two parts, the research schemes account for a little more than Rs. 40 lakhs and the developmental schemes accounts for about Rs. 52 lakhs. That immediately brings me to the point raised by

PROF. HUMAYUN KABIR (West Bengal): May I put: one question in this connection? Has a regional survey been made? Has the increase per acre in each area been estimated?

SHRI A. P. JAIN: These are the overall figures.

As I said, this brings me to another point and that was raised by Mr. Kishen Chand, that no attention has been paid to Hyderabad which is now developing coconut growing. As he himself admitted, they have just started this coconut growing in Hyderabad and the Second Plan has shown them a little more mercy by allocating a pretty small sum of Rs. 37,000 for the development of coconut cultivation. That indicates that they are not out of the mind of the planners.

Another very important point was raised by Mr. Nair and supported by Prof. Ranga and that was about the extension services. I quite accept that though the results of fundamental and applied research may be of value to the

scientist and to the specialist, in order to be fully appreciated, they must reach the farmer. Hon. Members are aware that by 1960-61, we propose to cover the whole of the country either by community projects or by national extension service blocks. The principal object of these projects and blocks is to make the farmer a better farmer and to enable him to utilise the results of the research to grow two blades of grass where at present there grows only one. Nonetheless, we have been quite aware of the importance of the extension service blocks and as I said just now, out of this sum of Rs. 92 lakhs allocated for the development of coconut under the Second Plan, no less than Rs. 52 lakhs are meant for developmental purposes. One of the methods of this development has been to set up nurseries for making better quality plant available. In Madras there are nine such nurseries, in Travancore-Cochin there are eleven, in Mysore one, Orissa two, Bombay two, West Bengal two and Assam has one.

Besides this, work has been done in propagating methods of arresting and combating the diseases of the coconut plant. My hon. friend Mr. Nair referred to the leaf and root disease in Travancore-Cochin. Now, substantial efforts have been made to help the farmer to combat this disease. In October, 1949, the Coconut Committee sanctioned a one year scheme for spraying the coconut farms and to control the leaf disease on a no profit no loss basis, levying a fee of two annas for every spraying done.

This scheme was mainly intended to demonstrate to the cultivators the method of spraying to control the disease. This scheme was extended from time to time and worked continuously till the 30th May 1955 and during the five years of this scheme, over 5 lakhs of sprayings have been done. Recently, the Travancore-Cochin Government have also started a comprehensive demonstration spraying scheme in all the 22 disease affected taluks of the State. The Travancore-Cochin Government have also forwarded to the Central Government a comprehensive coconut spraying scheme costing about Rs. 25 lakhs which is at present under consideration. Now, so far as proper cultural practices are concerned, some demonstration farms have been set up; besides, some other methods of propaganda have also been adopted; some pamphlets have

been issued by the Committee in almost all regional languages. Recently, the Committee has prepared a film on coconut growing which is being shown in the villages. There are also Coconut Propaganda Officers who are educating the farmers; some radio talks have also been given but I think the full tempo of this developmental work particularly the extension part of it, will be felt only when the whole country has been covered by community project and extension services. Now, so far as supply of fertilisers, etc., are concerned, that comes under the grow more food schemes and fertilisers, etc., are available to the growers of coconut as to the rest of the farmers. The hon. Member, Mr. Nair, referred to some farmers who are being displaced on account of acquisition of land. It is generally the policy of the Government to provide alternative lands to those who are uprooted as a result of land acquisition. I shall look into this matter sympathetically and if possible, we shall provide them with alternative lands.

Now, one more important question which has concerned the minds of a number of hon. Members is the question of prices. No one is more conscious than me of the fact that the farmer, like any other wordly person, can get more stimulus to produce more and to produce better quality only when he gets an adequate return for his products. As has been said by Shri Nair and Prof. Ranga, we do not produce enough of coconut for our needs and we have to import coconut from abroad. In such circumstances, the question arises whether the proper method of controlling coconut prices would be through the manipulation of imports and the imposition of duties or by price support. Now, that question again can be looked at from two points of view to meet the immediate difficulty. I can assure the hon. Member that whatever may have been lacking in the past, I am going to look into the matter immediately. There is also another question, from a wider and long-range point of view. Now, the question of price support for agricultural product is a rather complicated one; the economy of the farmer does not depend purely on one crop; it is the total amount of his income that matters and that is a vast question which has been under the consideration of the House, may be it has not come up always in a comprehensive manner but some observations have been made, I am

[Shri A. P. Jain.] also fully conscious of it but I am equally conscious of its difficulties and occasionally though not in an integrated manner, we have been sparing no efforts to render such assistance to the farmer against the low prices as we possibly could. I confess that we have not been able to undertake this scheme on a national basis.

Some hon. Members—and Mr. Ranga is included among them—have criticised the composition of the Committee. Mr. Ranga said that, on a Committee of this type, majority representation should be given to the farmers. Now, Sir, another hon. Member, Mr. Tankha, complained—I would not say complained, but suggested—that the Members of Parliament who, of course, represent not only the consumers but the industry and also the grower, must be given more representation. The breakup after the passing of this Bill would be as follows; The Vice-President of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research is the ex-officio President. The Agricultural Marketing Adviser would be on the Committee in his ex-officio capacity. The Government of India will have the right to make five nominations, now, one of these nominations has gone in favour of the Agricultural Commissioner and I do not think any hon. Member would resent that nomination. As regards the remaining four nominations, it may be possible to appoint a grower or a person occupying more than one capacity. Now, there are eight representatives of the State Governments. Naturally, these are the persons who are interested in coconut growing.

PROF. G. RANGA: But generally they are officers.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Well, officers also make contributions and I submit, substantial contributions. They are there for the purpose of developing coconut.

Now, the coconut industry has five representatives and the Chamber of Commerce has one representative, that is, six in all.

PROF. G. RANGA: Is he also to be counted?

SHRI A. P. JAIN: So far as Members of Parliament are concerned, the Lok Sabha has got two and the Rajya Sabha one. Growers have got 12. I think, Sir, that the Committee, as it is constituted

has to fulfil the objectives, namely, welfare of the grower.

PROF. G. RANGA: May I put one question, Sir ? Has it not been the experience of the Government that the Government representatives generally take a view which is not supported by the growers' representatives, and that they represent only the Government as a whole ?

SHRI A. P. JAIN: They have to take a fair and a just view, a view which helps most the grower.

Now, a suggestion has been made by the hon. Mr. Tankha that this system of nominations is a faulty one and that we must give representation to these growers through elections. I was a little amazed at it. Just, Sir, think of the number of growers and the type of electroal machinery which we will have to set up. All I can say to my friend is, "Don't overdo democracy".

The hon. Mr. Madhava Menon has raised a question which concerns the reorganisation of the States. If I understood him correctly, the point that he made was that in the State of Madras, the principal coconut growing area was Malabar, which is now going to the State of Kerala, and, may be that the town of Madras may have a few groves or there might be some people in the city of Madras who might be growing coconut in the compounds of their houses. There is a lot of force in what he said. In fact, when the Bill was framed we did not have this aspect before us. I would not like to delay the passage of this Bill for that reason but I can assure the hon. Member that when a proper opportunity arises, we shall not fight shy of making an amendment to this so as to do justice to Kerala as also to Madras. Mr. Dasappa has made a few suggestions. He wants that the date groves may be replaced by coconuts. It is part of our scheme to enlarge the area under coconut and to increase production. The matter is well worth considering.

He also raised another very relevant and important point that, constituted as we are, a good portion of the profit is taken away by the intermediaries and the poor grower does not get his full due. That is a malady not confined only to coconut but practically to all agricultural produce, and it was for that I reason that we are undertaking a

comprehensive scheme of co-operative marketing and warehousing. The remedy lies there. I accept the force of his arguments.

I think, Sir, I have covered the points that were raised by the hon. Members and I hope that they will give me support.

DR. P. C. MITRA (Bihar): One question, Sir. May I know whether the research institute on coconut cultivation has succeeded in minimising the length of time within which a tree can produce the nut, which at present is not less than ten years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has no information readily available.

DR. P. C. MITRA: In Bengal the period within which coconut can be produced is prohibitive. For that reason the man cannot get the benefit of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Coconut Committee Act, 1944, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall now take up clause by clause consideration.

Clauses 2, 3 and 4 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Title and the Enacting Formula were also added to the Bill.

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Sir, I move: "That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is: "That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted. [MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

THE GOVERNMENT PREMISES (EVICTION) AMENDMENT BILL. 1956

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, HOUSING AND SUPPLY (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Government Premises (Eviction) Act, 1950, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Bill seeks to make two amendments in the main Act. One amendment relates to extending the provision to buildings belonging to the Delhi Improvement Trust. The provision of the main Act, as it exists to-day, without this amendment, makes this Act applicable to premises or land belonging to or taken on lease or requisitioned by the Central Government or requisitioned by the Competent Authority under the Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1952, and in relation to the State of Delhi, includes any premises or land belonging to any municipality in Delhi or any land belonging to the Improvement Trust, Delhi, whether such land is in the possession of or leased out by the Improvement Trust. This, Sir, is the existing provision. The clause which is sought to be substituted for the existing provision, although here it appears to be a longish one, yet really the addition is a small one, namely, that whereas the existing Act applies only to land belonging to the Improvement Trust, now by this change the intention is that buildings belonging to the Improvement Trust may also come within the scope of the Act so that, whatever is the procedure for taking action with regard to land belonging to the Improvement Trust, the same procedure may be available to the authorities so far as buildings belonging to the Improvement Trust are concerned. Sir, I do not want to make any lengthy speech. The scheme of the Act itself indicates that a special procedure has been prescribed with regard to land and buildings belonging to Government or municipalities, and there is no reason why there should be a differential treatment so far as buildings belonging to the Improvement Trust are concerned. Therefore, really the Improvement Trust, by this amendment, is sought to be brought at par with, say a municipality in Delhi or with Government lands or buildings, wherever they might be situated. The necessity for this was, Sir, that besides land, the Improvement Trust also owned a certain number of buildings, and there is no reason why the unauthorised occupants of Improvement Trust buildings should not be dealt with at par with the unauthorised occupants of land or buildings belonging to Government or a municipality.

Then, Sir, the second amendment is the addition of another sub-clause (e), where 'unauthorised occupation' is sought to be defined. The amendment