

strikes. In the steel plants, if I remember correctly, people drawing a particular salary are not allowed to be in the Union. The Government is considering so many aspects of the question. I do not think it is possible to create a permanent agency to resolve these disputes.

SHRI KRJUN ARORA : May I know, Sir, if this conversion of lay-off period as leave was done with the consent of the employees and their unions or was it done by the management unilaterally ?

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY: The management is in touch with the Unions. Whatever is permitted by the rules is being done. They are always in touch with the Unions.

SHRI ABID ALI: Of course, these particular employees had no business to resort to a strike or anything of that kind. May I know, Sir, if the Government have considered the necessity of evolving a system by which the reasonable demands of the workers are given speedy consideration so that this idea that the Government do not act unless they resort to strike, that their legitimate demands also are not given due consideration and disposal unless they take to demonstration or strike and such methods, is dispelled ?

SHRI C. M. POONACHA : The hon'ble Member would be no doubt knowing that as far as the employees of the Air-India and also the I.A.C. are concerned, we have agreements with them for a period of time. After that they came forward with a charter of demands. Later the Government decided to refer these demands to arbitration. Justice Khosla was appointed for this purpose. Under the Industrial Disputes Act, Justice Khosla went through the whole set of demands and the award was given, the National Industrial Tribunal Award. The present agitation was against the award, not against the management. This point will have to be clearly understood. This was an agitation against the award. As such this strike was itself bad. The pressure that was brought to agitate against the award could not be accepted. The Navigators saw that they were not within their rights, they were not properly advised in resorting to this kind of agitation, and they went back to work.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA : Sir, we know the Navigators are a very highly paid staff of the Air-India. I do not know whether they come under the definition of "workers".

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY : They do now unfortunately.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA : The questions that are put in this context need not be confused. I would like to know from the Minister whether any investigation or examination has been made or whether possibilities are being explored to have electronic mechanical navigators so that we can do away with the Navigators altogether.

SHRI N. SANJIVA REDDY : Sir, the proposal is there before the Corporation to instal electronic navigators. It will take some six months to instal them. Therefore, we will have to get along with the Navigators as we do now. We will take steps to see if we can provide the foreign exchange necessary for equipping the planes with these electronic navigators.

POST OF BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

◆104. DR. SHRIMATI PHULRENU GUHA: Will the Minister of FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any proposal under their consideration to convert the post of the Block Development Officer into any other post; and

(b) If so, what is the proposal and what functions will be allotted to that new post ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHEB SHINDE) : (a) and (b) The Central Government have no proposal to convert the post of Block Development Officers into another post. The arrangements in

Madhya Pradesh, following the State Government's decision to abolish the post of Block Development Officers, are under examination.

DR. SHRIMATI PHULRENU GUHA : May I know when the Government is thinking of having any conclusion, because we often find that consideration takes more than one, two or three years ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : As is well known, administrative patterns are established by gradual process of evolution and I do not think we can have any finality as such. But as far as the Government of India are concerned, we are seized of the matter. We have already exchanged views with the Madhya Pradesh Government. Our Secretary of Agriculture has discussed the matter with the Chief Secretary, Madhya Pradesh.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : How many years will it take ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : This matter came up only during the last two or three months and we have sent a team to discuss the issue.

PROF. SATYAVRATA SIDDHANTA-LANKAR : The Madhya Pradesh Government was very wise in abolishing this institution of Block Development Officers. These Block Development Officers have proved to be Development Block Officers. Instead of accelerating production, they have been so busy with their executive functions that all the development has stopped. Therefore will the Government consider abolishing this institution of Block Development Officers altogether and send these people to some other avenues of life ?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : The whole matter is under consideration with regard to the set-up community development. I do agree there are deficiencies and there are complaints also with regard to the functioning of the community development but when we make a change, it should be for the better. Therefore I would like to devote some attention to this aspect to bring about a better change.

SHRI B. K. P. SINHA : May I know if Government have realised that the

main cause of failure of the block development scheme has been that these Block Development Officers, instead of confining themselves to the development aspect of the work, are busying themselves with the executive functions and the result is that most of their time is taken by the executive functions and they have no time to devote to development functions. Will that aspect be kept in mind in any scheme of reorganisation of the whole system ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: Obviously the very post of the Block Development Officer was intended to see that he attends mainly to development functions and that was the purpose in separating revenue functions from development functions. Under the Block Development Officer there is a team of Extension Officers, extension of agriculture, of minor irrigation, of animal husbandry etc. and he is supposed to coordinate all these activities. And in many of the States, I may submit for the information of the hon. Member, this system is functioning well. In some of the areas because of certain inherent difficulties, perhaps local situations, we are coming across some difficulties.

DR. M. M. S. SIDDHU : About two years back under the new agricultural policy enunciated at that time the Block Development Officers were to solely confine themselves to agricultural production. May I know how far the Government's good intentions have been carried out ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : I may submit that for instance this year we had the rabi campaign, the second crop campaign. I may cite for the information of the hon. Member that in Gujarat and Maharashtra really the Block Development teams and Panchayati Samitis have acted as very effective instruments for raising agricultural production and there was a certain definite impact.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : May we know from the hon. Minister whether the Madhya Pradesh Government intends to remove these Block Development Officer* and to retain decentralisation of power or also the Madhya Pradesh Government intends to do away with decentralisation of power ?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : No. Sir. That is not the idea of the Madhya Pradesh Government. In fact, in Madhya Pradesh a higher tier of panchayati raj has still to come into existence. They have enacted a law but due to emergency and certain other reasons they could not hold the elections. Even now it appears that the Madhya Pradesh Government's understanding is that some officer at the Block level is necessary to pursue the development activity. Therefore it would be incorrect to suggest like that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Next question.

FOOD SITUATION

*105. SHRI ABDUL GHANI : Will the Minister of FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION be pleased to state :

(a) the estimate of production of food crops during the present Rabi season; and

(b) the decision taken on the food zonal system ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON) : (a) The production of major rabi food crops is tentatively estimated to be of the order of 18-8 million tonnes.

(b) Recently, the States of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Union territories of Himachal Pradesh and Delhi excluding the rationed area have been constituted into a single wheat zone, A gram zone has also been formed with the States of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and the Union territories of Himachal Pradesh and Delhi. The whole question is however under examination by the Foodgrains Policy Committee. A final decision will be taken on receipt of its report.

شہری عبدالغنی : کیا وزیر صاحب فرمائیں گے کہ جو زون ابھی رکھے گئے ہیں اس سے یہ بلیک مارکیٹ جو

سرکار کی طرف سے اور ویوپیاریوں کی طرف سے ہوتی ہے اور پنجاب کا گندم اور چنا جو ۶۵ روپیہ کوٹل پر لیا جاتا ہے وہ گجرات اور مدراس میں ۱۳۰ روپیہ کوٹل کو بیچا جاتا ہے اس لئے میں جاننا چاہتا ہوں اس چیز کو ختم کرنے کے لئے سارے دیش کو ایک ہی زون مان کر اور ایک ہی پرائس رکھنے کے بارے میں سرکار کوشش کرے گی اور اس کے بارے میں ایسی سبسیڈی دیگی جس سے سارے دیش میں ایک ہی قیمت ہو اور سارا دیش قیمت کے لحاظ سے ایک ہی سمجھا جائے۔

† [श्री अब्दुल गनी : क्या वजीर साहब फरमायेंगे कि जो ज़ोन अभी रखे गये हैं उससे यह ब्लैक मार्केट जो सरकार की तरफ से और व्यापारियों की तरफ से होती है और पंजाब का गंदुम और चना जो 65 रुपये क्विंटल पर लिया जाता है वह गुजरात और मद्रास में 130 रुपये क्विंटल को बेचा जाता है इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूँ इस चीज को खत्म करने के लिए सारे देश को एक ही ज़ोन मान कर और एक ही प्राइस रखने के बारे में सरकार कोशिश करेगी और इस के बारे में ऐसी सबसिडी देगी जिससे सारे देश में एक ही कीमत हो और सारा देश कीमत के लिहाज़ से एक ही समझा जाए ।]

SHRI P. GOVINDA MENON : Sir, there have been various opinions expressed in Parliament regarding the desirability of having one zone throughout India and various opposite opinions have also been expressed in the country and in Parliament.

t [] Hindi transliteration