

13.23 hrs.

SUGAR UNDERTAKINGS (TAKING OVER OF MANAGEMENT) BILL—
contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now we take up further clause by clause consideration of the Sugar Undertakings (Taking over of Management) Bill.

Clause 7—(Power of Central Government to make certain declarations)—
contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Bhagat Ram—he is not here. So I put his amendment to vote. The question is:
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omit lines 14 to 18 (23).

The motion was negatived.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now I put the question:

“That clause 7 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Clause 8. There are two amendments—one is by Shri B. C. Kamble and the other is by Shri Dajiba Desai. Both are not here.

So, the question is:

“That clause 8 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 8 was added to the Bill.

Clause 9 was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Clause 10. Again there are amendments—one by Shri Kamble and another by Shri Dajiba Desai. None of them is here. So I put the clause to vote.

The question is:

“That clause 10 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 10 was added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Clause 11. Again amendments by Shri Kamble and

Shri Dajiba Desai. They are not here. So, the question is:

“That clause 11 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 11 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 12 to 22 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule, clause 1, the Enacting Formula, the Preamble and the Title were added to the Bill.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION (SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH): I beg to move:

“That the Bill be passed.”

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shrimati Parvathi Krishnan.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN (Coimbatore): I was hoping that the Minister in his reply would at least understand the mood of the people and the mood of the House. But, apparently, he is totally unmoved by whatever we may say from this side of the House and even by whatever is said by his own Party men on that side of the House.

Therefore I want to take this opportunity of reiterating once again the demand that this mere take-over is not sufficient. What the House expects, what the people expect, is nationalisation of these sugar undertakings. Here you are taking them over for a mere period of three years. You are going to make these concerns run and, at the end of the three years, you are going to hand them back to the same people who had brought them to this plight in which they are. This is exactly what has been raised again and again by all the Members of this House who participated in the discussion on this Bill and, yet the Minister has not even gone to the extent of giving this assurance that this is what the Government proposes to do. After all, you are taking these mills over and you are going to plough the tax-payers' money into running them and, at the end of it all, having made the concern stable, you are going to hand over it on a platter to the same

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people who had brought it to the plight in which it is.

Therefore, this is the first thing that I wanted to say. The second thing is about the guarantee to the growers to whom crores of rupees are still pending to be paid. I think it is Rs. 53 crores as the Minister himself stated. What is the guarantee and what is the period within which these dues would be cleared? These growers, a large number of them, are small farmers. They do not own large plantations and they do not have anything to fall back upon. Therefore, in this measure which the Minister brings it as a relief measure, the farmers' interests should also be taken into consideration. All the money that is going to them should be cleared at the earliest possible time. It is the Government's responsibility while taking over these concerns.

Thirdly, is the matter on which we have had the division. That is on the question of the dues of the workers. We have had the experience again and again in this country that the workers' dues are always being given the lowest priority. I cannot understand how the Minister, in his reply, could say that the Law Ministry had advised them. This Law Ministry, pardon my saying so, needs to be thrown out of the Government lock, stock and barrel when they are giving this totally illegal opinion and advise. It is no good. The Law Ministry and the Minister also believe that they are interested in the workers but they are interested only to see that the workers do the work. Are they interested in seeing that the workers get a return on their work? After all, the Labour Minister thinks that it is a joke. It is not a joke. Unfortunately, it is a reality as far as Government is concerned. They gave the workers a very interesting advice—to old and young that they will continue to work. But, what has happened to their dues? (*Interruptions*). On the Textile Undertakings Nationalisation Bill, I had requested the Government that they, having paid more than thousand crores as compensation to the textile mill mag-

nates, should now see that they take over the responsibility of a mere Rs. 10 crores of the provident fund dues to the workers. They refused to do it. Mr. Ramamurthy tells me that Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh is now studying his papers. I hope he is having his second thoughts. Maybe, that is why he is looking at the papers. You will please see that the workers' dues are protected when you are taking over these sugar undertakings. He says that this is the advice of the Law Ministry. This is absolutely misguided advice, ill-timed and totally immoral and sadistic advice of the Law Ministry. We are talking here on behalf of the workers. When he talks so much of the sugar stocks that he has got, he should consider wherefrom does the sugar come. Sugarcane growers have not yet been paid their dues. It is the workers who have produced so much which makes you in a comfortable position. Look at the conditions of the workers. You do not want to take on the responsibility. The Minister tries to shirk his responsibility though his shoulders are broad enough to take on that responsibility. It is not yet too late. I think he should take over the responsibility also and see that the workers' dues are safeguarded.

Lastly, he is talking so much of the comfortable position of sugar stocks. I would appeal to him not to base himself on export-oriented economy. If today there are large stocks of sugar lying with the Government, it is precisely because the purchasing power of the people is so low. What is the purchasing power per capita I would like to know from him. If you would only work out the mechanics of it, then you would understand that it is not so much. Therefore, Sir, I would appeal to the Minister not to be complacent about it but to see that in the overall policy of the government you see that the purchasing power of the people has increased and the price of sugar is brought down so that the lowest is able to afford the sugar that he and his family require. Sir again I stress not to take over for three years but make sure that you nationalise the concerns of

these industrialists which will bring great returns to the government and to the people.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Sir, I have repeatedly said that we do not believe in the nationalisation for the sake of nationalisation but at the same time. (Interruptions). We will, however, not hesitate to nationalise if we find there is no other way to modernise and put these factories on a sound basis. Regarding the dues I have to say that already from Rs. 53 crores which was due it has been brought down to less than Rs. 20 crores. So, the Ordinance has already produced some results and I assure the House that within a short period of time even these Rs. 20 crores will be cleared. Out of Rs. 53 crores we have already cleared Rs. 33 crores and only Rs. 20 crores remain.

श्रीधरी बलबीर सिंह (होशियारपुर) : 20 करोड़ को तो आप ऐसा कह रहे हैं कि बड़ी मामूली गड़बड़ है। जिन्होंने तकलीफ बर्दाश्त कर के गन्ना पैदा किया, आप उसको बड़ा लाइटली ले रहे हैं।

श्री कल्याण जैन (इंदौर) : मैं मंत्री महोदय, का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहंगा कि खण्डमारी की जो फैक्ट्रियां हैं, उन्हें भी करोड़ों रुपया किमानों को देना है। उस तरफ उन्हें ध्यान देना चाहिये।

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: It has been said that after investing lot of money on these factories, Government will present them on a platter to the industrialists. That is not true.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: Then why don't you nationalise?

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: There is difference between what you intend to do and what we intend to do.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN (Cannanore): You may please make it clear that you want to do.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I have made it very clear last time. If these factories require only small repair etc. and the proprietors are willing to modernise the mills themselves and

submit to us a programme of modernisation which is time-bound and they are able to convince us that they have finances also then, of course, whatever we have invested in the factory we would treat it as loan and hand-over the factory to them. But in those cases where they do not come forward with time-bound programme of modernisation and are unable to make financial arrangements then we will certainly consider taking over those mills and modernise ourselves and those will never be returned to the proprietors.

Regarding consumption I may also inform the House that since de-control the consumption of sugar has gone up by nearly one lakh tonnes every month.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: I said about per capita. So many wedding seasons have taken place.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Certainly when it has gone up by one lakh tonnes then the per capita consumption would have also gone up.

SHRIMATI PARVATHI KRISHNAN: No, No.

श्रीधरी बलबीर सिंह : पर-कैपिटा कनजमशन बढ़ा नहीं है। जो चीनी पहले ब्लैक-मार्केट में बिकती थी, वह अब ग्रापन मार्केट में घा गई है, और वही मंत्री महोदय को नज़र घा रही है। मगर वह कहते हैं कि प्रॉडक्शन और पर-कैपिटा कनजमशन बढ़ गया है।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Thank you for the information.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Not a single bag of sugar can move out of the factory without our knowledge. They have to pay excise duty. Therefore, there is record of every disposal. Formerly the monthly consumption was 3.7 lakh tonnes. Now it has exceeded 4.7 lakh tonnes. And to that extent, the problem referred to, of big surpluses building up, is taken care of. But at the same time I must say this. We cannot take any measures to further reduce the price of sugar. The reason is obvious. If we reduce the price of sugar, the canegrowers will not get

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even the minimum statutory price. Also the khandsari and gur manufacturing units which are already in difficulties will simply be liquidated if sugar price is further brought down.

श्री कल्याण जैन : एक भी खंडसारी की फ़ैक्टरी नहीं चल रही है। इन्दौर ज़िले में बीस खंडसारी फ़ैक्टरियां हैं और वे सब बन्द हैं। सरकार की वर्तमान शकर नीति के रहते हुए कोई भी खंडसारी फ़ैक्टरी नहीं चल सकती है। इस नीति के कारण सरकार करोड़ों किमानों का नुकसान कर रही है और साथ ही साथ खंडसारी फ़ैक्टरियों को भी बन्द कर रही है। इस लिए सरकार को अपनी शकर नीति को बदलना चाहिए।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Let him conclude.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: I was saying the same thing which he says. He said that the prices have come down to such a low level that khandsari units are finding it difficult to function. Therefore, any suggestions of further bringing them down would be disastrous. As far as the functioning of the khandsari units are concerned, this is under the control of the State Government. Regarding State Governments, some are doing better than some others. But I need not make a comment on that because it is a State subject.

SHRI KALYAN JAIN: It is not a State subject.

चीनी नीति केन्द्रीय सरकार निर्धारित करती है। गन्ने के भाव भी वही निर्धारित करती है।

श्री भानु प्रताप सिंह : गन्ने का भाव हम सिर्फ़ बड़ी फ़ैक्टरियों के लिए निर्धारित करते हैं।

I thing I have covered all the points.

SHRI C. K. CHANDRAPPAN: You did not say anything about the workers.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH: Regarding consumption of sugar I should like to clarify one point. Our sugar consumption per capita is low. But there are other sweetening agents in this country such as jaggery and khandsari and so on. If all those are taken into consideration, then, our consump-

tion of sugar and other sweetening agents is comparable or slightly higher than the world average. Of course, it may not be comparable to the consumption of countries like Western Europe or America. But our consumption certainly is equal and comparable with certain other countries of the world.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

“That the Bill be passed.”

The motion was adopted.

13.39 hrs.

PAYMENT OF BONUS (AMENDMENT) BILL

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill to amend the Payment of Bonus (Amendment) Act, 1977, be taken into consideration.”

This is a Bill which seeks to replace the Payments of Bonus (Amendment) Ordinance, 1978 promulgated by the President on the 8th September, 1978.

You would recall, Sir, the statement which I made on the 22nd August 1978, in which I said that in view of the onset of the festival season, the Government had decided to maintain the status quo with regard to bonus for one more year. This meant that the minimum bonus of 8.33 per cent which had been restored soon after the present Government came to office, would continue to be paid regardless of profits for one more year. As it was not possible for a Bill to be introduced before the Session was adjourned, the President promulgated an Ordinance to give effect to the decision. The present Bill seeks to replace the Ordinance and thus protect the payments made in pursuance of the Ordinance.

While making the statement on the 22nd August last, I had said that there