

Committees of Privileges of the Lok Sabha and the Council of States, which was presented to the House on the 23rd August 1954."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That this House approves the recommendations contained in the Report of the Joint Sitting of the Committees of Privileges of the Lok Sabha and the Council of States which was presented to the House on the 23rd August 1954."

The motion was adopted.

#### RESOLUTION REGARDING ENHANCEMENT OF EXPORT DUTY ON TEA—*Continued*

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA (Bihar): Mr. Chairman, before I proceed with my speech today, I would like to correct an obvious slip which occurred in my speech of the other day. I said that the dividend declared by the tea companies in 1953 related to the year 1952. Obviously that is not the fact and the dividend declared in 1953 does not relate to the working year 1952. The fact is that the tea companies fared badly in the year 1952.

On the last working day, I explained at some length that there was a rise in both the internal and the external demands for our tea and consequently the prices were high. I was referring to the Economic Adviser's wholesale price index which includes both the prices—the prices in the internal and the external markets, for our tea. You will find that taking 1939 as the base year, the price indices in the year 1950, for the months of August, September and October were very high, being 461, 460 and 460 respectively.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

For the year 1951, the highest figure was in August, being 439. In 1952 the price index went very low, being 191 in October 1952. But in 1953, you will find that there has

been a tendency for an increase in the tea prices. The year opened with a figure of 235 in January 1953 but by December it went up to 474. This rising tendency was continued during the year 1954 and it stood at the very high figure of 705 in September of this year. It will thus be seen that there was an increase of 350 per cent. between the years 1950 and 1954 and a rise of as much as 500 per cent. between October 1952 and September 1954. Therefore I emphasise that the price of tea is very high, not because of the duty, but the duty was levied because of the high prices. We should not, therefore, have any fears that the consumption of tea would fall because of the imposition of this duty, or that this duty would be passed on to the consumers. I am pretty sure that this duty will come out of the windfall of profits that the industry and trade are making today.

Sir, I would now refer to a very disquieting feature in our export trade. Today we are governed by the International Trade Agreement of 1950-55, so far as exports are concerned and I understand that Government have released 129 per cent. for export. The system of export quotas for tea was devised as long back as 1933 and the primary object at that time was to restrict or rather to curtail the tea crop in India. This system of quota has since then not been changed in any manner so as to meet adequately the changing circumstances; and this is now more urgent because the production has lagged behind the demand. The most disquieting feature of this out-dated system of export quotas for tea is that it allows persons not in the remotest manner connected with the tea industry to take away sizable chunks of the profits. Several tea producers do not have enough production to meet the full quota allotted to them and this is where precisely the outsider comes in to manipulate and take advantage of the situation.

In view of these facts, it is imperative that the present system of export quotas be drastically overhauled and

brought to deal with the realities of the situation of today rather than that of yester years.

Sir, here I will give you a very interesting quotation from "The Indian Finance" of November 20th where under the heading "Export Quota Price" it is stated:

"The price of export quota rights has risen further from 189 pies per pound last week to 202 pies this week."

And here I would like the House to appreciate that this is the cost of export quota rights which does not include the price of the tea, but it is barely the cost or the price of the chit of paper—the Export Quota Licence.

"This demonstrates the results of a policy which deprives the genuine producer and exporter of the full value of his tea, and yields a premium to any middleman who can corner the export rights at the right time. The cost of the quota, which was about 148 pies per pound on November 1, touched 182 pies immediately after the announcement of the increase in the export quota. The present rate is 28 pies higher than the previous record of 1941 when export rights fetched 174 pies as a result of the sudden withdrawal of Indonesia as a supplier of tea in the world market."

Therefore, you will find that the price of the export quota rights is even higher than what it was during the days when the British were ruling this country. If there is a rise in the price it should go to the benefit of those who are engaged in the industry, of those who are engaged in the trade and also this should be shared by the Government by the imposition of a duty. But I do not see any ground to permit the middleman, the speculator to take advantage of the rise in prices and I feel

that this continuation of the old quota system is helping this speculation. I would, therefore, urge upon the Government to take immediate steps to stop this speculation on tea licences and I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what he proposes to do in the matter.

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Lastly, Sir, I would like to touch one point and it is this that the effort of the Tea Board should be to build up a stable market for our tea in the world market. We do not deny the immediate importance of the U.S.A. market for our tea—and it is good that we are doing our best to expand the market there—but we all know, Sir, that the purchasing power of the people of U.S.A. is very high. And rich people are always very discriminative and my fears are that ultimately our competitor, Ceylon, which produces better quality than us may scope over us; Ceylon will get the U.S. market because of the better quality of tea produced. I would, therefore, submit that the Tea Board should take up, along with the due attention to be paid to the U.S. market, the question of developing other areas where we can have a more stable market. I find that the import of tea by the Middle Eastern countries and also some countries of Europe is very negligible. There appears to be a good market and if we can develop the tea drinking habit in those countries by suitable propaganda, we can develop a good market. I think this market will remain with us because people in those areas would like to have cheap tea.

Thank you, Sir.

प्रो० एन० आर० मलकानी (नामनिर्देशित):

उप-सभापति जी, यह जो प्रस्ताव पेश किया गया है उसे मैं स्वीकार करता हूँ और इसमें जो कर चार आने से बढ़ा कर सात आने रखा गया है, वह भी मुझ को स्वीकार है, अगर इसमें भी ज्यादा बढ़ा देते, आठ आने कर देते, दुगुना कर देते

या उससे भी बढ़ा कर नौ आने कर देते तो भी ज्यादा खुशी से उसे स्वीकार कर लेता । मैं जानता हूँ कि सीलोन में चाय का कर एक रुपया रखा गया है जब कि हमारे यहाँ चार आने से बढ़ा कर सात आने किया गया है । मैं मानता हूँ कि इससे भी ज्यादा बढ़ा दिया जाता जो ज्यादा अच्छा होता । तो भी जैसा है मैं उसे स्वीकार करता हूँ ।

श्रीमन् जी, मैं मानता हूँ कि चाय की खपत सिर्फ हिन्दुस्तान में नहीं बल्कि दुनिया में बढ़ रही है और बड़े जोरों से बढ़ रही है । हिन्दुस्तान की बसासत भी बढ़ रही है, लेकिन हिन्दुस्तान में चाय पीने की आदत भी बढ़ रही है । जहाँ कहीं शराबखोरी बढ़ होगी, दारू पर निषेध होगा, वहाँ चाय का इस्तेमाल ज्यादा होने लगेगा, यह मैं मानता हूँ । मैंने देखा है कि मद्रास में काफी का प्रयोग बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ गया है और बम्बई में चाय का नशा बहुत बढ़ गया है, और यहाँ पर भी बढ़ने वाला है । लेकिन सबसे ज्यादा जो हमारी चाय की आय या आमदनी होती है वह हिन्दुस्तान के बाहर होती है । हमारे यहाँ जहाँ कि चाय की पैदावार होती है, उसका एक छोटा हिस्सा खपत होता है, लेकिन ज्यादा हिस्सा बाहर ही जाता है । बाहर के मुल्कों में यूनाइटेड किंगडम और यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स आफ अमेरिका में जिम् कदर चाय की सबसे ज्यादा खपत है उस की सब को खबर है । यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स आफ अमेरिका के बारे में कहा जाता है कि वहाँ फी आदमी पीछे साल भर में १४० कप चाय के पिये जाते हैं जब कि हमारे यहाँ शायद पंद्रह-बीस फी आदमी के पीछे होगा । मैंने सुना है, वहाँ काफी की खपत फी आदमी पीछे ४०० कप है ।

उनके पास बहुत रुपया होता है, सब कुछ पीते हैं । वे चाहें जो करें, पीकर के मौज करें, मगर उनको धन्यवाद है कि सब कुछ पीकर भी वे हमारी चाय को पसन्द करते हैं, उन्हें हमारे यहाँ के टी की क्वालिटी अच्छी लगती है । इस दृष्टि से हमें यह कोशिश करनी चाहिये कि हमारी वहाँ जो मार्केट है उसे मजबूत करें और चाय की निकासी का हम अच्छी तरह से बढ़ोबस्त करें जिससे वहाँ हमारा मार्केट पक्का रहे । यह सब तो ठीक है, लेकिन श्रीमान् जी, सब को दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि इस चीज की हिन्दुस्तान के अन्दर जो मार्केट है उस पर कोई देखरेख रखने वाला नहीं है, उसमें कभी तेजी रहती है, कभी मंदी रहती है और सट्टेबाजी चलती है । हम देखते हैं और आपने देखा होगा कि हमारी चाय महगी हो गई है, छः आने में सवा रुपया एक पौड पीछे फर्क हो गया है । यह फर्क मेरे ख्याल में बहुत ज्यादा है, यानी कि १५ फी सदी से लेकर ५० फी सदी तक चाय के दाम में बढ़ती हुई है । मैं समझता हूँ, इस कदर तेजी हो जाय यह हमारे वास्ते ठीक नहीं है । जिन लोगों के पास पैसा ज्यादा है, पीने की आदत ज्यादा है उनके लिये तो यह ठीक हो सकता है, लेकिन हम लोग ज्यादा पैसा नहीं दे सकते हैं, गरीब आदमी ज्यादा पैसा देना बर्दाश्त नहीं कर सकता है । गरीब आदमी का दूध भी गया, दही भी गया, लस्सी भी गई, दारू भी गया, उसे कम से कम चाय तो मिलनी चाहिये । हमारे देश में चाय इतनी पैदा होती है जिसकी कोई हद नहीं, इसलिए हमारे देश के अन्दर तो उसके दाम ठीक रहने चाहिये और उन्हें बढ़ने नहीं देना चाहिये । मुझे यह भी दुख के साथ कहना पड़ता है

[प्रो० एन० आर० मलकानी]

कि जो दाम बढ़े हैं वह हमारी कमजोरी की वजह से बढ़े हैं । मैंने टी एकट को देखा है, उसे आपने भी देखा होगा, उसमें हर किस्म के अधिकार, हर किस्म के अस्त्रियारात सरकार के पास हैं जिनसे वह इस चीज को रोक सकती है, वह यह कह सकती है कि कौन बेचेगा, कितना बेचेगा, किस व्यक्ति को बेचेगा, वगैरा । लेकिन मैं मानता हूँ कि उस अधिकार का कोई भी उपयोग नहीं हुआ है ।

मेरा ख्याल है सरकार इस बारे में सो रही है जो कि मुझे ठीक नहीं मालूम देता है । आज हमारे देश में चाय ज्यादातर गरीब लोग ही पीते हैं । इसलिए गरीबों की प्याली मंहुगी नहीं होनी चाहिये । सरकार को इस बारे में ज्यादा होशियार होना चाहिये, जाग्रत होना चाहिये, टी को प्राइस पर उसका पूरी तरह से कन्ट्रोल होना चाहिये । टी बोर्ड का जो फंक्शन है, मेरे ख्याल में उसका उचित रूप से प्रयोग नहीं किया जा रहा है । सरकार को इस सम्बन्ध में पूरी तरह से जाग्रत होना चाहिये और टी बोर्ड का उचित रूप से इस्तेमाल किया जाना चाहिये । टी बोर्ड की हालत आज यह है कि वह जनता की भलाई की ओर ध्यान नहीं दे रही है, इसकी ओर हमारी सरकार को बहुत होशियार होना है ।

इसके साथ ही साथ मुझे टी प्लान्टेशन के बारे में भी कुछ कहना है, मुझे इस क्षेत्र में जो हालत दिखाई देती है वह उचित मालूम नहीं देती है । सरकार को इस बारे में भी विचारना चाहिये, सोचना चाहिये कि इस हालत को किस तरह से ठीक किया जा सकता है । जब मैं बिहार में काम करता था तो मुझे इन प्लान्टेशनों को देखने का मौका मिला और मुझे यह

अनुभव हुआ कि वहां पर एक फ्यूडल सिस्टम चल रहा है । जहां पर चाय पैदा होती है उस जमीन पर बड़े बड़े पूंजीपतियों का अधिकार है, कारखाने पर भी उन्हीं का अधिकार है, इस तरह से सारे चाय के उद्योग पर पूंजीपतियों का ही अधिकार जमा हुआ है । सब से ज्यादा खूबी की बात यह है कि इन सब पर बाहर वालों का कब्जा है । इन प्लान्टेशनों में किसी तरह के ट्रेड यूनियनों का कायम किया जाना बहुत ही मुश्किल काम है, वहां पर ट्रेड यूनियनों की ताकत बहुत कम है । मैं अपने अनुभव से कहता हूँ कि टी प्लान्टेशन की हालत बहुत खराब है, सरकार को इस सम्बन्ध में विचार करना चाहिये और कुछ न कुछ वहां की जनता के लिये करना चाहिये जोकि इस देश की ही है । इस दुखदाई स्थिति को सुधारने के लिए जब तक सरकार कोई कदम नहीं उठायेगी तब तक वहां के लोगों की स्थिति ठीक नहीं हो सकती है । हमने देश से जमींदारों का उन्मूलन किया और कर रहे हैं तो हम क्यों न सोचें कि प्लान्टेशन में इस तरह के जो बाहर के जमींदार अभी तक कायम हैं उनको क्यों न दफा किया जाय ।

मुझे खबर है कि वहां पर एक प्लान्टर के पास १०० से एक हजार एकड़ तक जमीन है । एक एकड़ जमीन के दाम वहां पर चार हजार से पांच हजार तक हैं । जिस जमीन में चाय पैदा होती है वह बहुत उपजाऊ होती है इसकी वजह से उसकी कीमत भी बहुत हो जाती है । मेरा ख्याल यह है कि एक ही आदमी के पास हजार एकड़ जमीन नहीं होनी चाहिये । हर एक आदमी के पास कुछ न कुछ जमीन होनी चाहिये । आज हालत यह है कि जिस के चाय के बाग होते हैं, उसका

कारखाना भी होता है, खरीदने वाला और बिक्री करने वाला भी वही होता है। इस तरह से वह एक जमींदार बना हुआ है। यह बात बहुत दुखदाई है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि जिस तरह से हमने भारत में जमींदारी प्रथा का उन्मूलन कर दिया है उसी तरह से प्लेटेशन के जमींदारों का उन्मूलन करना चाहिये। हम को यह प्रबन्ध करना चाहिये कि हर एक के पास १० एकड़ से ५० एकड़ तक जमीन हो, इससे ज्यादा किसी को न दी जाय। अगर हम इस तरह की व्यवस्था कर देंगे तो वहाँ की जनता को, जो कि इनमें काम करती है, आराम मिल जायेगा। टी प्लेटेशन को हिन्दुस्तान में सौ वर्ष हो गये हैं। एक एक प्लॉट तीस तीस, चालीस चालीस साल चलता है। वहाँ जो लोग रहते हैं वे जानते हैं कि किस तरह से उसको उपजाएँ, पाले पोसे। और जब वे अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं तो इसमें किसी खास एक्सपर्ट ऐडवाइस की जरूरत नहीं है। मैं मानता हूँ कि जो वहाँ के फार्मर्स हैं, जो किसान हैं, उन लोगों को यह जमीन दी जाय। मैं यह भी मानता हूँ कि उनके जो कारखाने हैं, वे जहाँ हैं वही बने रहे और उनको सहकारी मंडल बना करके चलाया जाय। किसान जो कि पैदा करते हैं वे आज इसके बाहर हैं। मैं मानता हूँ कि दस साल के अन्दर, पंद्रह साल के अन्दर हम लोगों को जरूर ऐसे सरिस्ता का स्थापन करना चाहिये। तब मैं कह सकूँगा कि वहाँ यह सरिस्ता ठीक चल रहा है।

मैं आपसे कहना चाहता हूँ कि चाय आसाम में होती है। आसाम हमारी सरहद पर है और सरहद पर ट्राइबल आदमी रहते हैं। उनको हमने सदियों

से छोड़ दिया है। वे अपने को आज़ाद मानते हैं। वे आज़ादी चाहते हैं, स्वतंत्रता चाहते हैं, आटोनामस स्टेट चाहते हैं, कुछ न कुछ चाहते हैं। उनके अन्दर किश्चियन मिशनर्स का बहुत ज्यादा प्रभाव रहता है। मुझ को दुःख से कहना पड़ता है कि वहाँ प्लॉटर्स ज्यादा करके परदेशी हैं, अंग्रेज हैं, जो पूँजीवादी होते हैं, रिएक्शनरी होते हैं, कंजर्वेटिव होते हैं, एडवांसड नहीं होते हैं। इस तरह सरहद पर हजारों आदमी जो कि परदेशी हैं, पूँजीपति हैं, जिन का खयाल पुराने ढंग का और रिएक्शनरी है, वह सरिस्ता मुझ को पसन्द नहीं आता है। यह मोचने की बात है, विचार करने की बात है। इस वास्ते मेरा कहना है कि सरकार को सोच विचार कर वहाँ भी एक माडर्न, आधुनिक सरिस्ता लाना चाहिये जैसा कि हम सारे हिन्दुस्तान में ला रहे हैं। यह जब होगा, तभी वहाँ के आदमी सुखी रहेंगे।

मैं कहना चाहता हूँ कि आसाम का मुल्क अच्छा है, लेकिन वहाँ बहुत गरीबी है। वहाँ के लोग रोते हैं कि हमारे यहाँ कोई बड़े कारखाने नहीं हैं और जो हैं भी वे परदेशी हैं। जो टी प्लेटेशन है वह परदेशी है और जो डिगबोई में एक बड़ा कारखाना है वह भी परदेशी है। जो एक और बड़ा कारखाना खुलने वाला है वह भी परदेशी होगा। इस तरह जो नफा होता है वह बाहर चला जाता है। वहाँ के लोग रोते हैं कि हमें कोई नफा नहीं मिलता है। जो नफा होता है उसको परदेशी लोग बाहर ले जाते हैं। हमारे घर में कुछ रोज़गार बढ़े लेकिन उसका नफा बाहर भेज दिया जाता है, यह चीज हमको बिल्कुल नागवार

[प्रो० एन० आर० मलकानी]

है। तो मेरा फिर यह निवेदन है कि इस पर सोचना चाहिये और जिस तरह से टी का सरिस्ता अभी चल रहा है उसको बदलना चाहिये, ताकि टी ट्रेड पर, उसके दाम पर, उसकी खपत पर और उसकी पैदाइश पर हमारा दखल हो। उसमें जो नफा होता है वह बढ़ने वाला है। इसलिये हमारे वास्ते यह सोचना जरूरी है कि जब यह चीज सुधर रही है तो इस पर हमारा क्यों न ज्यादा दखल हो।

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, this Resolution seeks to enhance the export duty on tea and we have been told by the Government spokesman who moved the Resolution in the House the other day, that this enhanced rate of duty has been fixed after considering the probable effects on the export trade and the reaction of the tea trade has been also not unfavourable. Sir, it has been also said that the intention of enhancing the rate of export duty is to mop up a part of the high profits now being earned by the tea industry. Now, with that I have no disagreement. Tea prices have skyrocketed both outside India and inside. Export prices and also internal prices have increased very much. According to some figures that I have collected, Sir, the tea prices at the Calcutta (Export) auctions were as follows. At a sale held on the 26th October, medium Assam Broken Pekoe was sold at Rs. 3-4-0 per lb. as against Rs. 1-12-0 a year ago. This means a rise of 86 per cent. in the price of tea. If we take the London tea sales, there also the price per lb. in the third week of October was 6/8d. as against 3/9d. a year ago, nearly 100 per cent. rise. In the internal sales also the price of tea is very high. So it is found that tea prices have also skyrocketed. And as regards tea profits Mr. Sinha the other day gave some figures. So I shall only cite a few figures because I do not like to tire out the House with a volume of figures. Sir, a few gardens under the managing agency of Messrs.

Andrew Yule & Co. had declared dividends in 1953, some to the tune of 25 per cent. some others 30 per cent. and still some more even 45 per cent. I can cite several examples. So there is no doubt that both tea prices and tea profits have now skyrocketed. Government's only consideration, I find, is that a part of these profits should be mopped up and absorbed in the Exchequer by means of the enhanced duty. I have no objection to that and I also agree to the enhancement of the export duty. But what I like to point out, Sir, is this that the Government's only consideration seems to be to mop up only a part of the profits and nothing else. I wonder at it because, Sir, the main question in this connection to be discussed is: Who are getting the cream of profits and how the profits are being utilised? For what purposes are they being utilised? Are they being utilised for the development of our national economy or for purposes which are exactly the opposite? Sir, as is well-known the cream of the profit is being taken by the dominant British interests in the plantations. Sir, even according to the figures supplied by the 'Economic Review' an organ of the All-India Congress Committee, 60.43 per cent. of the total investment in the tea industry is controlled by the United Kingdom. And, Sir, according to the reports of the Rege Committee, 10 leading agency houses control every operation of these tea gardens. That grip of foreign capital is there. It is earning high profits. It has been earning high profits and all these profits are being exported outside India. Even in 1952 when the tea planters tried to make out a case that there had been a crisis in the tea industry, even in that year some gardens declared dividends. Of course for the small Indian gardens that year was a bad year, a year of difficulty if not of crisis, but even in that year some of the big European planting companies declared dividends. But I find, Sir, that the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry, who was so indignant about the grip of foreign capital in the coffee and rubber industries and was indignant about the

abnormally high profits which they have been making by those industries and taking those profits outside India, he in this case has not come out with any such indignation and there is not even the ghost of that anger here, not even a pale reflection of that anger. Here the main question is that the profit, the cream of the profit, is being taken outside India but I find the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry does not pay any consideration to that fact. Sir, apart from that, there is the main question of the injustice that was done to tea garden labour in the year 1952. In the year 1952 when a hue and cry about the crisis was made by the planters, it was pointed out by many of us, particularly those of us who are in the plantation labour movement, that this crisis is actually a crisis **manœuvred and engineered by these dominating British interests** and actually it happened that when the burden of the so-called crisis was shifted on to the shoulders of the workers, tea prices began to rise. Sir, at that time in this opinion that the so-called crisis is actually a man-made crisis, all sections of the plantation labour movement were unanimous. Still what happened? It is an old story and so I would not like to repeat in detail but it requires some recapitulation. After much agitation by the planters for the abolition of the export duty a departmental committee was set up to enquire into that question. We were naturally apprehensive that under the name of this enquiry and under the name of this crisis the planters will try to cut down the privileges—not the privileges—but the little amenities which were being at that time enjoyed by the plantation labour. But there were categorical assurances both from the Minister for Commerce and Industry and the Minister for Finance on the floor of both the Houses that that enquiry had nothing to do with the labour and that it was concerned only with the export duty, but what happened gradually is this. After the report of that enquiry was submitted, it was found out that the whole attempt is to place the burden on the shoulders of the labourers.

The Plantation Labour Act was shelved; the food concession enjoyed by the labourers was cut down; their wages in many cases were reduced. These were all legally allowed by the Government in spite of the previous assurances. Now, Sir, we hear—and it is admitted by the Government—that profits are sky high. But has the Government lifted even its little finger to undo the injustice that was done at that time to plantation labour? The Government has done nothing of the kind. At that time in Assam, in West Bengal actually in some places, the wages of the labourers were reduced. Minimum wages had been fixed previously but immediately when the so-called crisis came their wages were revised and reduced in various ways. There was direct reduction, withdrawal of food concession for which even after much agitation they could not obtain complete compensation; then there were ration cuts, wage cuts and work load was fixed in such a manner that the workers could not get even the minimum wages which were fixed after revision. Particularly in West Bengal the workers suffered from a severe wage cut. After much agitation by plantation labour and after voices were raised on the floor of Parliament, a Tripartite Committee was formed and in that Tripartite Committee some agreement about cash conversion of food concession was reached but that was not also full compensation. And that cash conversion was not allowed to the tea garden labour in West Bengal particularly. Moreover, even now the workers have not been compensated for the wage cuts and the ration cuts that were imposed on them in 1952. In 1952, as you know, Sir, a large number of gardens in Assam and West Bengal had closed and most of them were Indian gardens, and nearly 60,000 workers were thrown out of employment. Later on when some of these gardens reopened, all the labourers who were previously thrown out of employment were not taken; a considerable number of them were left unemployed. Now, when the tea prices began to improve and the plantation labour

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movement was asking for a revision of the cut that was imposed on the labour and also for compensation—and we were also raising our voices in Parliament—there was another Tripartite Committee. That Committee considered the question of the implementation of the Plantation Labour Act which was shelved previously on the recommendation of the Departmental Committee that was set up in 1952. Now, Sir, in the Plantation Labour Act there are various provisions; some provisions relate to hours of work; some provisions relate to the rights of the workers; some provisions relate to their living conditions; and some relate to welfare measures such as canteen amenities, housing, drinking water and all these things. We were asking from the very beginning that it was absolutely unjust to put the entire Plantation Labour Act in the shelf. Assuming even that the tea industry was passing through a crisis there was no justification in not implementing some of the provisions of this Act, say, as regards the right of trade union activities, right of access of the public to the workers' settlements etc. But then it was shelved. In 1954 there was, as I said, another Tripartite Committee and this question of the implementation of the Plantation Labour Act was placed before that Committee. The planters both of the North and of the South, both British and Indian, still persisted in their previous plea of the industry passing through a crisis but at that time the tea prices were again improving and what happened as a result? Only those sections of the Plantation Labour Act the implementation of which did not require any expenditure practically, were agreed to by the planters, namely, provision of facilities for drinking water and the like. You will be astounded, Sir, to hear that the facility of having clean healthy drinking water was so long denied to the labourers. Even now it is being denied; that is also my point. Sir, I am sure the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry will try to sidetrack the issue by saying that these complaints are the subject-matter of

investigation either by the State Government or by the Labour Ministry. But, Sir, as the hon. spokesman of the Government on another occasion gave us the idea of collective functioning of the Government and not of departmental functioning, I take this opportunity to point out to the Government what it has done to labour and what it has not done. I want to point out its omissions and commissions. Sir, in the Plantation Labour Act there are provisions for housing.

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI): If I may be permitted to interrupt, I would like to tell my hon. friend that we are bringing another Bill, raising the cess and that increase would be intended specially for the purpose of providing amenities for labour. Perhaps if my hon. friend will concentrate his remarks at that time, it might be more helpful to me and to the Government.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Sir, I shall wait for that Bill. He has announced that a Bill is coming increasing the cess which will be mainly devoted for providing increased amenities for labour. But I do not know when the Bill will come; I do not know when it will be passed. I am not sure about it and I am not sure how it will be implemented. So I think what I was going to say, I must still say and point out to the Government all these things.

Now, Sir, about creches. The tea garden labour population contains a large percentage of women. Perhaps the percentage of women is almost equal to that of men in many cases. But there was no provision for creches in an overwhelming majority of the cases.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You need not go into details.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Sir, when the profits are skyrocketing, even these provisions of the Plantation Labour Act which were so long held in abeyance are not being implemented by the planters. If you want me to be



brief, then, for the sake of brevity, I can mention only the major heads, that is, compensation for the loss which the labourers suffer—compensation due to ration cut, wage cut—then giving them these facilities, medical facilities, crech facilities, housing facilities. These were shelved, as I said, even in the Tripartite Committee on Plantations which met some time in January. These questions were shelved but my point is that when the profits have skyrocketed, there is absolutely no justification for shelving this whole question any longer. I am not saying that all these—the housing programme, the housing difficulties, etc.—can be solved overnight, but the implementation of these things should be taken in hand in right earnest. Unless this is taken in hand in right earnest, the labourers will suffer all the more, even in small matters. For instance, the Plantation Labour Act provides for the supply of blankets, waterproof covers, baskets for plucking of leaves, etc. These were also, in many cases, held in abeyance. My point is that these things should be taken in hand immediately just now.

Then, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to another matter. The Plantation Labour Act permits the Government to frame rules. The rules which were framed by the Government were placed before the Tripartite Committee and the rules which were finalised for implementation were only those having the consent of the planters. That means, when the Government passes an Act, it takes into its hands the power to frame rules, but in actual practice, while framing the rules it depends upon the sweet will of the planters. And the planters have various standing orders terrorising the workers, which were drawn up unilaterally, without taking the consent of the representatives of labour. They are even now refusing to allow the right of access to the plantations, which has been admitted to even by Government spokesmen. All these conditions are still continuing. Sir, I have no doubt that the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry has given an as-

surance about the coming Bill for increasing the cess, but still I would like to point out that when it is admitted on all sides—even by my friend sitting there—that the cream of the profits in this industry is being taken away by foreigners, taken outside India—not utilised in the interests of India—they are building up reserves, not putting anything for labour welfare or for improving the industry—we wish to know what steps the Government propose to take about that matter. For example, about employment of Indian nationals the Government has agreed that there should be more and more employment of Indian nationals. But what is happening in the plantations? In the category of officers with a salary of Rs. 1,000 or above a month, the proportion of foreigners is increasing gradually. All this is happening before our very eyes. On the one hand, profits are skyrocketing—prices even for internal consumption are rising. We do not get good tea at cheap prices. The profits are being exported outside India—not being utilised in India. And I find no trace of any indignation against this state of affairs in the face of the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry. It is all the more surprising that after expressing all his indignation against the foreign vested interests in the coffee and rubber industries, he is totally silent about the same picture in the tea industry. About this increase in the export duty, as I said, I have no objection. The profits should be mopped up. But that is not the ultimate goal—only to mop up the profits. The injustice done to the labourers should be undone. Moreover, steps should be taken—steps which are within the four corners of the Constitution—to see that these abnormally high profits are kept in India, are invested in India for the development of Indian trade, in our national interest and economy. Otherwise, it is mere moonshine to say that there is high profit. We want to mop up only a part of the profit. The reaction of the tea trade to the proposed announcement of increased duty has been not unfavourable. Why should it be un-

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favourable? They know very well what they are getting. They know very well that they have been able to hoodwink the people so long. They have hoodwinked a lot of people. The story of their earning profits is the story of uninterrupted earning rackets, and as has been pointed out by previous speakers, this year their profits are higher than previous years. That is going on. And then the hon. spokesman for Government, the Minister for Commerce and Industry, simply says: "We want to mop up a part of the profit."

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE (SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR): Have you any objection to that?

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: I have agreed to that, but I want to tell you something more. I want you to take all the steps which are possible for you to take—even within the precincts of this Constitution—to see that these profits are mopped up—not only part of the profits are mopped up, but the profits are utilised in the national interest. The reaction of the tea trade will not be unfavourable. They have a guilty conscience. They know that if they do not agree, then the Government will be forced by public pressure to take stringent measures against them—unless the public is able to put pressure on the Government, the Government will not do anything of its own accord. That is why their reaction has not been unfavourable. But it is the duty of all who have the interests of the nation at heart to base their action not on the reaction of the planters, the employers of the tea industry, but to have a clear idea of the whole picture and find out ways and means as to how these profits can be utilised.

Sir, even my friend Mr. Malkani—he has been in this House all these years and he has been listening to me for so long—has been recently to Assam and he now knows the conditions of plantation labour. He is now awake to the danger to a vital sector of our economy being dominated by these foreigners who are dominating against our own interests. He has

come to certain conclusions; he has drawn the conclusion that all plantations should be abolished. There is some truth in some of his observations. The plantations own acres and acres of land which they had obtained for a song a century earlier. A large portion of that land is left fallow. Tea has not been cultivated on it; nor is it being used. It could be used for food production, it could be used for settling landless labour and it could be used for settling refugee families. When there was a rush of refugees here, the Indian Tea Association made a gesture that they would settle refugees there. But later on there were complaints that the refugees were not settled; where they were settled, the conditions were very onerous, very difficult for them. There are many aspects of this thing. So, I wonder how knowing all these things the hon. Ministers come here and say that as the reaction of the trade has not been unfavourable, we are enhancing the duty. They have said that in enhancing the duty, they have taken into consideration the probable effects of this enhancement on our export trade. Sir, we want that our export trade should increase and we know that India is one of the major tea producing countries. But while considering the probable effect on our export trade, if the pattern of our export trade—if the structure of our export trade—is not taken into consideration, then also we shall remain where we were. The main difficulty in connection with the tea industry is that it is dependent on export and export, also, mainly to the United Kingdom. That is how the domination of the foreign interests are maintained. There is a possibility of raising the internal consumption on the one hand; and of expanding the export market to other countries. Exports to the United States are expanding. In this connection, I would like to point out that, when the cry about a crisis was raised, we said: "Even now, in 1952, you can get rid of these British manufactured crisis, if you try to direct our exports in other directions." We suggested "try to export tea to the U.S.S.R., Australia, Burma, Egypt, Iran, etc." Then

the suggestion that the U.S.S.R. may be a consumer of Indian tea was pooh-poohed by hon. Members on the other side. But not even a year had passed when a trade agreement with the U.S.S.R. was concluded and one of the major items for export in Indian commodity was tea. I do not know as yet what efforts have been made in that direction. Then, Sir, our neighbouring countries, Burma, Australia, Iran, etc. used to take Indian tea. I do not know what steps have been taken to explore the possibility of expanding our export there. If this is not done, if the structure of the tea industry, as it is here, is left untouched, if the structure of our export trade is untouched, then what will happen? Today, the profits are skyrocketing. They are earning huge profits. So the planters are agreeing to this enhancement of this duty. But tomorrow, if there is a slight fall, or if the plantation labour movement is sufficiently organised to assert itself for its just demands, then there will be another manipulated crisis, and in the name of that crisis again pressure will be put on the Government, and the Government will yield to that pressure, will succumb to that pressure, and will reduce the export duty at the cost of the national exchequer, and thus will help the planters to shift the burden of the whole thing to the shoulders of the labourers. Therefore, Sir, I would like to point out to my hon. friend. Mr. Karmarkar—I find Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari is not here and has left the House already—that the Government can by all means enhance the export duty, but it should take these steps which are within its power. Then only the *bona fides* of the Government will be proved, otherwise not.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS (Orissa): Sir, if I rise today to speak on this question, I do so because of the unfortunate sight that I was able to see while visiting the tea gardens of Assam, when the tea industry was passing through a crisis. Sir, it may not be out of place to state here that over 35 per cent. of the tea garden labour went from various districts of Orissa.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: We fight for them also, irrespective of it being your State.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I know; I know. During the days of crisis, these unfortunate people who were taken away from their places, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years back, knew not where they came from, absolutely lost contact with their kith and kin, and had no experience of any other occupation except that of plucking tea leaves and tending tea gardens, were thrown out of employment in hundreds and thousands. I have seen those pitiful sights. I have also seen how these unfortunate men from Orissa and other States, thrown into the lap of Assam, were forced to live on roots or were forced to starve. I also know that the Government of Assam, and the I. N. T. U. C. and the Congress organisations in Assam, did their very best to give them help. But what else could they do? The Government offered them the chance to take to labour throwing open the Public Works Department. But these people were not accustomed to hard labour, and the result was that even this act of generosity was of little help to these people. Sir, under these circumstances, I must frankly confess that this unfortunate Central Tea Board did nothing to help them. Sir, this Tea Board was constituted to serve the tea industry, and to carry on tea propaganda. By killing the hen which lays the golden eggs, where is the hope for the man, who tends the hen, to find anything for himself or for the hen? That was the condition in which the tea industry, the tea estates, and the tea labour, were left to themselves in those hard times. Sir, I therefore feel very strongly against this Board. If I say a few words, my hon. friends will forgive me that I have no comment to make against the Ministers. They are busy people; they are hardworking friends. And probably, in the midst of their labour, they leave everything to these degenerated *Mahants* and *Mathadhipatis*, these Tea Board gentlemen. I may be wrong or I may be right, but I have no other expression than to call them by these appellations.

[Shri Biswanath Das.]

These gentlemen did nothing either to help the Indian tea planters who were losing and who were going to close their gardens in very large numbers, or the tea labourers in general. Sir, even now, they could do a good lot. I have seen that each garden has a certain acreage of land for cultivation; it is being divided among the labour population, and there is some paddy crop being raised. That is all, and it ends there. Sir, Assam is the State which has a heavy rainfall. It gets rain for about seven to eight months in a year. What did these degenerated *Mahants* do? Could they not do something to help these tea garden labour to plant their own vegetables? I find these unfortunate people never grow any other thing. They could grow immense vegetables, and thus help themselves and also help the State. But, nothing doing is the order of the day. Sir, they can organise co-operative societies. These people purchase things at very heavy prices, and the result is that whatever little they get, they refund. That goes to the middle man not to these people. They drink heavily. Nothing doing; no anti-drink propaganda, nor alternative avocation for these people, either in their off-time or in the holidays, is provided. The result is that they drink, and drink is the order of the day. What are these unfortunate people doing? I would therefore implore my hon. friend to close this organisation of *Mathadhishes* and *Mathadhipatis*; let it end, and let there be instead a useful organisation which looks to the real needs of labour, and also look to the needs of the gardens.

Sir, speaking of the gardens, I have to say that there are two classes of gardens, those of British planters and those of Indian planters. Times were there when Britain showered all the blessings of her rule on the British planters. The Assam Government was dancing to their calls. Those days are gone. The Republican Government of India wants to do justice to the planters, not to Indian planters only but to all planters. Sir, I call for a change in policy for two reasons. In the first place, I have reason to believe that the

Britishers of the industry are preparing themselves for a fight with us and to compete with India developing their tea industry in African colonies. Many plantations have been started in their African colonies with the money they draw from their Indian plantations and also with the trained personnel that they are able to get from India. I ask this Board as to what they have done to resist this tendency of the Britishers. I think there is no need for such a Board if they cannot draw the attention of the Government to the things which India will have to face one day or the other. Certain courses of action have to be prevented. What are these? These planters have to purchase large quantities of machinery, instruments and spare parts for the requirements of their gardens. In this connection, let me also state that four-fifths of these gardens are in the hands of the Britishers, while one-fifth only is in the hands of Indians. Gardens which are in the hands of the Britishers are the best ones, the most paying gardens located in the most fertile areas. Indians got into the field late and the result was that what was left by the Britishers was taken over by our people. Therefore most of the instruments, machinery and spare parts are for the gardens required by the Britishers. The Britishers make it a point to import all these and even tea chests from their own country.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: That is all past history, this thing about tea chests.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: About machinery, I would point out to the hon. Minister.....

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: No supplementary observations please.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: If certain orders have been passed on this subject, I would only thank the Government. If Government has been and is doing its best, I have absolutely no complaint against the Government. If the Board has not drawn the attention of the Government to these things, where is the justification for

expending so much on this expensive body? My information, however, is that all these things are imported through or from England, even though this kind of machinery, instruments and spare parts can very well be obtained from the Indian market.

I now come to the question of delegations abroad. In the delegation that was sent to foreign countries, leading part was taken by the British plantation interests. Why, when we have to develop our industry, to develop our tea markets, should these people who are preparing themselves for a fight with us give the lead and why should they guide us even in a delegation, I fail to understand. I think the Minister owes an explanation to us as to why necessary steps were not taken to send a delegation of experienced Indians, or at least, a delegation headed by an Indian, for the propagation of Indian tea outside India.

About the tea sales, we want as Members of this House, and as citizens of the Indian Republic, that the venue of the sales should be shifted from London to Calcutta. Calcutta should be the tea market of the world. We have been harping on this question for so long. I am sorry that Mr. Krishnamachari is absent.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: I am here.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: You are here, but he would have borne me out when I say that as members of the Standing Finance Committee we were agitating for shifting of the venue from London to Calcutta. I should like to know what has been done by the Central Tea Board, in that regard, so as to give effect not only to the wishes of the Members of the Standing Finance Committee, not only to the wishes of the Government but also to the wishes of the people of this country.

Sir, certain things have been said about credit facilities in the report of the Central Tea Board for 1953-54. I have already said of two classes of

planters, the Indian planters and the British planters. True it is that some of the British planters were in trouble, but they have got mounting sums of money laid by for bad years, whereas these unfortunate Indian planters have nothing or very little left for themselves. I should like to know whether the British planters also got the benefit of this scheme Sir, while the Government of India is sitting quietly and thinking as to what steps they should take, the British planters were getting advances and bank credits from their home banks. How can you maintain your industry, how can you develop and how can you nationalise it unless you take steps to see that the Indian section of the planters are at first protected? Small they are, and few they are, and you have to protect them lest you would lose the industry. Sir, I know that there are proceedings pending even today against the Indian section of tea planters. These people are anxious to do their best, ready to sell their other properties, to maintain these gardens. But nothing is done for them.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you take more time?

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Yes, Sir,

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can continue after lunch. The House stands adjourned for lunch till 2-30 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House re-assembled after lunch at half past two of the clock. MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kapoor to present the report of the Committee on Petitions.

SHRI J. R. KAPOOR (Uttar Pradesh): After a few minutes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Biswanath Das.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Sir, it is a matter of history that the British interests were created in the course of a hundred and fifty years of British rule in a way which had taken deep roots in the soil of India. After the British handing over charge of administration the British interests were feeling whether or not time had come when they should quit India really with bag and baggage so far as economic interests are concerned. Sir, in those days of 1946 to 1948 the British planters were anxious to dispose of their plantations at the minimum price possible even though tea had a very good market value in those days. Certain tea gardens were then purchased and they are now selling or disposing of other gardens. A comparison of the purchase price of these gardens will show how mounting the demand of the British interests have been in respect of the prices of these gardens. Sir, while discussing about sterling balances to be drawn from England, we, in the Standing Finance Committee, had recommended to the Government to purchase all the British interests in India. Sir, due to justifiable reasons or otherwise, the Government then thought it not desirable to purchase them including tea interests. The Britishers know that the policy of *laissez faire* that has been accepted by the Government of India in this regard and the policy of non-discrimination against British interests is very heartening to them. The result is the high prices in selling away tea gardens. I would therefore implore the Government to prevent this. Attention has been drawn to these aspects of the question. I accuse this unfortunate body called the Central Tea Board. Have they done anything in this regard? The first concern and the best thing to do is to see that Indian interests are safeguarded in this national industry of ours which is one of the two or three main industries to earn our dollars and foreign exchange. Nothing doing has been the goal of this Central Tea Board. While stating that the policy of *laissez*

*faire* has well paid the foreign interests and not helped the growth of Indian interests in this national industry, I have to plead with the Government that a change is called for.

I come to the question of reducing the cost of production of tea so that tea industry itself, the Indian tea interests and the tea gardens could be helped and not much protection will be necessary, if even small things are done, and such things will greatly help the Indian section of the tea plantations, by change of rules. If any nursing is necessary, it is those small tea interests that are to be nursed. I would refer hon. Members to one aspect of the question. Each planter is called upon—whether big or small or middle sized—to maintain a hospital. That is very good. He has to maintain necessary doctors—the minimum being one—a compounder and also a nurse or nurses. Well, maintenance of compounder and nurses is good and no one denies it. But why should a small garden or plantation be called upon to maintain a medical officer within the garden? It is a punishment to the doctor and an inconvenience to India as a whole because we want medical treatment as widely as possible. If there is a plantation with a hundred workers why should they have a medical officer or why should a medical officer be confined to one single plantation. I am not able to understand. I would therefore appeal that this Board should examine such things and place them before the Government for any change of rules or for necessary adjustments. But my complaint is that nothing in this regard has been done.

I then come to section 12 of the Tea Act of 1953 where absolute control regarding cultivation or extension of cultivation or starting of new gardens have vested in the Board. Now what is it that the Board have done? The British wanted to colonise Assam and Darjeeling. The result is that they confined their atti-

vities only to those areas. Now we have in India very many useful and important places where tea plantation could be carried on. As a person in charge of administration of Orissa I explored possibilities of coffee plantation in the hills of Koraput District and I found that they were very encouraging. Similarly there are very many fresh possibilities in the ex-State areas of Orissa as also in the District of Koraput and Ganjam agencies where tea cultivation could be carried on, or extension of tea cultivation could be done to the great advantage of India. I am only illustrating Orissa. There are other States also. What has this blessed Tea Board done? Responsibility and power go together and the responsibility rests on this Tea Board. I would ask the Government to call upon this Tea Board to say whether anything of the kind has been done by them to explore the possibilities of extending cultivation of tea to other areas where plantations have been started or are intended to be started.

In section 12 (2) provision has been made for the possible amenities of plantation labour. I should like to know what fraction of this sum of Rs 53.50 lakhs budgetted in 1953-54 has been allotted for the provision of amenities and welfare of the plantation labour. Sir, I wish you had gone to the tea gardens of Assam and seen the most unfortunate conditions prevailing there. Instead of having these high-paid and well-provided officials—the President, the Vice-President and other high officials of this Central Tea Board—I would appeal and submit to the hon. Members of this House to force the demands and the necessities of these unfortunate people on to the attention of Government so that a good fraction of this money be spent in providing amenities for these labourers and in improving their living conditions in the tea gardens of Assam and other areas.

Sir, next I come to the constitution of this Board. You have a

Board consisting of 40 members—something like a small legislative assembly. Of course, the Act allows it. The Act has, however, laid down the maximum number. Why should you have that maximum and thus a small legislative assembly which carries its meetings in Ootacamund—under conditions which can well be imagined than stated? I have heard some members of the Board—well-meaning members themselves—expressing disgust at the whole thing, at the waste of resources. Once the maximum is fixed and the money is drawn and put in the hands of these “Mahants” and “Mathadhipatis” there is no end to expenses. The Government and the Ministers are too busy with their own work. The Ministers are awfully busy people, while merry these institutions and these “Mathadhipatis” go on with their improvements and amenities. I, therefore, appeal to the Government to see that this small legislative assembly is reduced in number, that the strength of this tiny legislative assembly is reduced to the minimum. Again, why should British planters get equal representation with the Indian planters? Sir, we have Indians in British colonies. What is their condition? They are the most wretched of the wretched. Why should we then, in the name of non-discrimination provide the British interest with equal rights knowing fully well that during the course of the last 150 years and specially within the last 90 years, they had built up mounting vested interests? If you cannot abolish them, pray for Heaven's sake, do not give them equal rights with their Indian counterparts and strengthen vested interests. And this is most revolting to me especially when I know that they are preparing themselves to fight against your tea interests, by building up tea gardens in their colonies in Africa.

I have already said something about this labour in the tea gardens. They are all citizens of India, but they are very highly undeveloped and they

[Shri Biswanath Das.]

are in conditions akin to those of the "Adibasis" in the interior parts of the highlands of India. That being their position, it is necessary that you should nominate representatives to represent labour partly also from among the areas from which they were drawn. When I approached these unfortunate people—and they form not a small fraction but over a third of the labour population—in these tea gardens in Assam and Darjeeling, I was surprised, I was really surprised. I would therefore, request Government to bear these things in mind when they nominate representatives for and on behalf of this labour. Sir, I claim that one member should be nominated to the Board in consultation with the Government of Orissa. When these labourers were thrown out of work some of them had to go back to Orissa. But these unfortunate people, where were they to go? They had forgotten the areas from which they had gone. These 25, 30 or in some cases even 40 years during which they had been away have changed the face of the country side and now they have nowhere to go. Actually they are nowhere. The Government of Orissa issued a notification calling upon the Departments in Orissa to give these hands preference in the matter of recruitment of constables and other low-grade services, without knowing the actual conditions of these labourers. If they had known, they would never have issued such a notification. The labour from tea garden is the least fit for any governmental work, because, though they are respectable citizens, as I have said, they are highly undeveloped and away from light and learning. Therefore it behoves that the Government of India, when they nominate members on behalf of labour, should see to it that a fraction of that nomination is provided to the States from which these people have come.

I find that section 4 deals with the subject of nomination and in sub-sections (b) and (c).....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We are not concerned now with the Tea Board, Mr. Biswanath Das. We are concerned with this Resolution here, this simple Resolution about the increase in the duty.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I know Sir; but I refuse to agree to it unless these conditions are considered and I want Government to consider them and that is why.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: And the provisions of the Act are only incidentally relevant. So we cannot go into great detail as regards these provisions.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Yes, Sir, I am not going into any details, but am only touching the fringes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: But you are going to sections and even to sub-sections.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Very well, Sir, I will not. I will now proceed. Under section 9(b) there is a provision which says that the Government of India shall appoint officers drawing a salary of Rs. 1,000 and more. How many such salaried officers total up of this class, this House has a right to know as also their functions, how many of them are Indians and so on. I would not tolerate these appointments or even a small fraction of them to go to the Britishers. This Board is intended for the protection of the industry and also for the propagation of tea both within and outside the country. That being so, I do not see why the officials appointed by the Board should be Britishers.

In conclusion I have to say that this policy of *laissez faire* should be modified and the plantations and the labour employed in it should be given the necessary protection.

SHRI D. P. KARMARKAR: What about the export duty?



**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 to 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.

**MR 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.

**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 Divorce Bill, 1952.

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

**MR DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Mrs Parmanand.

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