

effects of the pill in countries where they have been used extensively.

(c) and (d) The oral contraceptive pill is not so far an approved contraceptive for general use. The question of its price or manufacture in India, at present, therefore, does not arise. The pill is reported to cost Rs. 10 per month per patient.

L.I.C HOUSE-BUILDING LOANS

29. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of loans given by the Life Insurance Corporation for building houses during the last six months in different cities of the country;

(b) the number of applications received by the LIC for loans during the above period, and the number of applications which were sanctioned city-wise; and

(c) whether Government have asked the LIC for simplifying the procedure for applying for loans; if so, the reaction of the LIC?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI SACHINDRA CHAUDHURI): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as received.

(c) The application form has been simplified and different sections of the earlier form have been combined into one application form, eliminating duplication. The period for which information regarding the employment of the applicant is required has been reduced from 10 to 5 years and the details of the income are being asked for 3 years instead of 5. The Corporation has also taken measures for decentralisation of the powers for sanctioning loans.

12 Noon

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

FOOD CRISIS IN KERALA

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN (Andhra Pradesh): With your permission, Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Co-operation to the present food crisis in Kerala and the steps taken by Government to meet the same, particularly in the matter of ensuring adequate supplies of rice to that State.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM): Sir, till late in 1964, Kerala was part of the Southern Rice Zone consisting of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madras, Mysore and Kerala. In September, 1964, the prices of rice rose to very high levels in the zone and the availability of rice in the market also decreased. This was attributed to speculative purchases at high prices by the traders, particularly those from Kerala. The situation was reviewed in September 1964 by the Chief Ministers of the Southern States and the Governor of Kerala. The conclusion was reached that instead of allowing the traders to buy at high prices which led to hoarding and consumer distress, it would be preferable to arrange for supplies to the deficit States on a State to State basis. Each State was to be cordoned off into a separate zone and the surplus available from Andhra Pradesh and Madras moved to the deficit States on Government account. It was decided that the entire State of Kerala should be brought under informal rationing and the food requirements of Kerala, estimated at 900,000 tonnes of rice and 400,000 tonnes of wheat should be met from imported supplies and from the surpluses of rice to be acquired from the States of Madras and Andhra Pradesh.

The quantum of ration in Kerala was fixed at 320 grams per adult per