

PROF. G. RANGA: I happen to be a member of that Committee and so I know. But the House also wants to know this. I want that there should be no delay caused in this regard.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: The last meeting was held recently, i.e. on the 10th August, but their interim recommendations have yet to reach me.

T. C. A. HELP FOR FIGHTING LOCUST INVASION

*17. SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Will the Minister for FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of help received under the Technical Co-operation Agreement for fighting the recent locust invasion; and

(b) the names of the foreign experts who rendered advice in this connection?

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): (a) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(b) Two experts from U.S.A., Messrs. William B. Mabey and Bryne Thraill, visited India to advise on aerial operations against locusts.

STATEMENT

Under the Technical Co-operation Programme two agreements have been signed by India and U.S.A. on locust control. The first agreement (May 1952) provides for U. S. assistance to the extent of \$ 2,30,000. The second agreement (March 1953) provides for further assistance to the extent of \$ 2,21,000. Both agreements provide in addition for the loan of 3 planes by U. S. with pilots and technical personnel for aerial operations against locusts from July—October in 1952 and 1953. The local costs of such operations on petrol, oil, lubrication, landing facilities, ground staff, transport and board and lodging of U. S. personnel have to be met by India.

Under the agreement of May 1952, India has received so far 50 vehicles, 7 wireless sets and 66 power sprayers and dusters and expects to receive shortly 10 more vehicles.

Under the agreement of March 1953 orders have been placed for 5 aerial dusting and spraying units, 75 light power sprayers and dusters, 24 large power sprayers, 20 wireless sets, 12 vehicles and 19½ tons of insecticides. These items are expected to be despatched shortly.

SHRI M. P. N. SINHA: Are they paid for it?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: No, Sir.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Am I to understand that the Government of India are not footing the travelling and maintenance bills of these experts?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: There are conditions which govern the getting of any expert.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: My question is: Do not the Government of India foot the bill for the maintenance and the travelling of these foreign experts in India?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: That is what I replied, Sir. It is very well known to everybody what responsibility we bear and what finances.....

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: May I know what the Government has done in connection with the last locust invasion in May in Delhi itself? Is the Government aware at all that there was a locust invasion last May here?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: The question refers to the experts. They were brought here only to advise on aerial operations against locusts. They had nothing to do so far as the rest of the matter is concerned. We know how to deal with the locusts so far as.....

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: They must have something to do with the fighting of locusts. I want to know whether the Government is aware that there was a locust invasion here last May, and if so, what they have done to fight this.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: The Government has arrangements. The responsibility, so far as fighting of the locusts is concerned, is essentially on the State Government.

SHRI K. C. GEORGE: Is the Government aware that these locusts invaded the Central laboratory itself?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Perhaps they might have found it open. (Laughter.)

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Am I to understand that these two experts came only to advise about the area of the operation?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not 'area of the operation' but 'aerial operations against locusts'.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Which other Middle-East countries suffer from this locust invasion and may I know whether they requisition the help of foreign experts in fighting the menace?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: I have no information.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Under which operational agreement did these locust advisers come?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: There are two agreements. The first agreement was in May 1952 which provided for U. S. assistance to the extent of 2,30,000 dollars. The second agreement was in March 1953 providing for further assistance to the extent of 2,21,000 dollars. Both agreements provide an addition of three planes by U.S.A. with pilots and technical personnel for aerial

operations against locusts from July—October 1952 to 1953.

SHRI S. MAHANTY: Therefore am I to understand that the Government of India signed these operational agreements without taking into consideration which other countries of the Middle East have locust menace problem and how they face it?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: How strictly it is necessary I cannot understand but I can tell the hon Member that there is an international organization so far as fighting the locust menace is concerned.

SHRI B. RATH: Since which year have these locusts been invading our country in big swarms?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: For a very long time, for generations.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI: After all, locusts are insects and not men. (Laughter.)

INVESTIGATION INTO THE CHARACTER AND ANTECEDENTS OF THE RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

*18 SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Will the Minister for RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an investigation into the character and antecedents of the employees has been started on the North Eastern Railway; if so, why; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that all employees whether they are new entrants or have been in service for years have to fill in some forms and will be treated as fresh candidates and their further employment will depend on the results of screening; if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND TRANSPORT (SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN): (a) The character and antecedents of all employees are verified at the time of appointment. If such verification could not be done before appointment in any particular case, it is required to be undertaken