

invited and who is not so much connected with marketing, not so much an expert, but he could do business. He came on a visit to this country and as a result we sent some exhibits to an exhibition in Paris and that exhibition has been successful. And we do hope that something will come out of it. It is difficult to say exactly what particular visit was made for the particular thing which the hon. Member has in mind.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Have the Government examined the marketing possibilities abroad for Indian handicrafts?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: That, Sir, is a continuous process. We are trying very hard to see if we can find markets for our handicraft products; and we do it by means of exhibitions and we have also in mind the opening of emporiums in London and a few others in other parts of the world.

SHRI GOVINDA REDDY: Have the Government considered the question of sending an expert abroad for exploring such possibilities for the marketing of our handicrafts?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Well, yes, in the sense that people who are in charge of these things are experts. An officer connected with the managing of the exhibitions has undertaken a tour recently for conducting an exhibition in Canada. As I have said, some business has resulted from these things and it is possible that in co-operation with some Canadian interests we may be able to open show-rooms in Canada. It is also possible that there is some chance of business resulting in the western States of the U.S.A.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: He should speak a little louder.

SHRI B. C. GHOSE: I believe in answer to a question the other day it was stated that an American was brought into this country to advise on

the possibilities of marketing cottage industries products in America. Has the hon. Minister any information on that?

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: That was an American who came from Macy's Stores to see how far they could help us in the marketing of our handicraft products.

*365. [*The questioner (Shri H. C. Muthur) was absent.*]

ARTISTES IN A. I. R.

*366. **SHRI N. S. HARDIKER:** Will the Minister for INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) how many casual artistes are there at present on the rolls of the A.I.R.;

(b) how many of them have been auditioned up till now under the new system of audition; and

(c) whether the system of audition has resulted in any improvement in the standard of music?

THE MINISTER FOR INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (DR. B. V. KESKAR): (a) It is presumed the figures required are in respect of musicians. On 1st January 1953, there were about 7,500 casual artistes on the roll. The inclusion of a casual artiste in the roll does not, however, mean that he must necessarily be given programmes.

(b) 2,318.

(c) It is somewhat early to assess the results of the system of audition as it has not yet been completed; the system is, however, sure to improve the standard of music by eliminating artistes of low standard and encouraging artistes of merit.

SHRI N. S. HARDIKER: How many of these artistes were summoned for audition?

DR. B. V. KESKAR: I would require notice.

PROF G RANGA: Is it a fact that even those artistes who have been employed for a long number of years are still kept on a temporary basis and they have not been given any permanent commission?

DR B V KESKAR Though this question does not arise from the main question, I don't mind enlightening my hon friend. But I do not know what he means by "commission"

PROF G RANGA Assignment or employment that is what I mean

DR B V KESKAR Artistes are employed on contract. There are several who are employed on long terms and several others who are on contracts of shorter duration. It is difficult to lay down one definite rule for all of them.

PROF G RANGA Does not this mean that these people do not get the advantage of provident funds and other advantages which permanent officers enjoy?

DR B V KESKAR Sir my hon friend Prof Ranga who is well informed about subjects is making some mistake somewhere because it is definitely mentioned in the question that it relates to 'casual artistes'. They are persons who are maintained on a register who are free artistes. When necessary they are invited to broadcast. They may accept the offer or they may reject. It is for them to decide. But Prof Ranga is confounding them with people who are regularly employed.

SHRI B K P SINHA If the system of permanent employment is extended to the radio artistes will not the standard of the AIR deteriorate and will not future talent that will be coming up be kept out permanently from this opportunity?

SHRI T R DEOGIRIKAR How many artistes are exempted from audition?

DR B V KESKAR There is no such thing as exemption, Sir. The artistes are auditioned by a committee and if they consider that certain artistes are sufficiently well-known and are of a very high standard they can exempt them. It is not necessary to include it in the rules.

SHRI N S HARDIKER Has the Government started any musical schools in the country in order to improve music?

(No reply)

PRODUCTION OF SHEETS AND PLATES

*367 DR SHRIMATI SEETA PARAMANAND Will the Minister for PRODUCTION be pleased to state

(a) whether the new iron and steel plant will be used for the production of sheets and plates mainly,

(b) the names of the places where the sheets and plates are produced and the industries which consume them at present,

(c) the total India's annual requirement of these sheets and plates, and how many of them are imported, and

(d) what was the quantity of sheets and plates sold in the year 1952-53 and what is the approximate quantity that will be required in the years 1955-56 and 1956-57?

THE MINISTER FOR PRODUCTION (SHRI K C REDDY) (a) Yes

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the Council

(c) India's annual requirements of plates and sheets in 1955-56 are estimated at 200,000 tons and 400,000 tons respectively. During the year 1952 the quantities of plates and sheets imported were 6,000 tons and 5,000 tons respectively.

(d) A statement is laid on the Table of the Council