

12.26 hrs.

DRUGS (AMENDMENT) BILL—
contd.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Pali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the main purpose of this Bill before us is to enable the Central Government to take over the entire control over the manufacture, sale and distribution of drugs. It definitely and clearly means centralisation of power. Though temperamentally and even otherwise I am opposed to centralisation, I understand that for certain matters where uniform standards have got to be introduced, there is need for some centralisation. As such, on this particular principle, I will not oppose the centralisation of power sought by the hon. Minister in this case. But my objection is based on certain other grounds.

I would like to be informed by the hon. Minister how he could assure us that certain better results would flow from this centralisation of power in his hands, because the past performance in any case does not give us any assurance of that type. Here, we sit in Delhi which is a centrally administered area. I do not think that the state of affairs in the centrally administered areas is any better. As a matter of fact, Delhi is supposed to be one of the homes for the manufacture and distribution of spurious drugs. The Central Ministry concerned with this matter has not given us any better account of its performance here. I would like to know how the hon. Minister proposes to proceed in this matter, because he must have taken note of the very strong feeling in this House about the state of affairs that is prevailing.

The spurious drugs industry is almost an organised industry in most of the metropolitan towns, and Delhi is no exception to it. So, the House would like to be enlightened as to how the hon. Minister proposes to proceed in this matter. If the general feeling is that they cannot manage one

single unit, the question arises as to how they are going to manage the entire country and have their jurisdiction running all over the country.

There is another apprehension which I share with most of the Members that with this dispersal and with this taking over of this power by the Centre, there may be a sort of overlapping jurisdiction with the State Governments. There is an apprehension whether the State Governments would feel the responsibility which they are feeling today or whether the same sort of complaints will arise, as they have arisen in many other spheres, regarding the inspectorates which the Central Government has and the inspectorates and analysts which the State Governments have. It is a common saying that where there are too many cooks, they spoil the broth. I hope there would be a clear demarcation of duties and allocations of functions and responsibilities. What are the responsibilities which the Minister is going to take up and what are the responsibilities which he is going to allot to his inspectors and to his analysts—that has got to be clarified.

Even apart from this, what I feel is if we are to tackle this very serious problem in an effective manner, something much more will have to be done. With the public sector expanding—information has been given on the floor of this House regarding the Russian collaboration and Rs. 20 crores worth project coming up—most of the Drugs being manufactured in the public sector, then I think instead of these punitive measures, a much better method would be to see that we create a special reputation for the medicines which are manufactured in the public sector. We have got Pimpri and other Public opinion in this matter particularly is hypercritical and hypersensitive. There was a lot of suspicion and doubt created about the penicillin of Pimpri, though further tests conducted here as well as outside completely assured that there was absolutely wrong with that medicine.

Though there is a general feeling that bad coin generally puts out the good coin from currency, if we have really good medicines which enjoy a real reputation and if we put them in the market of which the market is assured, then there is a likelihood by a positive action of putting these medicines in the market that this problem could be tackled to some extent. It is not merely by punitive methods that we can do it. We have to take certain positive steps and ensure the supply of pure medicines from our own manufacturing concerns. I would prefer nationalisation in one way. Nationalisation, so far as manufacturing is concerned, can certainly be attempted in regard to allopathic medicines, because I think three-fourth of the sector is already being taken over. These spurious drugs are being put in the market from a thousand and one sources that to me it appears that the only one course is to nationalise completely the drug industry and the distribution of the drugs. Otherwise, it would not be possible to control it by punitive methods. I have no objection to these punitive methods; they must be there, but they will not go very far.

My apprehension will be shared by many, because here it may be much more difficult to control spurious medicines and drugs. We have got the steel control orders. Like my hon. friend, there is another Minister from the Centre who completely controls the manufacture, planning and distribution of steel. Now the Health Minister wants to take this power himself in respect of the medicines. I am giving you the example that even in such a matter as the manufacture of steel where there are hardly half a dozen manufacturing concerns, the planning and manufacture of iron and steel even in these half a dozen concerns cannot be properly managed and controlled by the Minister. Then, how can I feel assured that my hon. friend, the Health Minister, who has got a much more difficult and much vaster field to cover, will be able to do it?

I know it for certain that in the matter of iron and steel, the programme in respect of even the projects which are in the core of the plan is not being implemented. We find here under his very nose in Delhi thousands of tons of iron and steel are being sold in the black-market. It must be much easier and much simpler to be able to control it and take action against the distributors. But even if that is not done, how do I feel assured that my hon. friend will be able to control the sale and distribution of medicines by thousands and thousands of persons, simply because we are having this unified control in the Central Government? We have our experience in other fields. So, I would like to be enlightened by the Minister as to how he hopes to go about his job and how he can create a little amount of faith and confidence in our mind that he will be able to do his job best when he has these powers. I am not against these powers being given to him. But I have a genuine apprehension and I would like him to give us a clear indication as to how he proposes to proceed in this matter. I feel it cannot be done until and unless the public sector is enlarged and it takes over the whole industry.

Another point I would like to know is, what would be the relationship regarding the manufacturing concerns which are in the public sector, whether he is going to have a managerial set-up which will ensure that what is coming out of these public sector enterprises is of the highest standard. Some Members suggested that the licensing of these public sector enterprises and of any other manufacturing concerns should be handed over to this Ministry or this Ministry should be a participant in the licensing of these manufacturing concerns. I am totally opposed to it. I do not think it should be made the concern of this Ministry. But I definitely feel that he should have a strong and independent control, as we have in the railways. The railways run the railway administration which is responsible for the operation, but there is a

[Shri Harish Chandra Mathur]

separate inspectorate which is under a different Ministry, the Communications Ministry. Similarly, I want that the manufacturing side should be under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, as it is. Let the licences be issued through them, but there should be an absolutely independent inspectorate under my friend, the Health Minister. Otherwise, if he is responsible also for licensing and for running these concerns, he will be more concerned about the manufacturing side, how these concerns make profits and everything of that nature. He should be a dispassionate independent inspectorate over all these public sector as well as private sector enterprises. He should have nothing to do with licensing and he should tell the House what sort of agency he proposes to set up to see that everything which comes out of the public sector enterprises as well as from other manufacturing concerns is properly checked in advance at various stages—internal inspection as well as external inspection, and independent inspection by my hon. friend, the Health Minister.

We also feel that the Ayurvedic and Unani medicines should be taken under the umbrella of this Bill. Because, it gives a certain amount of prestige and it gives a certain amount of confidence to the people when they know that certain items are manufactured after proper supervision and control by the Central Health Ministry and what is put in the market has been properly examined. Because, as my hon. friend, Shri D. C. Sharma has very correctly pointed out, the country at large is very much concerned with the Ayurvedic and Unani preparations. By and large, most of the people use them. Since thousands and thousands of persons are manufacturing this, I think it would be very difficult and I can understand the administrative difficulties. But if he cannot take over the entire control,

I do wish that he takes over the control of at least a limited number of concerns and he seals them so that the people should be able to know that these are medicines which are standard medicines which have been made under the inspection of the Health Ministry. Let them make a beginning. Then, we have got certain big concerns, as in Jamnagar, where we have got the Central Institute. Let us also start the manufacture of ayurvedic medicines there. If those medicines are properly examined, properly inspected and properly labelled, that will create confidence in the minds of the people on the quality of the medicine put on the market. I hope these medicines which have your seal of approval will in due course drive out the spurious ones. I think a limited effort should be made in that direction soon.

Lastly, I come to the punitive or penal provisions of this Bill. I was a little amazed when Shri Bharucha referred to a certain proviso which was put in the Bill, because I know that he is a man with legal acumen. Under that proviso a magistrate is given discretion to give sentence for less than one year by recording the reasons. He asked: what is the purpose of putting a minimum of one year when this proviso takes away the stringency of the provision? I am quite prepared to say that more severe punishment should be given to those people who offend in such a matter which is of such a vital importance to the health of the nation. If a man could be saved by an injection, he is allowed to die because there is adulteration in the medicine. I do not minimise in the least the severity of the offence, and I am prepared to say that the severest punishment may be given and, if one year is not adequate, two, three or four years of imprisonment may be given. But, at the same time, it would be wholly against the canons of all justice to deprive a presiding officer of a court from exercising discretion in certain cases when

it may be found that the offence is just a technical one. In such cases, it would be too harsh to impose a punishment of imprisonment for one year. It is good enough that we have given directions and this Parliament has indicated the mind of the country, reflected the mind of the country by telling the magistracy that the least we want is one year's punishment in such cases. But we should not bind the magistracy hand and foot. After all, it must be left to them to come to just decisions after exercising their mind judiciously. We can only give them a direction. I strongly oppose the putting of any such restrictions on the judiciary. We can indicate the mind of the Parliament and the country on the issue but we can never put any obstacles on their discretion to exercise their mind judiciously on each case. That would be most dangerous.

Now the magistrate has been asked to record his reasons if the punishment is of less than one year. Here I might make a suggestion. If the House feels very strongly, we may not leave it at that. We can give discretion to the magistrate to give a lesser sentence but we may change this proviso slightly to say that where the magistrate record his reasons for a lesser punishment, the records must be sent up to the appellate court. The appellate court has jurisdiction to take over cases *suo motu* if they deem fit. After the check of recording his reasons, if a further check is put of submitting such cases to the appellate court, I think that would be more than enough. We can compel the magistracy in all deserving cases to give the proper punishment, which may be one year, two years or whatever it is, but this discretion should not be taken away from the judiciary. The only thing is that the proviso should be amended to that extent.

Shri Khadilkar (Ahmednagar): I may be permitted to put a question. In the last session, when Shri Gopalan moved a resolution regarding the nationalisation of the drug industry, a

point was raised and the Minister for Industries, Shri Manubhai Shah replied on that point that there will be a central testing laboratory for all the drugs and unless that laboratory gives a certificate, the quality of that drug will not be ultimately determined. So, I want to know from the Minister of Health how far the scheme of having a central testing laboratory has advanced and, secondly, without such a laboratory how he proposes to have enough controls to have quality medicines.

Shri Karmarkar: I am grateful to all the hon. Members who have participated in this debate for the general support that they have given to the two broad aspects of this amending Bill—firstly, the establishment of greater control over any possible misdemeanour in the manufacture or distribution of drugs and, secondly, the advisability of further strengthening the penal provisions by providing for a minimum punishment and making all punishments more deterrent than before.

If I were only to rest content with what has been germane to the discussion, I think I might have thanked the House and the hon. Members and sat down. But, incidentally, certain observations have been made, some of them very useful to us and some of them arising out of a misconception of the actual facts of the case. I shall deny myself the pleasure of referring to each individual point made by each hon. Member, but I shall invite the attention of the House to certain broad points that have been sought to be made.

I shall take up the point that was just now referred to by the last speaker, Shri Harish Chandra Matnur. There has been, if I may say so, a general consensus of opinion on the floor of the House regarding the advisability of not leaving the pharmaceutical industry to the private sector. If we were writing on a clear slate as from today, may be, perhaps we

[Shri Karmarkar]

might have paid greater attention to this fact and proceeded to have this industry wholly in the public sector. I entirely agree with the view that whoever takes up the manufacture of drugs takes it up from the point of view of the profit motive. I am quite sure in my mind that it is not altruism that guides people in their activities in organising this industry. The first motive is to make profit. It is a profitable venture if properly managed. They want to make profit. This is also the complaint in the western countries. Say, in a country like the U.S.A., it is the complaint of the normal user of drugs, the man who suffers, that drugs are getting costlier and costlier than before. An instance was cited. Drugs are becoming versatile. Take, for instance, anaemia. They mix 3 or 4 drugs and make it a multi-pronged attack. One of the drugs will act on the particular type of the disease. That makes it costlier than a simple single drug for a particular ailment would be. I have read something to this effect that for the common man in the advanced countries, it is getting more and more difficult to get the drugs within his means.

Certainly, if we want to make the drugs available to the consumer at the most reasonable prices, perhaps the wisest way would be to nationalise the industry. We have experience of it in the penicillin factory. We have been able to reduce the price much earlier than we thought we would be able to do it. A few years ago, when we were dependent almost entirely on imported penicillin, the drug was costlier. Now the drug is so reasonably priced that it is used rather loosely. I wish sometimes that it is a little costlier than it is to prevent the abuse of this drug.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): Do not mention this.

Shri Karmarkar: It is there. Therefore, I am one with the opinion expressed on the floor of the House

that as much as possible, to the extent that is possible, this industry should more and more come into the public sector in order to serve the people. But, one cannot change history. Ultimately whether the country is in a position to nationalise all the industries it would like to nationalise is also another question. But, certainly, the Government will note the opinion expressed on the floor of the House for any action in the future. As it is, hon. Members of this House doubtless know that we are having shortly five units in the public sector, namely, synthetic drugs, antibiotics, glandular products, medicinal plants products, and surgical instruments and appliances, in the near future.

Another point was made. That is not exactly, if I may say so respectfully, relevant to the amendments that are being made. I am happy that there was consensus of opinion on the point that just as we are bringing these modern medicines under control, we should bring all other medicines also under our control: that is to say, Ayurvedic drugs, unani drugs and homoeopathic drugs, actually, all drugs that are being used in this country. I am one with all hon. Members who have expressed that opinion, in that particular opinion. In fact, I am happy to tell the House that this being a Concurrent Subject, we have to consult the State Governments, and that we have sent round letters to the State Governments asking for their opinion. So far as we are advised, we feel in the Government of India that all the drugs should come under similar control. Because, unless you bring the drugs under control, you cannot guarantee standardisation. It is no use quarrelling with the fact that drugs are spuriously manufactured and there is a large amount of spurious drugs when we have not taken adequate means to control them. I am hoping that it might be possible for me to bring forward before this House a Bill

in the near future asking for their sanction to control all other drugs also.

A certain fear was expressed, I think, by my hon. friend Shri D. C. Sharma who is, if I may say so with respect, not always, but sometimes prone to put the right thing in a little exaggerated manner. He referred to diarchic administration. As a matter of fact, it is a fact that the arrangement as now envisaged does make it possible for the Central Government and the States to have inspectorates, etc., at the same time. It is not as if we are at loggerheads with each other. There is no difference or opinion between the State Governments and us regarding the advisability of controlling drugs. The whole crux of the matter is that it was not that all States were equally vigilant in exercising the power that they did possess (and that was the reason why we had to come on the scene. We placed this matter before the Central Health Council and the Health Ministers of all the States are there. We took their concurrence for enacting this piece of legislation to enable ourselves to come on the scene. We shall see to it that there is no conflict whatever between any arrangement that the States are authorised to make and any arrangement that we might feel impelled to make. In case we find that the arrangement made by a particular State is completely satisfactory, we may not come on the scene at all, because it may not be necessary. In case the arrangements are not satisfactory, we will certainly come on the scene. But, it will be a wholly harmonious arrangement. I can assure the House that there will be at no stage any conflict between our inspectors and theirs and between our arrangement and theirs.

Some complaint was made, I think it was by my hon. friend Shri Achar, who was rather jealous about the powers of the magistrates before whom cases might come. For a

moment, perhaps, he allowed himself to forget that ultimately this House is a sovereign House. This House just gives the power that it likes to give to the magistracy or to the courts to the extent that it wants to give. If emphasis has to be placed on a particular point of view, this House is sovereign and therefore, it is competent to place it and say what this House actually means. What we have said is that the minimum punishment will be one year in certain types of cases. But, for reasons to be stated in writing, the magistrate can make it less. There may be palliative circumstances. There may be a technical offence. We do not want the magistrate to be in a position not to have any option to give any punishment less than one year. When Parliament says that the normal punishment for an offence will be one year, every magistrate, every judge knows what is the will of the sovereign Parliament. Then, it expects the magistrate or judge or whosoever is concerned with the administration of justice, and it gives them to understand that what is expected of them is a minimum punishment of one year, unless there are justifying circumstances, in which case, for reasons to be stated in writing, the magistrate will give less. Supposing we had left it at that, saying that the magistrate could give any punishment up to a maximum of three years, the intention of the House would not have been clear. What we wanted is that normally, for any offence under the particular section, if it requires this punishment, the minimum will be one year unless for exceptional reasons the magistrate or court has a feeling that the punishment should be less. The general rule is one year minimum. Exception will be less than one year. That discretion, we have left to the courts. This is the same provision as we have put in another Act. There is precedent for that. When we wanted to deal with corruption, we did the same thing.

Shri Achar (Mangalore): May I explain what I said?

Shri Karmarkar: The point of my hon. friend was very clear, unless he wants to confuse me further. What he has said is clear.

Shri Achar: You are meeting an argument which I did not put forward.

The general trend in criminal law is,—take the I.P.C. or any other law everywhere, the maximum punishment is prescribed. That is why I said that Parliament is showing a tendency not to trust the magistrates or their discretion.

Shri Karmarkar: My hon. friend entirely forgets that it is not a question of trust. It is a question of telling the magistrate what we expect him to do and what this Parliament expects him to do. We would have been rigid in saying that the minimum punishment will be one year, whatever the offence.

There may be technical offences. When this Bill is passed, normally the punishment will be one year, but in exceptional circumstances, the magistrate may award a lesser punishment, because we do not want to comment upon what the magistrates or the courts have done. If we do not give them guidance like that, we cannot complain if a magistrate feels that it is open to him to give any punishment he likes. It is not a question of our trusting the magistrates. We trust every magistrate and judge in this country. Actually, what we want is to give notice to every intending offender that if he commits this offence, he will go to jail for one year normally unless there are extenuating circumstances. I am quite sure my hon. friend does not want to be kind to offenders, and will agree with me that there should be a deterrent law on the statute-book to prevent people from even thinking of such offences. So, I am not exactly able to appreciate his argument.

13 hrs.

On the other hand, people wanted to provide for a larger amount of punishment. Ultimately we have to weigh and see how much punishment is enough for a particular offence. We have said that in the case of offences of one kind, the minimum of one year and maximum of three years will suffice. If that is not sufficient, if people are still so foolhardy and wicked as to break the law, we shall come before the House and ask for a larger minimum and a larger maximum, five years minimum and transportation maximum or things like that, but we hope the punishment provided is reasonable and does not err on the side of leniency or harshness.

A comment was made about having an Indian Pharmacopoeia. I can understand if hon. Members who have much else to do are not aware that a good Pharmacopoeia, as a result of years of labour, was published, not this year but about five years ago. We are not being guided by any other foreign Pharmacopoeia. We have not only our own Pharmacopoeia, but also a national formulary of medicines.

Dr. M. S. Aney (Nagpur): You have prescribed a minimum. Is the maximum also prescribed there?

Shri Karmarkar: Yes. I am happy it satisfies my elderly colleague for whose opinion I have the highest respect.

Sometimes things are said in a hurry without looking into their implications. Something was said about penicillin. People say somebody was injected with penicillin and he died. As Shri Harish Chandra Mathur just now said, a dose of that particular penicillin which was given to an esteemed colleague, whose death we all lament, was sent not only to our laboratories here, but also abroad, to an American laboratory, and the whole lot from which that dose came was found to be completely faultless.

The achievement of the Pimpri factory is something of which we can really be proud. Ultimately it is a national factory.

Shri Narayananukutty Menon (Mukundapuram): This is the third time he has been telling us that it has sent for chemical examination to different places. If there was nothing wrong with the penicillin, he should tell us what was the real cause of death after injection.

Shri Karmarkar: I reaffirm that nothing was at fault with that batch of penicillin from which an injection was given to the hon. Member. As to what happens when a man dies, there are certain things which are never known to any one. Supposing I am allergic, and a dose of penicillin is given to me. Things have happened in foreign countries tragically, and not hundreds but thousands of deaths have taken place. One is not exactly able to know the cause.

Shri Narayananukutty Menon: This is the Health Minister of India speaking. There is a definite instruction on the carton itself that the doctor should keep with him antidotes when administering penicillin, and there is a short period of time when the patient to whom penicillin has been injected should be kept under supervision. He says the finding has been arrived at that there was no defect in the penicillin, but were these mandatory precautions taken by the medical officer concerned? Has an enquiry been made into that?

Mr. Speaker: I am not going to allow all these matters here. The whole thing is irrelevant to this issue. We are on drugs. One can certainly make the suggestion that the quality of the drug should be as good as possible. Whether the particular doctor took care or not is not the subject-matter of this Bill.

Shri Karmarkar: I am deeply grateful to you, Sir, for these observations, because that is really not pertinent to this Bill.

My hon. friend Dr. Sushila Nayar made the point that there are a large number of preparations with more or less the same composition selling under various trade names, and she wanted an arrangement to be made so that such drugs would be sold under their proper names. As a matter of fact, the Act provides for giving the proper name in addition to the trade name. The point made by my hon. friend has a certain merit, and in order to improve the present state of affairs it would be necessary to impress both on the medical profession and the manufacturers of drugs not to popularise the names of drugs not given in the national formulary, so that there would be no confusion. If there is the same name, then things would be simpler.

There is no doubt about the fact that spurious drugs are still being manufactured; otherwise, we would not have come up with this Bill. I do not know if my hon. friend Shri D. C. Sharma meant exactly what he said, but he said that any one moving in any constituency for ten yards would find these things. We have not sufficient good drugs in the country, not to talk of spurious drugs. To say that there are spurious drugs is one thing, and to say that we are flooded by them is entirely another thing. People who have had occasion to deal with these matters know that the law as it has been passed before has had some deterrent effect. We want that deterrent effect to be more.

Shri Nanjappa would like to penalise, through this Bill, advertisement of mis-branded drugs. The fact of the matter is the advertisements of drugs are comprehensively covered by the provisions of the Drugs and Magical Remedies (Objectionable Advertisements) Act, and therefore it was not considered necessary to make any provision in this Bill for that purpose.

These were the important points that were raised in the debate. There

[Shri Karmarker]

was general agreement about the purposes underlying the Bill, namely to make the manufacture of spurious drugs and their distribution more difficult and to strengthen the penal provisions. There was also a fear expressed that there might be a conflict of jurisdictions. Apart from that, there was general support for strengthening our inspection machinery and for the Central Government taking powers in that regard.

It was not possible for me within the time at my disposal to deal with each point of each Member, but we shall certainly give the best consideration to all the points raised in the debate whenever occasion arises. I thank the Members who have taken part in the debate.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: In the course of my speech, I referred to the fact that in industrial places like Kanpur, in the name of drugs like tincture ginger actually liquor was being sold. I wanted to know whether an enquiry was possible, whether he would at least enquire from the State Government. This thing is a curse.

Shri Karmarker: I shall forward the remarks of my hon. friend to the State Government and I hope that they will look into the matter.

Mr. Speaker: That was what I heard also in my own town. It is prepared all over.

Shri Assar (Ratnagiri): It is done in Bombay State also.

Mr. Speaker: They prepare what is called tincture ginger and sell it; it is said that it has been sent from Bangalore. I cannot say whether it is from Bangalore or some other place. But many things are passing in the name of drugs.

Shri Karmarker: I thought Bangalore was a gentlemen's place. But still, such things can happen.

Mr. Speaker: I have nothing to say against Bangalore. My point is only this. My place is quite close to Bangalore. They say that it has come from Bangalore. It may have come or it may not have come from there

Shri Karmarker: That is possible.

Mr. Speaker: Possibly, they want to associate the name of Bangalore with it so that fashionable people may take it.

Shri Warior (Trichur): Essences also may be included in this category.

Mr. Speaker: Some people drink methylated spirit also nowadays. That is the misfortune.

Shri Karmarker: Exactly.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Drugs Act, 1940, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Speaker: We shall now take up the clauses. There are no amendments to clauses 2 and 3. So, I shall put them to vote.

The question is:

"That clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Mr. Speaker: There is an amendment to clause 4, standing in the name of Shri Raghunath Singh. The hon. Member is absent. Therefore, I shall put clauses 4 and 5 together to vote.

The question is:

"That clauses 4 and 5 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 4 and 5 were added to the Bill.

Clause 6.—(Amendment of section 23).

Mr. Speaker: There is an amendment to this clause, standing in the name of Shri Nanjappa. Does he want to move it?

Shri Nanjappa (Nilgiris): No, I am not moving it. I only want some explanation as to why drugs are not going to be seized by the inspector.

Shri Assar: That is my complaint also.

13.14 hrs.

[**SHRI JAGANATHA RAO** in the Chair]

Shri Karmarkar: I am sorry I missed that point, because I thought that it was not a very major point. But I find that my hon. friend Shri Nanjappa and also my hon. friend Shri Assar have raised the point today, and they would like that the inspector should be vested with powers to seize the drugs also. They will see that this power is already vested in the inspectors under the provisions of clause (c) of sub-section (1) of section 2 of the existing Act. Therefore, we did not want to duplicate it by putting it here.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

“That clause 6 stand part of the Bill”.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 6 was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 was added to the Bill.

Mr. Chairman: Now, we come to clause 8. There is an amendment in the name of Shri Raghunath Singh. The hon. Member is absent.

The question is:

“That clause 8 stand part of the Bill”.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 8 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 9 to 11 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the long Title were added to the Bill.

Shri Karmarkar: I beg to move:

“That the Bill be passed”.

Mr. Chairman: The question is:

“That the Bill be passed”.

The motion was adopted.

13.15 hrs.

**CUSTOMS DUTIES AND CESSES
(CONVERSION TO METRIC UNITS)
BILL**

**The Deputy Minister of Commerce
(Shri Satish Chandra):** I beg to move:

“That the Bill further to amend certain laws relating to customs duties and cesses for the purpose of adopting metric units in those laws, be taken into consideration.”

The Bill that is before the House now for consideration is very similar to the one which was passed only last week in relation to the excise duties etc. The purpose of the Bill is very limited. It seeks that the relevant sections of the various Acts such as the Indian Tariff Act, the Indian Lac Cess Act, the Coffee Act, the Coir Industry Act, the Indian Oilseeds Committee Act, the Indian Cotton Cess Act, the Indian Coconut Committee Act and the Tea Act, be amended so as to enable the adoption of the metric system in the levée of the customs duties and cesses which are imposed under those Acts.

The rates will all remain unaltered, but there would be a certain rounding off which is necessitated by the fact that the exact conversion may