

that it is not desirable or practical to switch over cotton areas to food crops in order to achieve self-sufficiency in foodgrains by 1970-71;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Study Group has also recommended the possibility of inter-shifting areas under cotton and food crops to boost production;

(c) if so, what are the reactions of Government to these recommendations;

(d) whether the State Governments have been apprised of these recommendations, if so, what are their reactions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE): (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) Yes. The Study Group concluded that the diversion of areas from cotton to foodgrains is neither essential nor feasible for the fulfilment of the target of production of foodgrains set under the Fourth Five Year Plan.

(b) No. The Study Group, in fact, was of the view that production of both foodgrains and cotton can and should be stepped up through adoption of intensive cultivation measures.

(c) and (d). The present policy of the Government is already in line with the recommendations of the Study Group. The Report has been released. Copies of the Report have not been sent to the States.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

*159. SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to step up the availability of

credit for the agricultural sector; and

(b) whether Government have received any proposal for the establishment of an Agricultural Development Corporation with the assistance of U.S. A.I.D. and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) (a) and (b). A statement is placed on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) A number of steps have been taken by Government to provide adequate and timely credit for the agricultural sector, chiefly the following:

(i) A programme of revitalisation of co-operative societies, by amalgamating weaker primaries into viable units, has been taken up;

(ii) The crop loan system has been introduced with a view to making the loan operation production-oriented instead of asset-oriented and meeting the full requirements of the cultivator for essential inputs;

(iii) For high yielding varieties programmes, the Reserve Bank of India has agreed to meet the credit requirements by sanction of adequate credit limits to the Central Co-operative Banks;

(iv) For cultivators who are not members of co-operative societies, most State Governments continue to provide a special line of credit in the form of taccavi, which is supplemented by Central ways-and-means advances for marketing and distribution of fertilisers, seeds, and pesticides;

(v) For procurement and marketing of fertilisers, the RBI has agreed

to sanction credit limits to the State Co-operative Marketing Units. This is being supplemented by the Central Government in the form of short-term advances. The State Bank of India has also undertaken to sanction credit limits to the co-operative agencies for procurement and marketing of inputs other than fertilisers;

(vi) For long-term credit, apart from strengthening of the loaning programme of land mortgage banks, the resources of the Agricultural Refinance Corporation have been augmented;

(vii) For sale and hire-purchase of agricultural machinery, Agro-Industries Corporations have been set up in several States;

(viii) The Food Corporation of India has taken up a pilot scheme for grant of loans to agriculturists under the high yielding varieties programme of paddy in selected areas of Andhra Pradesh and Madras. A link-up of marketing of produce with the recovery of loans has been achieved; and

(ix) Suitable measures are under consideration for induction of commercial banks into the field of agricultural finance.

(b) Outlines of a proposal for establishment of Agricultural Development Corporations in selected districts have been received from the Ford Foundation and the matter is under consideration. The U.S. A.I.D. has made no commitment in regard to size and nature of assistance that might be needed for setting up of such Corporations, the details of which have yet to be worked out.

GANGA BRAHMAPUTRA WATER TRANSPORT BOARD EMPLOYEES' UNION

*162. **SHRI P. K. KUMARAN:** Will the Minister of TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ganga Brahmaputra Water Transport Board Em-

ployees' Union has submitted any memorandum of grievances to Government recently;

(b) if so, what are the main points therein; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING (PROF. V. K. R. V. RAO): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

A memorandum was submitted on the 20th June, 1967 on behalf of the Ganga Brahmaputra Water Transport Board Employees' Union urging the planned development of river transport services and the provision of some form of job security for those former employees of the Ganga Brahmaputra Water Transport Board who had been absorbed in the Inland Water Transport Directorate and the field organisations under its administrative control.

The feasibility of operating river services on a commercial basis on the Ganga has been examined and the study reveals that there is not sufficient traffic available immediately to operate such services on an economic basis. In view of the development of alternative means of transportation in this area, particularly by road and railway, the possibility of traffic by river developing to any appreciable extent in the future would require detailed study. The completion of the Farakka Barrage will also have some bearing on this matter and it is necessary to have the problem examined on a long term and integrated basis. This will take some time.

The question of conferring quasi-permanent status on personnel whose services are required on a long term basis and who are otherwise suitable is under consideration.