

[Shri Annasaheb Shinde.]

Australia have once again come forward and made a gift of 1,50,000 tonnes of wheat during the current financial year for shipment as soon as it can be arranged. I would like to convey, on behalf of the Government of India, our thanks to the Australian Government for their generous and timely assistance in helping us to tide over the present difficulties created by drought and other factors beyond our control.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Do I understand, in view of the commitment which has been received by the Government, that immediately foodgrains will be rushed to Kerala and West Bengal who are in dire need of supplies? I say this thing because the Government has not fulfilled its quota of wheat even for the months of June and July. As far as West Bengal is concerned . . .

SHRI G. MURAHARI (Uttar Pradesh): What about Bihar?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: . . . the situation is serious. Bihar is also bad. Therefore, I say that in view of the fact that you are now getting a little, the existing stock from Punjab and from other Central sources should be immediately sent to Kerala, West Bengal and also Bihar.

AN. HON. MEMBER: And also to Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR THE APPROPRIATION (NO. 2) BILL, 1967

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that under Rule 186(2) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I have allotted three days for the completion of all stages involved in the consideration and return of the Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 1967 by

the Rajya Sabha, including the consideration and passing of amendments, if any, to the Bill.

ENQUIRY RE CALLING ATTENTION NOTICE ABOUT STRIKE BY LIC EMPLOYEES

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, what about the other Calling Attention Notice that we have given about the LIC?

SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal): The LIC employees have begun a strike today, an all-India strike. The Calling Attention Notice was there. You do something about it. Let us get an assurance that it will be raised tomorrow at least.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Mr. Chairman, the LIC people have been agitating all over the country for months and months against automation. It is a serious national problem and almost all the parties are supporting the cause of the LIC people. The Government is turning a deaf ear to the repeated representations made by the LIC people. So they have been forced today to launch such an action and maybe they will have to think of other actions also. I should like to know from the Government what steps they are taking in the light of the strong resentment in the country, not only amongst the LIC employees, but also among other employees and the public against the automation which the Government want to push through. Now, Sir, I will request you that this Calling Attention motion be taken up tomorrow in view of the seriousness of the situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am giving attention to the matter.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): Mr. Chairman, this is very important. Already the employees of the LIC have struck work. So the situation is very serious. The Government should be asked to make a statement in the afternoon