ESTIMATES COMMITTEE 1960-61

HUNDRED AND TWENTIETH REPORT (SECOND LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS)



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT NEW DELHI

March, 1961/Chaitra, 1883(S)

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- 9. Page 12, Para 28, Une 7:
 For '1.C.T.C.' Read '1.G.I.'
 - 10. Page 15, Marginal Heading, line 7:

 For 'shares' Read 'spares'
 - 11. Page 15, Para 37, Une 13:
 For 'recommended' Read 'recommend'
- 12. Page 16, Sectional Heading:

 Add 'H' before 'Personnel Matters'
- 13. Page 18, S.No. 2, Une 2:

 For 'quite' Read 'quiet'
- 14. Page 20, S.No. 14, line 3:

 For 'inadequate' Read 'in adequate'

121-L.S,-R.P.-30.3.61/1,250.

CORRIGENDA

Hundred and Twentieth Report of the Estimates Committee (Second Lok Sabha)

- 1. Page 4, Footnote, line 1:

 Page 4, Footnote, line 1:

 Read 'Ram'
- 2. Page 4, Footnote, line 2:

 For 'Mark' Read 'Marks'
- 3. Page 6, line 4 from below:

 For 'fiures' Read 'figures'
- 4. Page 8, last line:

 For 'differences' Read 'difference'
- 5. Page 9, line 3 from below: For 'nd' Read 'and'
- 6. Page 9, line 2 from below:

 For 'a330 lakhs' Read '3330 lakhs'
- 7. Page 9, last line:

 For '3.5 percent' Read '5.5 percent'
- A. Pabe II, Para 26, line 4:

 For 'Ldt.' Read 'Ltd.'

P.T.O.

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1960-61

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^{*}Riected w. e. f. 25th November, 1960 vice Shri Dinesh Singh resigned.

INTRODUCTION

- I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Hundred and Twentieth Report on the Ministry of Commerce and Industry—Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (Reports and Accounts).
- 2. The Estimates Committee examined the working of the Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. in 1954-55 and their recommendations/observations in this behalf are contained in their 13th Report (First Lok Sabha). The replies furnished by Government indicating action taken on the aforesaid Report were considered by the Committee (1957-58) and the same are embodied in their First Report (Second Lok Sabha).
- 3. This year, again a general examination of the published Annual Report and Accounts of the Company for the year ending 31st March, 1959 was conducted by the Sub-Committee of the Estimates Committee on Public Undertakings whose Report thereon was finally approved by the whole Committee.
- 4. A statement showing an analysis of recommendations contained in this Report is also appended (Appendix II).
- 5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. for placing before them the material and information that they wanted in connection with the examination of the Annual Report and Accounts of the Company.

New Delhi; March 28, 1961. Chaitra 7, 1883 (Saka). H. C. DASAPPA,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

A. Short Background

The Sindri Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd., registered as a limited company in 1951, is now nine years old. Its present business mainly relates to manufacturing, stocking and distribution of ammonium sulphate which is its main product. The important bye-products are ammonia, gas, coal tar, motor benzol, pure benzene, pure toluene etc.

B. Production

(i) Shortfall in Production

2. The table on the following page shows the rated capacity and actual production of important items during the last nine years:

E	Annual				Actual]	Actual Production	đ			
	Capacity 1951-52 1952-53 1953-54 1954-55 1955-56 1956-57 1957-58 1958-59 1959-60	951-52	1952-53	1953-54	1954-53	98-861	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59	09-6561
Ammonium Sulphate (Tons)	. 3,50,000 34,800 2,19,000 2,50,000 3,00,000 3,26,000 3,33,700 3,32,000 3,30,000 2,85,000`_	4,800	000,61,1	2,50,000	3,00,000	3,26,000	3,33,700	3,32,000	3,30,000	2,85,000
Ammonia (long tons)	. 93,800	:	:	:	84,176	782,287	95,211	84,176 92,287 95,144 96,144 94,151 72,631	.94.151	72,631
Raw Gas (Million cu. ft.) .	. 11,550*	:	•	:	10,489	11,205	11,416	10,489 11,205 11,416 11,830 11,339	11,339	981'6
Converted Gas (Million cu. ft.)	. 15,400*	:	:	:	13,376	14,559	14,841	13,376 14,559 14,841 15,378 14,659	14,659	11,428
Coke (tons)	. 2,16,000	:	:	:	1,20,141	2,18,641	2,23,827	1,20,141 2,18,641 2,23,827 2,29,013 2,28,596 2,24,233	365,8242	2,24,233

- 3. It will be seen that the production of ammonium sulphate (which is the principal item of production) recorded an increasing trend upto the year 1956-57 but has been declining from 1957-58; in 1959-60 it amounted to only 81 per cent of the rated capacity of the plant. Similarly, the production of Ammonia, Gas and Coke also started falling down from 1958-59. In no year has the rated capacity in respect of the main product of the factory viz.; ammonium sulphate been reached.
- 4. In the course of his evidence the representative of Reasons feet the Ministry gave the following reasons for the shortfall in production:-

- (i) wear and tear of the plant which had been in operation for 9 years against the assumed life of 12 years. Extensive reconditioning of the plant had become necessary and the generators had to be kept idle for sometime;
- (ii) non-availability of high ash fusion coals for coking; and
- (iii) use of gypsum of a lower purity; the plant was designed to use 96 per cent purity gypsum (from sources now in Pakistan) whereas the gypsum now available (from indigenous sources) is only 80—82 per cent pure.

(ii) Expert Committee Report

5. From a Press Report dated the 13th November, 1960 it was gathered that a one member Committee consisting of Dr. Hussain Zaheer (a Director of the Sindri Company and Director, Regional Research Laboratory, Hyderabad) had been appointed to investigate the reasons for set back in production in the Sindri Factory. It is a matter of regret that though the Estimates Committee had fairly detailed discussions with the representatives of the Ministry and the Company on the 9th November, 1960 regarding the reasons for shortfall in production none of them referred to the expert investigation carried out in the matter*. On a request from the Committee subsequently, a copy of the Report was made available.

^{*}At the time of factual verification of the Report, the Ministry stated that there was no intention to conceal the fact that Dr. Hussain Zaheer had undertaken a detailed investigation into the reasons for the fall in production at Sindri and that he had prepared a report after his investigation. There was no formal appointment of a Committee for the purpose. Dr. Hussain Zaheer was a Director of the Sindri Board of Management and it was in his capacity as a member of the management that he was asked to make the investigations. The investigations, therefore, were more in the nature of an internal examination by the management themselves than an enquiry by an outside authority. ment themselves than an enquiry by an outside authority.

- 6. The Report was submitted by Dr. Hussain Zaheer in April, 1960 and it is understood that the recommendations made therein have been accepted by the Sindri Board, though it has not been specifically indicated whether the management is in agreement with the findings of the Report.
- 7. Dr. Hussain Zaheer has dealt extensively with the aspects of the problem of low production with special reference to the quality of the coke and the conditions of the gas generators.

Clinkering trouble evident from the beginning.

34 . -

It appears from Dr. Hussain Zaheer's report that clinkering trouble affecting production of gas started only after 1954 when the coke ovens of the company were commissioned. Till then coke purchased from Indian Iron and Steel Co. and the Tatas was being used. The problem has continued on an increasing scale for five years and has affected not only the output but also the life of the generators themselves.

Delay in having a comprehensive enquiryation.

8. It was only in 1960 that a comprehensive enquiry into the matter was carried out and remedial measures suggested. It is difficult to understand why they kept quiet Committee's for so long without looking into the condition of the plant recommend- and allowed it to deteriorate so markedly. The Committee feel that such an enquiry should have been made and remedial measures adopted much earlier. They trust that the management would now take necessary steps to implement the remedial measures suggested by Dr. Hussain Zaheer without delay.

Defective Planning of Coke Oven Plant.

- 9. Dr. Zaheer's report indicates that while preparing the specifications for the raw materials for the coke oven plant, the type of coke required for Semi-Water Gas Plant was overlooked. It also seems that the Stamping Mills* acquired with the Gas Oven Plant are not really required. has made the following observations in his report:—
 - "It appears that at the time the specifications were prepared for the raw materials for the Coke Oven Plant and the specifications for the coke to be produced emphasis was laid on the production of hard coke through the utilisation of a blend containing a large portion (upto 95 per . cent) of Dishergarh coals. The requirement of the Semi-Water Gas Plant of a coke, which should not only be reactive but also have a high ash fusion temperature appears to have been overlooked. Therefore, while the Coke Oven

The cost of the stamping arrangement in the Raw Car is estimated to be of the order of 5 lakh D. Mark,

installed by Carl Still can produce a satisfactory coke from a blend containing a higher percentage of Dishergarh coal, this coke is not satisfactory on account of the low ash fusion temperature for the Semi-Water Gas Generators. It was, therefore, necessary from the very beginning to work out a blend containing not more than 40 to 42 per cent of Dishergarh coal along with a necessary quantity of high grade Jharia coal in order to get the satisfactory coke with a high ash fusion temperature.

The stamping mills which are acquired with coke Oven Plant for production of a compact coke with a high percentage of Dishergarh coal are really not required for producing a type of coke which is required by the Semi-Water Gas Plant using the optimum blend, which is now being worked out. It is, however, understood that the stamping mills are really an essential part of the ramming device for this particular type of coke ovens".

10. The Committee were informed that all the present Gas generaeight gas generators have been badly corroded and other-tors badly affected. wise affected by the use of inferior grade of coal. Some of the generators had even cracked and had to be laid by and others worked at reduced capacity. The necessary repairs would cost at least Rs. 10 lakhs. Even after reconditioning of the generators, the rated capacity would 3,30,000 tons per year against the original rated capacity of 3.50,000 tons.

11. Dr. Zaheer's Report however indicates that during Annual over-the period 1956—58, gas production was maintained at a haul and high level by operating the plants for longer periods. To maintenance boost up falling production adequate time was not given neglected for annual overhaul and running maintenance. Particularly and generators worked during the last quarter of 1958 and throughout 1959 even above permissions. though the gas generators were exercising serious and ssible limits. frequent clinker troubles, they were constantly working at higher than normally permissible limits. From about the middle of 1958 and particularly during 1959-60, the drop in gas generation was due more to deterioration of generators than to changes in coke quality. He has added that even a slight variation in coke quality must have caused further breakdowns in the plant and that even if a uniformity was maintained in the poor quality coke supplied to the generators, the latter were not in a condition to respond well. the end of 1959-60 there was no reserve strength left in the generators and the danger point had been reached.

Committee's

12. If the findings of Dr. Zaheer are correct, it would seem that the generators were worked beyond the normally permissible limits to keep up flagging production. This was obviously neither correct nor prudent. It has been somewhat of a costly mistake contributing to the loss in production and earnings on the one hand and avoidable damage to the plant on the other. The Committee trust that Government would investigate these aspects without delay not only with a view to fix responsibility but also to learn the necessary lesson and to guard against such lapses in this and other undertakings in future.

(iii) Expansion Scheme

Mission, deputed by the Government of India under the Technical Co-operation Agreement between U.S.A. and the Government of India, a contract was entered into with M/s. Montecatini of Milane, Italy in January, 1955 for the erection of the necessary plant for processing the Coke Oven Gas and producing as end products 70 tons of Urea and 400 tons of Double Salt per day. The expenditure involved was slightly over Rs. 9 crores. The Expansion Plants were commissioned in 1959-60. The actual production of Urea and Double Salt during that year was as under*:—

(In metric tons)

		Annual Production	Annual Target
Urea	•	4,658	24,500
Double Salt	•	22,195	I ,40,00 0

*At the time of factual verification, the Ministry have given the following figures of Annual production and annual target of Urea and Double Salt:—

(In metric tons)

		/	
		Annual production	Installed capacity
Urca .		4733	74 per day
Double Salt		22,552	347 per day

The lower installed capacity has been shown for double salt because the Manufacturers had failed to fulfil the guarantee test of 400 tons per day which was the capacity originally planned. The installed capacity cannot be increased from 347 tons to 400 tons unless certain large scale additions and modifications are carried out to the Lurgi Sulphate Section of the Double Salt Plant.

It may, however, be pointed out that the flures of actual production as given in the Report were based on information contained in the Chapter 'STATISTICS' in the Annual Report of the Company for the year 1959-60.

14. Explaining the reasons for the shortfall in production Working at the representative of the Ministry informed the Committee that these plants were being operated at half the load because of technical difficulties, partly due to design and partly due to the unsatisfactory performance of the foreign collaborators on account of which it had not been found possible for the two plants to go into full production. It was further stated that at the time of trial of the double salt plant the contractors were unable to convince that the plant would produce the double salt upto the guaranteed capacity and tor this failure they had paid the assessed penalty of Rs. 4.87 lakhs. The penalty assessed for delay* in erection and commissioning of the expansion plant was Rs. 34.74 lakhs. The amount accepted and actually realised from the firm was Rs. 19:50 lakhs—thus making a total of Rs. 24.37 lakhs. The rated capacity of producing 70 tons of Urea a day was expected to be reached in about 18 months when the would go on "double stream". As regards double salt the attainment of the rated capacity depended on the rectification of defects in the plant by Messrs. Montecatini.

15. It would appear that the Expansion Scheme has been Committee's encountering heavy weather from the very beginning. The recommenda-Committee trust that the defects in the Expansion Plant would be got rectified by M/s. Montecatini before long and the plants run at their rated capacity. They also hope that the balance of compensation claimed will be also realised.

(iv) Cost of Production

16. From a statement furnished to the Committee they Cost of production observe that the cost of production per ton of ammonium rising. sulphate has gone up by Rs. 34 during the four years 1954-55 to 1958-59. As a result of increase in the cost of production the selling price** was raised from Rs. 270 in 1954-55 to Rs. 280 in 1956-57 and to Rs. 290 in 1958-59 i.e., a rise of Rs. 20 over this period.

The rise in cost of production was mainly ascribed to:

- (i) rise in railway freight;
- (ii) royalty on gypsum and prices of coal and steel;
- (iii) wages and salaries.
- 17. The Committee however note that besides the increase in the freight charges by 35 per cent and raw materials by 29 per cent there has been a rise of 32 per cent

^{*}The loss in the production due to delay in installation has been a ssessed at 5,250 tons of Urea and 30,000 tons of double salt.

^{**}The cost of imported ammonium sulphate in June, 1960 was Rs. 222 per ton (C & F) landed.

in salaries and wages and 22 per cent in miscellaneous expenses during the four years. The Committee have dealt with the increase in salaries and wages in para 40 of the Report.

C. Turnover and Profits

18. A table indicating the turnover and profit of the company during the last 3 years is given below:—

(In lakhs of Rs.)

Particulars ,	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59
1	2	3	4
A .			
 Total capital* Net worth 	3265	3493	3647
 (a) Paidup capital (b) Reserve and surpluses . (c) Less fictitious assets 	1700 186.69 () 	1700 186.20 (—) 5.64	1700 181.77 (—)14.46
Total	1886.69	1880.56	1867.31
3. Net working capital† 4. Sales	334 1038.2	455 989.32	558 1030.4
5. Net Profits (before tax and interest).	218.2	173.29	184.1
6. Net Profits (after tax and interest). 204.7	148.65	159.20
7. Dividends	85	85	85
B .			
1. Ratio of total capital to sales	1:.31	1:.28	12.29
2. Ratio of Net Worth to sales .	1:.55	1:.52	1:.55
3. Ratio of Net Working Capital to sales.	1:3.1	1:2	1:1.9
4. Percentage of net profits (before tax and interest) to sales.	21%	17.5%	17.8%
5. Percentage of Net Profits (before tax and interest) to total capital	6.6%	4.9%	5.04%
6. Perce trage of Net Profits (after tax and i sterest) to Net Worth	10.8%	7.9%	8.5%

^{*}Total of all assets less ficticious assets.

[†]Represents differences between current assets and current liabilities.

(i) Turnover

- 19. It will be seen from the above table that the ratio Turnover of total capital, net worth and net working capital to sales low. of the company ranges round 1: 3, 1: 5 and 1: 2.5 respectively. These ratios indicate that the rate of turnover of the undertaking is on the low side.* During evidence the representative of the company attributed the low turnover to the following reasons:—
 - (i) ratio of equity capital to loans in the company was high;
 - (ii) Sindri, being a Coal based Plant, its capital cost was higher by about 25 per cent compared to the Gas based Fertilizer Plants in the U.S.A.; and
 - (iii) about Rs. 5 or 6 crores having been locked up in providing housing accommodation to the labourers.

While the Committee appreciate the above reasons for the low turnover on the capital employed, they feel that this is mainly due to the production having not reached the required level.

(ii) Profits

20. The percentage of net profits (before tax and Return on interest) to the Total Capital during 1958-59 was 5.04.** capital low. Compared to Net Worth, the percentage of net profits (after tax and interest) works out to 8.5 per cent for the year 1958-59. Thus the rate of profitability of the company is low. The representative of the Ministry also admitted during evidence that a yield of 5-6 per cent on the total capital employed in the Company was most unsatisfactory.

(iii) Dividends

21. The Company declared dividend at the rate of 5 per cent. on paid-up capital during each of the years 1956-57, 1957-58 and 1958-59. It is to be noted that during the years 1957-58 and 1958-59 the management did not make

^{*}The average ratio of tangible net worth to sales and the average ratio of net working capital to sales of Industrial Chemical industry in U.S.A. during the years 1951—55 were 1:1.99 and 1:4.19 respectively. Pages 413 and 436—Practical Financial Statement Analysis by Roy Foulke.

^{**}The Tariff Commission has allowed certain chemical industries such as those dealing with soda ash, etc. a return of 8 to 12% on employed capital (comprising fixed and current assets used in the business less current liabilities nd provisions). The return earned by Sindri on employed capital (i.e. Rs. ~330 lakhs worked on the basis adopted by Tariff Commission) comes to about 2.6 per cent.

any provision for General Reserves. It was explained that the amount that can be appropriated to General Reserves actually depended on the size of the surplus.

(iv) Depreciation

22. The total value of plant and machinery of the Company as on 31st March, 1959 was Rs. 1,675.7 lakhs against which the amount of depreciation provided was Rs. 88.9 lakhs. The Committee were informed that depreciation on plant and machinery was being calculated on the straight line basis on the estimated life of the plant, which was 12 years according to the Technical Consultants. In evidence the Committee were informed that the plant had already put in 9 years service and that it was expected to go on functioning for 5 to 6 years more or longer. As to the utilisation of the Depreciation Fund, the Committee were informed that some of it had been used in the expansion of the plant and some of it (about Rs. 5 to 6 crores) had been ploughed back. Asked whether the company would be able to provide adequate finances to replace its old plant, the representative of the Ministry only stated that it should build up sufficient Reserves in order to be able to replace the plant after 5 to 6 years. He agreed that the management should look into the matter carefully. The Committee trust that the Company would review the present practice with this end in view.

(v) Reserves

Reserves unsatisfactory.

23. The balance of Reserves and surpluses of the company as at the end of 1958-59 was Rs. 181 77 lakhs as against the paid-up capital of Rs. 1,700 lakhs. Thus the reserves are about 10.6 per cent of the paid-up capital The Committee understand that normally the ratio Reserve to the paid-up capital should be 1:1.* ing that the company has been in existence for nearly a decade the Reserves built up by the Company cannot be considered satisfactory. Moreover, the increase in the fixed assets of the Company during the last 3 years by about Rs. 496 lakhs had to be financed from out of loans. The representative of the Ministry admitted that so far the company had not laid sufficient emphasis on building Reserves and that even in their representation to the Tariff Commission for deciding the fair price of their products, they had been somewhat negligent about this matter,

^{*}The aggregate ratio of paid-up capital to reserves of 1001 companies in the private sector, worked out by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Department of Company Law Administration), as at the end of the year 1956-57 was 1: 1.1.

24. In the Committee's opinion a public undertaking Requireshould not only give a reasonable return on the capital, after ments to be fulfilled by providing for depreciation and reserves, but also provide a Public funds for expansion. Alternatively, the undertaking should Underbe in a position after a specified period, to redeem from its Committee's accumulated funds its capital which can be utilised by recom-Government for other purposes. The Sindri Fertilizers and mendation. Chemicals Ltd., have not so far been able to meet these requirements. The Committee hope that the future working of the undertaking would satisfy these requirements.

(vi) Computation of Net Profits

25. From the Annual Accounts of the Company for the year 1958-59, the Committee observe that while provision for Wealth Tax has been shown as a charge on the Profits, the provision for Income-Tax has been shown as an appropriation from profits and treated as Reserve. It was explained that Wealth Tax was charged to Profit and Loss Account as a provision because it was a definite liability whereas the Income Tax Provision was for an unknown liability of the future and hence its exhibition as Reserve and as appropriation from profits was in order.

26. The Committee find that there is no uniform practice No uniform followed in this regard by the public undertakings. While practice followed. the Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., and the Travancore Minerals Ldt. are making appropriations for incometax from profits, the State Trading Corporation of India Ltd. and the Hindustan Aircraft Ltd. are charging it off from their Profit and Loss Accounts. Further it is also doubtful whether the provision for income-tax can be held as a liability of which the amount cannot be determined with substantial accuracy in terms of para 7(1) of Part III, Schedule VI of Companies Act, 1956. The current practice in advanced countries is "to set aside out of profits sums Committee's required for taxation before arriving at figures of true or mendations. net profits. Net profits are always understood to mean disposable profits and the substantial charge on profits in regard to tax payment is normally deducted to give a true measure of profits earned".* It would appear desirable that the term net profits should be used to mean only disposable profits which remain for dividend distribution and for Reserves. The Committee suggest that the matter may be examined by Government in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General with a view to lay down a uniform procedure to be followed in all public undertakings in this regard.

The Puture of Joint Stock Enterprise in India by H.T. Parekh, pages 17-18.

D. Losses of raw materials and finished goods

(i) Losses on Stock Verification

Extent of losses.

27. The loss due to shortage of raw materials and finished goods on physical verification was about Rs. 18.7 lakhs in 1956-57, Rs. 16 lakhs in 1957-58 and Rs. 16.7 lakhs during the year 1958-59. The Committee were informed by the Ministry that this was not a special feature with Sindri alone undertakings which handled large but common to all quantities of material. It was also contended that it was not possible to eliminate completely shortages and wastages of this type or to arrive at a definite figure of wastage which would hold good under all conditions. The limits of wastage could only be fixed on the basis of actual experience assuming, of course, that reasonable care was taken to avoid wastage.

Barlier recotion of the Committee.

28. The Estimates Committee (1954-55) in para 30 of mmendation their 13th Report (1st Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of recommenda. Production also drew attention to considerable shortages in stock in the Sindri. Government informed the Committee in 1956†, that the company was in correspondence on the subject with other heavy chemicals manufacturers like the I.C.T.C. The Committee thereupon recommended that norms should be fixed on the basis of experience gained by the Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., and on the experience of foreign firms in India in this line. The Committee feel that it should not be difficult to lay down limits of normal shortages for raw material and finished goods of the company when the company has been in existence for nearly a decade. They recommend that the limits of shortages for various items should be fixed without any further delay. They would also suggest that since the losses on physical verification of stocks amounting to Rs. 16-17 lakhs in a year are apparently very high, the matter may be thoroughly investigated in order to find out and correct defects, if any, in the existing procedure for custody and control of stocks.

(ii) Losses on account of shortages of Gypsum

Losses on account of shortage of Gypsum.

29. A major item of loss on account of shortage and waste relates to gypsum. The quantity and value of gypsum

^{†1}st Report of the Estimates Committee (Second Lok Sabha) pp. 60-61-S. No. 12.

found snort on annual physical verification of stocks during the last three years is as follows:

(Qty. in tons)

Year	Quantity	Value
	- The Control of the	Rs.
1956-57	24,961	9,45,939
1957-58	24,791	10,08,318*
1958-59	30,122	12,90,707

30. It would be seen from the above that the position of shortage of gypsum had been constantly worsening instead of improving as claimed by the Company in their Annual Report for the year 1958-59. These losses were stated to be in the nature of paper losses arising from defective measurement at the time when gypsum was fed into the grinding mills. Some loss might be due to collusive activity at the time of despatches and at transhipment point at Agra (transhipment from metre-gauge to broad-gauge) and also pilferage in transit. The management was stated to be taking remedial steps and was going in for better type of weighing machines. The Committee would suggest that the reasons for the abnormal wastage of gypsum may be investigated.

E. Inventory

(i) Stock of Spares, Raw Materials etc.

31. The total value of inventories (i.e., raw materials, finished and semi-finished goods, stores and spare parts) in the Company during the last three years is given below:

In lakhs of Rs.

Item	1956-57	1957-58	1958-59
Raw Material	68	109	106
Finished Goods	2	2	18
Semi-finished Goods	14	15	35
Stores and Spare parts	272	317	337
Others	8	5	2
TOTAL •	.364	448	498

^{*}These are exclusive of the monthly adjustments made during these years which amounted to Rs. 6.61 lakhs and Rs. 10.39 lakhs in 1956-57 and 1957-58 respectively.

High Stocks maintained.

- 32. It will be seen that the total inventories rose by about 37 per cent during the three years. Further, it is observed that the value of stocks of stores and spare parts at the end of 1958-59 (Rs. 337 lakhs) is about 347 per cent of the consumption (Rs. 95 lakhs) during the year. In para 18 of their 13th Report (First Lok Sabha) the Estimates Committee had recommended that a larger stock than was normally necessary of essential spare parts should be The Government stated in reply that stocks maintained. to the extent considered reasonable were being kept, a principle which does not seem to have been kept in mind by the undertaking. While it may be reasonable to expect the company to maintain a margin over its immediate requirements to provide for emergencies, it does not appear necessary to hold stocks of stores and spare parts to the extent of nearly three and a half times the value of annual consumption. The Committee trust that the management of the concern would examine the matter to determine the minimum requirements of stores and spare parts with reference to normal annual consumption.
- 33. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the Company did not have the spare parts which were required for the repair of the Generators. The Managing Director of the Company admitted that it was a mistake which would be rectified. The Committee are distressed to find that although the Gas Plant was installed in 1954, the management did not lay in adequate spare parts for it even though the value of their inventory stocks came to Rs. 337 lakhs as noted already.

(ii) Indigenous Manufacture of Spares

34. The Estimates Committee recommended in para 18 of their 13th Report (First Lok Sabha) that the Company should explore all avenues for getting the spare parts produced in India and for that purpose should know the capacity in the major Engineering Works so that in case of any emergency, a part could be got manufactured or repaired without delay. Government stated in reply in February, 1956 that efforts were being made to obtain the spare parts from indigenous sources. On further enquiry being made, it transpired that about 50 per cent of the requirements of spare parts were still being procured from foreign sources.

^{*18}t Report of the Estimates Committee (2nd Lok Sabha) S. No. 6 Ch. IV.

35. In their First Report (Second Lok Sabha) on Action Adequate Taken on the 13th Report (First Lok Sabha) on Sindri taken to Fertilizers, the Estimates Committee recommended that a develop list of spare parts which could be met only by imports should indigenous be drawn up and that this list should be periodically reviewof shares. ed. They also suggested that the list and necessary information regarding the items therein should be made available to Associations of Manufacturers and Engineering Industries and the possibilities of utilising spare capacity in Defence Industries should be explored. During evidence the representative of the Ministry stated that the stage for preparing any such list had not really reached in a Fertilizer factory and as the requirements of the spares would be of considerable scale in future, they would direct their attention to develop indigenous capacity for the manufacture thereof.

36. The Committee regret that in spite of their recommendation 3 years ago for the compilation of a list of spares imported by the Company and its circulation to Indian manufacturers, nothing has been done in this direction and it is proposed to take up the matter only now. They trust that Government will take action in the matter at least now.

F. Book Debts

37. The position of Book Debts of the Company appears High Book to be deteriorating from year to year. The total Book Debts increased from Rs. 325 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 335 lakhs in 1957-58 and to Rs. 358 lakhs in 1958-59, i.e., an increase of about 10 per cent over the three years. The Committee are unable to appreciate why commercial undertakings like the Sindri Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. should allow such outstandings to accumulate especially when bulk of their products is sold to the State Governments. They consider this unbusinesslike particularly when the undertaking had to borrow Rs. 88 lakhs from the State Bank of India for their working expenses in 1958-59. The Committee recommended that suitable action to bring down the Book Debts should be taken by the concern.

G. Cost Accounting

38. As early as 1954-55, the Estimates Committee in Proper their 13th Report (First Lok Sabha) recommended that the system of Cost account-Sindri Fertilisers should have a proper system of Cost ing not yet Accounting and work out the actual cost of production of introduced. each bye-product. During evidence, the representative of the Ministry admitted that they (the management) were not fully cost-conscious so far and also that the present costing system was somewhat deficient and had not proved of much

use in suggesting possible lines of economies in the cost of production. The Chief Cost Accounts Officer of the Ministry of Finance was stated to be looking into the system for suggesting improvements. The Committee are surprised that despite their recommendation for introducing a proper cost accounting system five years ago, the Company has not yet done it. They trust that the Board of Directors would arrange to introduce an effective Cost Accounting System in the Company without further delay.

Personnel Matters

(i) Staff Strength

39. The statement below shows the strength of the managerial, supervisory, non-supervisory and factory staff of the company for the years 1956-57 to 1958-59:—

0-1		Y		
Categories		31-3-57	31-3-58	31-3-59
I. Managerial		94	90	83
2. Technical Supervisory .		433	530	630
3. Technical Non-Supervisory.		2,937	3,002	3,97
4. Non-technical Supervisory		48	93	98
5. Non-technical Non-Supervisory		2,218	2,354	2,44
6. Daily rated un-skilled workers	•	2,142	2,048	1,696
TOTAL		7,872	8,117	8,924

Rise in staff strength of, production.

40. It will be seen that total staff strength of the Company increased from 7,872 in 1956-57 to 8,924 in 1958-59 i.e., an increase of over 13 per cent during the three years. While the increase in technical staff might be due to expansion schemes of the Company, the increase of over 100 per cent in non-technical supervisory personnel does not appear to be justified specially when the production of the Company is falling. The representative of the Ministry contended that though a view was held in responsible quarters that there was some over-manning in the Company, it was extremely difficult from the point of view of public relations to achieve rationalisation by retrenchment in a public undertaking. He added that position would improve with the operation of the Expansion Plant. He agreed that a more determined effort in this direction was necessary. The Committee trust that vigorous attempts would be made to rationalise staff strength. They feel that the test of efficiency of an organisation is that it should be able to cope with the increase in production without an equivalent increase in its staff strength.

(ii) Ex-Gratia Payments

- 41. An ad-hoc ex-gratia payment of Rs. 16 lakhs was sanctioned for the staff, Rs. 14 lakhs for distribution as cash and Rs. 1 lakh for making an appropriate addition to the Provident Fund of all employees drawing upto Rs. 500 and having more than one year's service and Rs. 1 lakhs earmarked for Workers' Amenity Fund during 1958-59. It was explained that as the Company was not paying any bonus or making any payment on account of incentives, the payment made to the workers was known as ex-gratia payment. This had become almost a regular feature. The Committee were further informed that no well-determined or well-defined policy in this matter was pursued in any other public undertakings except the Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd. The Committee feel that the system of ex-gratia payments is not desirable and that such payments should be related to output as far as possible.
- 42. The representative of the Ministry expressed the view that since a Chemical Plant involved continuous process of manufacturing, it was difficult to develop a system of incentives relatable to output. He, however, stated that Government had indented a team of I.L.O. and Russian Experts to discuss and exchange experiences in this regard. The Committee trust that the Sindri would be able to introduce before long a scientific system of incentive wages.

New Delhi; March 28, 1961. Chaitra 7, 1883 (Saka). H. C. DASAPPA, Chairman, Estimate Committee.

APPENDIX I

Summary of Conclusions/Recommendations

SI. No.	Ref. to Para No. in the Re- port.	Summary of Conclusions/Recommendations
1	2	3
I	3	The production of ammonium sulphate (which is the principal item of production) recorded an increasing trend upto the year 1956-57 but has been declining from 1957-58; in 1959-60 it amounted to only 81 percent of the rated capacity of the plant. Similarly, the production of Ammonia, Gas and Coke also started falling down from 1958-59. In no year has the rated capacity in respect of the main product of the factory viz. ammonium sulphate been reached.
īΑ	5	It is a matter of regret that though the Committee had fairly detailed discussions with the representatives of the Ministry and the Company on the 9th November, 1960 regarding the reasons for shortfall in production, none of them referred to the appointment of the Expert Committee headed by Dr. Hussain Zaheer to investigate the reasons for set back in production in the Sindri Factory.
2	8	It is difficult to understand why the Company kept quite for so long without looking into the condition of the plant and allowed it to deteriorate so markedly. The Committee feel that a comprehensive enquiry into the matter should have been made and remedial measures adopted much earlier. They trust that the management would now take necessary steps to implement the remedial measures suggested by the Expert Committee without delay.
3	12	If the findings of the Expert Committee are correct, it would seem that the generators were worked beyond the normally permissible limits to keep up flagging production. This was obviously neither correct nor prudent. It has been somewhat of a costly mistake contributing to the loss in production and earnings on the one hand and avoidable damage

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I 2 3 to the plant on the other. The Committee trust that Government would investigate these aspects without delay not only with a view to fix responsibility but also to learn the necessary lessons and to guard against such lapses in this and other undertakings in future. It would appear that the Expansion Scheme has been 15 encountering heavy weather from the very beginning. The Committee trust that the defects in the Expansion Plant would be got rectified by M/s Montecatini before long and the plants run at their rated capacity. While the Committee appreciate the reasons advanc 5 19 ed for the low turnover on the capital employed, they feel that this is mainly due to the production having not reached the required level. 20 The percentage of net profits (before tax and interest) to the total capital and of net profits (after tax and interest) to net worth indicates that the rate of profitability of the Company is low. The Committee trust that the Company would 22 7 view the present practice in regard to the provision of depreciation so as to build up adequate Reserves for replacement of old plant and machinery when due. Considering that the Company has been in existence 23 for nearly a decade the Reserves built up by it cannot be considered satisfactory. In the Committee's opinion a public undertaking should 24 not only give a reasonable return on the capital after providing for depreciation and reserves, but also provide funds for expansion. Alternatively, the undertaking should be in a position, after a specified period, to redeem from its accumulated funds its capital which can be utilised by Government for other purposes. The Sindri Fertilisers and for other purposes. The Sindri Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd. has not so far been able to meet The Committee hope that the these requirements. future working of the undertaking would satisfy these requirements. It would appear desirable that the term net profits 26 10 should be used to mean only disposable profits which remain for dividend distribution and for Reserves.

I 2 3 The Committee suggest that the matter regarding the computation of net profits by the public undertakings may be examined by Government in consultation with Comptroller and Auditor General with a view to lay down a uniform procedure to be followed in all public undertakings in this regard. The Committee feel that it should not be difficult to lay 28 11 down limits of normal shortages for raw material and finished goods of the company when the Company has been in existence for nearly a decade. They recommend that the limits of shortages for various items should be fixed without any further They would also suggest that since the losses on physical verification of stocks amounting to Rs. 16 to 17 lakhs in a year are apparently very high, the matter may be thoroughly investigated in order to find out and correct the defects, if any, in the existing procedure for custody and control of stocks. The Committee suggest that the reasons for the ab-12 30 normal wastage of gypsum may be investigated. While it may be reasonable to expect the company to 32 13 maintain a margin over its immediate requirements to provide for emergencies, it does not appear necessary to hold stocks of stores and spare parts to the extent of nearly three and a half times the value of annual The Committee trust that the manaconsumption. gement of the concern would examine the matter to determine the minimum requirements of stores and spare parts with reference to normal annual consumption. The Committee are distressed to find that although the 33 14 Gas Plant was installed in 1954 the management did not lay inadequate spare parts for it even though the value of their inventory stocks came to Rs. 337 lakhs. The Committee regret that inspite of their recom-1Ś 36 mendation 3 years ago for the compilation of a list of spares imported by the company and its circulation to the Indian Manufacturers, nothing has been done in this direction and it is proposed to take up the matter only now. They trust that Government will take action in the matter at least now. The Committee are unable to appreciate why commer-16 **37**

cial undertakings like the Sindri Fertilisers & Chemicals Ltd. should allow large outstandings of book 1 2 3

debts to accumulate especially when the bulk of their products is sold to the State Governments. They consider this unbusinesslike particularly when the undertaking had to borrow Rs. 88 lakes from the State Bank of India for their working expenses in 1958-59. The Committee recommend that suitable action to bring down the Book Debts should be taken by the concern.

- The Committee are surprised that despite their recommendation for introducing a proper cost accounting system 5 years ago, the company has not yet done it. They trust that the Board of Directors would arrange to introduce an effective cost accounting system in the company before long.
- The Committee trust that vigorous attempts would be made to rationalise staff strength. They feel that the test of efficiency of an organisation is that it should be able to cope with the increase in production without an equivalent increase in its staff strength.
- The Committee feel that the system of ex-gratia payments is not desirable and that such payments should be related to the output as far as possible.

They trust that the Sindri would be able to introduce before long a scientific system of incentive wages.

APPENDIX II

(Vide Introduction)

Analysis of the recommendations contained in the Report

- 1. CLASSIFICATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS:
 - A. Recommendations for improving the organisation and working: Sl. Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.
 - B. Recommendations for effecting economy: Sl. Nos. 11, 12, 18 and 19.
 - C. Miscellaneous: Sl. Nos. 1, 1A & 10.
- II. ANALYSIS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS DIRECTED TOWARDS ECONOMY:

SI. No.	No. as per summary of Recom- mendation	Particulars
•	11&12	Fixation of limits of normal shortages of raw materials and finished goods.
2	18	Rationalisation of staff strength.
3	19	Desirability of relating ex-gratia payments to output.

Book Em- 61. Mittal & Company 78. Hind Book House 82.

Mount 85-C, New Mandi Janpath, New Delhi. 43. The S. S. 85-C, New Muzaffarnagar. porium, Mount Joy Road, Basavangudi, 62. Shalig Ram & Sons, ing Company 2 Bala Booksellers. ing Company, 3, Pair Bazar, Daryaganj, Delhi-Bangalore-4 Booksellers, Gate, Aligarh. ORISSA 63. Universal Book Com- 80. Jayana Book pany, 20, Mahatma Chapparwala 44. The Cutt Times Office, pany, 20, Mahatma Gandhi Marg, Allahabad. Law Kuan Cuttack Karol Bagh, New Delhi., Cuttack-2. 81. Jain Book Agency Connaught Place, New WEST BENGAL **PUNJAB** Book 64. Firma K. L. Mukho-Jhoke Delhi. 45. The English padhyay, 6/1A, Ban-82. J. M. Jaina, & Brothers, chharam Akrur Lane, Mori Gate, Delhi-6. Depot, 78, Road, Ferozepore, Cantt. Krishna Book Calcutta-12.
Publishers, Book-65. M. C. Sorkar & Sons Stationery and (Private) Limited, 3, Delhi.
Old Court House Street, 84. Mehra Brothers, 50-G, Kalkaji, New Delhi-19. 46. The Depot, sellers, News Agents, Bazar, Pathankot. 47. A-The Minerva Shop, 66. Thacker Spink & Com- 85. M. Gulab Singh & Sons Book Mall, Private Limited, Press Area, Mathura Road, New Delhi. Simla-1. pany (1933) Private Ltd., 3, Esplanade East, New Book De-76, The Mall, 48. The 3, Espli pot, Simla-1 67. W. Newman & Com- 86. The New Book Depot, pany Limited, 3, Old P.O. Box No. 96, Con- Court House Street, naught Place, New Delhi. 49. The University Pub-Railway Road, lishers, Railway Calcutta. Jullundur City. 87. Oxford Book & Sta-tionery Company, Scin-dia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi-1. JAMMU & KASHMIR RAJASTHAN 663 68. The Kashmir Book

Mer Shop, Residency Road, 88. People's Pu

House, Rani 50. " Bookland " Publishing Madar Gate, Ajmer House, Rani J. Road, New Delhi-r. Srinagar, Kashmir. Jhanei (Rajasthan). 51. K. M. Agarwal & Sons, 69. Students Stores, Ra-Tawi.

Sons, Tawi.

Sons, Rama Krishna & Sons, 16-B, Connaught Place, New Delhi. Stall, Railway Book Udaipur DELHI 90. Sikh Publishing House Private Limited, 7-C, Connaught Place, New UTTAR PRADESH 70. Atma Ram & Sons, Kashmere Gate, Delhi-Sons, 52. A. H. Wheeler & Com-pany, Private Limited Delhi. pany, Private Limites 15, Elgin Road, Allaha- 71. Bahri Laipat Brothers, 188, Rai Market, 188, 91. The United Book Agen-Lajpat Delhi-6. cy, 48, Amrit Kaur Mar-ket, Paharganj, New 53. British Book Depot, Delhi. 84, Hazaratganj, Luck- 72. Bookwell, 4, Colony, Narankari Kingsway Delhi-9. MANIPUR Camp, 54. B. S. Jain & Company, 71, Abupura, Muzaffar-News 92. Shri N. Chaoba Singh, Con-Newspaper Agent, News Ramlal Paul High 73. The Agency, Central ragar. Agent, High 55. Friends Book 23/90, House. Ramial Paul High School, Annexe, Imphal, New Circus, naught Delhi. M.U., Aligarh. 56. Goel Traders, Manipur. Goel Traders, 100-C, 74 City New Mandi, Muzaffar- 74 Soben Book Sellers, Sohanganj Street, Delhi. Dagar. 17-A, 75. Dhanwantra Medical AGENTS IN FOREIGN 57. Kitabistan, Kamla Nehru COUNTRIES & Law Book House, Road, 1522, Lajpat Rai Mar-ket, Delhi-6. Allahabad. 58. Law Book Company, 76. The English Sardar Patel Marg, 76. The Shop, 7-L, Co U.K. Book Shop, Shop, 7-L, Connaught Circus, New Delhi. Allahabad. 93. The Secretary, Establishment Department, 59. Laxmi Narain Agarwal, 77. Freeland Publications
Hospital Road, Agra. Private Limited IVA The High Commission Private Limited, II-A/ India House. of India, o. The Loyal Book Depot, Chhipi Tank, Meerut. 16, Lajpat Nagar, New LONDON. Aldwych, Delhi. W.C. 2

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