

who were elected as Delegates by the Railwaymen to attend the above conference were denied usual relief, leave and pass facilities; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that the Works Manager Golden Rock threatened the Labour Union of forcibly removing a piece of work of decorations made at the gates of the Labour Unions grounds on the plea of encroachment?

The Deputy Minister of Railways and Transport (Shri Alagesan): (a) and (b). Yes. Permission was sought by the South Indian Railway Labour Union—for holding their annual conference in railway land in the Railway Colony at Golden Rock. As such facilities are not given to unrecognised Unions permission was refused by the Administration.

(c) No special instructions were issued by the Administration to departmental officers to relieve delegates and issue them railway passes. The grant of leave to railway staff in the ordinary course rests entirely on the discretion of the departmental officers and it may be that some staff, in the exigencies of service, might not have been granted leave for attending this conference.

(d) No.

Shri Nambiar: May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that that Labour Union has applied for recognition and whether this lack of recognition stood in the way of granting this right?

Shri Alagesan: Yes, Sir, the Union has applied for recognition.

Mr. Speaker: His point is whether it was the want of recognition that led to the refusal of the facilities asked for.

Shri Alagesan: At the time, the permission was asked for, the Union was an unrecognised one and hence the permission was refused.

Shri Nambiar: May I know, Sir, what exactly is the position as to the recognition of the Union?

Shri Alagesan: I do not think, Sir, that that question directly arises from this.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether it is the policy of the Government not to give railway premises or buildings to railwaymen irrespective of the fact that they are members of unrecognised Unions or not?

Shri Alagesan: Yes, Sir; railway premises are allowed to be occupied by recognised Unions for such conferences.

Shri Nambiar: May I know, Sir, in this particular case, though the Union was not recognised, the railway men asked for permission for their use not as members of the Labour Union but as railway men and it was refused?

Mr. Speaker: From his answer it is very clear.

Shri Alagesan: The request came on behalf of the Union.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether the leave passes claimed by the railway men on their own account for attending some business,—of course, the Labour Union—were refused or not?

Shri Alagesan: I do not follow the question.

Mr. Speaker: It is no use following the question any further because he is going to argue.

Shri Nambiar: May I know whether these passes applied for by these railway men on their own account were refused or not?

Shri Alagesan: I have no information on that point, Sir.

PRICE OF SUGAR (FIXATION)

*602. **Shri Jhulan Sinha:** Will the Minister of Food and Agriculture be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that while fixing the price of sugarcane, no price for sugar has been fixed this year as in the previous year; and

(b) the grounds for not fixing the price for sugar during this year?

The Minister of Agriculture (Dr. P. S. Deshmukh): (a) Yes.

(b) Control over price of sugar is not considered necessary as the supply of sugar is far in excess of the demand. To safe-guard the interests of the consumer, however, it has been decided to so regulate the release from the factories that a reserve of approximately 3 lakh tons sugar is always available with the industry, and if the market prices of sugar rise to unreasonably high levels, the Government will release sugar from the reserve stocks at prices which the Government may then fix statutorily corresponding to the minimum price of sugarcane, and will also direct it to be sold through such agencies as may be considered necessary.