

With regard to canteen stores, however, it has been possible to stop imports of as many as fifteen items which also include some items of foodstuffs like biscuits, jams marmalades, pickles, etc.

ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON THE ARMED FORCES INFORMATION OFFICE

63. DR. R. P. DUBE: Will the Minister for DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the annual expenditure incurred on the Armed Forces Information Office for the years 1951-52 to 1953-54; and

(b) the number of personnel who were employed in this office during each of the above three years?

THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE ORGANISATION (SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI): (a) The annual expenditure on the Armed Forces Information Office including its regional branches has been as follows:—

		Rs.
1951-52	. . .	5,39,992.
1952-53	. . .	6,46,665.
1953-54	. . .	6,23,121.
(b)		
	Number of Personnel	
1951-52	. . .	128.
1952-53	. . .	126.
1953-54	. . .	131.

12 NOON.

THE COFFEE MARKET EXPANSION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1954

—continued

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA (Mysore): Mr. Chairman, I have risen to participate in this debate on this Government Bill rather reluctantly for more than one reason. A Bill which is sponsored by the Government, I take it, is sponsored after considerable deliberation and therefore any criticism that I might have to offer has got to be made after a great deal of study and

consideration. The second reason in this particular case is a little more personal, because of my own regard and respect for the hon. Minister who sponsored the Bill in the Lok Sabha and the great regard I have for his ability and industry. After a very detailed consideration of the Bill, I have a notion that, if only there were an equal amount of a judicious frame of mind and an objective view of the circumstances, I believe.....

SHRI B. C. GHOSE (West Bengal): On whose part?

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: On the part of the Government obviously.....the Bill would not have come in this particular form. I may be pardoned if I take a little time of this House very briefly to narrate the background of coffee industry and its problems so that it may be easily understood by such of the hon. Members of this House as have not had the incentive to apply themselves to the provisions of this particular Bill. After all, as admitted, this Bill applies to a small region in the south of India confined mostly to my own State of Mysore and the State in which I was born, Coorg, and also the neighbouring State Madras, where I have got a number of friends and relatives. And so even without much of an effort on my part I get to know the problems which face the coffee industry, and therefore I claim a certain amount of knowledge of the inside working of this industry.

As the House is well aware, during World War II, there was no possibility of any export of coffee. Now, coffee is a very delicate plant. It is a plant which requires at least six years of nurturing in order to get anything out of it. It gives a crop only once every year, and it is confined, as I said, to the hilly tracts of what we call Malnad. No other crop can be grown conveniently in these hilly tracts. These are the conditions which we have got to take note of when we try to do anything for

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.]  
the coffee industry. Before commencement of the Second World War, only a small fraction of the coffee was consumed in the land and much of it was being exported to countries abroad primarily to the U.K. Companies like Aspinwala, Pierce Leslie and Volkart Brothers were the agents who used to export coffee abroad. The merit of Indian coffee is that it is of a high grade quality. It is not used in the West for consumption directly by itself but it is used largely for being blended with other coffee obtained from Brazil, Kenya and other places. After all, the production in India forms only one per cent. of the total world production of coffee. Yet it was a good dollar and sterling earning commodity. When World War II came, we were unable to export any coffee with the result that the coffee growers found themselves in a very unfortunate position. They wanted to build up a home market for coffee. That was the origin of the Coffee Market Expansion Act. That was done on a voluntary and cooperative basis. First an Ordinance and then in 1942 the present Act itself, which is now sought to be amended, came into existence. The idea was that all the coffee grown in the land should be pooled together and then distributed or marketed in India. It was a very fine cooperative effort. There is some idea, I think, aired in the other House that these growers joined together in order to exploit the consumers. I must on the floor of the House lodge my protest against any such idea prevailing in any quarter. This cooperative venture started in 1942 has worked during these twelve or thirteen years. What exactly was the result of the working of this Board may be briefly indicated. Earlier, years ago, there were three lakhs of acres under coffee. Owing to the hard days I have mentioned already, the acreage shrunk to less than 50 per cent. At the time of the constitution of the Board, it came down to 1,40,000 acres or so. That was in

1940-41. The result of the working of the Coffee Board, which took up the entire production under its own operation and control so far as marketing was concerned, so far as advice with regard to cultivation and the establishment of research stations was concerned, has been that the acreage rose from 1,40,000 to 2,40,000 during these twelve years. So also, production from about 17,000 tons in 1941-42 to 25,000 tons in 1952-53. Last year, or I might say this year, it rose to 29,000 tons. That, I may say, gives an indication of the successful way this Board has been working. Labour, which was about 90,000 at the time the Coffee Board came into being, has risen to 1,70,000, giving employment to about twice the number. Again, as a result of the efforts made by the Coffee Board, internal consumption which was 8,000 tons at the commencement of the Board, has risen to 19,000 or 20,000 tons. All these go to show that the Coffee Board has acquitted itself exceedingly well during these years. It might probably be helpful to this House if I were to read out a portion of the report published by the Government of India on the working of the Indian coffee Board, because anything that I might myself say is just likely to give the impression—it is only human psychology—that I am trying to paint the picture in a very rosy colour. This is what the Government themselves say: I request the House kindly to note the year 1953, because the remarks that I would be making subsequently will have a bearing on it.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE) in the Chair.]

“With the year ending 1953 the Indian Coffee Board completes 13 years of service to the coffee industry in India. These 13 years have witnessed a remarkable rehabilitation of the industry. The extent of the rehabilitation can be best appreciated if the present position of the industry is compared with that in 1940 when the Coffee Board was

brought into being. The long economic depression of the thirties had hit the coffee producing industry in every country. This fact is strikingly illustrated by the destruction of large quantities of coffee in Brazil and elsewhere in a vain effort to prop up the price of coffee at a minimum economic level for the grower. In India large tracts of coffee were being either abandoned or neglected because year after year the growers were finding it an increasing liability to maintain them. This growing crisis in the industry in India was suddenly brought to a head in 1940 when with the German occupation of Western Europe the export outlets for Indian coffee were blocked up and the home market was threatened with a glut of surplus coffee amounting to about 10,000 tons annually. The grower was consequently faced with the prospect of a disastrous slump in the already uneconomic price for his produce. It was at this juncture that the Indian Coffee Board was constituted as an emergency measure by Central Government. After the industry was helped to tide over the crisis the Board came to be established on a more permanent footing with a view to setting the industry firmly on the road of steady rehabilitation.

The trend in expanding coffee acreage and increasing production, since the Board was founded, is a measure of the stability and confidence restored to the industry. The following coffee acreage and crop figures for 12 years ending 1952-53 will speak for themselves:"

This is the certificate given by the Government of India to the Coffee Board at the end of the year 1953. Still, certain drastic changes are now sought to be introduced by this Bill with regard to the constitution and working of the Board. I have listened very carefully indeed to the speech of my hon. friend Mr. Karmarkar and I have taken notes of it. I don't

find a single remark of his to justify any such amendment to the Act subsequent to this grand certificate given to the working of the Board. If there is, I would like to sit down for a minute and listen to it. I have gone through every page of the debate in the Lok Sabha on this Bill after the Select Committee report. There is no word in it which goes to show that subsequent to this certificate there was one action of the Board which has justified the implied and explicit condemnation of this Board both on the floor of the Lok Sabha as well as here. I don't think I would have stood to participate in the debate but for the fact that in trying to justify this new Bill they have gone about trying to condemn in the first instance the working of the Board and in the second instance, the conduct of certain individuals who had something to do with the Board. It is a case—I regretfully have to say—of trying to give the dog a bad name before it is hanged. If the Government had simply said that for the better working of the Coffee Board, or in order to take more control so that they might develop the industry more vigorously than hitherto, there would have been some justification but where, I ask, was the necessity to condemn the Board as has been done in no uncertain terms. I am going to refer to some of those things. Where was the necessity to do that and where was the necessity to try and say that the Coffee Board was trying to prop up the prices and exploit the consumers? Where was the necessity to drag in the name of Mr. Ivor Bull who was the Chairman for some time of the Coffee Board? He was the only planter who was Chairman for about a year and a half during these 13 years. For the rest of the period, the Chairman was either an official of the Centre or of the Mysore State. I am sorry I have to say all this. He is not here to defend himself. He is the Managing Director of Consolidated Estates in Coorg. He has been dubbed with a number of epithets,

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.]  
one of which I have got here is that he is a money-loving man. 'Ivor Bull loves money' is the expression used. I very regretfully and with a considerable amount of pain ask: where was the necessity for it? If you only go to either Coorg or Madras or Mysore and meet those planters, you will find how the praises of Mr. Ivor Bull are being sung today in every quarter, in every coffee estate, big and small. You will not find a single man who will have any word to say against him. If any word is there, it is in fulsome praise of the work—of the wonderful work of Mr. Ivor Bull. In a most dispassionate way, in a most patriotic way, I should say, he threw his heart and soul into this and the estates which were almost dying for want of proper cultivation.....

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA (Bihar): And exploiting the Indian consumers.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: It is an unfortunate thing that our friend is making a remark without any justification and I will try to answer him. You put a question but don't cast any remark without justification. (*Interruption*).

SHRI RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Madras): Our friend from Bihar may not know who Mr. Ivor Bull is.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: It will be found that these estates were almost working at a loss and the acreage was dwindling at that time. Mr. Bull came on the scene conducted a series of experiments and adopted a scientific method of cultivation in which he took a personal interest and went about in Coorg, and he was able to help in the rehabilitation of those estates. This is acknowledged by every planter in Coorg and this thing of course spread to the regions in Madras and in Mysore. That is the part which Mr. Bull played. I have the

evidence here from which it will be seen that a reflection is sought to be cast that he was getting some commission on the gross profits of the Consolidated Estates. Three per cent. of the gross profits on consolidated coffee estates would have amounted to a very high sum but though it is provided like that possibly in the agreement between him and the coffee estates, he drew only a paltry sum of Rs. 24,000 a year. That itself is enough justification to show that sort of a gentleman Mr. Bull was.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: Quite all right, but has he foregone his right to withdraw that amount which is due to him in the future also?

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: That was a question which could have been put at the time of evidence and an answer elicited.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I was not there.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: I don't know. You were not there and I was not there but if this evidence does not produce that, it is not your fault or my fault. It is the fault of those who were examining the person. It is open for my friend today after so many days of taking this evidence.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I simply wanted information as to whether he is entitled to draw that amount or not.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: That is a question which he could very well direct to the Government and get an answer. It is a thing which could have been got but I tell you that so far as evidence goes, he has chosen to draw only a paltry sum of Rs. 24,000 and yet this remark is made.....

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I am also having a.....

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE):** Let him go on. Mr. Sinha, you will have a chance to speak and deal with the points that he is dealing with now, instead of interrupting him.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I will be very thankful to my hon. friend if he does not cast reflections. He can certainly ask questions and I have no objection to that. I am here only to say what I could gather from the records that are made available to me.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** I thought he was speaking from his personal experience.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I did not say about his personal transactions. It looks to me that he is less than fair to me or to Mr. Ivor Bull. I did not say that I knew all his monetary transactions. I knew of his contribution to the development of coffee industry and that is what I referred to. All that I can say is that you can understand the psychology of people. If I have to get some allowance as a Member of Parliament, I will not allow the money simply to lie in the Imperial Bank.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** That is the usual practice of business concerns.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** It may be so but normally speaking, no man tries to leave his money lying idle without giving him return from it. I cannot understand him. It was open for these people of my friend's frame of mind to have elicited that information if they wanted it. Anyway all that I wish to say is, as he is unable to defend himself in this House, let us not cast aspersions, which are not warranted by the facts here. One's views are likely to be coloured by any such pre-possessed notions about a certain person. There was another question which will also indicate how it is likely that we allow ourselves to be prejudiced. This is what Mr. Machia, Secretary of the Consolidated

Coffee Estates says. And I may add that he was the Chief Marketing Officer for a certain period, from about 1948 to 1951, and he was an officer of the Mysore Government of which I may say I was a member at the time. This is what he says: "This is an Indian company now". And the Minister says "It is an Indian company because it is registered under the Indian law. But it is not an Indian-controlled company." In answer to that Mr. Machia says: "It is an Indian-controlled company. 85 per cent. of the share-holding is in Indian hands."

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** Which page is the hon. Member reading from?

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** Page 41 of the evidence recorded by the Select Committee. The Minister asks: "Who are the managing agents?"

**SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR (West Bengal):** That is very important.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** And the answer is: "There is no managing agency."

**SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR:** That is very, very important.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** And Mr. Mazumdar says that is very, very important. But the answer, as I said, was "There is no managing agency. There is a managing director."

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** When did this company become an Indian-controlled company? When did the shares pass on to the Indian shareholders? Has my hon. friend got any information about that?

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I can only refer my hon. friend to the evidence contained here. If the evidence contains that information, then he can get it from the evidence. If it does not, then he is applying to the wrong quarter for the information.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** I am not applying to any wrong

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.]  
quarter. I am only asking when this British company became an Indian company, and if the hon. Member knows, he can say it.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** Sir, my hon. friend does not choose to understand me. I say, if there is any answer to his question, in this evidence, he can have it, if not, he must get it from some other quarter and not me.

**THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE** (**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR**): I would not like to interrupt my hon. friend. We are not concerned with what Mr. Ivor Bull did or what others did. All that we on this side of the House really want a little clarification about is as to what was done when prices were rising abnormally to the detriment of the consumer.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I would certainly not have referred to this but for the evidence that has been published. My hon. friend has to think himself if he has chosen to adopt the line he has adopted. We all read the evidence and the speeches. Our minds will be influenced by these speeches and the evidence. Would it be fair on the part of my hon. friend to say that I should be gagged and not allowed to refer to them?

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** I do not mean anything like that.

**SHRI H. C. MATHUR** (Rajasthan): That is the point. Let us have a fair and frank discussion. What is Parliament for if it is not for full, free and frank discussion?

**SHRI B. C. GHOSE:** There is freedom of discussion, not of voting.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** There is no objection to discussion at all and if we are convinced by the arguments, we may alter our decision.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I am preparing the mental background to receive certain suggestions and ideas

I am going to put forward. I actually started with the word "background". Unfortunately, in regard to this Bill, the background that has been created has not been all correct or all fair. If there had been a bit of constructive approach to the problem, possibly there would not have been so much discussion. Therefore, having sown the wind he should not hesitate if the whirlwind comes.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** We are prepared to reap the whirlwind.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I do not want to dwell on this matter for it is an unhappy thing for me. Likewise, there was the question about Mr. Machia. Well, I claim to know Mr. Machia even better than Mr. Ivor Bull, because Mr. Machia was one of our officers. He was in the Police Department. After all, the Mysore scales of pay are very low and as Chief Marketing Officer, he was getting much more than he would have got as an officer in the Police Department. So at the end of it, he felt that if he reverted, there would be a substantial reduction in his emoluments. He was also a man from Coorg, born and bred there. His family is in Coorg. He comes from the same place as Gen. Cariappa and Gen. Thimmayya. In fact, he is related to them. So, when he got the offer from the Coffee Estate, he took it up and went to his own country, to his own place. But a kind of atmosphere is sought to be created as if Mr. Machia did something wrong or unworthy. I say this is a total misconception of the situation, because he was only going over to his own part of the country and to manage an industry which is of so much importance to Coorg, to the Government of Coorg as well as to the people of Coorg. And instead of extolling it as a patriotic service, for having thrown off his job and for dedicating himself to the development of this important industry, we find here a kind of a suggestion that he has done something wrong. It is unfortunate that it should be so. That is all I would say about that aspect.

Now, the points here are mainly three, maybe that they would reduce themselves into two. The first is about the composition or constitution of the Board. The second thing is about the removal of the elected chairman and to substitute in his place a full-time paid chairman. And then there is the question of consultations. There is also the other allied question of the interests of the small growers and the interests of the consumer. With your permission, Sir, I hope to go direct into the merits of these questions and deal with them.

First of all there is this question about the constitution of the Board. According to the Coffee Market Expansion Act of 1942, there were 30 members 14 of whom were elected by recognised associations of coffee planters, big and small. Now, roughly there are about 30,000 coffee planters, and of course, the majority of them are small growers. But any way, all of them come under one or the other of these associations. If the.....

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: On a point of information, Sir, how many of these 30,000 planters are members of the associations?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): The hon. Member is not yielding.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Sir, I have been patiently yielding to my hon. friend's interruptions. He can go on interrupting and being an old veteran lawyer, I am not going to be disturbed.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I do not want to disturb my hon. friend, Sir. I only want this simple information as to how many out of these 30,000 planters are members of one association or the other.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Sir, if my hon. friend would only have a little patience—I plead only for a little

patience—he will get all the information that he wants. And if at the end of my speech, he has not got the information he wants, he can again ask for it and I will answer him. Let him not unnecessarily interrupt now, for I am just now leading on to those very things. He will get his answer.

With regard to this constitution of the Board, you had 14 elected representatives of the coffee growers and there were 16 others. So the majority on this Board were not coffee growers. And this Board has been functioning all these twelve or thirteen years. There has been no complaint from any quarter about the constitution of the Board. I was waiting eagerly to hear from the mouth of my learned friend a single statement as to whether there was any complaint from any quarter about the constitution of the Board. I have gone through the speeches in the other House also, but there was not even one single complaint from any quarter as to the constitution of the Board. What has now happened is this. I wish there were a Joint Select Committee in which case probably at the stage of the Select Committee itself many things could have been rectified. In the Bill as originally introduced, the number had been reduced from 14 to 12 out of a total strength of 28 and their elective character also taken away.

There were certain additions at the Select Committee stage but the twelve remained the same and six more were added to the strength. At the Select Committee stage the number 28 got enhanced to 34, all of them to be nominated. There was not a single elective member out of the 34. What is the suspicion for? My hon. friend Mr. Karmarkar yesterday asked us, "Why distrust the Government?" May I ask another question of him? "Why do you want to distrust the coffee growers whose entire coffee gets into the pool for distribution?" Is the whole Bill to be based on a position of distrust and suspicion? So far, there was not a single complaint

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.]

against any of these elected representatives. I, for my life, could not understand why this elective element is sought to be disturbed in preference to a nominated body. There has not been even a single remark of distrust against them. Why all this show of the constitution of a Board? We can as well have a department of the Ministry and carry on in which case the responsibility would be that of the Ministry who will be in a better position to tackle the question. Forming a Coffee Board of 34, all to be nominated, I think, is a most extraordinary suggestion. Luckily for us, the Lok Sabha has chosen to introduce an amendment and I am very thankful to the Government—I am always very thankful for small mercies—for having said that there will be elections in the case of the twelve, four from Mysore, four from Coorg and four from Madras; but, they have also retained the words 'or nominated'. This way, they have taken away with the other hand what they gave with one hand. When you have got as many as 34 members in your Board, why do you grudge the elective principle to these twelve coffee growers? That is one point.

The second point is what my hon. friend referred to yesterday: it is attempting to divide and rule. Till this moment there was no idea at the back of any planter's mind, big or small, that one was big and the other was small. You may take it from me that there was not a single small grower, who complained that his interests were being neglected by the bigger coffee growers. I have tried to wade through this mass of literature; I have heard my friend Mr. Karmarkar and he has not suggested that there was any kind of a complaint or even a suggestion from the small growers that they would need separate representation. Not that I grudge them separate representation but let me not be misunderstood as saying that I am not for separate representation for small growers. I am glad that the Govern-

ment is thinking in terms of the small growers. By all means give them representation but let not an attempt be made as though the bigger growers are not looking after the interests of the small growers because that is far from the truth. If the Coffee Board has achieved one grand result, it is to rehabilitate and help the small growers. So far as the question of payment from the pool is concerned, the small grower gets the full amount due according to the costing, the moment he delivers the coffee. There is a separate method of costing and the whole amount is paid immediately whereas, in the case of the bigger growers it is not so. Payments are made as and when coffee is sold in the market and abroad. Supposing this aid was not there for the small grower, what would have happened? He would have had to make distress sales, he would have had to take whatever the market was able to offer and he would not have had the benefit of export prices which rule as much as 100 per cent. over and above the home prices. The price of coffee abroad is twice as much as it is in India. The small grower would not have had the ghost of a chance of getting higher prices by the sale of coffee to foreign countries. Not only that; he also gets his basic price immediately on delivery of the coffee to the pool. Over and above all this, he gets the benefit of all the scientific research which he would not have otherwise got. He gets all the aid from the bigger growers because, as my hon. friend said yesterday, it is to the advantage of the bigger planters to help the smaller ones. There is what is called the borer disease which is communicable and which can destroy the neighbouring estates. So, in these multifarious ways the smaller growers are today helped and they are immensely thankful to the bigger growers and to the Coffee Board. Now, a special plea is sought to be entered on behalf of the smaller growers. What I say is that we can have representation for smaller growers on the Board; that is perfectly right but let there be no suggestion whatever to the effect that the cause of the



smaller growers was neglected. That is not correct.

As regards financial aid, that is a State problem; that is a Union problem and that is a problem for the whole of the country in respect of all developmental activities. One thing I must say and that is that there are obvious limitations for the smaller growers. The acreage is limited and they cannot spread beyond that; they have got their paddy fields and their plantain gardens and so due to limitations they cannot spread over. Any development of coffee means a large acreage and that is not available to small growers. Even if they have got the capacity, it is very difficult for them to find forestlands nearby. It is not easily possible for any man to go over fifty miles and then take up a jungle. So, the small growers have their own limitations. I am not going into that but what I do say is that this idea, introduced for the first time here in the Parliament that the interests of the small growers have got to be specially protected is, I submit, a policy which will create a difference between the bigger grower and the small grower. I submit that there is no reason whatsoever to distrust the plantation industry and deny them the right to select their own representatives and to introduce the word 'nomination' here. Why should we have nomination? If there is need for separate representation for the smaller growers, why should we not reserve a seat in each place to the smaller grower? That is the easiest and the best way to give representation to the smaller growers. This can easily be done and, therefore, I submit that the words 'or nominated' may kindly be deleted from the Bill. I do not know whether the procedure would permit of it because there are certain difficulties but, in any case, if I at least get an assurance from my friend that these twelve, out of the thirty-four, are going to be elected it would be something gained for poor me and for the coffee industry.

After the question of the constitution of the Board comes the question

about the Chairman. On that question, I hope, Sir, that the House will kindly appreciate that for more than one reason it would not be the best arrangement to have a wholetime appointed Chairman. There are two suggestions in this connection. My hon. friend's suggestion is that it must be an elected office as hitherto; he has also said that out of the thirteen years, only for 1½ years has there been a planter as Chairman, otherwise, the post was always held by an officer, either of the Government of Mysore or of the Government of India. Even now, when you have got 22 nominated non-growers against 12 growers, it is very easy to get any person whom you like. There are 22 nominated members against 12 to be elected—even granting that these are ultimately going to be elected.

The other is the constitutional and procedural aspect. If the chief executive head of a commodity Board like this is also to be the Chairman of the Board, I ask whether it is possible to have that frank discussion in the Board which everybody would welcome and desire. With the best of intentions, Sir, it would be difficult for the executive head who presides to welcome criticisms or adverse comments from the Members of the Board, and all being in one way or the other obliged, they have got to be seeking the favour of this chief executive head, whereas if he is not the chief executive head, whether he is elected or even nominated, then things could be different. The chief executive head would be the chief marketing officer as he has been all these thirteen years. There are various reasons given, one of which is what my friend referred to about the prices. I said I would have to revert to this question some time later.

Now with regard to this there is the evidence on record here. You will find there that Mr. Machia, who was the Chief Marketing Officer for a number of years, has definitely said that he did his utmost to control the prices. This is what he says. He

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.]

is the Chief Marketing Officer appointed by Government. He says: "I came there in May 1948 and I left in May 1951." So that is three years exactly. To the question "You did not know if there was any big increase in price?" Mr. Machia answers; "You will find that I tried my very best to keep prices down. There are records there." To the next question "And the Board appreciated it?" he said: "They had no other course because the Chief Coffee Marketing Officer has the power to control the prices." It is clear as to who has the power to control the prices. I am referring to this question because the one and only main ground on which they want to suggest these amendments is that the prices are allowed to soar high. Whose fault is this? Mr. Basappa yesterday said: Let there be an impartial judicial tribunal, a very high judicial officer to go into the question of what caused the soaring of prices in 1952, because that is the only thing they refer to, not in any other year previous to 1952, nor in the subsequent years. Mr. Basappa said that the Coffee Board repeatedly requested the Government not to export coffee in that year so that there might be more coffee made available for home consumption, which would bring down prices, but the Government insisted on earning foreign exchange and allowed 3,000 tons to be exported. Of course, only 2,200 tons were exported. That is the position which I want the hon. Members to appreciate. Well, I do not want to go into that question and I want that to be left out of discussion. It just relates to one year and opinions may differ, and so far as the Board is concerned, it is prepared to have an impartial enquiry into its affairs. But what I here say is: There are so many protecting clauses here to show that it is not the Board that determines the prices, that it is the Chief Marketing Officer who is the presiding officer over the price fixation committee and who has got all powers to fix prices and also recommend to the Government.

There are two other clauses, Sir, dealing with sections 16 and 42 of the present Act. Now, section 16 provided for consultation of the Coffee Board for the purpose of fixing the price. That is sought to be removed now. Section 42 provides for overriding control of the Government over the Board. Now when you have got the entire control in the hands of the Government—and there is an officer who is charged with that task,—when Government have got full powers, where was the necessity to have to remove section 16 and take away the clause which necessitates previous consultation of the Board for the purpose of fixing the price. Under section 42 Government have overriding power not only in regard to fixation of prices but to all other matters. This idea of trying to justify this measure on the ground that the Coffee Board was responsible for making the prices soar high in the interests of the coffee grower, I think, is wholly unfounded and is wholly uncalled for. On the other hand, it will be seen that time and again there have been a number of resolutions to show that they have been pleading for keeping the prices down. It may be the prices went up because that particular year something happened; maybe, I do not know. As I said I do not like to go very much into details about what happened in 1952 but that was only in 1952. Now in the year of grace 1954 they have given a good chit to the Coffee Board. Having done that, they are not estopped from referring to the year 1952. Is there no such thing as estoppel by conduct? When the Ministry itself says that the Coffee Board has been functioning extremely well in the year 1954, why they try to hug to a certain individual transaction of 1952, I for my part cannot understand. So, that is with regard to the constitution of the Board and that is with regard to.....

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
Before my hon. friend passes on, just for my information I want to know what is the pool price and what is the auction price.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** I think my friend has got the formula. As I understand the pool price, it is this. There is such a thing as cost accounting and there are certain points worked out. It is Rs. 2 or Rs. 2/4 per point or some such thing and they work out a basic price and then when the whole thing is sold out to foreign countries and you get extra money, then you get the usual pool price.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** Does the pool price cover the cost of production?

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** The pool price is expected to cover the cost of production of course. It seems to me to be obvious, unless my friend has got something to the contrary, and that is why even the planters have said: Why bother about it and why this conflict about the cost? Let it be referred to the Tariff Commission; that is a Government-appointed Commission. Can there be a fairer proposal than that? Why should we not accept it?

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** What is the auction price? We want to know that also.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** These are elementary things and if I were to start with the ABC of it I may have to take much more time of the House. Auction price is what price coffee fetches when it is sold in auction.

As I was saying, Sir, before I was interrupted, so much with regard to the question of the Chairman. Then I have got to deal a little bit with the consumer. We are all consumers; the vast majority are consumers but let us not exaggerate the place of consumers. Coffee is not such an essential article of food as wheat and rice. It is what is known as a 'beverage', a kind of luxury beverage. It is not even like lemon juice or butter-milk and so on. I agree that the price at which the consumer is to get coffee must be a fair price. It should not be too costly or made prohibitive. At the same time we

have got to see to other things, that the price that coffee fetches is sufficient incentive for the grower to maintain his estate in a good condition and also to develop it, which is the objective of Government.

Secondly, we have got to increase the national wealth not only by producing more wealth here but by earning more foreign exchange. Therefore, we must grow more. If you want to grow more, the acreage must increase. If the acreage should increase, there must be inducement to planters to take more and more to coffee. That is the grand result achieved by the Coffee Board for the nation. I think during the last four years, if my memory is correct, a sum of Rs. 5 crores has been obtained in the shape of excise and customs—a sum of Rs. 5 crores out of this small industry. Sir, we can further develop the industry. When that is the position, why is it that we should think that the consumers have been hit hard? Sir, have they made any comparison with other commodities, with any other commodity like cardamom or pepper? Sir, during this identical period the price of pepper has gone up by 1,220 per cent.—something unimaginable. Then, why this kind of attack on poor coffee alone of all products in the land? How many products have gone up in price? Cardamom, for instance—I am only referring to Malnad products, products of hilly places. There are various other articles the prices of which have gone up. So I beg humbly to suggest that there is no abnormality in coffee prices, nothing so terrible that we should throw our hands up and say, well, a calamity has overtaken the country. After all, what is the percentage of people that drink coffee? I can calculate it very easily. 20,000 tons will be so many pounds; each pound will give you 64 cups or so of coffee and you get the whole number that drink coffee on the basis of two cups of coffee a day.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** Some people take more than two cups.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: My friend says that some people take more than two cups in which case the number of those who take coffee will be less. He has added a very good argument in support of my case. So, it is a small fraction.

PROF. G. RANGA (Andhra): It is the retailer who swallows most of it.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: May I, Sir, submit to this House that there are larger questions of policy which you had better take note of? Sir, we all know about Sir Stafford Cripps' austerity programme. What were the ways in which he built up the falling economy of Great Britain after the war? Was he trying to provide everybody in the U.K. with whisky or nice worsted clothing? On the other hand, the policy that he adopted was to have a high duty inside the country so that the people would not take to whisky. Whisky is their favourite drink in the U.K. and I think a couple of pegs in the U. K. cost as much as a whole bottle that was exported to the U.S.A. That was how Britain built up her national economy. Even, granting for purposes of argument, if we deny ourselves a little so far as these luxury articles are concerned and earn more foreign exchange, that I consider would be a very wise policy. That is the way of building up national wealth and the stability of the nation. By denying ourselves certain of these luxury articles we can certainly do better. The best of Harris tweeds of Scotland were to be found in the U.S.A. and not in Scotland or England. There they were wearing torn coats with leather stitches. That is how Britain built up her own economy. But here what an amount of sympathy for the coffee consumer! If only a fraction of that were transferred to the poor agriculturist, how much more blessed this land would be! Are there any attempts to keep up the prices of foodgrains for the poor agriculturists?

PROF. G. RANGA: They did not agree.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: That is what I am referring to. Therefore let us not exaggerate the importance of these consumers' needs with regard to coffee. As I said, let me not be misunderstood by any consumer. It is likely that a propaganda will be carried on that Mr. Dasappa was against consumers' interests. I love coffee more than anybody else. I do not think there is anybody else in this House who loves coffee so dearly as I do.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): But you do not love the consumers.

DR. R. P. DUBE (Madhya Pradesh): Question.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Question what?

DR. R. P. DUBE: That you love coffee and other people don't.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: The bills I pay to the coffee booth will be an index. I am prepared to accept a challenge from any Member here.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): Coffee seems to be getting hot!

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, Sir. This is lunch time now.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: May I submit another factor which the House may bear in mind? What is the price which an Indian consumer pays and which a foreigner pays? The foreign price is twice as much as the price at home. As I submitted, I should not be misunderstood that I feel that it is wrong for the Indian consumer to pay only half as much as the foreigner pays. What I say is, this question of a little price on coffee is so exaggerated and bolstered up just for the sake of this Bill. It is not necessary to bolster that up. It would have been enough if he had said that we would have a Board with an official Chairman who would be better able to look after the industry. That would have been enough instead of bolstering up these doubtful factors in the consideration of this Bill.

Sir, there is just one little point which I would like to refer to before I sit down and I think that was referred to by other friends also that there is a Plantation Enquiry Committee to go comprehensively into the problems of tea, coffee and rubber with wide terms relating to capital, investment, methods of production, costs of production, financing, marketing of production, expansion and development. Here is a Commission appointed to go into all these questions in a comprehensive way. Now, I ask whether the hon. Minister has made out a case for such urgency for this Bill. Supposing it had come next year, what would have happened? Heavens would not have fallen. You would have on the other hand an authentic report. In a case like this where we interfere with an existing Board, usually I take it the practice would be to appoint a committee or commission to go into the working of the Board, get its recommendations and implement those recommendations. No such thing has been resorted to here. In fact, all such democratic methods and principles have been given up. My friend was referring to democracy yesterday. I was rather flabbergasted at the attitude that he took up. Because we are elected we can do anything 1 P.M. we like—is that the idea?

Why not give the same privilege to others? Is it not that democracy has to function in a democratic way? Our way of life must become democratic. That would be the best answer to anybody who would try to find demerits in democracy. Now, does this satisfy that canon, that elementary canon? I am afraid it throws that into bits. Therefore, what I would say is this: Let us await the report of this Commission before the full implementation of this Coffee Bill. When we get their report we would be better able to appreciate—with their authentic study on the spot, we will certainly be in a better position, I think—to assess the necessity for this provision. Sir, all this I have said frankly to unburden myself. I may not be misunderstood

by my hon. friend as saying that I was trying unnecessarily to pick holes in the Bill. That has never been my object.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Only my hon. friend has not replied to my question as to what the Board did when the prices were soaring high.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): Mr. Dasappa has spoken so much about coffee that everyone is feeling thirsty and we should adjourn. The House stands adjourned till 2-30 P.M.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: I think that Mr. Dasappa has not finished his speech.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): Mr. Dasappa will continue his speech.

The House adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at half past two of the clock, THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE) in the Chair.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Sir, I am at the end of my speech. I want to wind it up by saying a few words. My hon. friend, Mr. Karmarkar, told me earlier that I had not yet answered his point as to what the Coffee Board did in 1952, when the prices were shooting up. I thought, Sir, that both my friend Mr. Shetty and myself, had answered it effectively, namely, that one of the normal processes by which we can keep the prices down is not to allow exports. Now I ask whether in 1952 the Government did not suggest an export of 3,000 tons, in spite of the request of the Coffee Board not to allow any exports, and whether, in fact, that year they did not export 2,200 tons. It is for my friend to answer as to why they allowed an export of 2,200 tons. If they had accepted the advice of the Coffee Board, the prices would naturally have come down. Now, can I find more effective answer than

[Shri H. C. Dasappa.]

that? Secondly, Sir, it was within their power to have done whatever they liked under sections 16 and 42 of the Act, and the Coffee Board would have been helpless. Nobody prevented them from bringing down the prices. In fact, Sir, I must acknowledge it with gratitude that whenever they felt that the prices should be brought down to some reasonable limits, the Government have given directions, and the Coffee Board have not turned down those directions. I am sure the hon. Minister will bear me out. So, if, during that period, they had chosen to give more specific directions in time, the Coffee Board would not have turned them down. It is only if the Coffee Board had taken up an unreasonable and hostile attitude that my friend would have had a good reason to complain against the Coffee Board. I think, Sir, that it is more than an effective answer to Shri Karmarkar's question.

All that I can say is that there must be some real need for a piece of legislation of this nature. It is not that I say that there should be no legislation, but there must be some real need and urgency for any measure to be brought forward here. Such a case, I believe, has not been made out. I am not questioning the intentions of Government. I know that the Government is keen to see that this industry must be developed. I know that the Government wants more acreage; I know that the Government wants to help the small growers. I have absolutely no quarrel with the intentions of the Government. Such objections as I have is only with regard to the way in which the Government has done this thing. It could have been done by winning the wholehearted sympathy and willing co-operation of all the sectors including the growers. Today, the growers nurse a feeling of resentment, and a feeling of suspicion that they will not have ample freedom to develop the industry as freely as they would like. Now, why

we should have engineered that feeling, is all that I am asking. There are, of course, certain amendments given notice of by me, and if the spirit behind them is accepted, it would improve the measure a great deal. I hope that while implementing the provisions of the Bill, the Government will have some of these points in their view, and will deal gently and sympathetically with the growers as much as with the other sectors, and help to build up what I consider a very fine industry, which will not only help the country with a very high-class beverage, but also will earn us a fair amount of foreign exchange, either sterling or dollars, and which will also fill the coffers of the Union treasury with a fair and substantial amount of money. Thank you.

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR (Travancore-Cochin): Mr. Vice-Chairman, I think I will not take more than thirty minutes on this occasion. I will, of course, try to be as brief as possible.

Sir, the previous speakers have, at great length, dealt with this whole question, and they have tried to show that the Government of India is doing injustice to the Coffee Board. But there are other points also which require to be dealt with, in order to bring it to the notice of the Government that they have done an equal injustice to the other interests, too. The previous speaker has tried to show that by years of hard work, the Coffee Board has expanded the industry to a very substantial extent. At the same time, it has been pleaded that by this Bill the Government are not allowing any incentive to the growers further to develop the industry. They say that Government are going to control the industry as a whole, but, according to me, they are not going to do anything towards controlling the profit of the growers. They will allow the same profit, or rather a higher profit. But here what I am driving at is this. It is true

that the coffee industry has developed considerably within these thirteen years. Previously they had 1,18,000 acres, and now they have been able to develop 2,40,000 acres. They have increased the production from 15,000 tons to 29,000 tons during these thirteen years. They have also increased the labour strength substantially. Then, Sir, our friends have said that there is no conflict between the small growers and the bigger growers. But my experience in Malabar tells me that the small growers were put to great inconvenience because of the dominance of the big growers in the Board. They also accuse the Government of partiality, because the Government have allotted land for coffee cultivation not in a justifiable way. The bigger growers were allowed to take more acreage of land for coffee cultivation, whereas the small cultivators were not helped in getting more acreage of land for coffee cultivation. That is their complaint. According to the evidence tendered here itself before the Select Committee, there are about 33,000 coffee growers in India. According to Mr. W. Gilgosh, the total number of coffee growers is 34,000, of whom, those who are owning 200 and more acres are only 300 in number, and the rest of them are owning 25 or less acres each. That is what he stated in the course of his speech to the Annual Conference of the United Plantations Association of South India. But according to Mr. Machia, above 100 acres, there are 590 growers holding a total of 1,19,566 acres. This shows that the bulk of the land under cultivation of coffee is in the hands of big growers, and there is a greater amount of concentration in the hands of the bigger growers.

How did these coffee growers develop the industry in these twelve years? Is it at their own sacrifice? Certainly not. They made huge profits because of this Coffee Board, and this Government, even though the Government and particularly the Minister for Commerce and Industry, have been

complaining that Mr. Ivor Bull, who was the Chairman of the Board, did not comply with what they had suggested in 1952, allowed those people to make bigger and bigger profits by increasing the price of coffee. So, the Government cannot absolve itself of the responsibility of allowing these people to grab more and more profits, by which they were able to develop the coffee industry as it is today. At the same time we in this House have to bear in mind that all this was done at the cost of the labour and at the cost of the Indian people. Of course, the home market has developed. That is true. Our home market must be developed. We must create a home market for our industrial products as well as for our agricultural products, and only what remains as surplus to our requirements must be exported to other countries.

Then, they say that there is no conflict between the small growers and the big growers. There is conflict and this conflict is increasing. The hon. members who have spoken before said that the small growers get the correct price from the Board. This is not so. The entire bulk of the profits they make in the home market and in the foreign market is kept by the bigger growers who dominate this Coffee Board. The price they get is more than what they pay to the smaller growers. That is the complaint of the small growers. So, it is not correct to say that the profits this Board makes are equally distributed to the small growers. Hence the conflict between the big growers and the small growers is increasing. Therefore, it is necessary on the part of the Government to do justice to the small growers. The Government thinks that by taking powers for nominating the President of the Board, it is able to do justice to the small growers. The number of the small growers is 34,000, while the number of the big growers is 590. Most of the seats reserved for the growers in the last Board were monopolised by the big growers. The majority of the seats were held by the big growers, and the number of

[Shri N. C. Sekhar.]

seats the small growers got was very meagre. It was not more than four, if my recollection is correct. What the Government should have done was to give equal representation to the small growers. They should have asked the growers to return their representatives or to give a panel of names from which Government could have chosen some. The choice of the representatives should have been left to the respective organisations. If there was no organisation for the small growers, Government should have asked them to organise one separately and then send in their representatives. Our friends said that the representatives of the small growers were there on the existing Board. It is true but I know the practice of these big growers or big industrialists. Having given membership to the smaller fry on their organisations, they don't allow them to express themselves. The Chairman or the man who holds sway of the Board sees to it that all the members agree to what he dictates. That is the practice in these associations. We know that. So, it is better to have a separate organisation for the small growers and ask them to submit their panel of names to represent them on the Board. Representation on the Board should not be governed by the number of acres owned and the amount of capital invested but by the number of the growers. If this principle is adopted, the bigger growers will not be able to run away with what they want. In this connection, I would also say that instead of nominating the President, the Government should do this: The Government should ask the respective organisations of the big growers, the small growers, labour and the consumers to send in the names of their representatives and then include Members of Parliament. Then, the Board constituted in this way should be asked to elect its Chairman. If this procedure is adopted, then the Government can see that no big grower is elected to the chairmanship. In that case, only a

man who can command a majority in the Board will be elected, and that man will see to it that justice is done to all the interests concerned. But here, the Government, in the name of taking over control of the industry, wants to bureaucratisise the whole industry. I don't think that by bureaucratising the Board the Government will be able in any way to help the industry to develop or to bring about better working conditions for the labour. One member in the Select Committee said that no representation should be given to labour. That is the attitude of the growers. That is the attitude generally of all employers in this country. But is it just on their part to deny representation to labour as well as to the consumers? Certainly, the rights of these people should be recognised, but personally I don't think that by merely giving representation to labour on the Board the Government can do justice to labour. It is true that the Minister in the Select Committee as well as in his reply to the debate in the other House said that the working conditions of labour were very pitiable and deplorable and should be improved. Sir, there was also a petition sent to the Lok Sabha by the employees of the Coffee Houses recommending to the House that their petition should be considered. The employers deny the rights of the workers and they say that they have made all efforts to develop the industry in all these 13 years. At whose cost? It is at the cost of the workers, by paying them low wages. They have made a huge profit which is expressed in the reply of Mr. Radcliffe to a question of the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry that he had been distributing a dividend of 13½ per cent. in one year. In one year he had given 20 per cent. dividend, in one another year 17 per cent. and in yet another year he gave 19 per cent. to his shareholders. At the same time this big dividend is after deducting the expenses including depreciation, taxation reserve fund and reserve fund to capital invested. Apart from all these, they



have made a net profit so as to distribute an average dividend at 13½ per cent. Can anybody imagine that such an industry should be allowed to distribute this high dividend at the cost of the labour who actually produced this profit? Certainly at the cost of the labour and the people they have got this profit.

The coffee houses are getting coffee at the rate of Rs. 210 per cwt. At the same time, how do they sell coffee there? They say they have reduced the coffee price in the coffee houses. They have reduced not only the price but also the quantity. Previously they gave 6 ounces of coffee and 2 ounces of milk. Now, in Calicut they are selling at two annas—also in Coimbatore and Trivandrum. In Delhi it is between three and three and a half annas and some times it comes to four annas. At the same time, they have reduced the quantity of coffee. They have even replaced the big cup by a small cup. Now they give 4½ ounces of coffee and 2 ounces of milk. By and by the sugar also will be reduced but at the same time by the number of coffee cups sold in all these 46 coffee houses, they have reaped enormous profit at the cost of the labour and the people. This is how they put into practice the reduction of price in the home market.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** The point involved is that we should give 8 ounces again in the coffee house.

**SHRI N. C. SEKHAR:** I am not driving at that. I will come to the question of coffee house later. Now the people who are on the Coffee Board have, in the name of coffee growers, reaped enormous profits through propaganda houses. That does not mean that I request that coffee houses should be abolished. We want better quality of coffee at cheaper rates.

Now, they have not only reduced the quantity of coffee but also the quality of coffee. Previously they

were giving Arabica coffee but now they give Robusta coffee which is third rate coffee that they sell in the home market. So the quality also should be improved. Let us see what wages they have paid. How have these people extended the area of coffee cultivation in these 13 years since the advent of the Board? How did they increase the production from 15,000 to 29,000 tons? How did they increase the home consumption from a quantity of 7,000 to 18,000 tons a year? Are these achievements by their own merit? They say the money is there, the sale is there, the production is there but I say it is at the cost of labour and at the cost of our people—it is sometimes at the cost of the Government also because it is by hook and crook as we know the tricks of these people and how they cheat the Government.

First of all, I will give the labour strength in the respective States. According to the 1949-50 report of the Coffee Board in Madras there are 73,178 labourers; in Coorg, 22,617; in Mysore, 77,884; in Travancore-Cochin, 2,592; in Orissa, etc., 1,026; making a total of 177,297 labourers. What is the wage that they have paid? Till 1952 in Madras it was eight annas per worker—not everywhere. In Travancore and Malnad some were paid six annas and some eight annas. Average was eight annas. Only in 1952 they introduced the minimum rate of wages to the workers which comes to this. Mr. Dasappa said that in Mysore they have a good acreage of coffee cultivation, and that was the first State which produced more coffee, etc., but the wages paid there are these:

	Rs. A. P.
Men	Basic 0 10 0
	D. A. 0 6 0
Women	Basic 0 9 0
	D. A. 0 4 0
Adolescents	Basic 0 7 0
	D. A. 0 3 0
Children	Basic 0 6 0
	D. A. 0 3 0

[Shri N. C. Sekhar.]  
In Coorg and Madras it differs. In Madras it comes to Re. 1-5-0. It is as follows:

		Rs.	A.	P.
For men—				
First grade	Basic	0	11	6
	D. A.	0	9	6
Second „	Basic	0	8	9
	D. A.	0	7	3
Third „	Basic	0	5	11
	D. A.	0	4	9
Coorg				
Men	Basic	0	8	9
	D. A.	0	10	0
Women	Basic	0	6	6
	D. A.	0	7	6
Adolescents	Basic	0	5	0
	D. A.	0	6	6
Children	Basic	0	4	3
	D. A.	0	5	0
Travancore-Cochin—				
Men	Basic	0	15	0
	D. A.	0	10	6
Women	Basic	0	11	3
	D. A.	0	8	0
Children	Basic	0	7	6
	D. A.	0	5	3

This is the rate of wages that they have given. They say that according to the rise or fall in the indices of cost of living they will increase or decrease by seven pies, five pies and three pies, respectively. It varies from State to State. Is it justifiable on the part of these industrialists who have reaped this enormous profit to argue that the labour should not be given more wages and that the labour should not be given representation on the Board etc.? Certainly it is unjustifiable. At the same time at the hands of the Government they want freedom to exploit the workers and to reap more profits without let or hindrance. That is their argument. I know that the friends who have argued here certainly represent the coffee estates in Mysore and other

places but at the same time they put forth their arguments not from the national point of view, not from the point of view of the interests of the entire people but from the point of view of certain monopolistic interests which are being represented by people like Machia, Radcliffe and others.

3 P.M.

We may next look into the question of the wage rates of the Coffee Board workers. They gave a petition to the Petitions Committee which recommended to the House the consideration of the problems of the Coffee Board workers. Sir, there are 46 Coffee Houses in India and the total number of workers employed in the different categories comes to 1,200. What is the pay that is given to these people in these different places? For men under training the wage given is Rs. 14—the basic wage. In the marketing section the minimum given is Rs. 10 per month and those in propaganda section get Rs. 14 per month. In the research section, the males employed get 14 annas as daily wage and the female gets only 8 annas and adolescents get 6 annas each. These are the rates given to these workers and they have been agitating for the last seven years and making representations before the Central Government as well as before the Board, requesting that their pay should be increased to at least the fixed rate of Rs. 30 per month as recommended by the Central Government Pay Commission. And what did the Board do? The Board went against the workers. The workers were victimised. One man—Shri Jai Singh—a young man who was employed in the New Delhi Coffee House, for exposing certain facts relating to the injustices done by the Board to the workers, was dismissed. And then after a long time, after much agitation, he was reinstated and sent to a place in central Travancore. Now, this man knows not the language of the place—Malayalam. His language is Punjabi. How can any man go and live in a place where he does not know the language of the place? At the

same time, see what is his basic wage. He gets the basic pay of Rs. 14 and then Rs. 40 as dearness allowance. What stands in the way of the coffee growers increasing the wages of these workers? But the stand of the coffee growers is that these people should not have any representation, there should be no concessions to the workers. All that the growers want is that they should be free to make profits and they should have the freedom to do things as they please. That is what they argued before the Board and that is how they argue in this House. But my submission before this House and to the Government is this. Of course, they have brought in a few things in this Bill. There are some clauses in it which deal with improving the working conditions of the workers. Those clauses are there. And the present measure is an improvement over the original Act. But this will not suffice. The Government should take specific steps to improve the lot of the workers. For example, in the Report you can see under what conditions the workers live in the estates. I happened to be once in an estate in Chikmagalur—the place which my hon. friend represents. I happened to be in Coorg also and also in Travancore. Of course, I could not go to the Mysore estates. I saw the conditions prevailing in those estates. Sir, one has to see those chawls where the workers live. A room 12 feet by 10 feet has to accommodate the parents and their grown-up children, sometimes even married couples all in the same room. You will find from the Report for 1951-52 when the basic wages were introduced—and they were so low that you could not have even a square meal a day—even those amenities that were there before were curtailed. I can state instances after instances from Travancore, but time is short and so I shall not do so.

I will only give a few facts and figures about the Coffee Board workers so that hon. Members of this House may better understand the real position and realise the pitiable condition in

which these workers have to live. In the New Delhi Coffee House.....

(Time bell rings.)

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR: Only five more minutes, Sir. Is there any time-limit?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): Yes, only half an hour. You may take another two or three minutes.

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR: In the Delhi Coffee House, the head coffee maker is paid Rs. 32. The head assistant is paid Rs. 26, the other coffee makers get Rs. 20 each. The pantry maker—the man who makes omelette—gets Rs. 20, the field staff get Rs. 12 to 15 and the peons get Rs. 15 to 20 each. How can a worker from the south, or for the matter of that any from the north even, work here on such meagre wages? Of course, it will be argued that these people get tips. But the question is, why do you keep them in such conditions that they have to take tips from the consumers, from the customers? If they are reasonably paid they will not have to approach the customers for tips. And what is the amount that he gets for rent allowance? He gets Rs. 3. Can any worker ever dream of getting a room on Rs. 3 to live here in Delhi? Certainly that is impossible. Therefore, they have put forth the demand that there should be an increase in their wages, that the Central Government should give them at least the minimum of Rs. 30 fixed by the Pay Commission. Even now their basic pay is Rs. 14 and then you give them Rs. 40. This should be converted into basic pay and a further dearness allowance should be given to them according to the cost of living.

Another demand is that they should be given travelling allowance which the estate owners give to their respective workers when they go home.

Another demand is that these people should be given facilities to bring their

[Shri N. C. Sekhar.]

families to the place where they work so that they may live as family people and not be cut off for long periods from their families. The Government should take up the demands of the workers and see to it that justice is done to the workers.

The Government should also see that the profits of the growers are controlled. It is a vague thing to say that the Government is going to control the working of the Board. This might end in either exporting the whole of our coffee to outside countries for the sake of getting dollars or sterling, at the expense of the home market, or due to the strict government control the acreage under coffee will decrease as has happened in the case of pepper, sugarcane and other products. Therefore, I would suggest that instead of merely appointing the chairman, the Government should take steps to control the profits of the growers. Of course Government should see that a certain amount of profit is made so that the industry may be rehabilitated. But after doing that, the surplus amount that is left over and above the amount fixed as profits, should be taken over by the Government and it should be reinvested in some other industry or used in rehabilitating and developing the coffee industry. These are the suggestions that I would like to make.

I would like to conclude by emphasising that the coffee prices in the home market should be reduced. The quality of the coffee served in the Coffee Houses should be improved and the number of Coffee Houses should also be increased.

There is another aspect of the subject which I would like just to touch upon and that is about the giving of contracts for the supply of eggs, bread, vegetable, etc., to these Coffee Houses. For this purpose contracts are given to certain persons. This system should be stopped.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Is my hon. friend supporting the Bill or opposing it?

SHRI N. C. SEKHAR: I am partly supporting the Bill and partly criticising some of its provisions. There are some improvements in it like the nomination of the chairman and greater representation for the workers; but there should be provisions for redressing the grievances of these workers.

SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA (Ajmer and Coorg): Sir, I come from a coffee growing area and so in duty bound I am obliged to speak a few words either on the merits or the demerits of this amending Bill. I have lived with big and small planters for more than half a century and I know their history, their sorrows and pleasures, the anxieties that the planters have, whether they be big or small.

I read the amending Bill with all the care that it deserves and I honestly tell you, Sir, that I fail to see the motive or the necessity for this at this juncture. A number of hon. Members have spoken and have given the history of the development of this industry and, coming from a coffee growing area, I have, more or less, to tread the same ground. Investing money, on a coffee estate is a very hazardous and speculative adventure. The hon. Mr. Basappa Shetty has given a standing invitation to all the hon. Members to come and see the coffee estate and I would extend the same invitation. Hon. Members should see—at least those who have not seen them—the coffee estates and the places where coffee is grown; they should also see the conditions under which coffee is grown. It is grown in places where tigers, elephants, snakes, etc., live and where nothing else is grown. It is in such parts that this industry is flourishing. It is a hazardous and speculative adventure and to get any outturn one has to wait for six to ten years. Coorg has the highest yield per acre as it carries on intensive cultivation. Almost

every part of Coorg grows coffee; this has been so for the last so many years. A gentleman living in Madras, Bangalore or Mysore cities may not have an opportunity of seeing a coffee estate but that is not so in Coorg. Coorg grows coffee in almost all parts and so all of us are expected to know a lot about coffee growing and the implications involved in such growing. Though Coorg is a small State, it grows coffee in about 45,000 acres of land and the yield is more than Mysore or Madras. The acreage in Madras is one lakh and in Mysore 90,000 whereas in Coorg it is only 45,000 but then the yield is more than double.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: You mean per acre?

SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA: Yes; even though the acreage is about half the yield is more.

Madras grows about 6,000 tons in about 98,000 acres; Mysore grows about 7,000 tons in about 89,000 acres whereas Coorg grows more than 7,000 tons in about 45,000 acres. The reason for this is that cultivation in Coorg is very intensive and is carried on scientifically and a grower spends from Rs. 500 to Rs. 800 per acre. I said that it is a hazardous process. It is so for these reasons. One is that it grows in a place where nothing else grows; secondly, one has to wait for about 8 to 10 years to get a return and a man's progress is made or marred by one rain in the month of February or March. Spikes that are formed will be waiting to open. It requires about 40 to 70 cents of rain in one day for the blossom to come. Supposing there is only four or five cents of rain and there is no rain for the next two or three weeks, the whole thing withers away and falls down in which case there is no crop forthcoming even after the plants begin to yield. There will be no crop for two, three or even four years continuously if the blossom showers do not come in time. There

has to be rain in the month of February or March. After nine days of rain, the blossoms open out. When the blossoms open out, there should be no rain for the next twenty-four hours; if there is rain, the whole crop will be lost. That is where the speculative nature of the industry lies. I also give an invitation to all the hon. Members to come and see those estates for themselves; if they come and see the estates, perhaps their impression will be that we are not wise people in having ventured to spend so much money on a speculative adventure as coffee growing. In the forest where usually elephants, tigers and snakes live, you will see coffee plantations inside.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: By clearing up the forests or by preserving them?

SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA: By clearing the forests. Apart from clearing up the forests, we have also to grow shade-trees. The coffee plants grow under the canopy of bigger trees and so big trees have to be planted just like the coffee plants and they have got to be looked after. The coffee plants do not grow on plain ground; it must have shade for which shady trees—big trees—are grown. I am really surprised to see those big trees, grown so well and looked after just like human beings, just like children are looked after. If you travel in the forests it would appear as if it is a big forest but if you go into that part, you will see a lot of labourers living with all the amenities. Our friends on the other side tell us that the labourers are not well paid. With regard to Coorg, I may inform all the hon. Members here that the labourers in the Coorg plantations are treated very well; they are given hospital facilities; leave is given for the women labourers during their confinement. For every group or even for a single estate there is a school for the education of the children of the labourers. All the amenities that

[Shri K. C. Karumbaya.]

are possible are given and I can definitely tell the House that the treatment meted out to the estate workers is much better than that meted out to agricultural labourers. Those amenities that are given there in the Coorg plantations are not given in cities like Bombay and Delhi. With regard to the grower it was said when the Bill was introduced that discrimination was made between the small grower and the big grower. I have not been able to notice the difference at all, I mean, all the research, all the demonstrations and all the scientific advances that are made are given to the small grower also; he is not denied all that, and I should say, because of the existence of this association, the small grower is benefited in more than one way. I know during the years 1930 and 1940, when this Association was not existing, many of the planters, both big and small, had to abandon their estates, and though the Government, as usual, in their slow way, tried to advance money, they were not able to live. They had to sell their estates for the small dues that the Government lent and many of these planters have not been able to raise their heads even to-day. That was the position of a coffee grower. After the Board came into existence, for the information of the House I may say that the grower is not at liberty to sell one grain of coffee. According to the Act he is allowed to retain a certain quantity of coffee for his own consumption; the rest of the coffee he has to deliver to the pool, and the Marketing Board pays away the money for the small grower as soon as his coffee is delivered. For the big planters it pays them in so many instalments, as and when the coffee is sold.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** I want information from the hon. Member as to whether the small growers owning, say, 5 acres or 10 acres are members of the Coorg Planters' Association and if ever any of the small men has been elected on the Association's executive committees.

**SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA:** Yes, there are so many Associations for every district. There are one or two Associations in Coorg and the planters, I mean the small growers owning 5 or 10 acres have been members and they are members and are on the executive, and some of these small growers even grow coffee as well as any big growers.

**SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY (Mysore):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, I am a small grower owning about 30 acres. I was a member of the executive committee of the Mysore Planters' Association at Chikinalalur. I was elected by members and I served as a member of the executive committee.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** Is it a fact that planters owning below 30 acres of land are not allowed inside this Association which my hon. friend represents?

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE):** I am afraid this will become a question hour.

**SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA:** I think it is not true. Mr. Basappa Shetty said that he is a gentleman who owns 30 acres. I know there are gentlemen owning 20 acres of coffee, who have been members of certain Associations and they have been very effective representatives also. For his information—because he has been putting that question for the last one, two or three hours without getting any reply—as well as for the information of the House—I may here again tell you that even planters who own only 10 acres have been members of such Associations and they have been very effective and I know once or twice they even came to Delhi to represent their case before the Government of India.

As I was saying, Sir, during the years 1930 and 1940 very many growers, because the price had gone down very low, had to sell away their land because they could not pay the Government dues as well as the money they borrowed from the Government

and they have not been able to come to their own even to-day. Though the Marketing Association which came into existence in 1940 has done its best to improve the lot of the big growers as well as the small growers I cannot understand why this impression is gaining ground in the Government circles, and I think the Members also have got an impression that the small growers have been discriminated against. I say it is far from true. Small growers have been benefited and during these ten years small growers as the big growers have made steady progress in their material prosperity. I had occasion to talk to various members, because I knew that this Bill was coming up, I had occasion to talk to big growers and small growers alike. None of the small growers told me that an amending Bill like this was necessary and that the Chairman of the Board has to be a Government nominee.

Now, there is the consumer. It is only 5 per cent. of the people in India who drink coffee and the price of coffee is only 50 per cent. when compared to other countries in the world. So when they are paying 50 per cent. of the value of the coffee as compared to other countries, where is the complaint from the consumer that he is being penalised or that coffee is sold at a high price? In other countries coffee is sold per ton at the rate of Rs. 8,000 whereas in India it is only Rs. 3,200 or Rs. 3,400 per ton. Of course all of us know those coffee houses where coffee is sold very cheap and even in other restaurants and hotels the price of coffee that is sold in India is very much lower than the prices which prevail in other countries.

And coming to labour I tell you, Sir, with regard to the treatment given to the labour in Coorg plantations it is very liberal and they are very happy when compared to labourers in other industries as well as the agricultural labour.

Then there is the question of the Government. Government practically

was not getting any money before 1940 and now by way of excise duty, agricultural income-tax and so many other taxes Government is getting a lot of money. The Central Government has levied an excise duty of Rs. 420 per ton, an export duty of Rs. 1250 per ton, then sales tax and then agricultural income-tax. There are various kinds of taxes through which the Government of India realises about Rs. 2 crores. The Indian planters, both big and small, get about Rs. 8 crores out of which about Rs. 3½ crores goes to labour. Unlike the agricultural labourer, the coffee labourer gets work all through the year. That is an advantage over the agricultural labourer. Then, there are various Acts with regard to coffee estates. The coffee planters, big and small, are compelled to provide so many amenities. The labourers are given good quarters, latrines, medical aid, educational facilities, leave during confinement to women, providing milk to children and various other amenities. I do not know why this Bill is brought forward at this time. I honestly feel that it is ill-timed. But it is a Government Bill; it has come out of the other House. I know that the Government has no motive behind. It is our Government; it is existing for our benefit, for our good and so.....

AN HON. MEMBER: You support?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Do not disturb him; otherwise he will oppose.

SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA: I would not have supported this Bill if it had been the original amending Bill. It has come out of the other House where many of the things which we wanted to amend have been amended except the appointment of the Chairman. I therefore appeal to the hon. Minister to have a human approach and to see while implementing the provisions of the Bill, now that a scare has been created in the minds of the growers, that they implement them in such a way that that scare is removed and make it clear that the intention of the

[Shri K. C. Karumbaya.]

Government is the welfare of the labourer, the grower and the consumer.

Sir, there is one other fear or apprehension in the minds of planters both big and small about the appointment of the Chairman. He must be a gentleman who has not only administrative capacity but also who knows something about the working of the coffee industry. It is not very difficult to find out such people. At least as far as Coorg is concerned, I can tell the hon. Minister in charge that there are very many planters who are in very high places and who combine in them a knowledge of coffee growing as well as administrative capacity. So I appeal to the Government to make it elective but if it is not possible for them to do so, they should, while appointing the Chairman, appoint only such people as have a working knowledge about coffee. With these remarks, Sir, I resume my seat.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
Mr. Vice-Chairman,.....

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE): Mr. Dasappa has to listen.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: Coffee has become so much a part of our activity here that although I come from an area where coffee is unknown, yet I venture to participate in this debate. Sir, coffee touches our pockets imperceptibly every day. Therefore, we are concerned about the prices that we pay for our coffee cups and naturally it upsets us if the prices all of a sudden shoot up. Sir, I will draw your attention to a report published by the Coffee Board itself—the 13th Annual Report. At page 88, it is mentioned: “Ever since April 1952 the trend of coffee prices was soaring high and had crossed all previously known peaks. The average auction prices reached during June 1952 were already unprecedented and the rising trend continued with accelerated speed during the first quarter of the year under review. The month of September 1952

saw the average pool auction prices of Plantation A at Rs. 316-11-0 which were the highest in the history of coffee prices since 1926.” Sir, we cannot view with equanimity if the Board permits things to happen in the manner in which they have allowed the prices to soar up.

Sir, I do not claim to know much about coffee as hon. Members sitting opposite have claimed and I would not hazard giving my own figures. But I can say this with confidence with the support of this Report of the Coffee Board itself that by quoting some figures the hon. Member from Mysore has misguided this House.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: What is the wrong figure that I have quoted?

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
I am just telling you.

My hon. friend said that the prices of other plantation commodities rose very much higher than coffee prices. Now, I will draw your attention to page 264 of this 13th Annual Report of the Board in which the index numbers of different commodities have been given. The average for 12 months in the year 1950—the index number for coffee—was 476; for 1951 it was 567 and for 1952 it was 680. Now, take the case of tea. The average for 1950 was 438; for 1951 it was 410 and for 1952 it has come down to 247. Let us now take pepper—the example quoted by my friend. The index number for 1950 was 3,305; for 1951 it was 3,372 and for 1952 the index number was 2,834—a steep fall, whereas there is a steep rise in coffee prices. Sir, these figures I am quoting from the Coffee Board Report itself.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: May I say that I took the 1940 figure as the basis and compared with what the pepper price was in 1952?

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
Sir, I have given the index figures from this Report of the Board and it



very clearly shows that there has been a fall in the price of pepper, whereas there has been a steep rise in the price of coffee. It is very clear and any economist or any man who is familiar with statistics will be able to understand. Now, Sir, to us in the north—or for that matter to consumers all over India—coffee has been a very tricky affair. In pre-war days the bulk of our coffee product was exported, as was explained so ably by our friend the other day. He quoted and also gave me a booklet known as “Coffee Case in India”—he was kind enough to give it—and last night I read it through. It is stated in this book also at page 13 that the average consumption of coffee in pre-war days was eight thousand tons and the average export was nine thousand tons. Now, the coffee planters reaped a very good harvest in the export trade. With the onset of the last war, the European market was closed and the coffee industry was in a very precarious position. There was a prospect of the entire coffee industry going to ruination. At this hour of peril, the Indian consumer came to their rescue and not only did they consume what they produced, but they sustained a rapidly growing production in this country. What is the position? What treatment have they meted out to this Indian consumer who came to their rescue, as I have said, during the war years? They manipulated and wriggled the prices at the auctions and raised the prices to exploit the coffee addicts—who became coffee addicts by their own propaganda, I would like to make it clear here that we are not against the coffee growers. You will remember that it was only the other day that we pleaded from this side of the House for a price support for all agricultural commodities, including coffee. Let us not confuse the issue. The issues are being confused. We are not against the growers. We want to give them a reasonable return, but you cannot ask us to be a party to your robbing and pickpocketing the Indian consumers. Let us see what evidence has been

disclosed or lodged with the Select Committee which has reported on this Bill. We have to see whether any sleeplessness or headache was caused to our friends on the Coffee Board when the prices were shooting up, or else whether it was all a happy-go-lucky affair with them, when we were asked to pay through our nose for our coffee cups. I would invite your attention to page 29 of the evidence—very interesting. Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari put this question:—

“*Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:* Prices shot up from May and high prices were maintained till the end of the year. I am asking whether the Board did anything about the high prices. Was a meeting of the Board summoned in September, 1952 when prices went up to Rs. 316?”

This was a question put to a representative of the Board, Mr. Ramanna.

“*Shri Ramanna:* The Marketing Committee was summoned.

*Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:* The Board meeting was not summoned?

*Shri Ramanna:* Generally all these questions are decided in the Marketing Committee. The Board does not meet except when it is a question of urgent importance. But the Marketing Committee took immediate action.

*Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:* I put it to you that Mr. Bull was away. You were in charge of the Board. You were the Vice-Chairman. What did you do about it?

*Shri Ramanna:* Immediately the Marketing Committee's meeting was convened and we authorised the Chief Marketing Officer not to accept the highest bids. That was sometime in October-November.

*Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:* By that time it had come down. I put it to you that you did nothing about it, because the Chairman of the Board was not present in India.

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.]

*Shri Ramanna:* The Board did not meet, but on behalf of the Board.....

*Shri T. T. Krishnamachari:* In effect, the Board was *functus officio*, because the Chairman was not there. To all intents and purposes, the Board was dead.

*Shri Ramanna:* There was no necessity for the Board to meet....."

This was the reply of Shri Ramanna.

Sir, I would say that whenever there is a crisis it is everybody's affair to put their heads together and solve the problem. The Board did not meet. Why? Mr. Bull, the Chairman of the Board, who owns or probably manages this Consolidated Estate—which is the biggest Estate, I would like to state, in the whole of India, having seven thousand acres under their command—the Chairman of the Board was holidaying in England. The Vice-Chairman says that there was no necessity for the Board to meet because it was the affair of the Marketing Committee. The Marketing Committee was, after all, a creature of the Board and Mr. Dasappa has very well explained how these Chief Marketing Officers function. They always look up to their masters for favours because they know if they please their masters—and they please them by putting more and more money in their pockets—they can draw fabulous salaries when they retire from the post of Chief Marketing Officer. They can get much more than is given to the highest paid civil servant of the Government of India. This has been explained by Mr. Dasappa very well—how Mr. Machia went over from the Chief Marketing Officer to the Consolidated Estates. You can very well see that the Chief Marketing Officer is influenced—corruptly influenced—in order to manoeuvre things as these big planters want them. Sir, the only epithet that I can give to this Board is this: "Nero fiddled while Rome burned."

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL (Punjab).  
Who is the Nero?

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
Mr. Bull and Mr. Ramanna.

Well, let us examine the representative of the growers on the present Board. My hon. friends sitting opposite have talked much about the representative of the growers and the growers' organisation and all that. They have spoken from their personal knowledge and some of them are themselves growers and members of the growers' association. But from my study I infer that the big planters have a monopolistic strangle-hold over the entire coffee industry and over the Coffee Board as well. We know that the small growers—the five-acre and ten-acre men—are the largest in number. They are about thirty thousand with small estates, but they have no organisation. They have no voice in the selection of their representatives on the Board. I put several questions to my hon. friends, who were speaking, to find out the percentage, the number of the small growers who are members of the Executive Committee, or are in the various organisations of the growers of the coffee estates. I also tried to find out from them if ever a small man was elected on the executive committee of these organisations—leave aside the Board. No satisfactory answer has come to these two questions. I challenge it, Sir. Let them place on the Table of the House, not necessarily today, but even at a later stage anything to prove that even ten per cent. of the small growers are members of the Associations and even one of these small men has been elected to the executive committees prior to this Bill seeing the light of the day. Sir, my hon. friend was just saying that he is a small grower and he sits on the executive committee of the Mysore Planters Association. Sir, I have got the evidence given by the authorised representative of the Mysore Planters' Association. There are two Associations. The other is the Indian Planters' Association. The evidence is tendered before the Select Committee. Sir,

Mr. Ramanna says that the total number of members of the Indian Planters' Association is 492 or 493. There are about 30,000 small estates, and another about 2,000 to 3,000 big estates, out of which only 492 or 493 is the membership of the Association. And further he says that you must possess a minimum of 50 acres before you are entitled to become a member of this Association. Now, it was also deposited that the minimum acreage required for the membership of the Mysore Association, of which my friend is a member, is 32 or 35 acres. I do not regard, Sir, that a 50-acre estate or a 35-acre estate is a small estate. Even the definition says that a small estate owner is one who possesses less than 25 acres. Now this is.....

SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY: I want to clarify one point. The Mysore Planters' Association consists of both Europeans and Indians, and in those days, before the advent of freedom in the country, the European planters had formed that Association. Till then, they were not admitting Indians. Now they have begun to admit Indians. But there is another Association, the Indian Planters' Association, in which more than 75 per cent. of the members are small growers.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: Anyway, I am simply telling you what has been deposited. I have no personal knowledge of these things. This is also deposited after the advent of freedom. Now, of course, things will be quite different. I know, Sir, that the small grower has risen in stature ever since this Bill has been brought before Parliament. And I want to assure the small growers, if my feeble voice can reach them in the South, that from now onwards this Parliament will be the watch-dog of their interests, thanks to clause No. 12 of this Bill. We shall have, every year, a discussion on the subject of coffee, and I am sure the coffee growers, the small growers, will figure prominently in this House, and we shall be looking after their interests. But so long nobody even cared

for them. Otherwise, they would have been represented in all these committees.

SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY: That is not correct, Sir.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: I have already thrown a challenge, Sir. Let them place all the names on the Table of the House. Sir, this is with regard to representation of the plantation interests and their Association.

Sir, as I said, the coffee industry is entirely dominated by the big planters, and they have the resources and the wealth to influence people and to create public opinion, and for all this, Sir, the blame lies at the door of the Congress Government. They have allowed this social injustice to be perpetuated, and this exploitation to go on, under their very nose, both at the Centre and in the States. Sir, the Government have been bewailing their helplessness and impotence to curb the powers of these racketeers, although they were clothed with enough powers under the present Coffee Act itself to control the rising prices and the exploitation of the Indian consumer. And then, Sir, the Government had in their armoury the Preventive Detention Act, which, the claim, is meant to be used against the anti-social elements. Sir, plunder and loot was going on all over the country. The hon. Minister himself was very much agitated, because he was being ignored. He knew how the manipulations were being done both at the auctions and at the stock exchange to exploit not only the coffee consumers but also the small investors. But still, Sir, they preferred not to use this weapon of Preventive Detention Act. Sir, I put it to them—was it not a fit occasion to clamp the anti-social elements like Bulls and Ramannas in order to stop their nefarious trade? But they will only use this weapon against their political opponents in the name of law and order. What do we see, Sir? In spite of these vast powers possessed by the Government, in spite of the vehemence and the alertness of the hon. the Commerce Minister, the

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.] racketeers have their way, and they go scot-free. It seems to me, Sir, that unknown hands, unseen hands, wield very great power and influence in the Congress organisation.

Sir, in so far as this Bill goes to break the influence and the predominance of the big planters, I welcome it.

I am aware of the fact **4 P.M.** that because of the influence of the Board in the press, they have been carrying on a virulent campaign against the Minister for Commerce and Industry and trying to confuse the economic issues involved in the presentation of this Bill. I would request the House to give full-throated support to the hon. the Commerce Minister in his job of breaking the backbone of these people and of ousting them from the coffee industry and the Indian Coffee Board.

But, Sir, this Bill is halting and unimaginative. It does not go beyond the limited purpose of breaking the backbone of these big planters. Sir, we are wedded to the philosophy of a co-operative commonwealth. The question is how far this Bill is going to advance us in that direction. In the coffee industry we have already got an element of co-operation in marketing. I would very much have welcomed a provision in the Bill to bring all the small growers into the ambit of co-operative production. Incentives ought to have been provided in the Bill to induce the small growers to go in for co-operative production, but there is no such provision in the Bill. The small coffee grower has been left to his own lot and to rot where he was.

Sir, I will give you one example. Much has been said on the other side by my hon. friends opposite that there is no difference between the small growers and the big growers, and that the Government has been trying in the old imperialistic manner to divide and rule and to drive a wedge between the small growers and the big growers. This is very strange logic. They say

that not a single complaint has come forward from the small growers against the Board. I know that the small growers are most disorganised. They are not vocal.

**SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY:** For the information of my hon. friend I may say that recently there was a big conference in Chikmagalur in Mysore of small growers, where they passed a resolution to the effect that the small growers were not at all aggrieved and that they had no complaints.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** In Wayanad also.

**SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY:** There was a conference there also presided over by Mr. Damodaran. They passed a resolution that there was no grievance against the big growers.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** This is something like S.E.A.D.O. trying to save Asia against Asians.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** Sir, I will try to show the consideration that they have shown to the small growers—at least, that is their claim. Here is a publication of the Indian Coffee Board. It has been proved on the admission of the Board itself that the small growers have been neglected. This is a magazine called *Indian Coffee*, January 1954 issue. We are told that Mr. Dasappa was for some time in the Government of Mysore. This article is by a retired Director of Agriculture, Mysore. Mr. Dasappa should be knowing him. Let us see what he says about the benefits that the Board has extended to the small growers. I will just quote a passage with your indulgence.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. K. DHAGE):** Your time is over.

**SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:** Give me some more minutes, Sir, to complete my argument.

**DR. R. B. GOUR (Hyderabad):** Moreover, they have challenged us

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
He says:

"During my recent tour, I have made special enquiries about the extent to which small planters of say 20 acres and under have been benefiting from the work of the station....."

This is about the research station. The claim was made that the benefits of research were extended to the small growers, but that was not the case.

".....I have found that they are benefiting much less than their larger neighbours. This is undoubtedly the main reason for the low yield of coffee. On the larger estates, Indian or European, spraying is practically universal; on the small holdings in Mysore it appears to be a rarity. The reason given, in most cases, is lack of capital. I believe this is not the only reason. I cannot help but feel that, with persistent demonstration, large numbers of small holders cannot be induced to take up spraying. Such demonstrations which formerly used to be conducted by the Agricultural Inspectors and their fieldmen, seem to have been discontinued. One liaison officer, however able, could not possibly supervise this work."

So, something that was being done previously by the Mysore Government has been discontinued by the Board. I want you to appreciate this. Where is the question of the small growers having benefited from the work of the Board? Mr. Ivor Bull may be a very good man, I do not want to question that. But he is just like a moral man in an immoral society. The man may be moral but what about the society?

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: When was this book published?

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA:  
In January 1954, and no action has been taken on this. This is what is

reported by a retired Director of Agriculture in Mysore, Mr. Coleman.

There is another very important article on the yield of coffee in India by the Assistant Statistician, Indian Coffee Board, Mr. Satyanarayana. Mr. Shetty must be knowing about him. Mr. Shetty also presented me with a copy of his book yesterday. From this article you will find that the yield is less in the small estates. The yield is:

5 to 10 acres	...	1.09 cwt.
10 to 25 "	...	1.25 "
25 to 50 "	...	1.38 "

and so on. It goes on increasing to 2.80 cwt. for 200 acres and above.

I will tell you another thing. My friend was just now telling us about the yield in Coorg being the highest—Coorg where Ivor Bull's estate is situated. What was the yield in his best-managed farm? He could not get a yield of more than 2.78 cwt. in his best-managed farm. If you will permit me, I will quote some figures. If his estate is the best-managed estate, he should have obtained the best results. But what is the position in other parts of the world? In British East Africa, we find the yield is 3.6 cwt.; in East Indies 4 cwt; and in Brazil 4.5 cwt. Has Ivor Bull got the same results in his farm as we see in other countries?

Now as I was telling you, this Bill is not conceived on proper lines. I would have very much welcomed if the Board were charged with two specific purposes—one, the breaking up of the big estates and the Bill had been conceived with the ideal of the land belonging to the tiller of the soil and secondly, to bring together all the small growers and labourers in a co-operative organisation and let them manage this entire industry. Sir, the hon. Minister in the other House said that he had an idea to bring about another lakh of acres under coffee plantation. We want to give a clear

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.]

indication to the Board as to how we should develop that. The hon. Minister is not very clear as to whether he wants to develop on capitalistic lines as big farms or as small holdings on co-operative lines.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. C. GUPTA) in the Chair.]

Sir, one thing more I would say and it is this that I am for the principle of elections with regard to the representation of the growers and other interests on the Board. Here I am one with my friends over there. I want that the autonomous character of the Board should be developed but I don't want that the representatives should come from only the big growers or the associations dominated by the big growers. It should be the duty of the Board to organize all these small growers and to arrange for the election of their representative to the Board. What I find is that by introducing an element of nomination, we have merely bureaucratized the Board. Most of us here in this House have drawn our inspiration from the philosophy which wants to develop and foster *Jansakti* and which wants to restrict the *Raj-sakti* to use the phraseology of Vinoba Bhave. What is this effort. This Bill now is going to make the Board dominated by the bureaucratic machine of Delhi, yesterday it was dominated by the big planters; and we don't want this to happen. We would have very much welcomed if the development and consolidation at the bottom had taken place and adequate representation to the growers, to the labourers, to the small traders, etc., were given consistent with their position, consistent with their number and a principle of election were introduced. They could have been organised and their representatives asked to come on this Board. We want such a Board. That is our conception

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Mr. Vice-Chairman, before I join issue with the hon. Members sitting opposite, I would

like to thank them very much for their invitation to visit the coffee plantations and enjoy their hospitality. I would have thanked them still more if they had treated us with a cup of coffee before this discussion so that this discussion would have been still livelier.

Now, after giving them thanks, I would like to say that I do not agree with their underlying idea that those who have not seen the plantations have no right or have no interest to say anything about coffee. It is true, I have not seen coffee plantations but I know enough of plantations and so I am not prepared to accept all the claims of my hon. friends at their face value. Mr. Karumbaya has told us of the hazards of coffee growing. These hazards are also present in all plantations and the hazards which he mentioned before us are actually not hazards which were undergone by the growers themselves. These hazards are undergone by the labourers who have been treated very badly by the coffee growers. Mr. Karumbaya tried to give an impression that the labourers in the Coorg plantations are treated very liberally. I don't know if liberal treatment means a daily wage of Rs. 0/8/9 and dearness allowance of 0/10/- per man and a basic wage of 0/6/6 and D.A. of 0/7/6 per woman. I don't know if that is the definition of liberal treatment. Moreover, I know I have studied something about the labour conditions in the plantations. I have studied it not from hearsay but from the reports of the Rege Investigation Committee. That Committee investigated into the labour conditions in all plantations—tea, coffee and rubber and they had some uncharitable things to say about the treatment which labourers received from the growers, particularly the big planters in the coffee industry. About their housing conditions it is the worst in the words of the Rege Committee and there has been no improvement. Housing in all plantations is very bad but it is the worst in the coffee plantations.

SHRI K. C. KARUMBAYA: What is the report that he is referring to?

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: The Rege Committee report. Recently when the question of implementing the Plantation Labour Act was being discussed in a Tripartite Committee, the representative of the U.P.A.S.I., which is also interested in coffee, tried his best and he succeeded to a great extent in putting off the implementation of the provisions of the Plantation Labour Act as regards housing. Minimum wages have been fixed on the basis of the earning of the whole family whereas it is the practice in all the industries to fix wages on the earning of the workers only and not of his whole family. Before fixation of the minimum wages the coffee estate workers used to get some conditions and now these have not been given. I know too well of the condition of plantation labour, particularly in the tea industry, and how they get the maternity and hospital benefits and the education benefit to be taken in by the claims of my friend, Mr. Karumbaya.

Now, I come to the Bill itself. The hon. Minister asked my friend, Mr. Sekhar, whether he was supporting or opposing the Bill. He has given his answer and that is my answer too, but before I explain the reason, I would ask my friend, Mr. Karmarkar, as to what actually this Bill intends to do. I have gone through the Bill. There are many things in it which I welcome—that it is proposed to develop the coffee industry under the control of the Union. We demanded it in the case of tea industry. A new addition is being made that the function of the Coffee Board will be to secure better working conditions for the coffee labourers. That is also welcome. But acceptance of these in the body of the Act itself does not mean that this will be implemented. Before going further I would like to say that after a perusal of the Bill, and of the report of the Select Committee as well as the evidence of the Select Committee, it seems to me that the whole issue with Government revolves round the

question of the constitution of the Coffee Board. While I was going through the evidence of the Select Committee, I rubbed my eyes in wonder when I found the hon. the Minister for Commerce and Industry, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, on the war path against the British planters and the big planters. I was wondering for a moment whether the Minister had been converted to our views. But before I go further with this subject, I may say about the structure of the coffee industry, that there are small coffee planters, with less than 5 acres and there are a few with 500 acres and above and these latter control the whole industry. My hon. friends, Shri Basappa Shetty and Shri Dasappa, have tried to give us the impression that the growers, big and small, are in a happy family. If they are in a happy family—and it has been disputed by many speakers here—let them be, but I am certain that this relation of a happy family will not continue for long, because I have seen the conditions of the big and the small planters in the tea industry.

However, as I was saying the attitude of the Minister—Mr. Krishnamachari caused me surprise. I found him cross-examining the representatives of the Coffee Board and he tried to bring out that the Consolidated Coffee Estates had made huge profits. It is true that they did make huge profits. They had a capital of Rs. 8 lakhs in 1943. Later on it was split into two and now they have got about Rs. 1 crore and 29 lakhs. There is an addition of Rs. 19 lakhs also. In the Select Committee, and also here, my hon. friends have tried to make out that the Consolidated Coffee Estates is now predominantly an Indian concern. I am not prepared to accept that.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: Kindly refer to the later report. The Consolidated Coffee Estates do not comprise coffee only, it is concerned with pepper and other things also.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: I am obliged to my hon. friend for that

[Shri S. N. Mazumdar.]  
information. But the important point is not that. The important point is that after 1947, the British planters in many cases, in order to make a show of Indianisation, have taken in Indian directors, Indian partners; and shares have changed hands. But by many a chain, visible or invisible, the domination of British capital is there in the coffee industry; and it is not free from it. What I was wondering was whether Mr. Krishnamachari had really come on the war path against this British domination or against the huge profits of the Consolidated Coffee Estates or such big planters. I was really searching in the whole document to find this out. But what do I find in the end? There is to be a nominated Chairman of the Coffee Board and the Coffee Board is to be reconstituted. So Government is open really to a charge. Sometimes there was controversy between the hon. the Minister for Commerce and Industry and the Coffee Board, and perhaps the British planters overshot the mark. They saw that the Congress Government was favouring them, obliging them and so in their behaviour also they overshot the mark and perhaps gave offence to the hon. Minister, Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, and hence this Bill.

Sir, this Bill contains some good features and I welcome those features. But after going through all these documents and also the provisions in this Bill, I find that the only solution in it for breaking the back of the big planters, for breaking the back of British dominance, was this nomination of the Chairman. Sir, I do not believe in such nursery rhymes and in such steps. If it is the real intention of the Government, if it is the real intention of Mr. Krishnamachari to break the back of British domination, let him take other measures.

SHRI B. GUPTA (West Bengal): He would rather break his own back!

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: He is not prepared to confiscate their capital.

As least, he can curb their profits. He was pointing out that the price of coffee was going up, that the profits were going up. He even took up the cause of the labourers and asked them, "What have you done for the labour?" But after all that, what is the conclusion? He has not come to the conclusion that a curb should be put on the profits of the planters. He has not come to the conclusion that restriction should be put on the export of these profits. Nowhere has he said that the profits of the British planters and the big growers should be ploughed back into the coffee industry for our national development. Nothing of that sort has he said. The only thing suggested is the reconstitution of the Coffee Board and the nomination of the Chairman. Sir, I have some experience of the tea industry and know how the so-called crisis in the tea industry was handled by the hon. Minister, Mr. Krishnamachari, who was representing the Government. It was not his own policy, but it was the policy of the whole Government. I am looking to the day when Mr. Karmarkar will get disillusioned of the policy of the Government.

SHRI B. GUPTA: And about Mr. Krishnamachari also.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: And about Mr. Bhupesh Gupta also.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: In the case of the tea industry also, I found when the Tea Bill came there were many good intentions, pious intentions and pious clauses there; but there was no attempt to break the back of the British planters or even British domination. Not to speak of breaking the back, not even the little finger was lifted there. Therefore, I have come to the conclusion that the main intention of the Bill was to take some powers into the hands of the Government, particularly into the hands of the Minister for Commerce and Industry, so that when these people misbehaved, they could be controlled. Even within the framework of this Bill itself, if it is the intention to do



away with the domination of the big growers, then why not increase the representation of the small growers? Why not increase the representation of labour? I do not believe that simply by having a nominated Chairman the whole problem will be solved. That is why with the nomination side of this Bill, I entirely disagree. It is true that if the constitution of the Board is left as it is, then a big planter will be elected as Chairman. But that does not mean that if there is a nominated Chairman—an Official nominated as Chairman—that he will act, or rather that the Government will act against the interest of these big planters or British planters. There is no indication of that in the whole Bill. The Tea Bill, for instance, has many provisions, to see that the living condition of the labourers is bettered. But in actual practice nothing has been done in that connection. Yesterday I spoke on that subject and I do not want to repeat it now.

Coming to the question of the Coffee Board, this Board is also guilty of many sins. The greatest of those sins is its dealings with the employees of the Coffee Board. This thing is not entirely new to the House. The question of the conditions of the Coffee Board labourers was raised on the floor of the House before also, but as yet nothing has been done. The Coffee Board is guilty of this inhuman treatment, of the scandalous treatment of its own employees. But the Government also cannot avoid taking its own share of responsibility for this. When the question of the recognition of the Coffee Board Labour Union came up, when the question of the implementation of their demands came up, the Government took the stand that the Coffee Board was an autonomous body and so they had no power to compel the Board to do so. But when they have this reconstituted Board, is the Government prepared to give the assurance that they will now compel the Coffee Board to fulfil the demands of the Coffee Board employees? Is the Government prepared to do that? If it is prepared to do that, then I can understand that

the Government is really sincere, even though in a limited way, towards the purpose for which this Bill is supposed to have come before us.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. C. GUPTA): How long is the hon. Member likely to take?

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR. I shall close now, Sir, because all the points have already been dealt with and I do not want to go over the ground already covered. Before concluding my speech, I want to point out that we are against this nomination of the Chairman, because we do not believe that by having a nominated Chairman, everything will be all right. Some of the features of the Bill, as for instance, having the development of the coffee industry under the control of the Union, the provisions designed towards securing better working conditions to the workers, these are welcome features.

These welcome features will cease to be so if they are not really implemented and continue to remain only on paper.

Before I resume my seat, I would like to mention that after a perusal of the Bill and after hearing all these matters, I fail to understand why the name of the Bill is mentioned as "Coffee Market Expansion (Amendment) Bill". It should have been called the Coffee Bill. There is scope for development of the Coffee industry; there is scope for the improvement of the conditions of the labourers and if Government wants really to do all these things, what is the use of naming this Bill as "Coffee Market Expansion (Amendment) Bill"? It should be appropriately called the "Coffee Bill".

With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I have tried to follow the debate very closely and I very much appreciate the views which have been very frankly put. My hon. friends Mr. Basappa Shetty and Mr. Dasappa put the points squarely

[Shri D. P. Karmarkar.]

—I would not say on behalf of the growers but, I suppose, they largely represent the viewpoint with which a grower would heartily agree. I appreciate the vehemence and strength with which they spoke because, as our esteemed friend Mr. Karumbaya said, there seems to be a feeling going abroad amongst the growers that as a result of what has happened during the last two years, it is as if Government are up against the growers' interests. I tried to make it clear yesterday that ultimately when we look at the industry as a whole, we have to look after not only the growers' interests but also that of the consumers, the interests of the labour and of everyone connected with the industry. After taking into account all these, we have to arrive at a decision. In all these economic matters we as a Government and as a sovereign Parliament have to look after the national interest as a whole. Formerly it was, for instance, that in industrial disputes we, in our legislations, used to treat the disputes as disputes between the industry and labour. Now, in all sectors of our national economy we have now to develop the view that one has to take into account the national interest as a whole. When we speak of prices, we over-emphasise the farmers' interests; sometimes we over-emphasise the consumers' interests and we look upon the question only as a sectarian point of view whenever we look upon any economic question, be it coffee, be it tea, be it rubber or be it textiles. I think above all other interests has to come the national interest. Once we look at everything from the point of view of that national interest, everything else will fall into its proper perspective. No national interest could be said to be justified if it looks after the interests of industry or of labour at sacrifices to labour or industry and it results in loss and so on. I cannot imagine that anyone would reasonably propose that the interests of labour should be looked after to such an extent as to upset any industry or which results in loss to that industry nor

would we propose that the incentive given to the industry should be at the sacrifice of the interests of labour. So, in these matters if we look at this question from an objective point of view—after all this is just a small question and five years later, when we look back upon the discussion on this Bill I hope we shall find how little reason there was for the apprehension voiced by our esteemed friends, Mr. Basappa Shetty and Mr. Dasappa—we will arrive at the correct conclusion. It is true that we have to look at the question from a broader angle than from the angle of a particular interest. Mr. Karumbaya made an entirely good point when he said that on all these questions, in addition to having an objective approach from the national point of view, we have to have also a human approach and I think this debate has inevitably suffered from what in my humble opinion I call unnecessary apprehensions on behalf of the growing interests because part of the reason that we have assigned for the amendment has been the safeguarding of the consumers' interests. No doubt prices rocketed high and my hon. friend Mr. Mazumdar could afford to be absolutely objective in putting squarely the blame upon both the growers and the Government for the situation. In fact, I cannot conceive of my hon. friend Mr. Mazumdar saying anything else; as I said once before—in any case to save any misunderstanding. I may repeat it again—I could never believe that Mr. Mazumdar will ever believe that the Government was completely free from blame. I never expected that but I could only judge by the vehemence with which he speaks; sometimes he is really sincere and I then say that he really feels that there is something in his opinion; sometimes, as he did today, he attacks Government with a little half-interest as it happens in a school where there are two students and the teacher wants to blame one. He tells one of the students "you have done very badly" and lest the other pride himself and get inflated, he says. "you are not also

very good". That is the way in which he treated us today. I am not entering into the merits.

SHRI B. GUPTA: But it is an objective test; you may be very good as a father or as a husband but may be very bad as a Minister.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I think the best objective test that my friend could put is to be silent for a little while because it is neither here nor there; neither a husband nor a father is relevant for the substance of this Bill.

SHRI B. GUPTA: It may be something.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am very happy that my hon. friend entirely agrees with me.

I am not interested at this moment just to behave like what you call dissectors of past events. Before I go on to my observations about the points made, I should say that I am very grateful for the historical contributions made by my hon. friend Mr. Basappa Shetty, supplemented by my esteemed friend Mr. Dasappa. What I should have done at the outset in introducing this Bill before the House, in fairness to the Members who might not have followed the history of coffee, is I should have given a little of the background by way of how the coffee estates have developed, the number of coffee estates, the number of small growers, the amount of coffee consumed, the conditions of development, the development of our exports and things like that. I am grateful to both of them because ultimately we cannot appreciate the present position unless we have a dive into the past. I agree with the history that they gave of the gradual rise in coffee acreage as well as in coffee production, the surplus which encouraged us to export and so on. Well, if they want now the credit to be given to the Coffee Board, I suppose some credit is due to the Government also which promoted

this Coffee Board, which have been following its work, administration and things like that. When we say something about the Chairman, Mr. Ivor Bull—my colleague has said in the other House or somewhere—I beg of this House not to take it as a personal reflection; it is not as if it is a personal reflection. Mr. Ivor Bull might have done according to the best of his judgment and ability; he is not under our scrutiny—personally he is not there—and he could have done even less than he has done if he had to look after his own estate. If he was the elected Chairman, according to the existing wording of the Act, all that the Chairman is required to do is to preside over the meetings. Assuming, for instance, he did not encourage something which was in the interests of the industry, he could defend it on his own grounds though not necessarily on public grounds. Now, it is precisely that situation which we want to avoid; we do not want anyone to say, "look here, this Board has elected me as the Chairman. I have my own private work and I must look after that. I preside over these meetings, keep order and so on". Ultimately, if he is franker and tells us, "if I have to do something as Chairman of the Board—I have my own legitimate interests to look after—when there is a conflict between the consumer and the grower and, as Chairman of the Board, I do whatever is legitimately expected of me as a grower, I will look after my own interest first". Under the circumstances, it would be very difficult to find fault with him as such though on public grounds one would have expected better of him. I do not propose to dwell upon any individual's faults or anything like that and it is hardly necessary for the purposes of the Bill. The point which I am now at—and that is the whole question that has to be considered by this House—is whether it is not necessary, in the larger interests of the industry as a whole, for us to do something more effective. Ultimately, one of the two points that have been contested is about the

[Shri D. P. Karmarkar.]

Chairman. We can appreciate the growers' interest to have a Chairman elected from amongst themselves. They were in a majority in the earlier Board and now also they will be in a sizable number. I can understand their insisting upon their representative being elected as the Chairman.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: The Chief Executive Officer.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I will not quarrel with them for that on principle but I will quarrel with them on the ground that if I were a grower myself and not someone taking an objective view of these things.....

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: May I humbly submit that nobody has pleaded for a grower to be appointed or elected as a Chairman? Nobody has urged that fact.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, I am coming to that point.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: I said: He is either elected or if he is nominated he should not be the chief executive officer of the Board.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, I am grateful to my friend for that correction. But if one reads not merely that portion but the whole of his speech that was the point urged by my friend, Mr. Dasappa. But if we look at the history of the whole thing, if we look at the evidence taken before the Select Committee, of the evidence of the growers' representatives and of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, of the only parties that have made a representation to us about this matter that there should be elected representatives, 95 per cent. have come from the growers' organisations. I am not prepared to comment on the observations that the Members made here. If my hon. friends Shri Dasappa and Shri Basappa have

made a plea that is in consonance with the growers' wishes, well, I do see that they have done it objectively and they have their own views. Apart from the discussions in the two Houses of Parliament, if there is anyone interested in this, who is pleading for the retention of the elected Chairman, it is representatives of the growers' organizations and we have received no other demand from any other party. We have received absolutely no proposal from outside the growers' organisations themselves. What does that show? Of course I am prepared to appreciate that position from their point of view. If I were something dominant in a growers' organisation, it was absolutely human of me to have proposed like that. In the earlier Board they were in a majority and in this Board also there is substantial representation for growers, big and small, 4 representatives from each of the three States and it stands to reason from their point of view that the growers' representatives be elected. Now, that is precisely the point which I am trying to meet. It is not as if in making this suggestion the Government are out with rod in hand against the growers' interests. It is absurd. If we were to come forward with a Bill having such a purpose, the Bill will stand condemned on its own. We want liaison. We want to have a little greater liaison, a more authoritative liaison between who would be the principal man on the Board, the Chairman of the Board, and ourselves. He would keep us in touch day to day, week to week, month to month which the earlier Chairmen were not bound to do. Now, apart from the statutory requirements of the Board, suppose he does not report even once to the Ministry, we could not hold him responsible. We want to get out of that position. He may be either in this country or he may be outside the country; it does not make much difference. But apart from the statutory requirements from the Board and the Marketing Officer who was our ser-

vant in a sense, well, the Chairman was not bound to do anything at all. He need not have to address even one letter to us about the affairs of the Board even when they are serious. Well, that is an anomalous position. In any industry which is growing, of course one can decide that Government should have nothing to do with it. That is another view. If the House takes the view and if Parliament says: 'Hands off this industry', I can appreciate the logical corollary of that position, namely, that we shall not have the authority to appoint a Chairman. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot have both control and de-control; we cannot have both discretion and non-discretion. We cannot have an order of things in which Government will be nowhere but Government will be responsible for the development of the industry. How can we? We hear so many times of autonomous Boards. We can understand a corporation being autonomous and the Government not interfering with its functions. One can understand that. Well, if it comes to that and if we arrive at a time when industry and labour and consumers and all of them so unite and form themselves into a body which Government will accept if it is so meriting that it will function autonomously, well, if that time comes I shall be only very happy to see such an autonomous Board where human interests will be predominant before them. But that is not the position now. My friend Mr. Mazumdar will say about labour. Other friends will say about growers. Somebody else will say about consumers, that unknown commodity which is often forgotten. My hon. friend Mr. Dasappa made the plea in a manner which I was not able to appreciate. I would have entirely accepted it if there were not one small flaw in the whole thing. For instance, he asked: Why don't you do what they do in England? Yes, they do it, but in what fields? In the fields that are necessary, not in the field in which the common consumer's needs fall, but in respect of

luxury articles. They see to it that the prices are controlled, whether it is of food or clothing or, coming to this point, even of drinks, that they were available to the consumer at a very reasonable rate. Well, I was myself in England, when things were not easy to get at reasonable prices. Of course, I am not speaking about luxury articles which could not at all be had easily for any price. But for 5 pence you could have the equivalent of a very good standard cup of tea.

The luxury articles were going out of the country and they could not help in this. When it came to a beverage they saw to it that the common consumer—I am speaking of a normal restaurant, not special restaurants, not bigger hotels, but a normal restaurant—was charged a fair price. If you went there you had a card printed and kept before you showing the necessities of a common man and their prices. I shall be very sorry if we cannot get the necessities of life at a reasonable price here.

I think my friend Mr. Dasappa ran on very hazardous ground. It is very good that many times what is released to the public is summaries of these debates. If his speech were reported verbatim people would be astonished at his observations. But I am quite sure that he was trading on very dangerous ground when he said: 'Tighten your belts. Have dearer coffee'. I know that, as a matter of fact.....

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** Why should I be misquoted? I said: I want a fair price for the consumer.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** If he reads his speech as a whole he will find that that is the implication. Since that was an important point and since it affected my interest in the consumer, it left an indelible impression on my mind and I feared what would happen to the consumer if the consumer tomorrow wanted

[Shri D. P. Karmarkar.]

coffee. You may differ on the advisability of taking coffee or tea. That is another matter. You may say: Don't take coffee; don't take tea. In a sense one would entirely agree with you. But people are bad sinners and they take to coffee. We see what a grip coffee has on the popular mind. I may say, Sir, during last year and this year many Members of Parliament have taken to coffee and they are in a position to say which is good coffee and which is bad. The other day we had a complaint from a member of Parliament that the coffee they took here was not quite good. It is because along with the pure stuff they are mixing something else and so the taste is not good. It is perhaps robusta or things like that. We cannot ignore the normal consumer, let alone for argument's sake the Members of Parliament. To know who the real consumers are you must go to Madras and Mysore and there people may part company but they will not part with the coffee. Their morning drink is coffee anywhere. We cannot brush aside the normal ordinary consumer like that in a matter like coffee. We have to have his interests very much in our view and if we have to take no interest in him, who will do it? I will not be merely content with blaming the grower because he gets more prices. Ultimately, one might argue that it does not go outside the country. Maybe that part is going outside and part is with Indians.

So I was on the point that we have to look at these things largely from that point of view, not only of one interest but of all interests, and if we have to do that more adequately than has been the case heretofore then the Bill is there before you, which aims at it.

Now, if you look at the constitution of the Board there is really none whom the Government can call its own except the Chairman of the Board, I mean they are in a minority.

The State Governments will have their own nominees. And of course there is one person to represent curing establishments to be nominated by the Central Government. Then, of course there are three Members of Parliament and they will not be amenable to anybody's influence. They have their own opinions. The growers have got their representatives. Except the Board Chairman and one or two others there is no other representative on behalf of the Government here and we have kept that Chairman advisedly because we want someone in that Board whom we can hold responsible in a sense.

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: May I crave your permission to interrupt the hon. Minister? He said: Nobody other than the growers objected to a full-time appointed Chairman. And here at pages 6, 7 and 8 of the Report of the Select Committee in the evidence part we have got Shri Raghavachari speaking on behalf of the consumers. I would like to quote a few observations of his. He says this: "To thrust an appointed Chairman and that too an executive officer, is something repugnant to the principle. I feel very strongly on this question. It may be conceded that one from among the members of the Board may be nominated as Chairman by the Government. It may be embarrassing to an executive officer to preside over a meeting where we may have to criticise his actions and he may have to carry out the policy of the Board. He owes allegiance to the Government also. That is a position which is rather contradictory with which I will not be able to reconcile myself." So it is not only the growers' representatives but consumers' representative also.

SAR D. P. KARMARKAR: After half an hour's research with all the material at his command he has been able to find one exception in Mr. Raghavachari. Exception only proves the rule.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** There is another instance also.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** Yes; we have had another instance of a big meeting of small growers denying themselves the right to have representation on the Board. I am prepared to give all credit to Mr. Raghavachari. All that is proved is that in the large number of persons who hold one opinion there is one person who holds a contrary opinion.

**SHRI H. C. DASAPPA:** He is the representative of the consumers, I think, nominated by Government.

**SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR:** That is neither here nor there. Sir, my friend Mr. Dasappa knows as much as I know about all the relevant facts. Perhaps it is very easy to educate someone who does not know; but it is impossible to educate one who knows a thing through and through. I will not take it farther than that.

Ultimately what is sought to be done by the Government is to have some authorised means to keep one as Liaison Officer. As for the powers of the Board we have said that normally there will be no interference but the Government are not bound to consult the Board every time. That is all I would like to say about the question of the Chairman.

Then, my friends Mr. Basappa Shetty and Mr. Dasappa both dealt with this question—small growers *vs.* large growers. It has been said that we want to create some cleavage. I was reminded of the old days of partition when differences and cleavages were created between X and Y, Hindus and Muslims and all that. What is the position? We have a large number of small growers. Admittedly, the small grower is not able to get the best out of his small holding. He has not the resources. The average production of coffee on a small estate is naturally less than the average production in a big estate. I

do not see why anyone should grudge representation being given to the small growers—to put it that way—apart from the allegation of creating a split between the two as if the Government have an interest in creating a split between the two. What will happen is, even if there is a difference between themselves, the small grower will come up and say; look here, you have given these concessions to the big growers, give us something more. If there is a fight between them they will fight with each other regarding mutual concessions. But when the interest of the industry as a whole comes in, it will be like the one hundred and five of the Mahabharata, it will not be that the small growers will come and say, this is to our interest though it is detrimental to the large growers. Things cannot happen like that. Whenever there is anything detrimental to the industry as a whole it is for the Government to take what action is necessary. What I want is merely that both the small growers and the big growers are contented. The way in which I interpret the plea as made—though I do not question the *bona fides* of the suggestion made—the way in which I look at it is not that it is urged that as a result there will be a split between the small growers and the large growers and the coffee industry will go to dogs. I take it as a strong plea put in to bolster up the claims of the large growers and thus deny the claims of the smaller growers. We are hoping that there will be no difference of opinion between the growers of coffee as such. Even if there is, one sees no conceivable possibility when the small growers will go against the industry as such. After all, we have to look after the interests of the small growers also. Therefore it is that we want this. In fact we could as well have specified the number of representatives in the Act itself. But it will take some time to ascertain all facts and consider them. We have given our word that so far as rules are concerned, they will

[Shri D. P. Karmarkar.]  
 exactly specify how many will be elected, how many will be nominated, out of four from each State whether two will be elected and two will be nominated, how many for the small growers, how many for the big growers and all that. We have an open mind; we have not yet made up our minds and we will welcome any suggestion regarding the composition of the Board but I am not for a moment able to appreciate the argument that because no small growers have complained, nothing should be done. The small growers are poor people; they are not very vocal. Again, there are small growers and small growers. One small grower is like my hon. friend Mr. Basappa Shetty who is the largest among the small growers or the smallest among the large growers. Ultimately, it is very difficult to draw the line anywhere. Shall we draw the line at 100 acres? It is an arbitrary line. If we draw the line at 75 acres, then he will be a large grower. If we draw the line at 500 acres, then he will become a very small grower. We must see that both the small and the big growers are protected in a proper manner. If any particular State says, here is an organisation, well and good. There was a suggestion from my friend that a group could be formed. We would welcome organisations.

SHRI BASAPPA SHETTY: May I know the grievances of the small growers?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I should like to have notice for that. I must say that one of the best sources of my information is Mr. Basappa Shetty himself because he knows more than I can tell him and if he only wants to present this case he will be better able to do than I can.

Sir, I was on the point of the small growers. Now, it is 5 o'clock and I would not like to wax eloquent on this point any more. On the question of elections, it has been considered that so far as the growers

are concerned, if there is any organisation, certainly it will have its elected representatives. We have said that we shall put it in the rules and that should be sufficient for the purpose.

I think I will request my hon. friend Mr. Mazumdar to pardon me if I am not able to deal with all his points *in extenso*, that is, about labour and all that. That is a proposition which is really harmless and which is desirable—that labour should find its own proper reward and perhaps I need hardly assure you that with greater control in Government hands it might be possible to look after this question better. He needs hardly an assurance from me that the interests of labour will always have our consideration and will be dear to our hearts. Ultimately if you neglect labour interests, no industry can thrive.

SHRI B. GUPTA: After the Bank Award business we are rather doubtful about it.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I think after what I have said you are better convinced than before.

Now, the last point that I should like to make is that while I appreciate some of the observations falling from my friends over there.....

SHRI H. C. DASAPPA: By no means the least I believe?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I do not distinguish, Sir. In fact the speakers who have contributed to the discussions are amongst the best. I do not distinguish between them. I was much impressed by the sincerity with which Mr. Basappa Shetty and Mr. Dasappa were pleading—but were pleading a wrong cause; there is no question about that—and that shows the way in which a case should be pleaded.

The last point I should like to make is this. I think essentially the way in which we have to approach this problem is the way



which Mr. Karumbaya suggested. They grow nice coffee there in Coorg. I have had the pleasure of meeting their coffee planters—extremely cheerful people—but I failed to see any elephants or tigers. I do not know how many of them have met tigers or lions. Some of them might have met them and killed them also. They are good shots as we all know. What I would like to commend to this House is the remedy that he has suggested. That is the human approach. I need hardly add on behalf of the Government that ours will always be a human approach—not only towards the coffee growers, but consumers, the labour and the industry as a whole—and just to that measure we certainly expect a similar human approach from all the interests concerned. I am sure all of us, Government *plus* growers *plus* consumers *plus* labour representatives *plus* also critics and sometimes irrational critics together will be able to bring about a development in the industry of which we can be really proud. Let us wait and see. It is no use anticipating things.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. C. GUPTA): How much more time do you intend taking?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Sir, I have caught your hint. I have finished. There is nothing more that I can usefully add at this stage. I must say that I appreciate the free and frank views expressed here during the course of the debate. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. C. GUPTA): The question is:

“That the Bill further to amend the Coffee Market Expansion Act, 1942, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

The motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI R. C. GUPTA): We shall take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill tomorrow.

The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. on Thursday, 2nd December 1954.

The House then adjourned at five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, 2nd December 1954.