

to that office, contained the conditions for execution of surety bonds and training;

(b) if so, whether the above conditions were brought to the notice of the surplus staff before they were nominated to that office and their consent obtained; and

(c) if not, why the surplus staff nominated to the above office is being asked to fulfil the above conditions now ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) For the proper discharge of their duties in the office of the Director General of Observatories, all members of staff (gazetted and non-gazetted) excluding mechanical and Class IV staff, are required to receive training in general Meteorology appropriate to the grade of entry. Since the training is given at Government cost, the persons concerned are required to execute a surety bond to the effect that if they resign from service within a period of two years after return from training, the amount spent on their training would be refunded to Government. This equally applies to surplus persons redeployed in that office. All the surplus personnel recently nominated to the office of the Director General of Observatories, Lodi Road, New Delhi, have since joined that office.

UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

1360. **SHRI M. K. MOHTA :** Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state :

whether the Atomic Energy Commission is studying the technology for conducting underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes and if so, whether any progress has been in this regard ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : The Atomic Energy Commission is constantly reviewing the progress in the technology of underground nuclear explosions both from theoretical and experimental angles. The economic value of such underground explosions is being studied with respect to available information in various parts of the country. Its possible effects on the environmental

and ecological conditions are also being studied.

ISSUE OF LICENCES FOR MANUFACTURE OF T. V.

1361. **SHRI M. K. MOHTA :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of new licences issued during 1971-72 for the manufacture of television sets and the number of applications pending with Government and the reasons for their pendency; and

(b) when the newly licensed manufacturers are likely to go into production and whether after these Units go into production there is any likelihood of the prices of the television sets to come down and if so, to what extent ?

THE MINISTER OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI K. C. PANT) : (a) Three new Industrial Licences have been issued during 1971-72. Eight applications are under consideration; these have been received during 1972. A large number of cases for production of TV sets in the small scale sector have been cleared and it is being examined whether further capacity for the manufacture of TV sets be created in the organised sector.

(b) Of the three new licences one has already gone into production and the other two are likely to go into production by the middle of next year. Approvals have been given to a large number of parties and with the increased production of TV sets, it is hoped that the supply will be adequate in relation to the demand and there will be sufficient commercial competition which will bring down the prices. It is, however, difficult to anticipate the extent to which the prices will come down, as that would depend on many factors including the market conditions. There is no price control on this item by Government.

Other important steps being contemplated in order to bring down the prices of TV sets are given below :—

(i) Gradual reduction in the prices of electronic components by setting up large volume production; components account for a substantial portion of the cost of television sets; in particular,