

it cannot be helped in this House. The hon. Minister may proceed

Shri Anil K. Chanda: At this stage end of the discussion, I will just, Sir, with your permission make two or three brief observations.

The question of East Bengal has been raised with great eloquence by my distinguished friend Mr. Chatterjee. I myself come from West Bengal, and more than possibly most Members, I know the woes and miseries of the people of East Bengal. But this particular Act has nothing to do with East Bengal. This Act only refers to the crimes of abduction committed during the period round about 1947. The recovery work in East and West Bengal today is being done under the Nehru-Liaquat Pact, and under the auspices of the Minorities Ministers of both the countries.

With regard to the attitude of Pakistan, much has been said. It is the usual practice to give a dog a bad name before hanging it, but in this case, I shall be false to my responsibilities if I do not admit here that our relief organisation has received considerable help—I should say, every possible help—from Pakistan, in the working of this particular Act.

I may mention, Sir, a very small case as an example of this. As a result of the judgment of the East Pakistan High Court, we had to perforce stop our recovery work in our country for a while. Pakistan did not take advantage of the situation, and during this period, they carried on with their recovery work and returned to us 172 girls.

With regard to the statement made by Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, the position is this. This is a very serious allegation, and this allegation has been made in both the countries. Just as we seem to believe that there are thousands of high-placed Pakistani officials and citizens who are in possession of our abducted women, they also similarly allege that on this side of the border, many of their abducted women are in the possession of our officers and our citizens. This matter is very closely being looked into, and it is impossible at this stage to give any categorical answer. It is only when each and every allegation has been looked into can they and can we give an answer to this.

Sardar Hukam Singh: Has Pakistan supplied you with the list of officials in whose custody Muslim women are

being kept, because Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar said we have given them every detail of the officers who are keeping them here. Have we got those particulars from Pakistan?

Shri Anil K. Chanda: As I have said, Sir, we are enquiring into it.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

“That the Bill be passed”.

The motion was adopted.

TEA BILL

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri T. T. Krishnamachari): I beg to move*:

“That the Bill to provide for the control by the Union of the tea industry, and for that purpose to establish a Tea Board and levy a customs duty on tea exported from India, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Shri A. K. Basu, Shri Upendranath Barman, Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tripathi, Prof. Nibaran Chandra Laskar, Shri Debeswar Sarmah, Shri Bhakt Darshan, Shri R. Venkataraman, Shri G. R. Damodaran, Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha, Shri Hem Raj, Shri N. M. Lingam, Shri H. Siddananjappa, Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad, Shri P. T. Chacko, Shri N. C. Chatterjee, Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar, Shri Jaipal Singh, Shri Tridib Kumar Chaudhuri, Shri K. Kelappan, Shri Rayasam Seshagiri Rao, Shri Purnendu Sekhar Naskar, Shri Dev Khanta Borooab, Shri D. P. Karmarkar, and the mover with instructions to report on or before the last day of the first week of the next session.”

The Bill is only a combination of the Central Tea Board Act of 1949 and the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938, along with certain variations that have been found necessary. The Bill begins with a declaration in terms of item 52 of List I, Scheduled VII of the Constitution.

[**PANDIT THAKUR DAS BHARGAVA** in the Chair]

The definitions more or less follow the pattern of the two enactments with certain additions made by the enlargement of the functions of the Tea Board.

The constitution of the Tea Board does not follow the pattern determined by the Tea Board Act of 1949. Ten categories are mentioned in this Bill of persons who should find representa-

*Moved with the previous recommendations of the President.

[Shri T. T. Krishnamachari]

tion in the Board and the nomination is left to the Central Government. The change has been made because representation in the Tea Board is apt to become stratified. Only the interests closely concerned are now represented in the existing Board. The tea industry is one of great national importance, and it is hoped that by providing some representation for persons not directly interested in the various processes which the manufacture of tea and the sale of tea undergoes, national interests would be better served thereby.

The appointment of a Secretary and officers drawing more than Rs. 1,000 will vest in the Central Government. It is also the intention of the Government that the financial control exercised on the Tea Board by the Finance Ministry should be strengthened, and it follows the pattern that generally government has in mind in the matter of greater financial control in respect of all such Boards.

The functions of the Board have been widened. In addition to the present functions of the Central Tea Board and the Indian Tea Licensing Committee, the enlarged scope of the new Board's activities will include:

- (i) Regulation and control of the sale of tea for internal consumption or export, whether by auctions or otherwise;
- (ii) Control over the quality of tea and the issue of licenses to engage in blending; and
- (iii) Promotion of the adoption of measures for increasing the productivity of labour, including measures for securing safer and better working conditions and the provisions and improvement of amenities and incentive to workers.

The Tea Board may also be required, according to any decision of the Central Government in the exercise of its powers as proposed under Clause 33 of the Tea Bill, to license brokers, manufacturers or dealers in tea waste.

Chapters III and IV of the Tea Bill, 1952, contain provisions similar in principle to those contained in Chapters II and III of the Indian Tea Control Act, regarding control over the export of tea and control over the extension of tea cultivation. The provisions of the Tea Bill, however, do not stipulate the exact basis subject to which export rights will accrue to tea estates and the extent up to which extension of tea cultivation will be permitted. The details in these matters are

to be left to be prescribed by rules under the proposed statute. This is desirable, as the Government have to decide upon their policy on such matters as the interests of the development and welfare of the tea industry may require from time to time. This will not, at the same time, in any way interfere with India's obligations in regard to the International Tea Agreement, should this Agreement continue.

Chapter VI indicates the control by the Central Government. Chapter VII, Clause 33, is a new provision, as I said before, in regard to brokers, tea manufacturers and blenders. The other provisions in this chapter are those reproduced from the two existing enactments.

I have only one word to say in regard to a subject in which hon. Members are very much interested. In the context of the crisis in the tea industry today, the introduction of this legislation might require some explanation. As the House is aware, this legislation is not a sequel to the crisis. Certain promises were made by Government in the last session that a change in respect of the methods adopted in the matter of tea control was being contemplated so that Government could be in a better position to exercise greater control in regard to this important industry. The present crisis, if anything, has demonstrated clearly the fact that the control exercised by the Tea Board over the industry is not as complete or as efficient as it ought to be. In this context, I have to mention that Government are not satisfied with the propaganda that is being carried on for tea, either internal or abroad.

Our internal consumption of tea happens to be less than a third of the production. This is an unsatisfactory position. Our dependence on foreign exports in respect of this industry is more than what it ought to be. Even with the inadequate knowledge that I have of internal propaganda, I have come to the conclusion that internal propaganda methods are extremely unsatisfactory. Primarily the propaganda is in relation to the sale of tea, as there is no tie-up between the concerns that pack and sell tea in the internal market, and the propaganda organisation. Though there is no specific mention in the new Bill that the Board will be taking over the control of internal sales, I think this matter may be left to be considered by the Select Committee. The way in which tea propaganda is done in other countries is by close liaison with the tea selling inter-

ests, and the propaganda organisation, and this liaison extends to the extent of participation in costs. There is no such liaison between the tea selling interests and the Tea Board in India.

The House is also aware that we have delinked our tea propaganda from the International Tea marketing Expansion Board. This step had to be taken because, from the evidence that I could find, the control exercised by the Tea Board over the activities of the International Tea Marketing Expansion Board was next to nothing. It is significant that while the ITMEB persuaded the people in various countries with whom they were co-operating to protest to the Indian Government against the withdrawal from the ITMEB, this organisation themselves have been curiously silent,—a silence which is bordering on complete indifference. I am, therefore, surprised that there should be anybody in India connected with Indian tea interests, who should suggest that the action taken by the Government of India in this matter was unwise.

This delinking from the ITMEB has laid the burden squarely on the Indian tea organisation to undertake, organise and direct international propaganda. Government have taken certain steps in this regard already. They do hope in course of time that the new Tea Board would be undertaking this responsibility fully and build up an efficient organisation for doing propaganda for tea in the world, if possible, in collaboration with the major tea producing countries.

Certain concerned interests are bound to express the view that they have not been consulted in the formulation of this legislation. Considering that the departure from the existing enactment has not been very great, this consultation before the drafting of the legislation was, in my view, unnecessary. But I would suggest to the House that the Select Committee might be asked to invite the representatives of the tea interests and of all shades of opinion to give evidence before them. I have no doubt that the Select Committee, the House and the Government would profit by taking such evidence.

An hon. friend suggested an hour back that there should be a provision in this enactment, similar to Section 20 in the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, namely that there should be power for the Government or the Tea Board, as the case may be, to manage certain estates which they think, are being badly managed. While

I am certainly prepared to leave it to the Select Committee to put in a provision of this nature should they consider it necessary, I must apologise to the hon. Members for more or less rushing through this Bill at this late hour on the last day of the session. But hon. Members will understand that the Select Committee being a wide one, we can have the Bill remoulded, if necessary, and bring it back before the House, and allow all criticisms that can possibly be focussed on it, at the beginning of the next session.

Mr. Chairman: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to provide for the Control by the Union of the tea industry and for that purpose to establish a Tea Board and levy a customs duty on tea exported from India, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Shri A. K. Basu, Shri Upendranath Barman, Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tripathi, Prof. Nibaran Chandra Laskar, Shri Debeswar Sarmah, Shri Bhakt Darshan, Shri R. Venkataraman, Shri G. R. Damodaran, Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha, Shri Hem Raj, Shri N. M. Lingam, Shri H. Siddananappa, Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad, Shri P. T. Chacko, Shri N. C. Chatterjee, Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar, Shri Jaipal Singh, Shri Tri-dib Kumar Chaudhuri, Shri K. Kelappan, Shri Rayasam Seshagiri Rao, Shri Purnendu Sekhar Naskar, Shri Dev Khanta Borooah Shri D. P. Karmarkar, and the mover with instructions to report on or before the last day of the first week of the next session."

Shri N. B. Chowdhury (Ghatal): We all know that the tea industry is today facing a terrible crisis and thousands of tea garden labourers have been thrown out of employment. At this stage, certainly we want a measure that is to be brought forward to ensure that the Indian garden owner does not suffer and at the same time the working classes are also provided for. So far as this Bill is concerned, we feel that not only the tea interests, and the owners of the tea gardens should be consulted, but that there should be conferences of a tripartite nature, between the interests concerned, namely the tea owners, the tea garden workers and the Government so that they might represent their views. It is only through such tripartite conferences that we can get suggestions which will help the Board to function properly.

So far as the constitution of the Board is concerned, we find that as

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many as 40 members are going to be appointed for this Board.

Mr. Chairman: There is so much of noise in the House that it is impossible for the reporters to take down what is being said. I would request hon. Members kindly not to talk.

Shri N. B. Chowdhury: So far as the membership of the Board is concerned, it has been stated that all tea interests will be represented. The owners, the Chambers of Commerce, the consumers, the manufacturers, the labourers, employees, the Members of parliament, and the representatives of the Central Government and the Governments of the principal tea-growing States have been mentioned. But so far as the workers are concerned, although we find that persons employed in tea estates would have a certain representation, no specific mention has been made as to what would be the quantum of that representation. The Chambers of Commerce also would have a certain representation. It has not been stated as to whether the organisations of labour would be enabled to send their representatives. It will not do if simply a person is nominated, who may not enjoy the confidence of the workers in the tea gardens. I would like to draw the attention of the Select Committee to the fact that when the Chambers of Commerce, that is the organisations of the owners of the tea gardens, are given the opportunity to be represented on the Board, a similar facility should be extended to the Tea Labour Unions who should also be consulted, and asked to send their representatives.

It has also been stated that so far as the quality of tea is concerned, there would be research centres, where scientific investigations would be made to improve the quality of tea. Coming from West Bengal, I know that some time back in Calcutta, the Corporation brought cases against renowned firms that instead of using good quality tea they used a mixture of tea stem. When representations were made to the Government, the Government instead of seeing that they improved the quality, brought up a measure by way of legislation declaring that this could be allowed. I want to draw the attention of the Select Committee to this fact also. Although it has been admitted by all sections of the people, that the quality of tea that is available for internal consumption, needs to be improved, yet, we find that a particular State Government has come in with a measure declaring that such a mixture could be allowed.

Then, we find that so far as the tea industry is concerned, the census of foreign capital dated 30th June 1948 showed that about 75 per cent of the capital invested in the tea industry was foreign-owned. And we know that one of the major reasons for the present crisis in the tea industry is the manoeuvrings of these people. So this must be borne in mind while the Select Committee is going through this measure, as to how we can save the native industry. The case of persons who have started small gardens must be considered. We also know that due to the present arrangement of auctions at Calcutta, Cochin and London there is sufficient scope for these foreign investors to carry on auctions at London and, therefore, the small owners of tea gardens here do not get an adequate opportunity to have any say in the matter.

Another thing is that with regard to tea garden labour, the Plantations Labour Act 1951 and the Minimum Wages Act are to be applied. But we find that when thousands of workers are being thrown out of employment and so many gardens have been closed down, no steps have been taken by the Government to see that these workers find alternative employment or are given some unemployment dole or that they enjoy all the facilities which are guaranteed under these measures.

Then it has been said that an attempt would be made to organise certain gardens on a cooperative basis. While considering this, the owners of small gardens should be asked to re-organize their gardens, if possible, so that they may not be in very great difficulty to carry on their trade.

With these few words I think that while the Select Committee is going to consider this measure, they should consider the case of the workers in the gardens and also the owners of small gardens who belong to this country and see that the foreign investors who are practically controlling the entire industry do not make any attempt to destroy the interests of indigenous capital.

Shri K. K. Desai (Halar): I fully support the motion for reference of this Tea Bill to a Select Committee. The Bill has come none too soon. When the Bill for the regulation and control of Industries was before this House, I did suggest that the plantation industry be included in it and at that time on the floor of the House an assurance was given that a Bill controlling the tea industry would be brought before this House in a comprehensive form. This

Bill is seeking to repeal the two Acts—the Tea Board Act and the Tea Control Act—and the name of this Bill is: the Tea Bill. This means that the whole of the tea industry is now sought to be brought under the control of the Government of India.

As the Bill has been brought at the very fag end of the session and we have very little time, I do not think I will be able to offer any detailed observations on it. But as it is going before a Select Committee, I should like to make a few observations. The tea industry, as we all know, is the most important and strategic industry in this country. It is a great export industry which brings us a lot of foreign exchange, and every now and then we in this country are faced with some crisis or the other so far as the tea industry is concerned. Now these crises come over us or the crisis is sought to be created either artificially or by the vested interests and somehow or other the Government, the Parliament or the State is being made to make some concessions. I may say at this stage that this is one industry about which there is very little knowledge in this country. This is one industry which has been built up on the blood and sweat of the poor human beings in this country. Just think of the past when this industry was established in this country; particularly, this industry was established in jungles and hills where hundreds of our countrymen living on the verge of starvation in the plains have been taken. One does not know what happened to them and it is a matter of history that thousands of poor labourers and employees would have died in those areas which are infested with malaria and all sorts of diseases. This industry is one which has developed in this country after exploiting very fully our human resources as well as our natural resources; and it has come into existence, as a matter of fact, by the concessions which we cannot think of giving to anybody—concessions which were given by the foreign Government to the foreign interests in those good old days. If you look to the financial aspect of this industry, I think their paid up capital originally might have been practically negligible. The whole industry has developed during the last so many years on the resources which this country has supplied, and today the industry is trying its best—because it is more or less a monopoly concern, more or less monopolised by the foreign interests who have got their own method of dealing with us, who have got their own method of dealing with employees—to get as many concessions

as possible. But for the first time now I am happy that this industry is sought to be brought under our control. Just now there is a crisis and they say that wages paid to the workers are very heavy and so we are not able to sell this tea in the outside market. Has anybody explored what are the overhead charges, what are the management charges and what are the charges that constitute the cost of production, as far as these charges are paid out either in London or any other place? If our raw tea is exported at eight annas or nine annas per pound, that very tea is sold in the European market at Rs. 2-4-0 and 2-8-0. This difference, in my opinion, is being pocketed by others and not our people who are working there. Attempts are being made for the last two, three or six months to see that the implementation of the Bill on plantation which we have passed in this House, the Plantation Act which is more or less welfare legislation, is sabotaged on the one plea or other.

Now, the present Tea Board that is constituted is dominated more or less by the Tea Planting Interests. Of course, there is improvement in this Bill as far as the representation is concerned. But, I may just point out to the hon. Minister of Commerce and Industry, what does he mean by giving representation to the vested interests in different guises. One is the dealers including both exporters and internal traders of tea are given representation. Then again the Chambers of Commerce and Industries are also being given representation. Are not these dealers also members of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry? Then again, in—

“(j) such other persons or class of persons, as scientists, economists or business men, ...”

So, it is more surprising that in three different ways the vested interests about whom we have got our own doubts are again sought to be represented in this Board so that again the Tea Board that is being constituted even under this Bill will be dominated more or less by the vested interests.

Now, there is one other suggestion which I would like to make to the Select Committee. As the Plantation Industry has been excluded in the Industries Regulation and Development law that we have passed, the section dealing with the taking over of the industry or the undertaking in the interest of the country should be included in this Bill so that there will be no need to include this Plantation industry in the Industries development and regulation law. I think this suggestion which I

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am making will find suitable reception at the hands of the Select Committee.

Just now some tripartite conference of the Government, of the employees and the planters is meeting at Calcutta, to resolve this crisis. But such crisis had always been coming and it has been resolved temporarily. I hope that after enacting this Bill, it is very urgent that the Board envisaged in this Bill should be formed and we have got to see that the Tea Industry is managed in such a way that such temporary crisis may not come. The crisis should not occur in such a very important industry. It is occurring because the whole thing is left over to private enterprise, which has been bringing every now and then crisis in the Tea industry.

Now, as far as the tea industry is concerned, we have, as I said, no knowledge about it and so, as I suggested last time, a complete probe into the working of this industry. The Board will look into it when the time comes. I would suggest to the Government that they must appoint a sort of Commission to go into the working of the whole industry. Let us see the mind of our Government especially in dealing with the tea industry. The mind of the Government is generally made up by those people who place both facts and figures and information that would suit them. As far as other interests are concerned, they are not presenting any views and even if they are presented, they are ignored. So I believe that the Bill as it has been presented to us is a good Bill and it must be enacted as early as possible and I hope in future some of us may not have to offer criticisms which I have offered today.

Mr. Chairman: A suggestion has been made that the name of Shri T. Subrahmanyam be added to the list of Members. I hope the suggestion is acceptable to the House.

Several Hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: The name of Shri T. Subrahmanyam is added to the list.

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri (Gauhati): I wish to speak on what repercussions this Bill has on the tea industry of the State to which I belong, namely the tea industry in Assam. Reading the provisions of the Bill, it seems to me that it is a mockery, at this stage, of the tea industry in Assam. I do not know what the condition of the industry in other parts of India is, but so far as Assam is concerned, I can say without the least hesitation, particularly so far

as the Indian interests are concerned, that the tea industry is about to collapse and by the time this Bill is passed, the tea industry of the Indian in Assam will totally collapse. I do not blame the Government. In this respect they have shown a lot of earnestness. They have recently had several conferences and they had also sent out their officers to Assam and also to Calcutta to find out exactly what can be done to save the industry. But the net result of what has been achieved is most disappointing. The assurances and concessions given are hardly sufficient to save the industry at all. I, therefore, say that certain provisions of this Bill at least seem to be entirely necessary. Here in clauses 12, 13 and 14 we are speaking about the limitation of cultivation, control and the expansion of tea cultivation but I am afraid the House will be astounded to hear—not to speak of expansion—the position in the industry is such that no cultivation even of the existing tea gardens is likely to be taken in hand in the near future. As many as 20 gardens of which I know have already sent notices to the labourers that they are going to close down their work from the beginning of next year. And I was rather surprised that my friend who has just spoken, Mr. Khandubhai Desai, had not a word to say in favour of the labourers who are going to be totally out of employment in the near future.

Shri K. K. Desai: I want permanent employment, not temporary one.

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri: From what I understand from a reply recently given in the course of a statement made by the hon. Minister of Commerce and Industry, the guarantee they are prepared to give is to the extent of 1953 cultivation only and that would not satisfy the tea interests in Assam, because they have already mortgaged the crops and hypothecated all the tea estates to the Banks. The Banks are not prepared to lend out any money to them unless some guarantee is also given to the existing loan. Now, the tea industry cannot be blamed for this reason that they have been very liberal to their labourers. I do not say that they have been extra-liberal, but they have been liberal. I suppose, considering the employers of other industries in India. In the tea gardens rice is supplied to labourers at Rs. 5 per maund even now. Even when the market was soaring up to Rs. 40 per maund, the tea proprietors had to supply rice to labourers at Rs. 5 per maund. Even if a single member

of a family of the labourers worked for a period of a week in the gardens, they were entitled to get rice at the concessional rate. They are entitled to get their clothing at pre-war prices even now. Various other privileges are given by the tea garden proprietors to their labourers. Not that I grudge it. But I consider that unless Government takes the entire tea industry under their control, it will be difficult for the tea proprietors to shoulder the burden of these privileges. Unless the financiers know that the tea industry is going to have a margin of profit, they are not going to lend any further money. Unless there is some long term arrangement, the tea estates are bound to collapse.

Yesterday a Conference was held by the Labour Minister in which the whole question would have been thrashed out—whether the margin of expenditure could be reduced so far as labourers are concerned. But no proprietor of the tea estate would even think of taking such steps because it would lead to strikes and other things. Therefore, I submit that before we go into a legislation like this, we must seriously consider what has been actually done by the Government. For instance what has Government done to stabilise the prices? How is it that the tea exported to England and other countries is sold at the maximum rate of Rs. 1-11-0 per pound now, whereas in India itself we have got to take tea and pay for it at Rs. 3 per pound? What is the reason for this difference? What has the Government been doing for the last five or six years in order to alter this state of affairs.

What Government should do now to save the industry is that they should purchase the entire stock of tea and regulate the prices themselves, just as they did during the war in 1942-44. When Government took the entire charge of the stock and issued permits for exports. If the Government now really want to save the tea industry they should purchase the entire stock of tea at a price which does not bring loss to the industry. With a margin of profit for them if the Government takes charge of the entire stock of tea and sell tea themselves then the prices will be regulated. They will be able to export to countries where tea is needed and the tea industry will be saved. My whole point is this. Unless you save the tea estates now, it is useless to pass such voluminous legislation. Government in order to show their appreciation of the seriousness of the matter should take into consideration the sug-

gestions that I have made of their becoming the owner of the entire stock of Indian tea and to regulate the export and sale thereof. Thereby they will give some assurance to the financiers as well as to the tea proprietors themselves and they will be able to stand on their own legs.

Another point to which I would like to draw the attention of this House is that we must seriously think of extending the market for tea in our own country. We can no longer depend on our monopolistic position. In Russia where a large quantity of tea is consumed, I understand that they are thinking of tea plantations in some areas. In South Africa, tea cultivation has been started. In Indonesia—Java and other places—there is a good production of tea. Ceylon is producing a large quantity of tea. In no other country except India is an export duty on tea levied. But here the Government still persist in levying an export duty, while the industry is going to ruin. Government on their part must make some sacrifice. They should either do away with the export duty for some years, or should make some arrangement for deferred payment of the export duty. In Assam the tea industry will be grateful—the Indian section of it at least—if they are only allowed deferred payment, that is instead of levying the duty before the tea is allowed to be moved, they may be allowed to make payment after sale. Now tea is not allowed to be moved unless the export duty is prepaid. That hampers the smaller proprietors.

Now I would appeal to the House that we should cultivate the habit of taking more tea. There is a lot of prejudice in this part of India, Northern India, (excepting West Bengal) against tea. Some of my hon. friends complain that tea is injurious to health.

Pandit Alga Rai Sbastri (Azamgarh Distt.—East cum Balbilia Distt.—West) Tandonji says so?

Shri Tandon (Allahabad Distt.—West): **Gandhiji** said it.

An Hon. Member: Doctors say so..

Shri B. K. Chaudhuri: The sooner you decide not to have anything to do with such Doctors, the better.

This attitude is the main reason for the ruin of the tea industry. You want to produce something for people who do not belong to India, just as we wanted to produce opium, not meant for consumption here. That prejudice to tea has to be removed. When you

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start with a prejudice that tea is injurious to health, you cannot expect the tea industry to flourish. Let us have an authoritative opinion on the subject. If it is really injurious to the health of the country, it should be injurious in all parts of India. If it is injurious to people in United Provinces it should be injurious to people in Bengal and Assam. Why then do you allow so much production of tea. Why then do you take so much interest in tea and have legislation, if it is really, as some of my hon. friends seem to think, a poisonous drink?

My whole object in making this short speech is to bring to the notice of the House as well as of Government that if really you consider that tea industry should prosper, if really you want to take some good contribution from the tea industry, you should encourage a market for tea not only in other parts of the world but also in India itself. If you really think that it is injurious exterminate this industry altogether. I believe we shall be living in Utopia if you for a moment entertain the idea that tea is injurious and that the taking of tea should be stopped. I would suggest any friend here to go and live in Assam or Bengal without taking tea. We have not so much of milk and honey, which you have in this part of the country, as tea. Tea protects you from various kinds of malaria.

Shri H. N. Shastri (Kanpur Distt—Central): You are an embodiment of those advantages yourself!

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri: Yes, I am a tea drinker. (Interruption). I am not interested in the tea industry. I am not a shareholder or a proprietor of any tea estate. I am not a propagandist also. But I simply want to remove the ignorance of my friends in this respect. Some friends complain that if they take a cup of tea they cannot sleep the whole night.

Shri Velayudhan (Quilon-cum-Mavelikkara—Reserved—Sch. Castes): That is true.

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri: I can take a cup of tea just before I go to bed and sleep like a top. But you might be thinking of so many things which you have done during the day with the result that you do not get sleep!

Mr. Chairman: He may speak on the Bill. I think he has finished.

पंडित जलमू राय शास्त्री : किसी को बेगन पद्य, किसी को अपपद्य ।

Shri R. K. Chaudhuri: That is all, Sir.

Some Hon. Members rose—

Mr. Chairman: It is so late now.

Shri S. C. Samanta (Tamluk): I have to offer some comments. I will do it in five minutes.

Shri Damodara Menon (Kozhikode): I have been standing up a number of times. I want a few minutes. I have to make one or two points.

Mr. Chairman: Very well. Mr. Samanta.

Shri S. C. Samanta: I whole-heartedly support the motion for reference of the Bill to Select Committee. With reference to clause 4, the number of members which should constitute the Tea Board has been specified there. But in the categories of representation mentioned it has not been stated as to how many will be allotted to each category. I shall be glad if the Members of the Select Committee take into consideration this matter and specify the number in each category. I find that there is representation from Parliament also. The Select Committee should make it clear whether these Members will be elected or nominated or appointed by the Government. There are so many tea producing States. It will be better for the Select Committee to put also some Members of the Legislatures of States where tea is grown.

Then I want to say something about the Tea Expansion Board. We have withdrawn ourselves from the Tea Expansion Board. So the whole burden of propaganda lies upon us now. I find that in the functions of the Board something is said. But this Tea Expansion Board was doing so much for India as regards tea and that work has fallen upon our heads. So when this committee is formed, either standing committee or ad hoc committees should be formed, and it should be specially mentioned in clause 3 that tea expansion and propaganda, in other countries as well as in India, will be the duties of this standing committee. The tea Expansion Board has done so much work for us that we have earned so much dollars from outside. This work should not now be neglected. It should be specifically mentioned in the body of the Bill itself. These are my two suggestions and I hope the Select Committee will give serious consideration to them.

Shri Damodara Menon: We are at the far end of the session and also of the day, and I do not want to make a long speech at all. I want only to make one or two suggestions to the hon. Minister and to the Select Committee about this matter.

One of the points has already been made out here, and that is that this industry is more or less in the hands of vested interests, especially foreign vested interests. We are making provision here for expansion of our tea gardens as and when we find it necessary. I want to make this suggestion to the Select Committee that hereafter it should not be possible for foreign vested interests to expand in this country at all. We must make such provision here that in our expansion programme foreign interests shall not find a place. It has been pointed out that the present crisis in the industry has seriously affected not only the interests of the industry but our economic interests also. This crisis has come in the industry merely because we have had no real control over the industry. That is because we have been allowing vested interests to concentrate in this industry. It must be our endeavour as soon as possible to get rid of the vested interests, and especially the foreign interests, in this industry. Therefore, in our expansion programme, if we do not take care to see that the vested interests do not progress, this industry will be doomed and also our country in the long run.

Then I want to make one or two suggestions about the Tea Board itself which is the most important provision in the Bill. Here several categories are given. As has been pointed out by an hon. Member, in regard to the provision about representation of labour, I do not know whether it will be adequate. Another thing is, when we are making mention of several categories, it must be possible for Parliament to know what is the proportion of representation you are going to allow to each category mentioned here. There are altogether forty members. We want to know how many of these forty will go to owners, or to persons employed in the tea gardens, manufacturers of tea, Members of Parliament, Central Government nominees and also Chambers of Commerce and Industry. I endorse the view expressed by Mr. Khandubhai Desai that when you have already made provision for dealers, including exporters and internal traders of tea, manufacturers of tea etc. there

is no necessity at all for you to include Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and later on, also businessmen. It appears you are giving a weightage to this kind of representation.

I would urge also another point. When you are making this appointment it must be not through nomination, it must be possible for us, especially when we are giving representation to labour and also owners of estates and gardens and growers, to introduce a certain element of election. I want to see that labour gets proper representation, and that through election.

I do not want to take more of your time.

The Minister of Commerce (Shri Karmarkar): I am very grateful to the House for the very vigorous support that it has given to the measure. There is one point beyond dispute arising out of the discussions, i.e., that the tea industry requires to be regulated in a better manner than before. Arising out of the discussions are some three or four important points. Firstly that labour should find its representation. That was what my friend, Mr. Khandubhai Desai said and then I understood Mr. Damodara Menon to say that there should be a definite specification in the category of various members. These are all matters that will be certainly taken into consideration by the Select Committee and I think I would be unfair to the Select Committee were I to try to meet any of those points here.

I was interested in the observations made by my esteemed and elderly friend Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri. When he was speaking, one point struck me. It has been the tradition of this House that there is no television permitted in this House. I am quite sure that if he were to talk and with his picture available to us, we will be saving a lot of expenditure on propaganda. The Select Committee will largely benefit by the observations that he has made in support of the tea industry.

There remains no more points and I think I would be hardly fair to the House by standing between the hon. Members and their evening tea.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the Control by the Union of the tea industry, and for that purpose to establish a Tea Board and levy a customs duty on tea exported from

[Mr. Chairman]

India, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of Shri A. K. Basu, Shri Upendranath Barman, Shri Kamakhya Prasad Tripathi, Prof. Nibaran Chandra Laskar, Shri Debeswar Sarmah, Shri Bhakt Darshan, Shri R. Venkataraman, Shri G. R. Damodaran, Shri Nageshwar Prasad Sinha, Shri Hem Raj, Shri N. M. Lingam, Shri H. Siddananjappa, Shri Bhagwat Jha Azad, Shri P. T. Chacko, Shri N. C. Chatterjee, Shri Hirendra Nath Mukerjee, Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar, Shri Hari Vinayak Pataskar, Shri Jaipal Singh, Shri Tridib Kumar

Chauduhri, Shri K. Kelappan, Shri Rayasam Seshagiri Rao, Shri Purnendu Sekhar Naskar, Shri Dev. Khanta Borooah, Shri T. Subramanyam, Shri D. P. Karmarkar and the mover with instructions to report on or before the last day of the first week of the next session."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Chairman: Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, the Minister of Commerce and Industry is appointed as the Chairman of the Select Committee.

The House then adjourned sine die.