

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I am coming to that. I would appeal to the House to agree to the export duty provided these conditions, one, two, three, four and so on are satisfied. That explains why I am stating all these. I plead with the Government that their policy of *laissez faire* and their policy of non-discrimination has failed. There is no reason for this non-discrimination against the multiple and mounted interests of Britain. No Indian can compete with those mounted and multiplied British vested interests, unless he, the Indian planter, is helped also by the State to compete. Attempts should be made to put the Indian planters on a par, at least, with British interest, if not at a higher plane. That is what I have been and am asking the Government to do. Unless and until that is done your coffee, tea and such other interests are bound to suffer. Two-fold activities are called for firstly attempts should be made to help Indian planters by way of reduction of expenditure, by providing credit facilities and by affording them godown facilities, and *such* conveniences as are open to Britishers. No Indian could compete with the British planters because they were the first to own godown facilities in all the port trust areas. They had been entrenched and established with all conveniences. How on earth could any Indian compete unless either the vested interest of the British is abolished or the Government comes to the aid of the Indian planters by affording them similar facilities? Unless and until that is done, Indian interests are bound to suffer. All the shipping facilities go to the Britishers and none to the Indian interests. What has the Government been doing up-till now, I ask? They should give at least equal facilities to the Indian planters. Unless an assurance is forthcoming from the Government that they will examine these things and take immediate and necessary steps in this regard, I think we have to say that we should reject this Resolution.

Sir, my complaint is that this Tea Board has done nothing in this regard

either to draw the attention of the Government or to formulate schemes for Government's decision or even to intimate to Government the difficulties, administrative or statutory, of the Indian section of the planters. They have also not intimated to Government the conveniences that are so very necessary and essential in the nature of amenities and other conditions to labour in the different plantations. I have said it and I repeat.....

MH. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No repetitions, Mr. Das.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: ..... that one of the immediate steps—I will not call it immediate but early steps—to be taken in.....

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SHRI B. GUPTA (West Bengal): He is making a very good speech; let us hear him. It is refreshing.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: ...to make Calcutta the tea market of the world instead of London as it is today. Sir, I have already stated my conditions and unless an assurance comes forth and the hon. Minister assures us that he will keep a watching eye on the extravagance of the Central Board, I think it will not be easy to get the approval of the House.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS RELATING TO THE HINDU MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE BILL, 1952**

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, I beg to present the report of the Committee on Petitions dated 6th December 1954. in respect of such petitions as were remitted to it relating to the Hindu Marriage and. DL vorce Bill, 1952.

#### **RESOLUTION REGARDING ENHANCEMENT OF EXPORT DUTY ON TEA—continued.**

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mrs Pan.ianand.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMANAND (Madhya Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, the reason for my speaking QJ1 this subject is mainly to draw

[Dr. Shrimati Seeta Parmanand.] the attention of the Government to the sky rocketing prices (ft\* tea. If levying an export duty is going to mean that the price of tea abroad is going to increase and, as a result of ' this, the price of tea here is going to be increased, I think it is time that Government took some drastic steps in the matter. So far, strangely enough, attention has been focussed only on two points namely, conditions ^of labour and conditions of the business. They did not pay attention to this problem of prices. This was the point which required, if anything, to 'have been dealt with at greater length. The opportunity for the House to bring forward this question of pri- ces is at the time of the Budget but at that time as there are very many other items, this item of price of tea gets lost sight of, and naturally so. : Sir, Government should be ' aware that in the last-fifteen years—I think since 1937—price of tea has gone up five times; particularly, tea used by the poor people has gone up from eight annas a packet to Rs. 2-8-0 per packet and nothing has been done in this sphere because there is no organised representation on behalf of the consumer. Industry is organised, for instance, the sugar merchants are or-Rp.nised. The textile merchants are organised to represent their grievances. Even the Coffee Board is there to represent their grievances and Government at once comes to help them. But the poor agriculturists are not able to represent even when the prices fall and nothing is thought necessary to be done so as to re-assure them—which is needed—that Government is taking a serious note of the thing. Similarly, Sir, the common man's point of view and interests are not represented in an organised manner. I feel that it becomes specially the sphere of women, who have to manage the domestic budget, to represent to Government. I would request the hon. Commerce Minister, if he finds it difficult to control prices, to start on the example of other countries what are called consumers'

co-operatives. This is a new idea which he must at once really try. Government can open ' such co-operatives with half shares paid by them and the other half paid for by the common people i.e., the consumers. That wan- Government can easily bring down the prices of tea to the level of other consumer goods or necessary commodities like grain, cloth etc. One can understand the price of tea going up three times but it is impossible of understanding when it goes up by \*bout five times. In spite of that, Government is prepared to give facilities to tea merchants to export tea; as has been pointed out, conditions in that industry have also not improved much. Where does all that profit go? ThL« industry, Sir, should not also be allowed to carry on propaganda through its Tea Board for consumption of more tea if it is not going to give the benefit of reduced prices as a result of greater consumption. Sir, the consumption of tea as against high prices of the lowest grade by the common man can be compared to third class travelling. That is where the largest number of customers comes 3 P.M. from. They are the

most hard-hit. The largest number of railway passengers being III class, they get the least amenities. Similarly the largest number in this case being the poor people cannot take to any other beverage with the shortage of milk, shortage of more expensive items like *ghee* and sometimes shortage of even sugar and other necessary things, except tea with or without milk, or sugar, to go by and with which to be hospitable to people. So, Sir, I feel if Government is not going to help them in this matter, time has come for women's organizations particularly, and all other organizations representing interests of common man to take up the common man's cause and to start a boycott movement against tea which will make Government take prompt action. After all tea does not do any good to the health although it has come to stay as a

necessity even for the poor people, and this is an important matter. The ladies have so many other more important matters on hand and they are not able to devote much attention to this, but this is a matter which can be taken up by men also. (Interruption.)

I am rather intrigued to again and again see the hon. the Commerce Minister thinking of ladies in these things in which common man is concerned and also just now .....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: When the hon. Member was speaking of women's organizations organizing a boycott movement against tea in the interests of the common man, in fairness, I just wanted to say that sometimes men have to prepare tea for ladies.

DR. SHRIMATI SEETA PARMA-NAND: I am glad, Sir, that things are changing, but it does not seem to be so if I were to remember some opinions expressed by the hon. Minister himself and some others that women should not perhaps speak on any other Bills except the Hindu Code or some other Bill which affects women only. So I feel that these people of that mentality think that as laid down by some Hindu texts the common factor between women and the poor people i.e. श्रद्धा that they are

grouped together in the famous couplet in our Shastras, wherein women and Sudras have स्त्री दासश्च पुत्रश्च other common factor being perhaps their illiteracy, their ignorance, their being slaves. This makes them perhaps all the time associate ladies with anything that is pertaining to the common man, and so he thinks, Sir, that this could be taken up by ladies and not by all people in general.

Sir, I do not want to waste the time of the House over this except to point out that in conformity with the prices of other foodgrains and so on it is necessary that Government should intervene and see that the price of tea for home consumption is reduced. It is common knowledge I am sure to the

Law Minister, I mean the Commerce and Industry Minister,—though a slip of the tongue, he is also Law Minister today in the sense that he is going to pilot the Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill on behalf of the Law Minister that in other countries prices of commodities manufactured or otherwise are always regulated for home market according to its purchasing capacity and for export market they are put on a different level. And, Sir, in all fairness and according to the economic needs of our country this step should be at once taken so that when the Budget comes, we should be able on the floor of the House to thank him and congratulate him for having acted promptly in this direction.

Sir, during the last ten months prices of tea have gone up about five times and nobody has enquired why it is so. The common people are so full of worries over how to get their more important and indispensable necessities for their day to day existence that they have not the time to enquire into this. They do not know where to enquire and it would be futile to enquire because they feel that if the Government which is to keep a watchful brief of their needs, if it has not been able to do anything, perhaps nothing can be done, but that need not be so if Government wants to make the common men feel that it is keeping a vigilant watch over their needs and where an injustice is done to them, it should give wide publicity to it and bring down the price of tea, either bring down the price of tea to the same level for home consumption, that is, about 3 times the pre-war price, as the prices of grains and other commodities are, or itself start a movement for boycotting tea and open a consumers' co-operative.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI KISHEN CHAND (Hyderabad): Mr. Deputy Chairman, we are discussing this Resolution on enhancement of export duty on tea. Sir, I welcome this Bill in so far as this enhancement is going to increase the Income of the general revenues of the country. But if we consider the problem and try to understand that during the last two or three years the Gov-

[Shri Kishen Chand.]

ernment of India has tried to regulate internal prices when they have been much lower than world prices by the levy of duties, I submit, Sir, that it has not been successful. This levy of enhanced export duty in order to mop up the extra profit that the middleman is making in this country on account of higher prices prevailing in outside countries is not the right method of controlling internal prices. It was tried in the case of jute. It was tried in the case of oil-seeds, and the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry will remember that there were such wide fluctuations that the export duty had to be varied very frequently and frequent variation of export duty is bad for the trade of any country. Sir, what is the solution? Only two years back the tea industry and the tea trade were in a very sad plight. Prices were coming down. Tea gardens were closing down and the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry showed his helplessness in the matter. Only after two years events have changed. Now the price of tea depends not only on conditions in our country—that is the financial condition of the tea gardens and their productivity—but it also depends very largely upon the conditions prevailing in other countries. It depends upon the purchasing power in those countries which take our tea; it depends upon the general trade agreements between our country and those countries which take our tea and so on and so forth. No Government can possibly regulate those conditions in the other countries and naturally he is helpless in the matter, and therefore the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry adopts the easy method of increasing or reducing the export duty. I would suggest for his consideration a different method which will not only solve this problem of fluctuating prices in foreign countries but also keep down the price of tea at a low level in our country. It need not be understood that I do not sympathise with other hon. Members who have spoken very eloquently on the very bad conditions of labour which are prevailing in the tea gardens

in Assam and other places. I have the fullest sympathy with them, and the method adopted by the Minister for Commerce and Industry is not going to rectify their hardships. I believe in State trading and I am going to suggest its adoption in the particular case of tea industry which is more or less a monopoly of our country as far as the quality of tea is concerned, because in our country we have a variety of climate, and the hilly regions which help in the production of a quality of tea, good in liquor, in flavour and in taste. With proper blending of tea from different areas we can produce the finest quality of tea and command the world market. In such a situation the "only solution lies in the Government of India adopting State trading. All tea produced in the country should be purchased by the Government at prices which leave sufficient margin to the producer to maintain proper conditions in the tea gardens. This will mean that in very large tea gardens where the cost of production is lower, they will get a lower price, while in the tea gardens which are smaller in size and the cost of production is higher, the price paid to them will be slightly more.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): What does the hon. Member suggest for the middlemen's profits?

SHRI KISHEN CHAND: These are simple things and the Government of India can very easily adjust them. I do not want to go into details of trading. I am only suggesting a general principle—the principle of State trading—and in that State trading the Government will be able to give a fair price to all the plantations. The difficulty arises from the fact that the plantations are different in size. In a big plantation the cost of production being lower, if you keep the price high the profits go up while in smaller plantations if you keep the price low, there is no profit, and when they do not make any profit they cannot work properly. Therefore if the Government of India purchases all the tea from all gardens at prices which are fair, which bear a fair relation to the cost of production, then the Government of India

can sell cheap tea in the home market. We can keep down the price of tea in the home market, benefit the consumer and get a very good price from the foreigner. That *i* means that we get more price from the foreigner and subsidise the local consumers and benefit him without injuring others. Interests of the tea plantations. JTbatwiiu, be. of great benefit to us. Tb,erefo,re, / will, insist on the Govern-*lifa*snt ofiiilfdia that if, they introduced o'hjs txpe, of State trading they will be guberjiftipd ^> i another way also. Sir, as, fJEsjeaid bjefor,rfia! agricultural produce there. Js^a, cycle, of, trade. The rain-cifilLsix cooies in aiCycle., Every five ssp,x six year you, -have, good rainfall -, and thethefticorexes ar, <sea^on of drought, oin.thisntea fcradfealsp, not only improductieaulaHt ini gethng,, -there will be cycles and if you ileave H in the hands 7/olritheipriv,at(8t,4ndi.yiduail naturally in ,the bynper, years heuWill make huge itpnafits -a-nd,-defflarej, dividends while JB, the Jean jifears i the: burden will fall ,pn.,,the poor.,, labourer in- the tea, igarden.,, There,r, is no other solution and Iff submit, Sir, that the , only salvation, lies in State trading— ,taking. up all the tea and selling it at a very, good' price to the foreigner, making a good profit on it and giving it to the local consumer at a reduced price.

Sir, in the matter of labour, hon. Members have already pointed out their hardships. This enhancement of the export duty on tea will bring in a substantial amount of money and I would request the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry to bring forward specifically another resolution which will authorise the utilisation of this additional money for the betterment of the conditions of labour. If that is done there will be a good justification for this enhancement of export duty. Sir, I support this Resolution.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Mr. Deputy Chairman, we have heard with very great interest and attention the objective speech made by Shri Das from the Congress Party. Sir, it is refreshing to hear such speeches coming from that side of the House and whenever

we near such speeches we cannot help feeling that once the Members of the Congress Party recall their past pledges and outlook, immediately there arises a scope for *commoa modus vivendi*<sup>d</sup> between ourselves and them. Sir, the criticisms that have been, made of the Government policies by Shri Das are on hundred per cent, justified and naturally having taken his seat on that side of the House and also being an elderly gentleman he would economise on his expressions. Sir, even so he has hit hard and very hard and I think the time has come for the Government to wake up to their responsibilities. As you know, Sir, we have supported this measure and we support it with the hope that such measures would be utilised for the well-being of the people, for the industry, for the workers and for the country as a whole. Unfortunately, during the last seven years or so of the Congress rule, the experience has been otherwise. It was expected of them when they came to power that they would take measures so \haX this stranglehold on our economy would be curbed and the Indian forces of production would be released. Unfortunately the policies pursued by the Government have belied our expectations. There have been Boards and there will be Boards. We have no quarrel with the Boards as such, and the cess has become necessary, but the point is not merely whether the Boards are good or. bad. The question is one of policy and it is there I find that my hon. friend Shri Das did not quite squarely face the issue. He thought that the Board was filled with nincompoops and mahants as he would like to use that expression about parasites from the experiences of his State.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Sir, I stated degenerated mahants.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Very good; they are undoubtedly degenerated; but I think it should have occurred to him as to how it was possible that such degenerated people found positions in high places. Who gave them places there? How is it that they come to occupy such important positions in the country? Is it because the Ministers

[Shri B. Gupta.] have become "very busy" as the hon. Member thought, or is it because of something else? The Ministers are busy and they are a growing family, as you know. I do not think that it is because of the fact that the Ministers are busy, that they cannot look after those Boards and their operations. On the contrary, I feel that they are conscious about what is happening there and it is with that awareness that they have kept these people in power in those positions. Hon. Ministers have not yet begun to realise that these British people have to be thrown out, if we are at all to take this question of the industrial progress of our country into our own hands. They do not do such things consciously. I do not know whether ideological questions will be raised today when the hon. Minister gets up to answer Mr. Das's speech, because he belongs preeminently to the same ideology. But I think that the points that have been raised by him call for objective, sober and truthful answer—and also a patriotic answer—on the part of the hon. Minister. As you know, Sir, we have got nearly 26 lakh acres of land owned by the various tea estates in the country out of which only eight lakh acres are under cultivation. The rest are lying fallow and it appears from whatever account that we have got that an overwhelming majority of this acreage is under the British; that is to say, they are British-owned.

Whoever knows anything about Assam knows that the tea planters there are also at the same time big incorrigible landlords. There was a time when they literally used to rule Assam. Before the war it was known that the Government of Assam lay with the tea garden associations and not with the Ministry or the Governor's Executive Council or the Legislative Assembly that was there. It was practically these people who ruled the show and they dared to give orders to the Congress Government whenever the Congress Government came into existence. It was a tough battle that the Congress Government had to fight at that time, before the war; I

am talking about the Ministry, the Congress Ministry that came into office at that time. But as you know, Sir, the Ministry did not last very long. After the war again the Congress Government came into office there also as in various other States in India. In the beginning it was quite clear that they wanted directly to oppose it. The tea magnates of Assam wanted to 'directly oppose whatever halting measures that the Government wanted to take. Later on they devised other ways and means and found more effective ways of prevailing upon the Government and ultimately it so happened that the policy essentially remained the policy of the plantation owners. There were certain changes here and there; but the basic policy remained more or less the same. There were of course certain changes; the dressing was a little altered and we know that in this regime very many things are given a new dressing. Such things happen, but the policy remains more or less the same. In our part, West Bengal, where we have got very powerful elements in the tea industry entrenched for a number of years, controlling through managing agencies, the whole field of the industry, the same miserable experience repeats. There again you find British owners holding the industry in their hands, although there are some Indian interests and some small gardens owned by them. Now, if you look at any account of how they are entrenched, you will find that there are managing agents like Andrew Yule; Macleods; Williamson & Macgregor; Gillanders Arbuthnot & Co.; Octavius Steel; Duncan Brothers; Devonport & Co.; Shaw Wallace & Co.; Jardine, Henderson; Brooke Bond, James Finlay & Co. Ltd. These companies control a large part of the acreage and, what is more, the vital sectors of the tea industry itself. Now, Sir, there are a number of gardens under these managing agents and the power is concentrated in their hands. It is impossible for the Government—since the power remains in their hands—to control them. Measures are passed, decisions are taken here at

the Centre; but they always find ways and means—because of their entrenched position—to dodge them and they have been doing so for a number of years. We know how they artificially create crises, how they want to squeeze the small gardens out of existence, how they monopolise the tea trade. How from London, above all, they dictate to the industry. It is regrettable that the Government has not found it fit to fight the machinations of these foreign interests. I find, of late, the hon. Ministers talking about "socialism" and the Prime Minister of India is one who is preaching that idea. Hon. Ministers, I suppose, are trying to play with such ideas, and if that were not so, then I would like them to take some measures at least with regard to this industry. It is not a question of socialism or any ism. It is a question of getting back what has been taken away from us by the foreigners. It is a question of saving the national assets from the hands that are controlling them to the detriment of our country. That is what we ask of them.

Sir, many points have been made from this side of the House and cases have been cited. I know the hon. Minister will forget all about it as soon as he emerges from this House, because forgetfulness, as far as the Minister is concerned, has become one of his virtues .....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am forgetting now.

SHRI B. GUPTA: He will at least kindly remember the speech of Shri Biswanath Das, who belongs to his party, who had been at one time the Chief Minister of a State. He will do well to remember that what we speak here is something which echoes also in the Congress benches and I think the time has come for the Minister's faith. I suppose these hon. gentlemen who fill the back benches would pay a little more heed to what they say than they have been doing so far. Therefore, I say that these matters should be considered with the seriousness they deserve. Very rightly it has been pointed out that

the tea trade, the tea market, should not be in London, but should be in Calcutta. Do not think I am becoming provincial minded. Let it be in some I place in India—it should not be in any case in London. This demand has been there for a number of years and there was a time when the Congress party itself, ! in its press and also on its platforms, ! was advocating this demand. How is it then that the Government is not taking any step whatsoever to implement this demand? The London market controls the whole industry and imagine how they control it. They control the prices; rather they dictate the prices. They import tea from our country and then they re-export it to the continental market, a market which was open to us. We could have operated in those markets independently on our own and taken whatever legitimate advantage or mutual advantage that was possible in the circumstances. We are debarred from doing so. Then, Sir, linked with those are the financial concerns, the banks. Important as it is, the banking industry is in their hands. Now, the tea industry, especially when it falls on evil days, bad days, hard days, looks to the banks for financial help. They do not give financial help—I am talking of Indian concerns at present—because the banking is in their hands. Big banks will not give money to the small tea industries. I am talking about those people who I pay for your election funds, the small | men in the tea industry. When they approach these big banks, they are , not given any money. They are not ! given any financial assistance. How is it that they do not dare give assistance to the Indian concerns? It is because these managing agents and monopoly concerns tell them not to help those small industries, so that they get suffocated and go out of existence, so that the small gardens may be taken over by the monopolists. Thus competition is eliminated and monopoly control is further established. This is what is happening.

With regard to the technical field, as you know, Sir, the British have

[Shri B. Gupta.] ikept it to itself. They have been operating for over a century in this field of industry but they have seen it that Indians do not know much of the technical side in this industry. Some of them are made "Bara Babus". Others are made directors. I have got a friend of mine of my London days, He is supposed to be a director in one of the managing agencies. What is his qualification? His first qualification is a Barrister-at-Law, which means nothing. His second qualification is that he happened to be the son of a former Member of the Executive Council of a Governor, one who was a Law Member and a knighted gentleman. Now, this young chap has been taken there. He would not have perhaps been successful at the Bar. He was taken there and made a director. A shop window has been put up to pretend that the British industries in India are being Indianised. As you know, if you put up a sign board saying that this shop is a sweets shop, but actually it happens to be a liquor shop, it will not change into a sweets shop. The liquor shop will remain a liquor shop. It is like this here. These labels are being changed. Certain Indians are being placed in important positions. They are being paid fat salaries, but they are very few. But they are placed in the show cases and shop windows in order to pretend that these industries are getting into the hands of Indians. In the tea gardens they are bringing their boys from England—useless boys, perfect vagabonds, I know that some of them would have done nothing on earth if they had been allowed to live there in England, could have done nothing whatsoever, except stoll about in Mayfair and waste the money of their parents. These chaps are being brought and placed in such positions and being asked to look after the plantations. The experts are being brought from abroad and they are being told—deliberately told—"don't teach anything to the Indians, so that the Indians do not know the 'know-how' of the tea industry." This is being deliberately done and this is

something which the Indian tea merchants have objected to and to which the Indian tea merchants and Indian tea industrialists have drawn the attention of the Government. So far nothing has been done whatsoever in that respect. Therefore, I say that the whole field is occupied by them. The tea industry is a vital industry. It is a foreign exchange earner. It gives employment to over a million of people. It is a vital commodity in our country and what is more a commodity which we use in our day-to-day life. And in that industry out of 78 crores or so invested, 51 crores are in the hands of the British and what is more the key positions are all occupied by them. Deputy Ministers may sit here in these air-conditioned rooms or in the Secretariat and may think that they have become masters of India, if they like; but this gives us no pleasure whatsoever, because we know that the vital sectors of industry, where the wealth of India is being produced, which makes or mars India's future, are under the control of the British and this control still continues unabated. Ministers may come and go in the Congress regime, but nothing changes there for ever. That is what is happening. I hope, Sir, we had some of the Ministers appointed to chase the British—as you see the ministerial crowd is increasing, the family is growing, and promotions are taking place. Why not put some Ministers to chase these people, the British and get something out of them? Nothing of the sort. Therefore, we believe that if the policy is not changed, and the hon. gentleman there has been very right in demanding a change of policy, nothing will come out, materially different, from these measures as cess or the Tea Board that he has mentioned. Sir, I hope that when the hon. Minister speaks, he will try to appreciate our points of view, and will not dismiss them as if we are making a political propaganda. Sir, I find that he is nodding there. It is clear. But I do not know if a dynamite would put sense into their heads. He says "political propaganda". Then, he has



also -been making political propaganda, but against whom? Political propaganda is their business. But I say that certain political points of view have got to be explained, because you are a political party, we are also a political party, and some political points of view have undoubtedly got to be explained. But here we are not concerned with grinding any political axe. All that we are saying is that certain measures, even within the four corners of the Constitution, can be taken by you, which would relieve the situation and which would curb the monopolistic interests in tea, and which would take you towards achieving the objects, which you speak of, when you bring forward such resolutions or Bills. That is what we are asking. Do not think that we are here for political propaganda. That we shall do in Andhra, where you would confront us. Now, Sir, here in Parliament, what we are interested in is how to get a few small things done. We are not suggesting any revolutionary measures. I suggest, Shri Das and myself can sit together and work out a common plan, provided you give an assurance that such a plan would be implemented, because there is a basis for it, and that basis is simply a national basis. There is no party basis. I do not think the hon. Member .....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can drop it there.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Sir, I do not think the hon. Minister likes the British. Personally speaking, he may not like the British, but the point is that their policy is subservient to the interests of the British, and it goes unchecked. And it is here that we join issue with them, and we demand of them certain changes in our policy.

Now, Sir, I would not deal with the question of wages and other things. That is a sad and tragic story. I can tell you that these tea owners have treated their gardens as a sort of reserve for them, not only for making enormous profit, but also for exploiting serf labour. I am not unaware of the

measures that have been taken by the Government, but all those measures have been set at naught by these people through their various machinations. That is yet another sad story. I would not like to go into them, because if I go into the details, there will be no end. But one thing is clear that until and unless you curb these people, the top men, the British especially, the productive forces would not be released for production. Unemployment is growing there, and the people are without houses, without lands to cultivate, and all that state of affairs is quite clear. And the hon. Member said that in Assam, huge tracts of land are lying fallow. These lands could immediately have been brought under cultivation. But the tea owners would not move an inch, would not part with an inch of land, until and unless very strong measures are taken against them. That is why these factors are also very material in the course of this discussion.

In conclusion, Sir, I would again signify my very great admiration and appreciation for the speech that has been made by the hon. Member from that side of the House. He need not feel embarrassed that I am appreciating his speech, neither should any one in the Congress Party hold it as a point against him. All that I say to that it is quite possible for Members on this side of the House as well as Members on the other side of the House to work out, by sitting together, certain common steps in order to achieve certain immediate good results. We do not think that by sitting here and participating in such cosy debates we are going to produce a revolution. Nothing of that sort. I would appeal that we can sit here, discuss the objectives, and see as to what we can do even with them in power, and even within the four corners of the Constitution. Therefore I feel that, then suggestions that have been made here are very serious. Suggestions considered seriously by the Government, and the Government see how far they can go. I think this is something which

[Shri B. Gupta.] Government should immediately take up. And as far as we are concerned, we are prepared to support them, whenever they take any step for protecting the national interests and for curbing the interests of the British, and for preventing the monopolistic grip over our production, which ultimately ruins production and at least limits production in the country.

London should not rule our tea industry. It is we, the Indians, that have to manage our affairs. It is a vital industry, and that vital industry must not be allowed to be left in the hands of the big owners who are entrenching themselves in this industry under various pretexts. I suggest that these people should be eliminated. If you do not eliminate them today, at least take sufficiently strong measures to curb their powers; prevent them from sending the profits abroad. What about the huge profits that are being sent out? You can certainly stop them by some Reserve Bank regulations or by some other measures. You can totally put a stop to the remittance of «my profits by the British abroad. Now, what is the position? You will not be able to touch their profits, even if you want to, because they are taken absolutely outside your jurisdiction. Let them be used in our country. Now, this is something which you can do. You should see that the extra profits they are making in these areas are ploughed back in this industry. Such measures can easily be devised. And in the Board itself, why should these people be there? If you have any Board or other institution to look after any aspect of the industry, or the industry as a whole, then you must turn these people out; they have no business to be there. We do not give them seats here in Parliament. Although some of them live here, we do not make them eligible for membership of Parliament. Then, why should we make them eligible for membership of these Boards, which we set up from time to time to protect our national interests? We should ban the entry of such people into whatever

Boards we may set up. That is, I hope, a very reasonable proposition, and it should be acceptable. If we leave out the British, heavens would not come down upon us. I do not know whether many of you have sat with them on the Boards, but you must have nonetheless noticed that they always push forward their interests, and they do all sorts of things in order to make the Board absolutely ineffective, or to make the Board toe their line. This is what they have been doing. And therefore, we like to have no faith whatsoever in their *bona fides* in this matter. Let them go to their country and have as many Boards as they like. But here, in this country, when we have certain Boards, they must be entirely national Boards which should be set up by you, keeping in view only the national interests and with the definite object of promoting national interests against the anti-national interests. Therefore, you must give no quarter whatsoever to the idea of bringing these people into such Boards. We do not want to live by relying on them, but we want to live by dislodging them from these positions, because these are very vital positions. Now, I hope that suggestion will be accepted. Now, the hon. Shri T. T. Krishnamachari has given out in his speech that he is concerned very much about what the British are doing. I think that occasions such as this should be seized upon and utilised for getting them out of harm's way, and therefore I would suggest to the hon. Minister to specially direct his attention to the question of controlling the industry, the question of marketing, and the question of how to protect the industry with the help of the labour organisations and the small Indian industrialists. I think some mechanism should be found whereby all these can function together for promoting and advancing the national interests.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Without meaning any disrespect to the hon. Members who participated in this debate, I must confess to myself and to the House that the way the debate

has taken its course has rendered my task rather embarrassing. If I were to confine myself strictly to the issue before the House and say that no one has opposed the increased export duty on tea and so there is nothing to be said, then I might be charged with showing disrespect to the Members of the House, while on the other hand, if I were to take advantage of the line the debate has taken and allow myself to be drawn into all sorts of extraneous matters, I would be absolutely irrelevant to the contents and substance of this Resolution. I should like to take advantage of this opportunity and clarify .....

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: May I ask the hon. Minister which are the points that we raised which are absolutely irrelevant and have nothing to do with this Resolution?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Almost everything that the hon. Member said in his speech was absolutely irrelevant. I may be wrong, but it is my opinion.

*(Shri Biswanath Das rose to interrupt.)*

I am afraid my elder colleague has misunderstood what I intended to convey when I said that those remarks were irrelevant.

SHRI B. GUPTA: We were only trying to make your position relevant to our national interests.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I wish my friend does not interrupt me. By saying that the points raised were irrelevant what I meant to convey was that they were extraneous to the issue now before the House which is this that in view of the tea prices rising in the external market, the Government have been right or wrong in bringing this Resolution before the House in order to mop up some of the money that the tea planters would make by imposing a higher export duty. I am quite sure that my esteemed friend and elder, Mr. Biswanath <sup>T</sup>~>as, does not detect any sense of disrespect in me for him or for the House. The whole debate has taken a turn as if this was a Bill for the development

of the tea industry as a whole. To that extent most of the observations were irrelevant, and if I were to go into all the ramifications of all the observations made, I will have to start with the history of the whole of the tea industry, how matters stood in 1945, what was the crisis which overlook the industry, how much the Indian sector of it suffered, how much the European sector of it suffered, in fact I will have to give the whole history of the tea industry from the beginning, and I am quite sure in my mind that I would be irrelevant if I were to do that. I shall briefly refer to the central point in Mr. Gupta's speech without which his speeches would not be complete, *i.e.* about the European interests. Now, our position in that matter is clear. We had a policy statement in 1948. In respect of new industries, we have always insisted upon, except in very rare cases like the refineries, a majority of capital being Indian, upon a majority of the management being Indian, and we do not propose, except of course where it is absolutely necessary in the national interest to make any exception to that. So far as the earlier ventures are concerned, if I may say so with all respect, hon. Members may talk loosely, but have they ever contemplated on the implications of a logical extension of their proposition and where they would lead us to? I would ask my friend, Mr. Gupta what, if his reasoning is to be accepted and extended, I would happen to our own nationals in Burma, for instance. Lakhs and lakhs of them are there, and they are sending remittances home as they have their family members here. They do business there.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Is it the contention of the hon. Minister.....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Let me complete. I am developing my own line. I never interrupted my hon. friend when he was speaking.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: But we must point out the contradictions.

SHRI B. GUPTA: He asks us a question and J. will answer.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I was on the point that these things are not decided by mere considerations of nationalism. We go to America.....

SHRI B. GUPTA: This is a slander on the people of this country, Sir. Our people do not go there as imperialist exploiters.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: We have gone to America, we have gone to the U.K., we have gone to Russia, for help. We negotiated with Germany for starting a steel factory here. Now, we have to think of the whole world, and in view of the policy of the Government, taken as a whole, let my friends take it once and for all that so far as we are concerned, unless and until our own national interests require it, we shall not go in the direction which my friend, Mr. Gupta, wants us to go.

SHRI B. GUPTA: That is the whole trouble.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am very sorry that Mr. Gupta does not understand these important matters.

*(Shri B. Gupta rose to interrupt.)*

Mr. Gupta must some time or other learn that, when another speaker does not yield, the only thing he should do is to sit down. I never interrupted him when he spoke nor am I likely to do it in future.

Sir, having decided on this policy in our national interests as a whole, our idea is to allow them to function so long as they do not work in any unfair manner against the interests of labour or against our national interests, and we will not follow the way Mr. Gupta wants us to go. In the context of the policy that we are pursuing, we will not follow a policy, of rigid exclusion. If we are to take over all these non-national concerns, very many crores of rupees would be necessary, and we cannot afford it.

So long as our national interests do not suffer, we will allow them to remain here—of course we cannot compel them to remain here—but so long, as we allow them to remain here, we shall allow them to remain here.

Then, Sir, I understand Mr. Malkani spoke about the desirability of having co-operative farming instead of these big estates. My hon. friend knows quite well how difficult it has been to develop the co-operative movement in this country. Even in matters where we want co-operation, e.g., consumers' co-operation, it has been difficult to develop it. Somehow or other, our people have not got the spirit of co-operation. Supposing some farmers to Assam start co-operative farming, Government would certainly welcome it and would look upon it with great kindness. That is one proposition to make, and the other proposition is how to do it. Co-operation ultimately is something which comes from within; it cannot be imposed from outside. It is not something which can be brought about by issuing an order. We cannot bring about co-operation as if by a magic wand. Certainly, we would welcome it if people start co-operative farming. Then my friend, Mr. Mazumdar questioned the implementation of the Plantation Labour Act. I would not like to go into that question now and take the time of the House but if he has any specific instances, certainly they would be useful to us and if he will be kind enough to take up these questions with us as Ministers or even on the floor of this House, they would be useful material to traverse.

PROP. N. R. MALKANI: What about control of domestic prices within certain limits?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I was coming to that. There was one point made about which we are also anxious, viz., price control. As the House knows, we were rather chary of assuming powers in respect of legislation for essential commodities. It goes without saying that in a State like ours, where we would like to have

larger latitude, we would not like to extend the number of commodities whose prices we would control. Just at the present moment, in respect of tea, as in respect of many other articles whose prices depend upon supply and demand it is absolutely impossible for us to take any operational step to enable ourselves to say that 'This shall be the price and you shall not sell it above that\*'. That is the principal difficulty. In fact when the President of the Associated Chambers of Commerce from Calcutta, Mr. Mackinly was here last year, I took up this question with him. I said "The internal price for the consumer has been rising"—not five times as my friend Mrs. Farmanand said, but certainly they have risen—"and the small consumer finds it a little hard to pay a higher price for the tea which he consumes every day" and then, well, in a way I said "You know and I know that we have not the wish to control the internal price of tea or external price of tea but something must be done about that." I join with Prof. Malkani and other friends in the feeling that they gave expression to that some method is found out by which the internal price of tea should be controlled. Likewise it is necessary to have all articles of necessity to be available to the consumers at a fairly reasonable price. Well, that is a thing in which everybody concerned—the trade, for instance, the grower—is interested. It is not only the grower and the blender that are responsible for the prices. The latest that we have heard is about the export quotas. The prices of export quotas have been skyrocketing and people sell the export quotas for very high prices with the result that the price of tea in foreign countries has risen up. Therefore it is a national problem which is really difficult, from the strictly legal point of view., -But I do hope that the concerned interests will make it possible for the consumer to get tea at more rational prices. •>

SHRI H. \*>. SAKSENA:' By what time?

PROF. N. R. MALKANI: When there is a depression?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My friend knows that I have no answer for it. Then my friend Mr. Biswanath Das raised some points. I hope by now he has shed off the hurt that I did him by saying that his observations—some of them—were irrelevant. I did not mean any harm or insult to him .....

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: It is not to me, it is to you more.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Not at all, because there was a kingdom in which the whole country was determined to be irrelevant and the king could do nothing. That is not the case here, with all respect. But somehow or other, if my friend pursues the matter. I will tell him a small story as to relevancy. Once there was a district magistrate in my district who one day discovered that a certain Marathi word was derived from a certain Kannada word. The Marathi word was Ghoda and the Kannada word was Kudure. I said that it passed my comprehension because the derivation was not relevant. He was not angry. He said 'No, no, it is quite all right. Kudure. Ghudure. Ghoda. That way any word could be derived from any other word. I was reminded of the story because strictly speaking, everything that has been said could be relevant in that sense because if we wanted to levy import and export duty., you must make a case for it. If you want to do so, you must show for instance that you are trying to control the internal price for the consumer. Quite all right because to the extent of three annas the prices will be depressed. So it is relevant for you to say that it is not going to be lower for the consumer because you are not taking care about the plantation interests. If that were not so, certain profits from outside the country will remain inside the country and they may reduce the price. I will not wax eloquent on that. I was touching the point about

[Shri D. P. Karmarkar.]

the consumer. That is where we are helpless. There is no way by which we can say 'This shall be the price of tea and tea shall be sold at such and such a price'.

PROF. N. R. MALKANI: What happens to Section 13 of the Act which is final .....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: If my friend discusses it and if we can find a solution, we may consider it. My friend Mr. Biswanath Das said something about British Officers and the rest and also about import of machinery in our market. About the import of plywood. I said a moment ago that it was past history. We were not very happy about the plywood being routed from Finland through United Kingdom to India. We stopped that because we are producing the whole of our requirements and we are now allowing only 5 per cent, of our requirements simply to keep up a slender competition. My hon. friend will be happy to learn that even if it was to be imported in large quantities, they would not now come through U.K. They would come straight from Finland to India. The arrangement by which they used to be routed through U.K. is now a past story. Then something was said about delegations and somebody asked "Why do you send delegations abroad?"

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: With a Britisher as leader I said.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: With Britishers? The Britishers came with us. The Leader of the Delegation that was sent to Canada and U.S.A. was our Consul-General from New York. He led the Delegation. There were a couple of Europeans along with them because we do require them. They hold lot of interests here. They are interested in having their own self-interest and they are also serving our interests. We do want to have them not because they are British but because they are concerned with the tea interests in this country.

Something was said about tea auctions. We would like to bring the auctions from London to Calcutta but as the House might know one of the biggest handicaps in Calcutta was the want of sufficient warehouses. Our anxiety was there and perhaps hon. Members of this House might know of the press note we have issued on the 15th October 1954. We have constituted a Committee to examine the whole question. The Chairman is Mr. U. K. Ghoshal. There are three Europeans—Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Culver-house and Mr. Mackay Tallack.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Throw them out.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Then there is Mr. Da Costa. Of course it is much easier to throw them out than throw out such obiters which are not necessary. Then there is Mr. Barua and Mr. M. K. Sinha. This Committee will go into the question of the different aspects connected with this question *viz.*, the mechanism of the present quantitative distribution of exportable tea between auctions held in India and in London, the method of disposal of the tea thus sold—down to the level of blenders and packers, financial arrangements between producers and brokers on the one hand and between brokers and buyers on the other—both in India and in London, the rates of arrivals (quantitative) at warehouses and the duration of shortage in warehouses—in India as well as in London, and there are many other allied questions also concerned with this question of tea auctions. We are awaiting the report of this Committee and we do hope to evolve, after this report is submitted, some suitable organization by which actually auction could be brought.....

SHRI B. GUPTA: What is the total number of Members in that Committee?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: My hon. friend will pick that up tomorrow morning from the proceedings because I have given the number.....

SHRI B. GUPTA: Have you given all the names?

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: Yes, I have given all the names, if he did not mind it. There we are and that leaves me very few points which I can give myself the luxury of dealing with, within the short time at my disposal.

Now I would like to go into one other thing. Just as we do with food-grains—we talk in terms of increasing the acreage under food growth—we also speak in terms of increasing the growth of a particular commodity per acre. This looks all very logical. In

respect of a commodity like 4 P.M. tea there is what you may

call striking a balance as a whole. One could not argue assuming for a moment that We are producing X million pounds of tea and that if we go on adding to this production—then we would get more and more of national wealth. We knew the recent happening, about a year or so back, when we found that between ourselves, Ceylon, Indonesia and other tea growing areas of the world, we were producing a larger volume of tea than what the world could consume; and we were face to face with the prospect of tea prices going down. It is not as if with an increase of 25 per cent, in the tea acreage, the world would consume 25 per cent, more of tea from you, because we are dealing with a commodity which depends upon the demand for its prosperity. In fact, Sir, one of the agreements we had some Ave years back was that there should be an increase of 5 per cent., or a little more, in the tea acreage. We reserved the right to increase it. But last year the growers themselves by mutual agreement decided that it was necessary in the interest of the tea industry itself to curtail the tea production by about 12J per cent. And now, this year what has happened! Just the opposite has happened and the world's supply of tea is far less than the demand for it, with the result that prices have sky-rocketed. So it is not a correct proposition to say that if we increase the acreage, say double it, or if we double our production, then we are going to get double the

benefit. That is precisely the way to destroy the tea industry, because the grower would not get the price which he ought to get. There is something like an economic price in the case of tea as in the case of coffee and other special industries. This is an industry in which we cannot have under production, for that would be bad. We cannot have over-production either, for that also would harm the industry. I want to make this point quite clear. It is an important matter. We cannot undertake a blind propaganda and go on increasing the acreage under tea and thus increasing our production. We have to adjust our production *visa-vis* the demand<sup>1</sup>. If the demand goes up by 30 per cent., then the world prices would go up by 30 per cent, and you may have to adjust your production accordingly. If you increase your production irrespective of the demand, it will be a dangerous thing.

Secondly, something was said regarding the situation in 1952. Well, somehow or other, after the war, tea passed through various vicissitudes. What did we find in 1952? Some hon. friends spoke as if the major advantage went to the better or larger growers. Normally the larger growers, whether they are Indian or foreign—and a lot of them, a number of them, are foreigners—they are able to produce better grades of tea, maybe because of their greater resources of larger finances or because they own larger estates. And that was not the type of growers that suffered bad days in 1952. It was the small grower who suffered much more. Well, I would not like to tire the patience of the House by recounting here all that the Government did, the steps that they took, to deal with that difficult situation. Sir, we sent an official team to Assam specially for this purpose and then that team proposed many measures, including the deferred payment of excise duty, relaxation of the rules regarding advance payment of income-tax, improved railway facilities, provision of finance to estates and so on. I need hardly take up the time of the

[Shri D. P. Karaarkar.]

House by referring to the various measures that the Government took. Thanks partly to the measures that the Government took and, thanks partly to the improvement in the situation itself, the industry recovered and to-day the position is that prices have gone very high. For instance, in respect of the Middle East, though there may be a shrinkage in the volume, the total value derived by the tea-growers for their exports is likely to be a little more, though the volume, as I said, may be a little less.

Something was said also about the labour in the tea industry. But it appears to me that it is in a better position—though I will not say that all is O.K. with the tea labour—than labour in some other industries. Tea labour is better looked after than corresponding labour in some other industries. They have got some privileges. Tea labour requires skill of a special kind and these people have the required skill, and on the whole I would say that labour in the tea plantations is a little better placed than labour in other parts of the country. They have to work for a little less time and they earn a little more.

SHRI B. GUPTA: A fairy tale.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: And they are slightly better than their counter parts in some other industries, just as I would say, it cannot be gainsaid that a textile labourer in Bombay derives better payments than a weaver in an outlying district. By which of course, I don't mean to say that this labour does not need any relief at all. (Intermission by Shri B. Gupta.) I may tell my hon. friend that as long as I am on my legs, as long as I do not finish, I will not yield. And so let him take some other opportunity, some future Tea Bill, to make his observations.

Sir, I would not like to detain the House any more on this subject. I have just touched on the question of the auctions and some other points

also within the time permitted to me, and I really feel that I have taken longer than it is absolutely necessary for this purpose, for the House is fairly well aware of the various steps that Government is taking regarding the tea industry. And so to come back to the motion about which there is no controversy. Sir, I commend the Resolution be approved.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Sir, just one question which primarily concerns this Resolution. It is this. Under section 10, sub-section (2) of the Tea Act, I had asked the hon. Minister to state what portion of the money of the budget of Rs. 53,50,000 for 1953-54 was spent for labour amenities, etc., and also what fraction of portion of this enhanced cess is to go to them or as a reserve for .....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: To which Budget is the hon. Member, referring? For what purpose was it made?

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: The sum of Rs. 53,50,000 budgeted for the year.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: For the Tea Board?

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Yes, the sum of Rs. 53,50,000 set apart for the Central Tea Board for the year 1953-54.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not concerned with the Tea Board.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I know, Sir, but it has a very important bearing on the issue before the House, for section 10 in sub-section (2) says that money out of the fund may be set apart for labour amenities and some allied objects. Therefore this House has the right to know what amount out of the previous sums were allotted for labour amenities and also what portion they are going to apportion of this increased cess for the same 111 impose?



MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Has the hon. Minister any answer?

SHRI D. P. KARMAKAR: Sir, the provision for 1954-55 is Rs. 4 lakhs and that for 1955-56—the proposed allocation for this purpose is Rs. 10 lakhs. I should like to make it clear that this export duty will straight go into the finances of the country, into the national exchequer.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Sir, on, a point of clarification .....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Sir, you may rule me out, but all I want is an important clarification.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, yes. What is the clarification sought?

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: Under the declaration, it is hereby declared that it is expedient in the public interest....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But we are not concerned with that, Mr. Saksena. If you want to ask anything about the Resolution, please ask it, but not about the Tea Board Bill.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: Sir, I want a little information from the hon. Minister. We are told that the Government is considering an increase in the export quota, they may increase the percentage of export quota of tea.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But you cannot make another speech.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: No, Sir. The House is anxious to keep down the prices in the internal market. But if the Government is considering an increase in the export quota, then naturally the prices in the internal market will go up. So what is the policy of the Government in this respect? What policy does the Government propose to follow in this respect? They have already released 129 per cent, and the rumours go to show that there will be an increase of

another 6 per cent. What is the policy of the Government? That is what I want to know.

SHRI D. P. KARMAKAR: The hon. Member doubtless knows that it will be entirely wrong for me to say anything on that matter, for it is more or less a business question. So I refuse to answer it either inside or outside the House.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Very well. Now I will put the Resolution to the House. The question is:

"That in pursuance of sub-section (2) of section 4A of the Indian Tariff Act, 1934 (XXXII of 1934), the Rajya Sabha hereby approves of the Notification of the Government of India in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, S.R.O. No. 3161, dated the 1st October, 1954, by which the export duty on tea was enhanced from four annas to seven annas per lb. with effect from the date of the said notification."

The motion was adopted.

### THE HINDU MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE BILL, 1952

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill.

SHRI S. MAHANTY (Orissa): Sir, before my hon. friend is allowed to proceed with this Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill, I wish to rise on a point of order. The point of order is briefly this that I venture to think that the (Hindu Marriage and Divorce Bill, 1952, as it has emerged out of the Joint Select Committee is *ultra vires* of the Constitution. If you would permit me, Sir, I would only take five minutes to elaborate my point for such consideration as it may deserve.

Now, Sir, article 15(1) of the Constitution says .....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Under what rules in the Rules of Business are you raising this point of order?