

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Whatever you say will not go on record. This is not proper. I am very sorry. I am not permitting you. You have got to sit down.

SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA:*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Don't question me. You carry out the order. You will have to sit down. Have you given notice in writing? You have not given any notice in writing.

SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA: ...*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not permitting you. Mr. Kurien to make the statement.

14.27 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MEMBER RE. IMPORT POLICY OF RAW CASHEW-NUTS

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Mavelikara): Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I make the following statement under Direction 115:—

Hon'ble Minister of Commerce while replying to the debate on Demands for Commerce on 7th July, 1980 announced in this House that he "would not allow private people" to import cashew nuts. To the delegation headed by the Chief Minister of Kerala also he gave the same assurance. To an Unstarred Question No. 4802 of 18th July, 1980 put by me, he has answered "the import of raw cashew nuts continued to be canalised through Cashew Corporation of India."

But, Hon'ble Minister of Labour in his answer to an Unstarred Question No. 4549 of 17th July, 1980 has revealed that—

(i) "a scheme to allow eligible manufacturers to import raw cashew

nuts from non-traditional sources under over-all supervision of Cashew Corporation of India was evolved in 1979". And

(ii) "Permission for direct imports for raw cashew nuts on merits for the purpose of processing in India for re-export" is being granted.

This policy statement of the Labour Minister has brought in an ambiguity in the light of Commerce Minister's reply. In fact this statement is also contradictory to the policy statement made by the Commerce Minister on 18th July, 1980 in his reply to Unstarred Question No. 4802.

Under the circumstances it is for the Minister of Commerce to clarify the position and state in this House as to which is the correct policy of the Government. If the policy is that of eligible manufacturers also allowing to import, as stated by the Labour Minister, how is that the assurances given by the Commerce Minister be honoured. I, therefore, request the Commerce Minister to remove the ambiguity and state the correct policy of the Government and give an assurance that under no circumstances private parties will be allowed to import raw cashew nuts and also all steps will be taken to import maximum quantity of raw cashew nuts through Cashew Corporation of India only.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Import of raw cashew nuts has been canalised through the Cashew Corporation of India since 1st September, 1970. The exportable surpluses of raw cashew-nuts from the traditional sources of supply in East Africa have come down after allowing for these countries' own processing requirements which have been progressively going up with the creation of new capacities. Consequently, imports by the Cashew Corporation of India have progressively gone down from 1.95 lakh tonnes

*Not recorded.

to 34,000 tonnes in 1978-79. So far the Cashew Corporation of India has imported about 4200 tonnes from Kenya during the current year. Some small quantities may be imported from non-traditional sources.

Indigenous raw cashewnuts production is estimated at about 1.10 lakh tonnes in 1979-80. The installed processing capacity in the country is estimated at 4.5 lakh tonnes. The cashew processing industry employs approximately 1.5 lakh workers. Thus the estimated requirement of raw cashewnuts for providing a round year employment would be approximately 4.5 lakh tonnes.

In order to increase the availability of raw cashewnuts for processing, a scheme was evolved in July 1979 permitting import of raw cashewnuts from non-traditional sources (excluding Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya and Malawi) by manufacturer-exporters subject to the approval of Cashew Corporation of India and their surrendering 50 per cent of import to Cashew Corporation of India for distribution to all eligible factories. The policy of canalisation continues to be followed. Under this scheme, State Corporations, like the Kerala State Cashew Development Corporation, as manufacturer-exporters, are eligible to import raw cashewnuts from non-traditional sources.

In spite of this special scheme which was announced by the Cashew Corporation of India in July 1979, adequate raw cashewnuts could not be imported, and in order to augment the supply of raw cashewnuts a Public Notice was issued under which CCI&E may allow direct imports of limited quantities of raw cashewnuts on merits for the purpose of processing in India for re-export subject to such conditions as may be stipulated in each case. This provision will be applied very restrictively and cannot be construed as a general permission to any private processor to make direct imports of raw cashewnuts.

As I have assured, while replying to the debate on the Demands for Grants

of the Ministry of Commerce, in the Lok Sabha on 7th July, 1980 and also in the Assurance I give in the Rajya Sabha on 6th July 1980, private parties will not be allowed to import raw cashewnuts provided State Cashew Corporations are able to make arrangements for their import. I may mention that no permission has been granted to any private parties for imports of raw cashewnuts after the Delegation led by the Kerala Chief Minister met the Prime Minister on 7th June, 1980. State Cashew Corporations under the existing policy are permitted to import raw cashewnuts as manufacturer-exporters from non-traditional sources, provided they surrender 50 per cent of the imported cashewnuts to the Cashew Corporation of India for distribution to all eligible units. The State Cashew Corporations under the existing policy can also be allowed direct import of limited quantities of raw cashewnuts on merits, for the purpose of processing in India for re-export subject to such conditions as may be stipulated in each case. There is no ambiguity, therefore, in the policy. The policy of canalising imports of raw cashewnuts through the Cashew Corporation of India continues and the Cashew Corporation of India will continue to make efforts to import the maximum quantities of raw cashewnuts. In addition, if any State Cashew Corporation seeks permission to import raw cashewnuts, permission will be granted to them in accordance with the Import Policy.

ELECTION TO COMMITTEE

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
AND DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAM-
ENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VEN-
KATASUBBAIAH): On behalf of
Shri Bhishma Narain Singh, I beg to
move:

"That the members of this House
do proceed to elect in the manner