

excesses or any corrupt practices for which they will not be punishable under this. So, by this, they are opening a dangerous chapter in the democratic Parliamentary system of this country because the Party which is in power will be allowed to do anything they like and they will be punished only when another Party comes to power. That means, the future Government, whichever Party comes to power will have to come with a Special Courts Bill saying that whatever offences were done by the previous politicians or the previous regime, they alone will be tried. Therefore, the people of this country will be forced to think that the Government is interested in trying only their political opponents. If Government want this to be changed—what the people are thinking about this present Government—then they may accept my amendment. I have no objection if they are really interested in punishing all the politicians whoever committed excesses, in future also; whenever there is an Inquiry Commission appointed, if, according to the report of the Inquiry Commission, *prima facie* cases are established against some persons, all such persons—in future also—should be tried under this legislation.

SHRI HARI VISHNU KAMATH: I have a series of amendments, 45 to 51, seven amendments...

MR. SPEAKER: It is already 6 O' Clock. We shall take it up tomorrow. There is an Half-an-hour Discussion.

18 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

SHORTAGE OF COAL

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO (Mormugao): I have raised a discussion because it does not appear credible to me—what the hon. Minister did say in reply to unstarred question No. 127 answered on 20th February 1979, on which this discussion is based.

The Minister did say that there was no shortage of coal with the coal companies in December 1978 and

January 1979. This was contrary to the reports. *The Financial Express*, just to cite one, did make out a case of such a shortage as late as March 1979, under the caption, 'Coal Output Target Elusive'.

18.01 hrs.

[**SHRI N. K. SHEJWALKAR in the Chair**]

Mr. Chairman, why I say that these figures are not credible is because just in the month of December, the hon. Minister was constrained to admit on the floor of the House that managers of the coal companies had a meeting in his office and that at that meeting in his very office and in his very presence, those managers gave bogus and inflated production figures. On that basis they collected incentives worth lakhs of rupees, possibly crores—I do not know. I would incidentally ask him to clarify what was the amount of incentive disbursed. But he did admit at least in the case of one company that bogus inflated production figures had been produced. He said that he would take action to see that in future such type of inflated and false figures were not given. Now I would like to incidentally know what action he has taken in that regard.

The other reason, which I do not believe and I do not think credible is that there is no shortage.

If there is no shortage and if the shortage with different companies is due to transport, namely, that railway wagons are not available, then, why the Government and the Ministry are not allowing private individuals to take their own trucks to go to the coal fields and collect the produce? They say that there is no shortage. If there is no shortage—why you, or I or the industries cannot go to the coal fields, why not allow private parties to go to the coal mines and collect whatever coal they require? This will be very good in several respects because under the new procedure if you want to get any quantity of coal you have

[Shri Eduardo Faleiro]

to get a licence from the District Magistrate and then you must approach Coal India in Calcutta and they may try to get this quantity from anywhere in India. Thereby a lot of inconvenience is caused and there are other problems also. In the bargain you may have to satisfy some officials also who, it has been alleged in the other House as also here, collect a certain percentage.

The third reason why I do not believe that there is no shortage of coal is that we are just now importing huge quantities of coal from abroad—millions of tonnes of coal—we are importing as the Minister has said in the House. Here there is an absolute reversal of the policy followed by the previous government by the present government. In the previous government, during the years 1973-74 and 1974-75, in these two years, there has been an increase in coal production to the extent of 25 per cent and many industries for instance, the cement industry, were using to some extent, at least some units were using coal as power instead of oil fuel which has to be imported. The coal position has changed again. These very industries which were using oil fuel and which were then made to use coal are reverting to oil fuel and thereby so much of foreign exchange is wasted. The point is that if there is no coal shortage, why does this situation take place? I submit that the shortage is there and the statement is not credible. In the past such statements and inflated and false figures have admittedly been given by the coal companies to the Ministry.

The shortage is there. What are the reasons for the shortage? The reasons can be summed up in one word—that is, mismanagement. The problem is this. The Coal India Ltd. is a holding company and it has so many subsidiary companies. After the Janata Party Government came to power, they have, what is known, decentralised it in such a manner that the subsidiary companies have their

own Board of Directors and the Managing Director has also been made the Chairman. There is no accountability whatsoever from the subsidiary companies to the main holding company and this was the complaint—there is no control—of Gen. Grewal who was the Chairman of Coal India Ltd and he had brought this fact that he could not control the subsidiaries in view of the change in the Articles of Association which has decentralised them completely. He has brought this fact to the notice of the Government. I have got copies of his letters to the Government and there he has made out a case why the situation is there and that in this way mismanagement will be there and he has said that this is against the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission which has recommended that the Board of Directors should be formed in consultation with Coal India Ltd. the holding company and this is followed also in other public sector and private sector companies. In public sector units for instance, of SAIL, this is the procedure which is followed. Why is it not followed in the case of Coal India Ltd.

Sir, the other reason apart from this absolute independence of subsidiary companies for this mismanagement is the very peculiar way in which promotions, transfers and postings are made. To give an instance, there is one Mr. Wadhwa. He is a non-technical man. He was appointed as Managing Director of Central Coalfields, Ranchi without observing proper rules of promotion. It is provided that a person who is appointed to this post should appear for an interview before the Bureau of Public Enterprises but he was directly appointed to this post. What is more significant is that he was Chairman and Managing Director in Dhanbad and then he was transferred as Adviser to Chairman, Coal India Ltd., Calcutta and from there within less than a month this man, who is non-qualified and not entitled to hold the post, is transferred as Chairman and Managing Director of Central Coalfields, Ranchi. This is

very irregular. It casts a suspicion that there are very peculiar type of deals going on. The Minister has to clarify in this regard also.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, the Minister had mentioned in the other House about natural calamities. But, Sir, I would like to say that the greatest calamity is his own administration and Ministry. I am sorry to say so. He is a man of sweet words and always smiling but then all the same the condition in his department and Ministry is deteriorating. Let me give the example of natural calamity in Dhanbad. There were floods and the whole coalmines were flooded. Why were they flooded? The local newspapers carried this news. They were flooded because the water pumps were closed as there was a quarrel and clash between Mr. Verma, Secretary of the Ministry and the staff there. Later the whole blame was put on the natural calamity though the whole thing has been the result of non-operation of the pumps closed by the staff earlier.

Now, Sir, on the basis of this I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister the following three questions:—

1. If there is no shortage of coal then why individuals cannot go to pitheads and collect the coal required by them?

2. What is the present position of Coal India Ltd. which is a holding company? What are its powers of control over subsidiary companies? Will they revise and reduce decentralisation?

3. What are the reasons for irregular appointment in the case of Mr. Wadhwa? What steps are being taken to see that these things do not happen?

श्री एडुआर्दो फैलेरो जी रोखें मंत्री (की प्रतिक्रिया) क्या कहेंगे की, पिछले को क्या कहा था कि वह लिखित का और उन्हें कहा गया था...

श्री एडुआर्दो फैलेरो: Sir, I rise on a point of order. Half-an-

Hour discussion is very important and when the Cabinet Minister is present it is not proper that the State Minister—for whom otherwise I have the highest regard—replies, Propriety demands that the Cabinet Minister replies. The last question was replied to by the Cabinet Minister himself, namely, whether those were inflated figures. He has admitted that they were inflated figures. So, it is better that the Cabinet Minister gives the reply.

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): Mr. Chairman, Sir, It is right and proper that my colleague answers it. Because, he has taken over. He is handling the subject. So, I thought that it is proper that he answers the entire question. But still,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants to be satisfied by your replying to it. Anyway, it is up to you.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: He has posed three questions. One is about the transport of coal by the individual consumers. Even now, when the individual consumer comes with the proper authority given either by the State Government or by the Central Government or by the sponsoring authority, he is free to take it either by rail or by road. Even now it is allowed. He was referring to the shortage of coal. And I can tell him with confidence that today in the country the stock of coal is a little over 12.9 million tonnes. If you want, I can even give you the figure of stock area-wise.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Previously you had given inflated figures.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: No it is not so.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: You told it to us in the House.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: What I told you was that it was not an inflated figure. There was a meeting with the CMDs. At that time I wanted a test check to be done. So, I asked one of the officers to go to a particular company to check and verify

[Shri P. Ramachandran]

the stocks. And in this verification, in one or two, some over-reporting was found. It is only on that basis and on that report that we are taking action. The report is being examined and whoever is found to be responsible will be taken to task and action will be taken against him. About the individuals, there is no ban on any individual taking the coal, provided he has got certain certificate of the sponsoring authority.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: No certificate is required if there is no shortage.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Just because there is no shortage do you want anybody to buy? No, that is not the Government policy. The Government's policy is this. It is a commodity which has to be distributed properly. You cannot expect anybody to go, take the coal and then sell it in the black-market.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Why should he sell it in the black-market? There is no scarcity.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Artificial scarcity will be created. It is the policy of the Government which has been enunciated long back, that coal, whether it is in plenty or in scarcity, must be distributed properly. That is why a certain Authority is created and the Coal Controller has his say to regulate the distribution of the coal. Wagons have to be allotted and coal despatched. Railways have got the authority to have the priority for that. You cannot expect Railways to move coal with low priority, as higher priority coal. The first priority comes in respect of coal for the steel plants, railways, power stations and then cement industries and other industries. Then only comes the brick kiln and other things. It is only the Railways which can stipulate the priority. We have no control over that. After all, the Coal companies have got only stocks at the pit-head and they are responsible to give the coal to those people who come with

the authority. That is all. And even for the price, at the pit-head, statutory price is fixed.

SHRI ANNASAHAB P. SHINDE: (Ahmednagar): In some cases it has been found that the Railway Board had communicated in writing saying that so many wagons have been allotted; but even then coal is not moved.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: It might have been so in the month of October, 1978 or so. Now it is not so. I would like instances if any to be brought to my notice. If there is anything to be looked into, I will immediately attend to that. Coal is available now in all the pitheads are wise, and any amount of coal can be transported if there is proper certificate from sponsoring authority. That is the position today. And regarding the powers of the holding company, certain steps of decentralisation were initiated. That does not mean that the holding company has lost the powers for having the control over the subsidiary companies. They still possess all the powers to monitor the production, the marketing aspect of it and also sanctioning of projects. Powers are still vested with the Coal Authority of India and there is no question of devaluing that authority except certain powers delegated to subsidiary companies for efficient operations. Certain powers were delegated to the subsidiary company. That is all. In fact, the Coal India Ltd. still enjoys all the powers necessary for effective monitoring of the subsidiary companies. The third point he was referring to was about the irregular appointment of a Managing Director he has referred to. He was appointed long ago. He was not selected for this post after this Government came to power. It is very common that within the Department, people are transferred for various reasons and he was there in a particular company.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: For how long?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: What ever it may be, it is not the length of period that is important. He was transferred from the company to the Department for some time and then a vacancy arose there. He was posted to another company. When the Coal India Chairman was selected for one of the subsidiaries, naturally a vacancy arose there and in that vacancy he was posted. That is all.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Is he qualified?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: It is a Managing Director's post. What is the necessary qualification that you are thinking of?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: What I have said is that for this type of post, it is necessary that it should be filled by a person selected by the Bureau of Public Enterprise.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Yes, he was selected and posted even before this Government came to power. He was the Chairman of the Central Coal Fields, Ltd. Then a general transfer took place. At that time he was transferred to BBCL and after some time he was posted to the Ministry and recently we have posted him in the vacancy caused by the transfer of the Chairman, C.C.F.L.

डा० रामजी सिंह (भागलपुर): सभापति महोदय, इतना प्रोत्तन हो रहा है, फिर भी बड़े दुख की बात है कि जहाँ हमने 1976 में 50 हजार टन बैलिजन को, 25 हजार टन कोस को, 1 लाख 25 हजार टन होल्स को, 2 लाख टन डेप्पार्क को कोयला दिया साथ ही नेपल, बर्मा, बंगलादेश और ताइवान आदि को भी कोयले का निर्यात किया, वहाँ आज हम 1.5 मिलियन टन कोयले का आयात कर रहे हैं। जबकि श्रीमते का हमारा प्रोत्तन श्री राष्ट्रीयकरण के बाद से बढ़ा है तब यह स्थिति है। हमारे सामने आंकड़े हैं कि हमारा प्रोत्तन बराबर बढ़ता जा रहा है। 1973-74 में 78.1 मिलियन टन, 1974-75 में 88.4 मिलियन टन की उत्पादन से हमारा उत्पादन बराबर बढ़ता गया है जो क्या कारण है कि यह सब स्थिति उत्पन्न हुई? जब से राष्ट्रीयकरण हुआ है, तब से हमारा कोयले का उत्पादन की संख्या जो रहा है और स्टाक भी बढ़ता जा रहा है।

Now, you have to move the present output of coal throughout the country.

The total demand of coal during 1977-78 was about 91 million tonnes. But the total stock is about 102 million tonnes. It is clear the production of coal has all along exceeded the demand.

इस तरह से हमारा प्रोत्तन बढ़ रहा है।

सभापति महोदय, आपका प्रश्न क्या है?

डा० रामजी सिंह: मेरा प्रश्न यह है कि जब स्टाक भी बढ़ रहा है, उत्पादन भी बढ़ रहा है जिसका कि कोई वर्णन नहीं है फिर भी कोयले के दाम बढ़ाने के लिए कोयला को जा रही है। यह बड़ी भयावह चीज है। मेरे पास रिपोर्ट है जिसमें दिया गया है कि कोस इन्स्टी का प्रशासन ठीक होना चाहिए। इस से 100 करोड़ रुपया बचाया जा सकता है। मुझे यह लगता है कि कोस प्रशासन अत्यन्त प्रथम है। यह मैं नहीं कह रहा हूँ। हर टन में 13 रुपये बचाए जा सकते हैं। इससे यह पता चलता है कि शासन कितना कमजोर और प्रथम है और कोयले के उत्पादन, उसकी कार्य-क्षमता को ठीक नहीं करता है। कोयले की कीमत बढ़ाने के लिए कैबिनेटसब कमेटी बाबू जगजीवन राम की अध्यक्षता में बनी थी। उसने कुछ फैसला किया था। अब कैबिनेट इसके बारे में फैसला करेगी। सारा देश सोच रहा है कि कोयले के दाम रोज-ब-रोज बढ़ते जा रहे हैं, ऐसा क्यों हो रहा है। मैं समझता हूँ कि यह विभाग की प्रथमता की निशानी है।

बाबू क्या स्थिति है। माननीय राम साहब वहाँ से आते हैं। वह जानते होंगे कि कांटेन्टर और सैनेजर की संख्या से हजारों टन कोयले की गैज होती है। इसको रोकने के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं।

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि कावेजा कमेटी की अनुसंधानों की ध्यान में रखते हुए कोयले के उत्पादन के खर्च को तेरह रुपये प्रति टन कम करने के बारे में आप क्या कर रहे हैं? साथ ही कोयले का आयात आप कब तक बन्द करेंगे और साठ करोड़ जो इस पर खर्च होता है उसको आप कब तक बचा पाएंगे? कोयले के दाम बढ़ने की सम्भावना से लोग बहुत भयभीत हैं। क्या उनकी इस चिंता को सरकार दूर करेगी और घोषणा करेगी कि कोयले के दाम नहीं बढ़ाए जाएंगे और कोयला विभाग के प्रबंध को सख्त बनाया जाएगा? कहाया जो राशि उसकी सरकार और दूसरे विभागों के पास है अगर वह उसकी सिम जाए तो उससे कैपिटल इनवेस्टमेंट में सुविधा होगी और बाजारों पर यह उससे बन सकती है। इस की विज्ञाने का भी क्या आप प्रयत्न करेंगे? कांटेन्ट सिस्टम जो कुराट कर रहा है और सर्वर जो इसकी वजह से जनबाव सेल में होते हैं और जो कांटेन्टर और सैनेजर के बीच बढ़ते हैं, ये न ही इसके लिए यह जरूरी है कि कांटेन्ट सिस्टम को एंजालिस किया जाए? क्या सरकार इस की एंजालिस करेगी?

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR (Gandhinagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the shortage of coal has been a chronic problem and it has been creating a lot of terrible and intolerable hardships to industries, major and small scale. The Minister has himself admitted in his answer given on the 20th February, 1979 to the Unstarred Question that it has caused a lot of hardships to a number of industries, particularly textile industries.

AN HON. MEMBER: As also fertilizer industries.

PROF. P. G. MAVALANKAR: Yes. Now, Sir, I come from Ahmedabad. Yesterday, there were two questions. One was a Starred question, directly on this problem, but unfortunately my friend Shri Kumari Ananthan was not present. I could not, therefore, ask any question so far as Ahmedabad mills are concerned. Another Question by me on the same topic came as an Unstarred Question and I could not ask any supplementary questions on it either.

I want to bring this problem to the Government's notice again with all seriousness. I have referred to the two questions of yesterday, and we have also the answer to the unstarred Question on the 20th February, which is the subject matter for half-an-hour discussion today. All the answers are a classic example of not saying anything. In the answer on the 20th February, on which this half-an-hour discussion has been raised, it was said:

"There was no shortage of coal with the coal companies in December, 1978 and January, 1979".

In that case, how is it that hundreds and thousands of industrial units and many others in many parts of India have been experiencing shortage of coal?

I come from Gujarat. There, not only the textile mills, but even the power stations suffered because of shortage of coal. Will not the Government agree that because of this

inadequate distribution or erratic distribution of supply of coal, although they have said that there is coal and they can supply, it has resulted in all kinds of hardships and corruption? Therefore, it resulted in all kinds of harassment and all kinds of loss of production. My question is: what are Government doing with regard to that? Finally: every time the Minister of Energy and his colleague pass on the buck to the Railway Minister. The Railway Minister in turn passes on the buck to the other Minister. Only about 2 hours earlier in this very House today, the Railway Minister said that whether he was there or the Minister of Energy was there, they were all ultimately one, in the same Government. Then how long will they go on passing the responsibility from one Ministry to another, and not coming to grips with the problem. In the end, the consumers are suffering. He says, the Ahmedabad mills are not closed. That is not completely true. The mills were on the verge of closure. In some of them, shifts were closed, if not the entire mills. People went out of employment. There was loss of production.

How long will the Minister of Energy take, to come to some kind of an energetic coordination with the other energetic Minister, viz. the Minister of Railways? Although you have got coal, you cannot distribute it properly and in time. You should see that coal is supplied to the mills, power stations, fertilizer units etc. All of them should get coal. Please give a detailed answer, so that no further discussion on this subjected is warranted.

SHRI K. MALLANNA (Chitradurga): There are two reasons for the shortage of coal. One, the production of coal and another the transport of coal in the country. So far as the production side is concerned, they attribute it to strike by workers and to the go-slow tactics of the workers. Sometimes it may be due to shortage of explosives. So far as transport is concerned, the Railway Minister is

shifting the responsibility to the Energy Minister i.e. coal is to be supplied to the point where the rail lifts it. There is absolutely no coordination between the two communities. I would like to know this information: what is the total amount of coal required in the country, how much is the country producing; is Government importing coal, if so, how many tonnes; how far is it adequate to cover the demand; whether it is a fact that sometimes the operation of coal comes to a halt due to shortage of explosives—if so, what is the action taken by Government to fill the gap; and whether there is any coordination between the two Ministries.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: First, I will take up my friend Dr. Ramji Singh's points. He made a very sweeping and fantastic statement about the inefficiency in the Department of Coal. I am very sorry; such a sweeping statement should not have come from that Member.

DR. RAMJI SINGH: But did I not substantiate it?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: You have not. It is easy to condemn when somebody is doing the job. Here is something which one has to understand. Coal is produced in adequate quantities, to meet the demands of the consumers in the country. At times people say that coal is not available. He referred to Baweja Committee's recommendations. I do not know from where he got the information that the Baweja Committee had said that Rs. 15 per tonne can be saved by efficient management. (Interruption)

That Committee has made a number of recommendations, which are being examined by the Government; and they will be implemented when a final decision is taken. They have also recommended various other things. The hon. Member has not tried to find out the truths about the report; and he is simply, from his second imagi-

nation, trying to give all sorts of things about the Baweja Committee report.

About coal production, it has picked up. For 3 or 4 months production had gone down, because of various calamities.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO rose.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: I know. Simply ridiculing a department is not good. You are ridiculing it. You can say anything.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: I am not. We are giving every detail. We can give more. He is not taking it seriously. He was sitting and smiling while I am talking.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: What is wrong with it? Do you want me to cry?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: You should cry and resign, instead of sitting and laughing when there is such a hue and cry outside.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: It is very easy to say anything he wants, because this House has given him the privilege to say whatever he wants.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Don't take it in a light manner.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: I know, Mr. Faleiro; I can also understand what you are talking.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Then it is very good.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: But this shortage is not there to-day in the country. They have got, as I told you, nearly 13 million tonnes of coal. Shortages are felt because of various constraints, movement difficulties and other things. On February 17, officials of the Railway Ministry, of the Energy Ministry and coal company representatives did meet and discussed and sorted out the problems. At the moment coal is moving properly to various consumer ends. Still there are

constraints, I admit, because of the movement difficulties. As the Railway Minister was saying, even though he has got wagons, he has no wheel sets and so he is not able to put the wagons on the track. We are trying to import them, if possible, and put wagons on the track. We are taking all steps necessary for movement of coal.

About import of coal, it is true that government has decided to import one million tonnes of coking coal as an experimental measure to see how blast furnaces behave with low ash content coal, because our coking coal has got higher percentage of ash and we have to wash it. By washing we lose. Either technology has to be changed in steel plants or we must import coking coal and blend it with indigenous coking coal, we are trying to see how far it can be useful. That is why government has decided to import coal. There is another aspect, namely, we have not got, very much coking coal reserves in the country. It is not only not very much but whatever coking coal that is available has higher ash content. That is why we are trying to see whether we can improve the performance of the steel plants by importing some coking coal and blending it with indigenous coal.

Then there was reference to explosives; there is shortage in the country. There is some problem in the explosive factories; that is why the Government has decided to import explosives. Already one shipment has come; it is moving to collieries for use; it is in the process of movement to coal areas.

About industries that are being closed, Mr. Mavalankar referred to it. It was brought to my notice by the Minister in Gujarat and also the Chief

Minister of Maharashtra. He also got in touch with the Railway Minister for the movement of coal. All efforts are being made to see that coal is moved to the needed place as quickly as possible.

DR. RAMJI SINGH: What about prices?

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Price is under consideration of the government. I explained in reply to one of the questions in this House how inputs have gone up enormously. Coal price has gone up only by 70 per cent after nationalisation whereas input costs have gone up four or five times. You take the wages of workers... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No further questions.

DR. RAMJI SINGH: 2000 tonnes of coal is being stolen away daily in Dhanbad, it is reported here. Is it a fact?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is half-an-hour discussion and he is replying to the points raised. No more questions.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: As I said earlier, inputs have gone up and that is why coal companies are incurring losses. Government is considering whether they could increase the price; they have not taken a decision yet. The hon. Member referred to Baweja committee; they have also recommended a higher increase in price. Any way government is considering all aspects before taking a final decision.

12.37 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, March 2, 1970/Pradgama 12, 1900 (Bala).