

[Shri M. C. Shah.] and Unstarred Question No. 85, a copy of a Memorandum regarding the action taken by the Government of India on the reports of the teams of officials which visited the scarcity affected areas of West Bengal, Mysore, Hyderabad, Bombay and Madras. [Placed in the Library. See No. S-68-A/53.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We shall resume discussion on the Tea Bill.

THE TEA BILL, 1952—*continued.*

SHRI KISHEN CHAND (Hyderabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, yesterday I was pointing out that now is the time to nationalise the tea industry. The capital invested in the tea industry is so small compared to the output that if time is allowed, the tea estates will slowly and gradually increase their share capital and then a subsequent nationalisation will cost the Government very heavily. Secondly, Sir, in the tea industry the number of labourers involved, as compared to the capital, is very large. It is not a highly mechanised industry and therefore if we take it up as a Government concern, we will be able to give fullest opportunity to labour to take its due share in the management of that industry. I submit, Sir, that our ideal of nationalisation is that the consumer and the labour interests should be fully represented in the management of that industry. That is real nationalisation. If labour is fully represented in the management, they will realise all the difficulties involved in the managing of any industry. They will develop a co-operative mood and the best interests of the industry will be served. Again, there is another advantage in present nationalisation. The tea auctions take place in London and these British interests manufacturing tea in India have a sort of adjustment so that a large part of the profit is never transferred to India. At present sales of tea amount to Rs. 65 crores. It is possible that it is only the net figure; the commission paid

to the manufacturers of tea is first of all deducted from it. Therefore if these sales take place on Government level it is possible that we may be able to get 75 crores for the same amount of tea.

Our chief competitors in tea industry are Ceylon and Indonesia and we have an advantage over them. If we look at our import and export trade, we will find that we are importing from the United Kingdom machinery worth nearly Rs. 70 crores every year. As I pointed out yesterday, if we enter into a barter agreement, we will be at an advantage over our competitors in the tea industry. Ceylon and Indonesia cannot purchase machinery from the United Kingdom equal in amount to the tea that they sell to them, but we can do it very easily. Therefore we can increase our tea sales and by a proper barter system get the best possible price for our tea and the entire amount will come to the nation, while at present a good part of it is going to the foreign investors in India.

The hon. Minister for Communications yesterday gave out in connection with the composition of Committees, his own mind. The hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry was also asked about the composition of this Tea Board and he said that he does not want to restrict himself by giving out the composition at this stage. May I suggest to him, Sir, that without committing himself if he could give us some sort of an idea of how these eight categories will be represented on the Tea Board, it will be very welcome? Because this composition will give us an idea of how this Tea Board is going to function, whether in the interests of our country or in the interests of the tea growers who are mostly foreigners. May I suggest to him on a very tentative basis that in this composition the first item is the owners of tea estates and the second item is persons employed in tea estates and gardens? If he gives roughly 40 per cent, representation to this (a) and (b), that is, roughly eight representatives to

owners of tea estates and eight representatives to persons employed in tea estates, then (c) and (d) another 20 per cent., (e) and (f) another 20 per cent., and (g) and (h) another 20 per cent., it will just make full cent, per cent., and this will be a composition which will command the confidence of the country. Therefore I submit to him that he should give a rough idea of the composition that he has in his mind.

Now, I *come* to a little more controversial point. Among the functions of this Tea Board it is stated that one of the objects (h) is "increasing the consumption in India and elsewhere of tea and carrying on propaganda for that purpose". I have nothing to say against tea, but hon. Members will remember that Mahatmaji was very much against the consumption of tea. I do not want specifically to be stated here that the object of this Board is the increasing of consumption of tea in India. If this line is deleted, I do not think the functions of the Board will become any the less important on account of its omission and it would be in keeping with our declared policy. We have stopped the consumption of liquor and it will be a good thing if we can go a step further and do not encourage—I dare not say stop it—the consumption of tea in our country. There are other countries which want our tea and it is a good earner of foreign exchange for us. Why should we consume this tea in our country? I may point out in this connection that tobacco is another article which we are largely exporting. We do not want to encourage the consumption of tobacco, as is obvious from the various restrictions that have been placed on the use of tobacco in, say, entertainment houses, etc. Similarly, Sir, let us not have it on our Statute Book that one of the functions of this Board will be the increasing of the consumption of tea in India: let it read "increasing the consumption of tea in other countries and carrying on propaganda for that purpose." The U.S.A. has started consuming tea, and if proper propaganda is carried on in that country,

they may buy larger quantities of tea from us, and that will be a good source of foreign exchange. We should so aim that our production increases from Rs. 75 crores to Rs. 100 crores and* the entire amount of tea is sold out.

Therefore, while supporting the Tea Bill, I would suggest to the hon. Minister to incorporate some of the suggestions made by me.

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI (Nominated): Sir, at the outset I should like to point out that the tea industry has some special features which demand special treatment and attention. Much of this industry is controlled by foreigners, and the following figures should always be taken into account in formulating our tea policy. I find that out of a total number of tea estates to the tune of 945, only about 366 estates are Indian, and the remaining 579 are controlled by foreigners. The tea industry is also next to jute as a dollar earner, and, therefore, we should very carefully nurse this industry as an important source of our dollar earnings.

The industry has so far been able to absorb about Rs. 100 crores of capital. Therefore, we are very greatly interested in the future of the tea industry, which is next to the jute industry as a dollar earner. But unfortunately much of the profits of this tea industry are derived from the export trade, and, therefore, unless we have a very vigorous export trade in tea, that industry will not be able to give us the full benefit of the profits. I find that about 80 per cent, of the total produce of 600 million lbs. of tea per year is exported. And of this vast amount of export, on which India has to depend on so much, 65 per cent, is taken by one country alone, namely, the United Kingdom. Therefore, our tea policy should be able to adjust the different claims of the various interests involved in the industry. We have to find out the possibilities of the export trade in different countries with which we have to conduct proper trade negotiations with regard

[Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji.] to the development of our export trade.

As regards consumption, I find that the following figures are very important. The United Kingdom is consuming 9-4 lbs. of tea per head per year. Next comes New Zealand: Its consumption is 7 lbs. per head. Next comes Eire—7 lbs. Next comes Canada—3-5 lbs. The U.S.A. is very backward, because the U.S.A. has taken more kindly to coffee; it is only 0.7 lb. The consumption of U.S.S.R. is 0.2 lb. Russia has been a very good customer of Indian tea recently, but of late the conditions have changed. India—0-45 lb. I just now heard with great interest the remarks of my colleague Mr. Kishen Chand, who does not want the consumption of tea to be increased in India. But I should like to remind him of the famous lines of the poet William Cowper, who said, with reference to tea: "Cups that cheer but not inebriate." Therefore, I think that tea is a very innocent beverage, and we should try and find out whether the consumption of tea in India, its producer, can be increased.

Sir, I am glad to find that the new Tea Board has been invested with the responsible function of undertaking propaganda work for increasing the consumption of tea abroad. So, in that connection the figures I have given are very important.

As regards finance, I should like to suggest that the Industrial Finance Corporation should be induced to include the tea industry as a proper party to whom loans may be given so that the industry may not suffer for want of capital.

My next point is as regards fixation of prices. I understand that the Minister in charge of the Bill is already prepared to say that prices should not be fixed before, but that they should be left to the natural operation of economic laws in the tea markets. As regards the condition of the industry, you know that it had to undergo a serious crisis when the

cost of tea fell below the cost of production. The cost of production was about Rs. 1-2-0 per lb. but during the five months October 1952 to February 1953, the prices of tea fell to only about 12 annas per lb., which landed the industry in very heavy loss. Now we have recovered a little and the average price now is about Rs. 1-4-0 to Rs. 1-6-0. But we are still not out of the wood, and, therefore, the Government must see that the prices are so arranged that they will cover the cost of production. Unless we do this, we shall again face a similar crisis of flourishing tea estates closing down.

As you know, the tea industry employs about 1 million labourers. Therefore, it is a very important industry and must be protected somehow. Unfortunately there are several complex factors shaping the destiny of this industry, and the most important factor which is not amenable to complete Indian control is the factor represented by the foreign interests in this tea trade. So, you have to frame your policy delicately so as not to antagonise directly the foreign interests and to promote export of tea, firstly to the United Kingdom and next to those countries which have been listed in accordance with the priorities of their consumption figures.

Lastly, as regards the Control Board proposed in the Bill, I feel that the various interests involved in the tea industry should be very well represented in the supreme controlling body of the industry as is now proposed in the Bill. I should like to say that the labourers and the growers should have proper representation along with the management, and trade also has vital interests, and brokers—all these interests should be very well represented in the composition of the Board that we propose to set up under this measure.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh):
And the consumers.

DR. RADHA KUMUD MOOKERJI:
As regards consumers, they can take

care of themselves. But I think we should all see that the price level is so adjusted that it will not land the tea industry in the position of having to conduct its operations below cost price.

With these remarks, I have pleasure in supporting this Bill, which is really meant in the best interests of a very important industry which is a dollar earner next to jute.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA (Bihar): Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Minister for Commerce and Industry for serving us not only with this Tea Bill but with a cup of tea last evening. It augurs well and I hope that he will take keener interest in propagating tea and expanding its consumption all the world over, and I do hope that his interest will not cease with propagating tea only to the Members of Parliament.

Sir, I welcome this measure. But I do wish that such a measure had come earlier to obviate the plight to which the tea labour was put, as referred to by my hon. friend the Minister for Commerce and Industry. Sir, our friends from Bengal waxed eloquent over the exploitation of tea labour by British planters and the monopolistic control of the tea industry by the Britishers. Sir, these are the patent facts of history, and of the British rule in India. "We are alive to it. But, Sir, their approach to the problem and their solution of the problem are also the patent of the Communist Party, and I do not know how far this House would go along with them. Sir, we have now become shock-proof to their eloquence and methods and manners. But, Sir, I was a bit surprised by the few observations made by my hon. friend Shri Rama Rao. He is an elder statesman of this country and that is why I was rather surprised that without realising the import and the implications of the suggestions he was making, he advocated expropriation of the British tea interests in this country. He wanted to nationalise the tea industry without any compensation at the

present moment. Sir, we are not against nationalisation. My hon. friend Mr. Kishen Chand has also advocated this point. But the question that we have to consider is the manner in which we desire to bring about the nationalisation.

Sir, there are certain realities of the situation from which we cannot get away, however good it may be to get out of them. We have to view every action in a larger perspective. We have decided upon certain policies after a good deal of deliberations and all our actions must be in keeping with that general policy. We have declared our attitude towards foreign capital. We have decided upon a policy of co-operation with the United Kingdom in many important matters in our own national interest. Sir, our entire development programme, our Five Year Plan, to a very large extent, is dependent upon the foreign aid, both financial and technological, that we may get, and this aid, Sir, mostly comes from the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. and other Commonwealth countries. Then, Sir, we have kept our doors open for the private capital to flow in and to develop our resources. We want of course this capital to come at our dictation and at our terms. We have not the resources and we have not the capital. We have therefore got to invite foreign capital. In the matter of defence technology and higher defence training we are co-operating with the United Kingdom. Our currency is more or less linked with sterling and all our foreign liquid assets are blocked in the sterling. Then, Sir, we are cooperating with the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries on the political plane in the international affairs. Sir, these are the realities of the situation and we are deliberately following this policy because it is to our advantage and for our benefit.

Now, Sir, we have to realise the import and the implications of the policy advocated by my friend Shri Rama Rao. What repercussions this isolated action of ours will have «*

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.] our international relations particularly with the United Kingdom? We have to consider this point. What repercussions will it have upon our foreign aid and foreign capital that we have invited? As I said, Sir, we are not against nationalisation. We want nationalisation, but we want it in a particular manner and we do not want to scare away the foreign aid and the foreign capital.

Now, Sir, coming to the Tea Bill, I would like the Government to take a long-term view of the tea industry, as has been suggested by my friend Prof. Mookerji. He has very rightly said that tea takes a very important place in our economy. It is the second largest foreign exchange earner after jute; it employs a big labour and gives about 15 crores of rupees to the Central exchequer in one form or the other. Therefore, Sir, he has rightly advocated that we have got to take steps to put this industry on a very sound footing. Sir, this industry has been regulated by the International Trade Agreement between the main tea producing countries, India, Pakistan and Ceylon. These countries are not only the largest producers of tea, but they are the largest exporters of tea as well in the world market. Sir, during the war time, Indonesia, Formosa, Malaya and Japan and also China went out of the picture from the international trade. Sir, there was an expansion of acreage in India and Ceylon and the production increased to meet the shortage. Now, Sir, with the cessation of hostilities these countries, namely Indonesia, Formosa, Malaya and Japan, are coming into the picture, and their production of tea is rapidly increasing to the pre-war levels. Now, with their production and our expanded production a crisis has come about. The supply has increased the demand. That is the crux of the problem, Sir. We have to equate supply with demand and every effort should be made to achieve this end. My suggestion, Sir, is this that the first step that the Government should take to achieve this objective is to induce

these countries—Indonesia, Japan, Formosa and Malaya—to come into the International Tea Agreement, so that their production and export may also be regulated in common with the other tea producing countries.

The next point is that either we should expand the demand for tea in the world tea market or to restrict the production in Ceylon and India to pre-war levels. The ideal will be to expand the world tea market as suggested by my hon. friend Mr. Kishen Chand, and vigorous efforts should be made by the Government of India and the Tea Board to expand our market in the U.S.A. and the Middle East. My hon. friend, Prof. Mookerji, has given us the figures of *per capita* consumption of tea in the U.S.A. and other countries and has shown that there was good room for the expansion of tea consumption in those countries. I shall draw your attention to the consumption of coffee in those countries as compared with tea which will further convince you that there is a very big room for the expansion of tea consumption in the U.S.A. and the Middle East. The U.S.A. imports 24,737 million pounds of coffee, whereas it imports 88.9 million pounds of tea. In Egypt, Sir, we find that the import figure for tea comes to 29.7 million lbs. and that the import figure for coffee comes to 208,000 cwts. We have got to snatch away a portion of this coffee trade for the benefit of our tea, and even if we increase our exports by 7 to 10 per cent., we can not only dispose of the expanded production, but there will also be room for further expansion.

Efforts should also be made to cheapen the cost of production of tea. We should bring down the cost of production without reducing wages. In this respect, I will give you a few suggestions for your consideration. After the war, the transport, both on stores and finished goods, to the tea gardens has increased tremendously. This increase has come about *because* of the longer route which they have got to cover in reaching the tea gardens from Calcutta on account of the partition

of the country. I would like the Commerce Ministry to induce the Railway Board to examine my suggestion in this respect and it is this that the increase in the railway freight caused by the longer route should be borne by the entire country by an increase in the general railway freight, so that the tea gardens and the people of Assam alone are not victimised on account of the partition and would continue to enjoy the same freight rate, as they were enjoying in the pre-partition days. I would like the Commerce Minister to induce the Railway Board to accept this proposition. If this is done, the transport of raw materials and finished goods will be at the old rates. Then we should also improve immediately the warehouse facilities in the port cities of Calcutta and Bombay in order to encourage our export trade and in order that Calcutta may become the centre of the world's tea auction and not London, as suggested by my hon. friends from Bengal.

Then, Sir, I would like the hon. the Commerce Minister to insist on the British managements to improve their technology by adopting new techniques and new machinery in the tea gardens and in the factories. There should also be a lowering of the remunerations paid to the Managers, the experts and the Managing Agents in the tea industry. I hope that Government has got adequate powers to force the tea industry to reduce the item of the cost of production, and if they have not got that power, Government should take that power. Then, the payment of dividend should be regulated. It has been correctly pointed out that the tea industry has over-withdrawn the capital invested in it. This is true not only of the tea industry in this country but this is the case in many of our industrial undertakings. We have allowed our industries to fritter away their gains. When I was speaking the other day on the Industries (Development and Regulation) Bill, I made out this point elaborately. I would like the hon. Minister to see that before dividends are distri-

buted in future, provision for the following funds should be made. This is being done in all advanced countries, in some cases by legislation and in other cases voluntarily. The suggestion that I am putting forward is in the interests of the industry itself and all those who have the good of the industry at their heart will certainly see that these reserves are maintained before the profits are distributed among the shareholders or given away as high remuneration to the Managing Agents: The full amount of the depreciation allowed under income-tax should be funded to replace worn-out and out-of-date machinery by new and up to date machinery as is being done all over the world in all good undertakings. This should also be done in the tea industry before profits are distributed. You will remember that the other day the Communications Minister said that most of the air companies distributed their earnings to the shareholders without providing for adequate depreciation. This is the condition not only in the tea industry and the air companies but in most of the Indian companies, and this should be discouraged, and by law it should be provided that the depreciation amount must be funded before profits were distributed among the shareholders.

Then there should be a Wages Equalisation Fund just like the Dividend Equalization Fund that some of the companies have got. Then they should have a Price Stabilisation Fund. We have seen that the prices came down and there was no reserve fund with the tea industry to equalise the wages that they were paying during the boom period. Nor did they have the resources to subsidise those prices. Therefore I submit that before profits are frittered away in giving high dividends or high payments or remuneration to the Managing Agents or experts, sufficient fund should be set apart in these three funds that is with the Depreciation Fund, the Wages Stabilisation Fund and the Price Stabilisation Fund, and after that a small portion, a reasonable portion may be allowed to be given as divi-

[Shri Rajendra Pratap Sinha.] dends. I would like the Commerce Minister to examine this viewpoint not only in the interest of the tea industry but in the general interest of the industry as a whole in this country and to take over necessary powers, if he has not got, to regulate the giving away of dividends and see that these funds are created by the industry during their good years in order that they may tide over the lean years.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE (Madras): Mr. Chairman, during the course of the debate yesterday, three points were prominently brought up by our friends of the Communist Party. They are the British exploitation, the nationalisation and a better deal for the labour. I must at the very outset pay my compliments to the very useful and learned contribution made by my friend Mr. Mazumdar to the debate. We might differ from him in many aspects. We may disagree with the emphasis that he has placed but by and large he has made an extremely useful contribution to the debate. Unfortunately the usefulness of his contribution was taken away by his Deputy Leader who made it more a political harangue rather than a contribution to a useful debate. It is rather unfortunate that the hon. Member has not been able to acclimatise himself to parliamentary atmosphere or to adjust himself to parliamentary conditions. If you are pleased to go through yesterday's debate, it would be a slur for any Parliament to use the expressions and the language that has been used on the floor of this House. I shall resist the temptation of

ing similar language.

SHRI B. GUPTA (West Bengal): Why don't you try that?

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: I am just as good as you are but I am in better company. My friends repeatedly told us to be nationalist, to be patriotic. They told us the atrocities committed by the Britishers in the past mainly during the pre-independence period and how they exploited the country and the labour. Sir, human men:

is very short. It is the Congress Party that fought the British people on every front—in the political, in economic and in the social front. It is to the credit of the Congress Party that we are independent today. It is mainly due to the sacrifices made by the Congress

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY (Mysore): The old Congress Party.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: You wait and hear. I will ignore you for the time being.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Do you think you are not making a harangue?

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: My friend Mr. Gupta has got a very convenient memory. He forgets his past. When the leaders of the Congress Party, when men, women and children faced the lathi charge and faced the guns and fought for Independence. Mr. Gupta and his party were the henchmen of the British.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where were you?

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: They sabotage! the Congress movement and they were spying the Congress.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us get on with the Tea Bill.

SHRI B. GUPTA: He is talking fantastic nonsense.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: They were under the orders of their political master in other countries. They were sabotaging the Independence movement.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Sir, there should be some restraint.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: It comes from bad grace for my friend to speak of the patriotism. Whose patriotism? They owe their patriotism to a foreign country. They, who have sold their conscience for a mess of pottage during the years 1940 to 1945, they were under the orders of Kremlin, they, who ceased to be Indians those days, is it not a pre-'. is it not a hoax? •

SHRI B. GUPTA: Our people were hanged in the State of Madras.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us proceed with the Tea Bill.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: We are proceeding with the Tea Bill. Let me say one word about the patriotism. My friends were speaking eloquently about patriotism on the floor of this House yesterday. We know whether our friends of the Communist Party are true to this country. Are they not prepared to sell this country to Russia? Are they.....

SHRI B. GUPTA: You have already sold it to the Commonwealth. We want to redeem it.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: We know how you are redeeming it. I am ignoring him not only in this House but outside as well. Yesterday he told us "Well, you might be in a minority in this House but I am in majority outside this House".

SHRI B. GUPTA: See the election results.

•SHRI K. S. HEGDE: Several by-elections have been fought. We have seen it. But I can understand we are in the middle of the midsummer and it has some effect on my hon. friend. If it comes to patriotism and my friend throws a challenge, I am prepared to accept it on that issue and we shall see where the people's verdict lies.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Let us go to the people and take a plebiscite on this tea industry issue.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: What has the Government of India done? After a careful consideration of all the economic questions, they have proposed nationalisation on reasonable terms and they say 'We shall nationalise so far and no further'. They have assessed our political potentiality. We have taken into consideration our means of production, our ability to control industry and we have considered the practical view of it and we had put

the question before the elections in our election manifesto as to what shall be our approach towards the different industries. We have the approval of the country so far as the programme of work is concerned. We are carrying out the programme of work. Tea is not an isolated factor. Tea is just in the larger context of our economic development and in judging that our fundamental principles have been set out. First thing we said was whoever were exploiting in the past, whoever are exploiting today—the Britisher might have exploited in the past, the Russians might be exploiting at present—we ignore all that. We said so far as the past industry is concerned, so long as they are not anti-nationalistic, so long as they do not interfere with the national progress, we shall treat them in the same manner as we would treat the Indian industry.

SHRI B. GUPTA:- Wonderful generosity!

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: We are generous to ourselves. My friend is generous to outsiders. That is the difference. Our Constitution was based on two grounds—on political morality and on the economic considerations. We are not believers in the doctrine of loot. I am not complaining about my friend if he has different political philosophy in life but, Sir, we are brought up and trained under the leadership of a great moral leader.

SHRI B. GUPTA: To land into the lap of the Mountbattens.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: No. I cannot help if he is a slave of Stalin and Malankov. Let me tell the House that after careful economic considerations — taking the need of the country, the necessity of attracting foreign capital into this country and the necessity of developing this country into consideration—we came to the conclusion that we shall not deter the foreign investor so long as he functions legitimately and in the interests of this country, and it is in pursuance of that policy that the present Bill has been brought forward. The hon. Minister has taken full

LShri K. S. Hegde.]

power to tune up the industry and to make it work for prosperity. If only my hon. friend would divest his mind of all his prejudices and examine the progress and the achievements that stand to the credit of this Ministry of Industry and Commerce during the last one year or so, he would find that it is something of which any country can feel proud. Of the achievements of this ministry I and my party are naturally proud and my country, I am sure, is also proud of it. In the course of one year we have achieved things which probably to the course of ten or fifteen years any other country would find it difficult to achieve. True, every temptation, every threat and every manipulation of vested interest—be it Indian, be it British—have been kept at bay and the "economy of the country has been shaped with the one and sole object of producing the maximum or optimum output, thus leading to the maximum welfare of the nation. But my friend is undoubtedly perturbed by the progress that the country is achieving. He does not want the country to be prosperous. A prosperous country makes him feel diffident. Well, I can quite appreciate the mental commotion passing in his mind yesterday when he perceived that the country was making strides on the way to economic development and all-round progress. There was a good deal of disturbance in his mind, because if there is misery and chaos in the land then he succeeds; but if there is happiness and prosperity, then he fails. We are working for prosperity and he is working for chaos and misery. That is the difference.

Sir, I will not take much time. I come to the question of labour. My hon. friend was very eloquent about improving the conditions of labour. Well, we yield to none in our anxiety for bettering the lot of labour. Indeed, during the last one generation or more, the leaders of the Congress Party, in season and out of season, have been strenuously working for improving the condition of labour in every possible sphere.

DR. R. B. GOUR (Hyderabad): Yes, by retrenchments.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: But so far as my hon. friends are concerned, their interest in labour is a political interest. They are not anxious to bring about the prosperity of labour. To them labour is not a human problem, it is just an instrument in their political game, it ought to be a running sore for them.

SHRI B. GUPTA: That is how Maxwell used to speak.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: Labour merely there to be exploited for party purposes. It is being used for warfare. It is not as if they are interested in labour in the least. Probably they will be the first to repent or be sorry if labour is prosperous.

SHRI B. GUPTA: I see.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: But so far as the Congress is concerned, we believe in a prosperous co-operative commonwealth. We believe in the maximum of production in every sector in the land. We have been trying to improve the condition of labour simultaneously with increasing the industrial output in the country. In the final analysis, it is only if we produce more that we can distribute more and labour can get a just deal only if the country is prosperous. There is one limitation in our trying to get the best out of the present industrial conditions and that is due to the need for increasing our capital formation. That is necessary for increasing our production in the industrial as well as the agricultural fields. But this Government, it will be admitted, has been trying to do its very best for labour and every genuine claim, every legitimate aspiration of labour shall certainly be protected by the Government. No sincere man will ever doubt the bona fides of the Government. But there are some, who are determined to doubt and for them there is no remedy?—far as we are concerned.

(Interruption by Shri B. Gupta)

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: My hon. friend is feeling very fidgety; in fact, he is unable to stand the strain when we are exposing him in his true colours. Of course, for a time you can cover yourself with a smoke screen, but there is a limit even to that. I think it is time my mends are exposed; I am sure if the results of the last by-elections are any criterion, my friends have been correctly adjudged by the public.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Yes, the by-elections in the Punjab.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: Sir, I shall not take much more time. I only wanted to show where my hon. friend stands and to disillusion him of the many hallucinations in his mind.

SHRI C. G. MISRA (Madhya Pradesh):

श्री चन्द्रगोपाल मिश्र (मध्य प्रदेश) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं इस टी बिल (Tea Bill) का विरोध करते हुए इस भवन के सामने अपने कुछ मौलिक विचारों को प्रस्तुत करूंगा कि जिन पर, मैं आशा करता हूँ कि, माननीय सदस्यगण ध्यान देंगे। चाय के विषय के साथ हमारे भारतवर्ष के राजनैतिक इतिहास का एक काला भाग सम्बन्धित है और साथ ही साथ जिस प्रकार विदेशियों ने यहाँ की गरीब जनता के साथ अत्याचार किया तथा उसको धोखा दिया, उस पर भी ध्यान देना आवश्यक है।

आपको विदित होगा कि चाय की उपज का विशेष इतिहास हमारे यहाँ विदेशियों के साथ प्रारम्भ हुआ। पहिले बहुत बड़ी बड़ी कम्पनियाँ आईं और बड़े बड़े धनवान विदेशी लोग आये जिन्होंने चाय की खेती में वृद्धि की। उस समय जहाँ जहाँ चाय की खेती होती थी उन स्थानों में मजदूर नहीं मिलते थे। अपनी

आवश्यकता को पूरी करने के लिए इन लोगों ने भारतवर्ष के अन्य स्थानों से मजदूरों को प्राप्त किया। भारतवर्ष की गरीब जनता को नाना प्रकार के प्रलोभन देकर तथा कई तरह धोखा देकर मजदूरों को अपने कार्य के लिए ये लोग ले जाते थे। इस कार्य को करने के लिये कई लोगों ने भारतवर्ष में जगह जगह पर “कुली डीपो” बना रहे थे और बहुत से कार्यकर्ता इस काम को करते थे। इन्होंने अपने अपने एजेंटों को देश के अन्दर फैला रखा था जो कि यहाँ की गरीब जनता को बहका कर तथा लालच देकर अपने कार्य के लिए ले जाते थे।

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA:

श्री एच० पी० सक्सेना : रिक्रूटर (recruiter) रहते थे।

Shri C. G. MISRA :

श्री चन्द्रगोपाल मिश्र : इस तरह से रिक्रूटर (मजदूरों को भरती करने वाले) देश के अन्दर फैले हुए थे, जिनमें न कोई सम्यता होती थी और न कोई सम्यता का सिद्धान्त ही होता था। ये लोग जगह जगह देहातों में घूमते थे और इस देश की गरीब जनता को लालच और धोखा देकर चाय के बगीचों में काम करने के लिये ले जाते थे। यही नहीं उनको नाना प्रकार के प्रलोभन दिए जाते थे कि तुमको अच्छा वेतन दिया जायगा और अच्छी सुविधायें दी जायेंगी। इस तरह से यहाँ की गरीब जनता प्रलोभन में आ जाती थी और इन विदेशियों के चाय के बागों में काम करती थी। जब झुण्ड के झुण्ड मजदूर लोग आ जाते थे तो इन लोगों से मैजिस्ट्रेट (Magistrate) के सामने इकरारनामा करा लिया जाता था और फिर इन मजदूरों से हर प्रकार के कार्य ये लोग लिया करते थे। इस देश में

[Shri C. G. Misra.]

जितनी भी विदेशी चाय कम्पनियां थीं उनके द्वारा यहां की गरीब जनता के साथ नाना प्रकार के अत्याचार किये जाते थे। यह अत्याचार इतना बढ़ गया कि देश के अन्दर इस "कुली प्रथा" के विरुद्ध आन्दोलन शुरू हो गया और लोगों के मन में इन विदेशियों के विरुद्ध विरोध की भावना जाग्रत हो गई। अन्तिम इस प्रथा का अन्त हो गया। इस भवन में जो हमारे नवयुवक सदस्य हैं उनको इन आन्दोलन के दृश्यों को देखने का अवसर प्राप्त नहीं हुआ होगा। इस चाय उपज के साथ साथ हमारे देशवासियों के ऊपर विदेशियों ने जो अत्याचार किये हैं उनकी एक बहुत लम्बी चौड़ी कहानी है जिसके लिए बहुत समय की आवश्यकता है। विदेशियों ने इस देश में चाय की उपज की जो वृद्धि की वह केवल अपने ही लाभ के हित के लिए की; इस देश के लाभार्थ कुछ नहीं किया।

चाय के विषय में बहुत से विशेषज्ञों का मत है कि यह एक नशे की चीज है और इससे स्वास्थ्य को कोई लाभ नहीं होता है परन्तु आज हम यह देखते हैं कि इसका उपयोग इस दश में बहुत अधिक बढ़ गया है। ५० वर्ष पूर्व इस देश में चाय का इतना उपयोग नहीं किया जाता था जितना कि आज किया जा रहा है, यह मेरा अनुभव है। ५० वर्ष पूर्व मुझे अच्छी तरह से स्मरण है कि इस देश में इतने होटल और चाय की दुकानें नहीं थीं जितनी कि आज हम देखते हैं। आज हालत यह हो गई है कि आप इस देश के किसी छोटे से शहर या कस्बे में चले जाइये आपको गलियों में भी

चाय की दुकानें मिलेंगी। इस शहर के अन्दर आपको कितनी ही चाय की दुकानें मिलेंगी। प्रति दिन अक्सर लोग चाय पीकर ही कार्यक्रम आरम्भ करते हैं। यही नहीं समय समय पर जब लोग बाहर निकलते हैं तो चाय का सेवन करते हैं और उसके साथ नाना प्रकार का दूसरी हानिकारक वस्तुएं खाते हैं। इस का परिणाम यह भी हो रहा है कि आज हमारे देश का स्वास्थ्य बहुत ही गिर गया है और कई किस्म की बुराइयां पैदा हो गई हैं। विशेषज्ञों का यह मत है कि यह एक नशीली चीज है, तो किस तरह इसका सेवन करने से हमारे स्वास्थ्य को लाभ पहुंच सकता है? इसलिए हमारा उद्देश्य यह होना चाहिये कि चाय के उपयोग को बन्द कर दिया जाय। चाय की खेती करने में, चाय की वृद्धि करने में, जितने प्रतिबन्ध हो सकें, शासन की ओर से होने चाहियें। चाय पर जितना ज्यादा टैक्स (tax) लगाया जा सकता है शासन की ओर से लगाया जाना चाहिये। हमको इस बात का भी ध्यान रखना होगा कि दुकानों में जो चाय इस समय एक आने या दो आने में मिलती है उसकी दर ४ आना या ८ आना प्रति प्याला कर देना चाहिये। इसका नतीजा यह होगा कि गरीब जनता इतने अधिक दाम होने की वजह से उसका प्रयोग बहुत कम कर सकेगी। अगर सरकार की ओर से इस तरह की कार्यवाही की गई तो काफ़ी बुराई जो इस चाय के प्रयोग से हो रही है वह दूर हो सकती है।

आज इस बुरी चीज ने हमारे देश के अन्दर जो रूप धारण कर लिया है वह हम सब लोगों के लिए ध्यान देने योग्य बात है। मगर आज हम यह देखते हैं

कि किसी भी समय समाज में चले जाइये तो मालूम होगा कि बगैर चाय के काम नहीं चलता है। यह प्रथा विशेषकर अंग्रेजी शिक्षित समाज में बहुत ज्यादा फैली हुई है। अगर कोई सज्जन बगैर चाय पिये हुए उस सभा या समाज में से उठ जाता है तो उसे असभ्य समझा जाता है। यह प्रथा हमको अंग्रेजों ने ही दी है और आज सारे भारतवर्ष में इस का इतना प्रचलन हो गया है तथा यह बुराई इतनी गहरी हो चुकी है कि अगर सरकार की ओर से इसको रोकने की कोशिश नहीं की गई तो हमारे देश की जनता का स्वास्थ्य बहुत जल्दी धीरे धीरे गिरता चला जायेगा। इस विषय पर मैं स्वास्थ्य मंत्राणी जी से प्रार्थना करूंगा कि वह इस ओर विशेष ध्यान दें, उनका यह कर्तव्य है कि इस बुरी चीज से जनता के स्वास्थ्य का जो स्तर दिन पर दिन नीचे गिरता जा रहा है उसको रोका जाय। हमारे स्वास्थ्य विभाग का यह कर्तव्य है कि वह यहां की जनता के स्वास्थ्य का स्तर ऊंचा करने के लिए नाना प्रकार के उपाय करे जिससे कि यहां की जनता का स्वास्थ्य दिन पर दिन उन्नति कर सके। ५० वर्ष पूर्व आप लोगों ने देखा होगा कि इस देश की जनता का स्वास्थ्य कितना अच्छा था। उस समय के लोग बहुत कम रोगग्रस्त होने थे और आज हम क्या देख रहे हैं। आज देश में नाना प्रकार की बीमारियां फैल गई हैं और लोगों का स्वास्थ्य भी बहुत गिर गया है। आज हम देख रहे हैं कि जो सन्तानें इस समय पैदा हो रही हैं उनका कद बहुत ही छोटा रह गया है और वे बहुत ही कमजोर मालूम पड़ती हैं। इस का कारण यह है कि हमारे देश में उन चीजों की उपलब्धि नहीं है जो कि पहिले लोगों को आसानी के साथ प्राप्त होती

थीं। मेरी उम्र इस समय ७८ वर्ष की है, मगर जब मैं ५० और ६० वर्ष पूर्व क समय को देखता हूं तो मुझे याद आता है कि उस समय के लोगों का स्वास्थ्य बहुत ही अच्छा था, उनको दूध, घी और दूसरी उपयोगी चीजें खाने को मिलती थीं। मगर आज हम यह देखते हैं कि प्रातःकाल ५ बजे उठते ही लोगों की चाय की जरूरत हो जाती है क्योंकि बगैर चाय पिये हुए उनको पाखाना ही नहीं होता। कुछ घंटों बाद करीब ६ बजे नाश्ते के समय फिर चाय की जरूरत हो जाती है, इस तरह से दिन भर में कई बार चाय का इस्तेमाल किया जाता है। इस तरह से जनता में चाय की बुरी आदत फैल रही है जिसका परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि जनता में तरह तरह की बीमारियां फैल रही हैं। सरकार का यह कर्तव्य होना चाहिये कि जहां तक हो सके चाय की प्रथा को देश में कम किया जाय।

दूसरा प्रश्न हमारे सामने यह उठता है कि अगर चाय की प्रथा को बन्द किया जाय तो इससे देश को आर्थिक हानि होगी। यह स्वाभाविक बात है कि आजकल शासन के लिए अनेक आर्थिक कठिनाइयां हैं। विदेशियों ने अपने व्यापार के लिए, अपनी भलाई के लिए इस देश में नाना प्रकार के उपाय सोचे। मगर जब हम देखते हैं कि एक नशीली चीज को बन्द करने से हमारी आर्थिक हानि होती है अथवा आमदनी कम होती है तो उस को कहां से पूरा किया जाय यह बात ठीक मालूम होती है। मगर महात्मा गांधी जी का यह सिद्धान्त था कि ऐसी वस्तु से जित के द्वारा जनता को नुकसान पहुंचता है, उससे आमदनी प्राप्त करना अनैतिकता है और सम्यक्त नहीं है। तो इस तरह

[Shri C. G. Misra.]

से जो हमको आर्थिक हानि होती है उस को सुधारने के लिए हमें दूसरे उपाय सोचने चाहिये। जिस बुरी चीज से हमारी जनता का स्वास्थ्य खराब हो रहा है और तरह तरह की बीमारियां पैदा हो रही हैं उसकी आमदनी का हम त्याग भी कर दें तो यह कोई खराब बात नहीं होगी। सरकार को इसको धीरे धीरे कम करना चाहिये जिससे कि हमें जो आर्थिक हानि होती है उसका एकदम अनुभव भी न हो सके। यह बात हमारे अर्थ मंत्री को भी विचार करनी चाहिये कि किस तरह से यह बुरी चीज हमारे देश से दूर की जा सकती है जिससे कि देश को इसके द्वारा जो आमदनी प्राप्त होती है उसकी कमी का अनुभव न हो सके। इसके लिए हम यह कर सकते हैं कि इसकी उपज को धीरे धीरे कम करें। जहां तक हो सके उसके प्रचार के लिए लोगों को प्रोत्साहित नहीं करना चाहिये। इस तरह की अन्य बातों से अगर हम इस बुरी चीज को दूर कर सकेंगे तो देश के लिए बहुत ही हितकर होगा।

इसके साथ ही साथ आज मुझे यह अनुभव हो रहा है कि इस चाय की वजह से देश में कई तरह के रोग पैदा हो गये हैं। इस चीज का प्रचार जैसा कि मैंने कहा कि देश के कोने कोने में फैल गया है। आज हम देखते हैं कि यहां की जनता होटलों में चाय पीने के लिए जाती है, मगर होटल वाले इस बात का ख्याल नहीं करते हैं कि जिस प्याले में पहिले एक आदमी चाय पी चुका है उस को अच्छी तरह से स्वच्छ करके दिया जाय। अक्सर यह देखने में आता है कि होटल वाले एक ही बाल्टी में चाय के

प्यालों को डालकर स्वच्छ करते हैं, इसका परिणाम यह होता है कि प्याले अच्छी तरह से स्वच्छ नहीं हो पाते हैं और एक मनुष्य की बीमारी दूसरे मनुष्य में चली जाती है। वे लोग अपना लाभ का ही ख्याल करते हैं, स्वच्छता की ओर तो उन का ध्यान बहुत कम जाता है। मेरा यह अनुमान है कि इस तरह से बहुत से रोग उत्पन्न हो गये हैं। आज इस चाय की ही वजह से देश में क्षय रोग का विस्तार हो रहा है। जितनी बीमारियां आज हम देख रहे हैं उनमें से कई इस चाय की ही वजह से पैदा हो रही हैं। इस तरह की बीमारियां पहिले सुनने में नहीं आती थीं। मुझे तो होटलों में जाने का अवसर ही प्राप्त नहीं हुआ मगर स्टेशनों में इस तरह की बातें देखने का अवसर अवश्य प्राप्त हुआ है। स्टेशनों में हजारों यात्री इधर से उधर जाते हैं और थोड़े ही समय में हजारों लोगों को होटल वाले चाय देते हैं। देखा यह गया है कि इन लोगों के पास एक बाल्टी में पानी रहता है और उसमें ही झूठे बर्तन को डालकर और साफ कर दूसरे आदमियों को चाय और दूसरी खाने की चीजें उस में दी जाती हैं। उन लोगों को उस समय अपनी बिक्री का ही ध्यान रहता है, स्वच्छता के बारे में कोई ध्यान नहीं दिया जाता है। इस तरह से एक मनुष्य की बीमारी दूसरे मनुष्य में फैल रही है जिससे कि सारे समाज में रोग फैल रहा है। यह बात हम सब लोगों के लिए ध्यान देने योग्य है। अगर हमने इस चाय को प्रथा को बन्द नहीं किया तो कुछ समय बाद हमारा देश रोगग्रस्त हो जायगा। इसलिए हमारा और सरकार का यह कर्तव्य हो जाता है कि इस चाय की उपज को तथा इसके प्रचार

को किसी प्रकार का भी प्रोत्साहन नहीं दिया जाना चाहिये। अगर ऐसा नहीं किया गया तो हमारे देश की जनता का स्वास्थ्य बहुत नीचे स्तर पर पहुँच जायेगा। इसलिए मैं चाय बिल का इस सिद्धान्त को ध्यान में रखते हुए विरोध करता हूँ।

इस विषय पर यह कहा जाता है कि अगर देश की जनता को इसके द्वारा हानि होती है तो उसको बन्द किया जाना चाहिये मगर विदेशों को भेजने के लिए ही इस उद्योग को प्रोत्साहन दिया जाना चाहिये जिसके द्वारा हमारे देश को आमदनी होती है। जब हम अपने लाभ के लिए रूस, ब्रिटेन, अमेरिका और अन्य दूसरे देशों को इस बुरी चीज का निर्यात करते हैं तो यह हमारी सभ्यता के खिलाफ है। जो चीज हमारे देश के लिए हानिकारक है वह दूसरे देशों के लिए भी हानिकारक हो सकती है। हमारी यह पुरानी सभ्यता रही है कि जो चीज हानिकारक हो वह दूसरे देश को न भेजी जाय, जिस तरह से कि यहां पर अफीम को उपज की जाती थी और उसको दूसरे देशों को भेजने के लिए प्रचार किया जाता था मगर अब यह बात उचित नहीं मालूम देती। इसलिए मैं इसका भी विरोधी हूँ कि चाय विदेशों के लिए पैदा की जाय। यदि विदेशों में भी हम इस को बन्द करें तो यह प्रसन्नता की बात होगी। इस कारण से इस चाय के बिल का मैं विरोध करता हूँ।

wing of our nation's activities as it has given to India a source of wealth flowing from outside. In fact, it appears to me that the present Bill is to some extent a codification of some existing practices; for example, extension of tea gardens is now controlled by the authorities, and also quotas are fixed for tea gardens for exporting tea outside India. These things are already in existence. This Bill will put the tea industry on a very stable and proper footing by constituting the Tea Board which will deal with all matters connected with the regulation and development of the tea industry in India.

Assam, from where I came, is the largest tea producing area in India. My hon. friend, Mr. Mazumdar, referred yesterday to the history of tea. Upto 1830, the world's tea came from China. But, shortly before that time tea bushes were discovered in Assam by Robert Bruce, and from that time Assam tea became a source of industry and trade. It has also been claimed in certain quarters that the eye-opener regarding the existence of tea bushes in Assam was an Assamese young man named Maniram Dewan. His name became afterwards very famous and he was executed during the Sepoy Mutiny for having tried to restore an Assamese prince to the throne. He was the first Indian to open in Assam, tea gardens and when the rope was going to be placed round his neck he referred to his two gardens brought to being by his own labours.

Now, Assam has suffered a lot on account of the opening of tea garden* in that area; but. I do not say that it has not received any advantages. Tea gardens were opened by the Britishers alone in the early years; and about the year 1860 or 1861 poppy cultivation was prohibited in Assam so that people who were in the habit of taking opium might be induced to go to the Government stores for purchasing opium with the help of the wages earned as labourers in the tea garden. The labour problem at that time was very acute. The planters imported

[Dr. S. K. Bhuyan.] labour from outside Assam and these labourers were treated not always very humanely.

There was some agreement between the coolies and their employees. These agreements were in certain cases rigorous and the coolies were known as 'Girmitia coolies', the word 'Gir-mitia' being a local variation of the word 'agreement'. Sir Henry Cotton took up the cause of the tea garden labourers in Assam and tried to improve the conditions of their service; and Indians honoured him by making him the President of the Indian National Congress in 1904.

Originally it was the Europeans who invested their capital in opening tea gardens in Assam, and they went on developing and expanding those gardens; but the Indians on account of their poor capital were unable to engage themselves in these enterprises. Of course our countrymen came in gradually, and about 30 or 40 years ago Indian capital was copiously available and was employed in opening tea gardens. But unfortunately soon after that stage, the opening up of new tea gardens and expansion of the old ones was restricted by the authorities with the result that out of a total number of about 1,100 tea gardens in Assam, the Indians have a little more than 200. It must however be admitted that the Indian tea planters have not kept their profits to themselves, and they have donated liberally for the foundation and maintenance of several cultural institutions, such as the girls college at Gauhati, the college at Dibrugarh, the college at Golaghat, the Histories Department building at Gauhati and the Assam Provincial Museum building. So I always feel that it should be our duty to give encouragement to the Indian tea growers to enable them to open new tea gardens of small size.

Provision has been made in clause 14(3) of the Bill that in giving permission for opening new tea garden*

and expanding the old ones the *final* authority will be the Tea Board. But I would request the hon. Minister in charge of this Bill that in granting such permission the Board must be liberal and generous so that people could be encouraged to open tea gardens of small sizes say of 100 acres. At the same time it must be seen that too many tea gardens are not allowed as they might lead to over-production, and the necessity to restrict the production of tea has been realised by Government.

Then, it has also been provided in clauses 26 and 27 that the income obtained from the customs duty on the exported tea will go to the Consolidated Fund of India, and part of it will be given to the Tea Board. As a large portion of the cess will be derived from Assam I request the hon. Minister to kindly remember that a part of this collection should go to the development of Assam. The Government of India derives some 9 or 10 crores of rupees as the duty on petroleum products from the oil fields at Digboi. The Government of India should give Assam some compensation in the shape of substantial allotment from the tea cess.

I now come to clause 10(h). I am not feeling very happy over the phrase "increasing the consumption in India and elsewhere of tea and carrying on propaganda for that purpose". Everything is all right, but I have some sort of hesitation in accepting the use of the word 'propaganda' in that context. The whole purpose would have been served if the following words had been inserted in place of those now appearing in clause 10(h), namely, "adopting all measures that would be necessary for promoting the sale of Indian tea in the markets of the world", instead of laying stress on increasing the consumption in India and elsewhere and carrying on propaganda for that purpose. After all, as was said by Mr. Kishen Chand, the efficacy of tea is not cent, per cent, non-controversial. The propaganda should be for inducing people to buy

Indian tea. Otherwise it would mean that the Government of India is playing the role of a commercial organization. The Government should take steps to promote the sale of Indian tea in the markets of the world instead of making propaganda asking people to consume tea. I would request the hon. Minister to consider the deletion of the word 'propaganda' and for substitution in its place the words I have suggested.

I have nothing more to add except to commend that this Bill be accepted by the House for the very useful purpose which it is going to serve for the stabilisation of the tea industry in India.

SHRIMATI PUSHPALATA DAS: Mr. Chairman, the previous speaker who has just finished his speech had given you a historical background of tea industry. We are having this debate from yesterday. Many of our friends from this side as well as from the other side contributed to the debate. I have no quarrel with those Opposition Members because they do not agree with us. They believe in revolutionary methods whereas we believe in evolutionary methods. We got our independence in that way. We believe in that process and we try to solve our problems in that way.

Now, under this Bill there is the scheme to protect the tea industry, especially the Indian owned tea industry as this industry faced crisis every ten years and the very recent crisis was partly man-made and partly due to slump and that is why the Central Government had to think whether to interfere in this industry or not. Now they have come to a decision and come forward with this Tea Bill. I congratulate the Government for introducing this Bill and I think this will solve the problem to a great extent. Even my friends of the Opposition agreed with the principle of the Bill. It has now come to the hands of Parliament and Parliament will have the control over this tea industry. Though it will be managed by the Tea Board it is not a completely independent body

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because the Central Government will have a hand on this Tea Board as they are to nominate the Chairman of the Board. Now 40 members are going to be appointed and a Vice-Chairman is going to be elected from among its members, among them labour representatives must be sufficiently represented. We have in the past seen that labourers have been the worst sufferers. The very fact that the Board is going to be appointed shows the anxiety of the Government to control the industry from foreign exploitation. If the members of the Board were to be elected the foreign interest would have dominated the Board. That is why I am sure Government is not willing to elect the members of the Board. When the tripartite conference met in Calcutta Government had no hand in the matter and they could not come to any decision because there were three parties to an agreement and Government kept neutral and the European planters who are managing 80 per cent, of the industry would not agree with the viewpoint of the labour. This shows that Government have no control over them. I have no much knowledge of South Indian gardens but in my State there are 600 gardens owned by British people. There unfortunately we have got only 50 Indians in executive posts because after independence they are bringing Englishmen from England for these executive jobs and so the Indians are not getting what they were getting before the war. When a number of our qualified young people are suffering and they are unemployed, why should the Britishers be allowed to bring their own men from England for these executive posts? Especially in my State there is no big industry except the tea industry and the Government owned Railway. Then there is unrest and chaos among the labouring classes. The Tea District Emigrant Labour Act of 1932 is also hampering the progress of the tea industry. I suggest that the Central Government may make some amendment of that Act also because

as a result of that Act of 1932 we have got so much surplus labour, and

[Shrimati Pushpalata Das.] the tea gardens are not able to absorb this labour. I think the Central Government can solve it.

The law and order position is affected, because they are not employed in the gardens. The Indian tea gardens, they are short of capital and they cannot employ them. In this connection I may say that the Bank guarantee to the extent of 15 per cent, against the losses of this year's crop seem to be hardly adequate as it does not cover the losses on the previous years. In view of this tea gardens continue to be hard pressed for money. Now, in the tea gardens we require about 30 lakhs of pruning knives and about the same number of hoes and 40 lakhs of cane baskets every year. These cottage industries could be developed so that the extra population could be absorbed. Industrial cooperatives of plantation labour for manufacturing these implements could be encouraged. If these people can find employment in these cottage industries, I think the problem of surplus labour can be solved to a great extent.

Then, yesterday, I think Mr. Gupta said about clause 26, and he wanted to know whether it will be certified by the Auditor-General or not. I think he raised that point and there was a confusion going on in my mind also when he was speaking. I may tell him that I happened to meet the hon. Minister Shri Karmarkar and he explained to me that the Accountant-General of West Bengal would be auditing that account. In fact, the Accountant-General, West Bengal has been appointed by the Auditor-General. So in that way I think we have nothing to fear on this score.

The main grievance, however, is that 80 per cent, of the industry is in the hands of foreigners. Here I would submit that the Central Government must bring pressure, to bear on the foreign firms to employ more and more Indians. In order to improve it, we should have control of this in-

dustry and I think this Bill will go a long way to achieve the object for which it is brought forward.

There is the problem of warehousing also. At the time of the war when there were bulk purchases from Great Britain, tea used to be transported quickly but after the war, huge quantities of tea are dumped, especially at Calcutta and in other parts also, and due to lack of proper warehousing facilities it gets deteriorated. As a result the owners of the tea estates do not get an adequate price. So about this warehousing also the Central Government should take the necessary action. Then the auction market must come to India from London. The market being in a foreign country, we have lost control over the price. We do not know what is happening there. Yesterday, Mr. Mazumdar was telling about ten agency houses. That is also one of the grievances. So long as the business remains in the hands of foreigners our Indian labour will never be benefited.

About labourers of Indian-owned gardens, I would like to draw the attention of the Government of India

J to this case. At the tripartite conference, as foreign interest dominated they could not come to a decision. But the Indian gardens could come to a settlement easily because they were really hard hit. The labour also sacrificed a lot. They faced the situation bravely. They only wanted that either they must be taken as shareholders or an assurance must be given that they were not going to issue any dividend so long as the crisis was not over. The Indian gardens had to consider this request and they agreed and as a result many gardens reopened after that bilateral agreement which was reached between the labour and Indian-owned tea gardens in Sib-sagar District. The two parties could come to terms because they were really hard hit. At that time Government of India could stand only as an onlooker. Now they are going to have powers in their hands. In an emergency they can control the prices even.

Again I would ask the Minister to look into the Tea District Emigrant Act of 1932 and take necessary action. Then we have got another difficulty and that is the transport bottleneck. I think it was in 1950 they could not send tea to Calcutta due to transport difficulties and when they could get some wagons the prices had begun to fall. And the Indian gardens suffered. Our Prime Minister said on many occasions that we are not going to distinguish between Indians and foreigners so long as they look to the interest of the Indian people. Now that they are finding that they are doing something detrimental to our interests, Government have come forward with this Bill and I am sure slowly they will take over the industry also. I do not feel like advising them to nationalise. Of course, after independence it would have been better if we had taken over, but we had no money. So as a practical politician, they cannot do that. But as imaginary politicians do, our friends on the other side dreamt of many things which did not come true. Now being in the Opposition they are in the fortunate position to criticise. Let them try taking it over and they will know what difficulties there are.

SHRI B. GUPTA: Next year, it will be taken over.

SHRIMATI PUSHPALATA DAS: So they should guide us and try to see what they would do if they were solving that problem. Sir, I do not want to take up much time. The Indian gardens must be encouraged. We do not want the foreigners to exploit us. Let them take in our nationals and let them examine whether they are behaving properly. The very fact that Government have brought forward this Bill shows that Government do not want to have any domination by foreigners. And I am sure in future there will be no opportunity for my hon. friends to criticise Government. With these words, Sir, I support the Bill.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Sir, I shall not go into the details of the Bill, be-

cause there are other hon. Members who have already contributed and will contribute and who are in a better position to do so. I will confine myself to two issues involved in the tea industry so far as this Bill is concerned.

Firstly, the question of the possession of the tea industry—as to who owns it in the majority—is a question that is agitating all sections of this House. The hon. Minister when he introduced this Bill anticipated that argument and tried to allay our fears that although 80 per cent, of the industry is being controlled by British interests, the Government has power enough and this Tea Bill will give them additional powers, to see that the British stranglehold on this industry will not affect our national interests adversely.

But, Sir, I feel that the hon. Minister not only on this question, but in most other questions, inclines to be much too complacent. He is very welcome to be confident in this matter. He is welcome to take more and more powers to see that this British element in the industry, which is exploiting not only the industry but the country also for more than 200 years, should not continue to exploit it. But I should like to tell him, that although he has all the powers, there are ways and means of circumventing the exercise of these powers. There was a time, Sir, when the British were ruling over us when they could blatantly go on exploiting our resources and our people, but now they have changed their tactics. They know that they cannot openly come out and exploit us, but they have all sorts of devices and methods by which they continue to do the same thing which they used to do blatantly some years back and the manner in which they are doing it is so very devious and of such a complicated pattern that not even the hon. Minister, who is so confident about himself and who seems to think that he could put the British interests on the mat whenever he wants, will be able to contend against those forces.

[Shri C. G. K. Reddy.]

Sir, the other day, when we were discussing the Industries (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, I pointed out one or two instances where the British interests, in spite of the fact that the Government want to treat them equally, in spite of the fact that they do not want to give them additional advantage, in spite of the fact that they do not wish that the British interests should operate in this coun-try to the disadvantage of our own interests—in spite of all this they have been having the upper hand in almost every sphere of industry. It is no use, having powers if in exercising those powers you are not able to catch the offender. In this connection I am tempted to say that the hon. Minister, with all his powers, probably enjoys the position of the Monarch in Great Britain. The Monarch in Britain is supposed to be the topmost man. He is supposed to be the man who decides the destiny of the nation. But the conventions and the manner in which politics operates there reduce him merely to a figurehead. And I should like most humbly to submit that the hon. Minister, with all his powers, is being reduced to a figurehead. He may try to tell himself and tell the country that he has these powers and that he will see that any undesirable inclination on the part of the British interests will be strongly put down, but I have my fears in this regard.

I would like to point out one or two ways in which the British interests operate. As the hon. Minister is aware, whenever resistance against British interests becomes too strong, they have a very well known method of counteracting it, and that is by way of mixed firms. We have had since 1947 a good crop of mixed firms. In spite of then being British firms, they somehow get the respectable name of Indian firms merely because one or two Indian? are taken on the directorate and sometimes the company is incorporated in India. In spite of that, you find that in every mixed firm, the British interests dominate not only on the

Board of Directors but also in the management.

We have seen a particular example of one shipping company, for instance,, which is absolutely in the control of British interests, and in spite of that it is called an Indian firm. In spite of the fact that the Shipping Policy Committee decided that such a firm should not be called j.n Indian firm, the Government of India, because of this factor that it is a mixed firm, and because there are certain powerful Indian directors on its Board, in spite of the fact that the managing agents who control it are entirely British, call it an Indian firm, and call the shipping operated by it as Indian shipping, and give them equal facilities with our own interests.

In the same manner, I feel that whether it is in the tea industry or in any other industry, if the national resistance becomes too strong for the British firms, they operate in another name but carry on in the same way as they used to do before. They just bring on to the board one or two Indian collaborators -who used to-collaborate with them even before 1947. You will find that in the case of these mixed firms, when they want to attain a certain respectability, they are always able to get some collaborators who almost invariably used to be the collaborators of the British before 1947, and that gives them a cloak of respectability.

The other and more insidious method, of which the hon. Minister is not aware, and to which on another occasion I also made a passing reference, is this, that the British firms established here try to influence the Government and influence the whole nation more or less by appointing people, not necessarily competent for the jobs, but people who wield political or social influence. We know in some of the oil companies or in other bigger companies we find what are called probationers who are given prize jobs. They are taken not for their competence, not for their ability

not for their qualifications, but because; they are connected highly either in the political sphere or in the social sphere, and indirectly influence is brought to bear. In spite of all this the hon. Minister may stand up and say, "I am powerful enough. I have all the powers, and I will see that these powers are exercised". But my great fear is this, that he is powerless, and he continues to be less and less powerful every day.

Apart from the influence that they can bring to bear on the Government, they also have another method—the famous method of lobbying. In this connection I may be permitted to quote a personal instance which happened to me about seven or ten days ago. Some weeks ago, when I was speaking on the Tariff Bill, in the national interest as I thought, I questioned the hon. Minister's proposal to raise the import duty on a certain product in the name of giving protection to our indigenous industry. I questioned the quality of the products produced by that industry, and I also said that in the name of protection you should not Denalise the consumer. A week or ten days later I had a rather very interesting experience. An old friend of mine from Calcutta came here and met me as if he had met me after ten years. And then he introduced me the same evening to a rather powerful British gentleman in Calcutta who is the representative of a world famous firm producing this product. And before I knew what was happening I realised that I was being taken in. Because I had raised a protest in the interests of the consumer, they immediately came to me thinking that I was in the Opposition and I could probably tackle the Government much better than the hon. Members opposite. So they came to me and tried to tell me that the consumer was being penalised in the name of protection.

I should like to submit that if some body had been a little less intelligent than I was.....

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member said he was taken in!

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: I probably would have been taken in. And I may also add that in these days when most of us are anxious, regardless of principles, to go abroad, if an offer comes in the name of going and visiting a factory and finding out how things are, I think that is an additional reason why certain Members may collapse. I am just trying to tell the hon. Minister in what ways these things operate. He may stand by himself, and he may think that he is strong enough and independent enough

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI T. T. KRISHNA-MACHARI): If the hon. Member wants to say that I have less intelligence than he has, I am prepared to admit **it**.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: I am not saying that.

SHRI H. N. KUNZRU: We shall not accept it.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: I say he is more intelligent than I am, but his intelligence is useless, because I do not think that it is his contention that he operates in isolation. There are influences. He is not a free agent. He might say that he is a Minister, and that he is powerful enough to exercise the powers according to the Statute. But his powers are influenced not only by hon. Members present here, who also I am sure will not succumb to such pressures, but by his own department. There are, I know, agents of British interests in his own department. There are people who are being influenced to see that additional advantages are given to British interests. In this regard I also gave an example the other day showing how a British firm got an additional advantage, an unjustified advantage, through a particular department in his Ministry. Of course the hon Minister said that he would look into it, but that on the face of it he did

[Shri C. G. K. Reddy.]

not think there was any basis for such an allegation. But I should like to say this without any fear of contradiction, that there are agents in the Government of India acting for British interests in the country.

'SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: Permit me, Sir, to protest against a statement of this nature.

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: Well, naturally, the hon. Minister who is in charge will have to stand up for those officers. But this is a common practice all over the world. Let him not think that it is confined to This country. It is common all over the world—lobbying, pressure tactics and agents—agents not in the sense of secret service men, but people who will locate people, who can give some additional favour. This is a famous method. This is a method which is adopted everywhere. Therefore, I should like to submit that he should not be so complacent; he should not think everything is all right

SHRI T. T. KRISHNAMACHARI: "Optimistic".

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: No: "complacent". My complaint against him is that not only is he optimistic, but he is so complacent; his whole expression is complacent. That is the trouble. I have no complaint otherwise against him. I shall not charge him with deliberately helping British interests, nor do I think there is any Member in this House who wants to help British interests, but there is complacency—a great deal of it. Not only is there pressure in this way, but we also find it more and more difficult to extricate ourselves from this because the tea trade or any other trade, because of certain economic and historical developments, is firmly in the hands of the British interests, British shipping, British banking, British trading. Specially in the tea industry you will find, as the hon. Member Mr. Mazum-dar has pointed out yesterday, that at the agency firms in Calcutta are agents

for tea, are agents for shipping, are exporting agents and besides that they are also bankers. So with all these things taken along with the fact *ihm* we are connected with Britain both economically and even monetarily, he can understand great danger underlying this. I know, Sir, that so far as this Bill is concerned, it is too late to ask the hon. Minister to accept an amendment to see that our interests are protected, and it is also too late for him to do anything about it. But I am only pointing this out in my hope that I may be able to reduce to some extent at least the complacency with which he looks at this situation.

Sir, there is another point which has been raised with regard not only to the British interests, but with regard to the other interests also and that is a rather unfortunate factor. That is this. Supposing we see that the British interests find it difficult to operate in this country, then the speculators will take over these estates and the industry will be in a far worse position than it is to lay. I fully agree with this contention. I know also, Sir, in Mysore some of the British estates which have been taken over by Indians are being badly managed because of the fact that they are not the proper kind of interests. They are commercial interests and they want to put in their money and pull it out as soon as possible, so much so that the estates *are* badly managed and ultimately the industry itself suffers—

To that, Sir, my only argument is 'nationalisation' Here is a case which is in every way ripe for nationalisation. It is not as if I am speaking only as though I have an infinite faith in nationalisation. I do have faith in nationalisation but it is not with an infinite faith that I speak. But even otherwise, taking all circumstances into consideration, here is a clear case for nationalisation. What is the state of the industry? It is really bad. Is it not a fact that again and again the Government will have to rush to its help so that it may be rehabilitated, so that this derelict industry may be put on

its feet? Is it not a fact that the labour is the worst treated in all the country, in so far as the tea industry is concerned? There are many other factors as well, which clearly indicate that the only thing for us to do is, under the present circumstances, to nationalise the plantations. There is no need for us to ask the Indian interests to take over from the British interests. Indian and British alike, there is a clear case for nationalisation and it is up to us to protect this key industry which is so important in our economy in so far as our foreign exchange is concerned by nationalising it so that we may be able to put it on its feet, on a proper footing, and we may also be able to develop it in a particular direction that we want.

Having said this much, Sir, I will go only to one point in the Bill and that is the composition of the Board. In this regard, Sir, I must draw the attention of the House to the departure of policy that is being followed by the present Commerce and Industry Minister, which, I believe, is definitely a retrograde policy. Hitherto, Sir, whenever we had Development Boards for particular industries, we always seemed to have had the members elected. They were the representatives of particular interests. Now the hon. Minister has completely gone back on that and in almost every Bill that he is going to bring forward, we find that he has given up the policy of election and he is going to nominate every representative. I am fully appreciative of the fact that he has found himself in great difficulties in certain matters, especially the Coffee Board, where, Sir, the Board has not been amenable to the directions of the Government and they have also acted against the interests of the consumer. But I should like to submit that the solution to that is not to have your nominees on the Board. In order to contend against certain situations, you may take powers, which you may exercise only under extraordinary circumstances. Sir, the principle of election in a democratic set up is unexceptionable. You cannot go against

it. You must concede it as an article of faith.

SHRI K. S. HEGDE: Even in economic field?

SHRI C. G. K. REDDY: In every field. You have been following it. It is a good principle that you decentralise power as far as possible. It is all right to say that the Government and the Minister is after all under the control of Parliament and whatever he does through the Board, through his nominees, is always questioned by the Parliament, by the people, and thereby we will be able to have certain restrictions. But my objection to it is that the taking of power by Parliament is itself objectionable because more and more power must be diffused to a greater and greater field. You cannot argue that the Coffee Board hitherto had elected members and because of this fact they manipulated the coffee markets and made the consumer suffer; you cannot try to amend that situation by nominating every member on that Board, because, Sir, nomination is, I think, a retrograde step. As I have indicated already, if you find certain difficulties in this Bill. Sir, for such contingencies for which the hon. Minister wants to protect himself and protect the people from the exploitation of the nominees on this Board, you can have special powers which you can exercise under extraordinary circumstances.

I agree that even the elected representatives on the Board which is a democratic Board may act against the interests of the consumer, may act against the interests of the people at large. In such contingencies and only in such contingencies you should exercise your power. But according to this Bill, Sir, when it becomes an Act, every member of the Board will be nominated by the Government and to that extent he shall be deeply indebted to the Government and he will also not be a free agent.

The principle of having an elected Board is this. You have the different

[Shri C. G. K. Reddy.] interests, the different factors that go not only into the production but also the consumption of that particular product and it should be a good principle that you should recognise that these interests know more than the hon. Minister himself. It is, I think, a principle which he must himself agree to because he cannot be expected to know everything about it, and the interests directly connected with that particular industry would know more about it. Therefore, Sir, when you give that power to them, they know how to develop that industry, they know what is good for that industry and they lay down certain policies. But if he finds that they have laid down a policy which is against the national interests, he will always be in a position to use such extraordinary powers and he will have the full support of Parliament. Therefore, there is no case for this particular thing. I should therefore suggest—and again it is too late in the day to move an amendment and for the hon. Minister to accept it—that in spite of the fact that nominations have been put down, the hon. Minister should see that his nominations approximate as much as possible to elections. That is, whenever he makes nominations, he must do it in full consultation with, and if possible, with the full concurrence of the various interests concerned.

One more point about this and that is this: So far as the Board is concerned, we have eight interests. My conception or any Development Board or Industrial Board is that it should be composed of three factors which determine not only the production but also the consumption and development of that particular industry, i.e. the management, the consumer and the labour. Here you have got seven or eight interests and we do not know which particular interest is going to be given weightage. That is why I asked the hon. Minister whether he had in his mind what would be the composition of this Board and the number of members which each

interest will have on the Board, but he was not able to tell me. He wanted a certain amount of flexibility. Whenever you constitute a Board, you must have these factors in mind, which determine not only the production but the consumption and development of the industry; i.e. the management, the consumer and the labour should be equally represented on the Board so that the industry may be properly looked after.

If you will permit one or two more minutes, I should like to emphasise one or two points made by hon. friend, Mr. Sinha. He said that the Assam plantations are working at a disadvantage as compared with those in West Bengal. He talked about price parity of coal and other raw materials which go into the manufacture and in the processing of tea, and he also pleaded for a price stabilisation policy so that it will be possible for us to maintain the price at a reasonable level, which will not go so far below as will ruin the industry and not go so far above as will ruin the interests of the consumer. These are suggestions which need the serious consideration of the hon. Minister. I hope that with the extraordinary powers that he wishes to have in so far as the Board is concerned, he will be able to direct the Board to look into these matters and take such action as is necessary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The discussion on the Tea Bill will be interrupted now to allow the Prime Minister to make a statement on foreign affairs.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU) : Mr. Chairman, since the last occasion when this House discussed foreign affairs, much has happened in the international sphere and many important developments have taken place. No major problem has been solved, but it may be said that for the first time in several years] large numbers of people have hoped