CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The cashew industry in India is completely a labour intensive industry. Almost the entire cashew kernels produced in India is exported. The industry is of considerable importance to the economy as a source of foreign exchange, employment and income to the farmers. This industry which was in a comfortable position during the seventies had to pass through various exigencies during this decade, the main crisis being acute shortage of raw nuts, both from traditional sources as well as from the indigenous production of the country. The processing units which used to work continuously round the year are working for two to three months. For the rest of the period the workers have to do casual work to earn their livelihood.

The exploited workers in Kerala moved for the essentials of a tolerable life and to wrest many a concession from the cashew industrialists. The Kerala worker went ahead much to the discomfort of the industrialists of Kerala. In most of the states excepting Kerala, even the Minimum Wages
Act has not been implemented with the result that the workers are poorly paid. The wage differentials in such places and the absence of organised working class movement and the orientation towards maximum profits prompted the processors to migrate the industry to Tamil Nadu and other neighbouring States. To make matters worse, the industrialists are now going for low profit area reduction by the elimination of production, factories, etc., where the profits fall below a pre-determined level. Money from the sale of such operations may be reinvested in more profitable areas. The human problems resulting from the migration of the industry from Kerala, its traditional home is tremendous. The social and economic, not to say the political implications of over one lakh workers being thrown out of employment can well be assessed. The repercussions of the collapse of the industry are felt far and wide. Not knowing where the next morsel of food will come from, the hapless workers are literally on the street, ready to take up any work that comes their way. The workers cannot survive on the occasional doles and sympathy from the Government.
The imperative need of the time is the production of more cashew nuts within the country, which will not only provide income to the farmers who cultivate but also generate employment to the labourers who are employed in the processing units and gain valuable foreign exchange for the country. To achieve these objectives, the Government introduced various schemes including the World Bank aided project. It has also introduced a scheme of subsidy to encourage commercial cultivation of cashew. In Kerala Cashew is not under the Land Ceiling Act, whereas rubber, goir and cardamom are exempted from the purview of land ceiling. Due to this reason large scale area expansion is unlikely in the private sector. One of the quick ways of bringing the available private lands under cashew cultivation is either to exempt the crop from land ceiling (at least for a period of 25 years) ensuring that such areas will continue to be outside land ceiling.

In the years to come, the imported cashew from traditional as well as non traditional sources will be negligible. The traditional sources have
already developed their own processing units and non-traditional sources are also likely to go in for the establishment of processing units in the near future. In view of the above, the banks in our country have to finance the development of cashew plantations and export of cashew.

The techniques of processing should be modernised and streamlined. Labourers should understand the problems and cooperate with the processors, standardisation of wages should be implemented. All expenses should be controlled and cost of production has to be minimised so that the price of Indian kernels may be brought on par with the price of kernels from other countries. Diversification of markets and improvements in the packaging material and methods, more profitable uses of the bye products, especially ChSL, Juice and Liquor, should be organised.

There is at present no single organisation which can give complete and comprehensive information about cashew as such. The multitude of organisations often work without coordination and at cross purposes,
The Cashew Export Promotion Council is concerned entirely with Export Promotion, the Directorate of Cashew Development is concerned only with plan programmes of development of cashew cultivation, the Export Inspection Agency looks after the Quality Control of this commodity and the Cashew Corporation of India Limited was the canalising agency for the import of raw nuts.

Cashew being a very valuable export earner, it is most essential that a coordinated and balanced view of this commodity be taken, because only then the relative importance of the different aspects of development and promotion can be seen in the proper perspective. The proposed Cashew Board with its own departments to look after the different sides of the industry or development can bring in better health to the Indian Cashew Industry and Exports. By the late eighties, the cashew industry may have a period of spring from the present decade of autumn.

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