

[Shri Bhupesh Gupta.]

country, we are prepared to sit till midnight—that is not the point—and get them passed. Government has been sitting over this matter. Did they not know that these Bills would expire midnight today and midnight tomorrow? They certainly knew it. Why did they not do it earlier? Now, what will happen? They will try to hustle us and perhaps they will be justified in asking us to sit longer. I am not disputing that, having been committed to it. Now I ask that the Government should think over it, over such matters, beforehand, what expires when and bring them well in time so that we are not hurried through, especially in a matter like this. Both are important, the Proclamation as well as the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill. Therefore I say that I am agreeable to it. But I do not know what Shri Subramaniam is going to say. But anyhow, as far as the Proclamation is concerned, we will have our say there. But I would also appeal to the Leader of the House that in such matters, eleventh hour surprises should not be sprung upon us.

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA : May I first express my regret to the House. I see the force of the point raised by my friend, Shri Bhupesh Gupta. We could have tried to bring these earlier but due to various difficulties in the other House and here, we could not do so. I assure the House that in future we will see that the work . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : It is not your function.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have said it.

SHRI M. C. CHAGLA : We will try and see that the Members of the Opposition who want to take part get full freedom and we will try and restrict speeches from our side so that nobody should say that they have not had their full say. My appeal to the House is that they must sit today. I take it that there will be no lunch interval today. But, if necessary, we sit beyond five and finish both the items.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have the feeling that the House will agree to that. But I must say that there is a general feeling from all parts of the House that the budgeting of the time is not being properly done and that this House has sometimes

the feeling that it is being hustled. That should be avoided, that should be definitely avoided, and there should be some forethought applied to this problem and we should have ample time. That is the feeling that has been voiced several times in the Business Advisory Committee and I have heard it here also, and I think it would be conveyed to the Government and they will take care about it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA : We have a Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. We never see him nowadays. It is not Shri Chagla's job. The Leader of the House's job is not that. He is the Minister of Education. We sanction budget for that purpose, we earmark money for the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, and he is not to be seen.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please sit down. I think I have the agreement of the House that we give three hours to each of the Bills—three hours for one and three hours for the other.

#### REFERENCE TO ARRESTS IN GUJARAT

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal) : Sir, this is not in this connection. You were good enough to say that the Government of India should enquire into the arrests in Gujarat and you asked the Government to make a statement. I waited patiently. Government neither made any enquiry to our knowledge nor have they said anything. We never raised it for 15 days or more. On the 9th August I raised it. You said the Government of India should enquire about the arrest of Mr. Indulal Yagnik and others in Ahmedabad. Now up to today the Government have not told us whether they have held an enquiry or not. Our information is that they have done nothing of the kind. But certainly the Government should have told you, having got protection from you, what they have done in the matter. They ignored even you. Now you can understand our position.

#### THE ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1966—Contd.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI C.

SUBRAMANIAM) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill further to amend the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

This Bill is intended to replace the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 1966, which was promulgated by the President on the 12th July, 1966. I do not propose to make any elaborate speech at this stage and I would reserve my reply to the end of the discussion. I would, however, like to say that this Bill is rather limited in its scope and concerns only two or three sections of the parent Act, namely, the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Under this Act Government already have the powers to procure essential commodities including foodgrains, etc. This Bill seeks to lay down the principles on which the procurement prices to be paid for foodgrains, edible oilseeds and edible oils would be fixed. These principles were already embodied in the Defence of India Rules from December, 1962. With the decision to restrict the use of Defence of India Rules for purposes connected only with the defence of India and civil defence etc., and border areas, it has become necessary to incorporate these principles in the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Secondly, the Bill seeks to provide more stringent penalties for those anti-social elements like hoarders and smugglers who violate various control orders.

As the House is aware, the serious situation resulting from unprecedented drought last year was kept under control without undue distress developing over large parts of the country by organising *inter alia* an extensive system of public distribution at fair prices. At the end of June 1966 nearly 11 crores of people all over the country were receiving their food supplies at fair prices either under statutory or informal rationing. This has helped to ensure not only equitable distribution but maintenance of prices at reasonable levels. It is, however, clear that for sustaining such a system of distribution, which would involve during the current year supplies of nearly 12 million tonnes of foodgrains from Central stocks, it is essential for the Government to acquire from indigenous

production as large a part of the marketable surplus as possible and supplement it only to the extent necessary by imports from abroad. Only by a policy of self-reliance we will be able to reduce our dependence on foreign imports. During the current crop year nearly 3 million tonnes of rice have already been procured on Central and State Governments account all over the country. This has been made possible by a policy of intensive procurement by levy on millers and dealers and by its extension to the source of all production, namely, the cultivator. The procurement levy has to be collected from the cultivator at the time the crop is harvested by him. Once the crop leaves the cultivator, the chances of leakage from levy become greater. It is only by procuring from the cultivator immediately after the harvest that maximum results can be achieved and the stocks thus acquired by Government utilised to maintain the system of public distribution.

The cultivator is the king-pin of any scheme for increasing agricultural production and as I have declared elsewhere unless he is given remunerative and incentive price, we cannot succeed in increasing agricultural production in the country. The question really is how the price which Government has to pay to a producer or to any other person for the foodgrains, etc., which may be requisitioned from him, should be determined. A person should not be able to get an unfair advantage just because he is able to hold on to his stocks. Under the existing law, Government have to pay the price prevailing on the date of the acquisition unless it first issues a notification controlling the prices. The Agricultural Prices Commission, in its report submitted last year, do not favour the idea of having legally fixed maximum prices continuously in force. This Bill accordingly provides that the procurement prices would be fixed after taking into account the maximum controlled price, if any, and the prices prevailing or likely to prevail in the immediate post-harvest period. In the Defence of India Rules there was no definition on the post-harvest period. This period has now been defined in the Bill as a period of four months. Considering the interest of both the producers and the consumers, I am sure the House will agree with me that this period is quite reason-

[Shri C. Subramaniam.]

able. The same price would apply to millers and dealers etc., from whom also Government will procure stocks. While this would go to ensure on the one hand that the producer gets a fair price, on the other also it would mean that nobody gets undue advantage on account of his holding on to the stocks.

Under section 3 of the parent Act Government has powers to issue various types of control orders. We are now providing that if a breach of any of these orders is committed then foodgrains, edible oilseeds or edible oils involved in the violation can be confiscated under the orders of the Collector. Here we are really concerned with the anti-social elements—the smugglers, the hoarders and the profiteers. There should, therefore, be no apprehension that these powers would be used against *bona fide* producers. The relevant clause has been clarified by a proviso that the growers will not be subject to this penalty, if the foodgrains etc., have been produced by themselves. In ordering confiscation, however, the Collectors will have to follow the principles of natural justice and give to the person concerned due notice as also give them an opportunity of being heard. A provision has also been made for appeal to the judicial authorities. These provisions would help in quicker and more effective curbs on hoarders and other anti-social elements.

The powers which the courts have under the parent Act are also proposed to be enlarged. In the existing Act the Courts can order forfeiture of any property in respect of which any control order is contravened. By the present amendment the courts, where they think fit, will be able to order forfeiture of packages, coverings or receptacles in which foodgrains involving contravention of an order are found and the animals, vehicles or other conveyances which are used in carrying such foodgrains.

Sir, I commend the provisions of this Bill for the consideration of the House.

*The question was proposed.*

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat): Sir, I have listened patiently to the speech of the hon'ble Minister who moved this Bill. While one may be in

agreement with his objective and sympathise with him in the difficult task that he has to face as the Minister of Food, the past experience that we have had of so many years of the use of powers by officials, particularly at the district level, is none too happy and, therefore, makes us reluctant to say 'yes' and sign on the dotted line as far as this Bill and the powers are concerned.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) in the CHAIR]

It is quite true, Sir, that there are people who want to make a little bit of money. That is a natural human tendency and they want to hoard. But if it goes beyond limitations, certainly they need to be controlled. Nobody would be against them.

On the other hand, there is the question of natural justice to the producer. The past experience of cotton control, particularly in Gujarat which State I come from, is such that it would not bear scrutiny. When the cotton crop is ready the ceiling price is enhanced. That is where the Government has gone wrong. Therefore, the producer is not encouraged. The cotton control was used for the benefit of the millowners which is a very wrong way of doing it. The millowners get control of everything. They get export promotion benefits, and it is the poor cultivator from the village who goes to the wall every time. I do not know whether it is going to happen in this case also. Hence my reluctance to support this measure wholeheartedly.

It is always so with controls. That is why Gandhiji was always opposed to controls. We have his writings before us. Unfortunately, in the last few years the Congress Party has been going away from the ways of Gandhiji; they are going the wrong way. And, therefore, instead of increasing the private initiative, the small cultivator, the small peasant and the small trader have been more or less eliminated. This is due to difficult laws, corrupt officials and, of course, there is a powerful class against whom their voice is often not heard. That 12 NOON is the danger before us and when too wide powers, too sweeping powers, are ultimately to be used by too

small people, abuses must come in. We are not able to find honest, clean people in high places. Charges of corruption and abuse of power come in against them. How can we blame the district officers and small officers in these difficult times of very high prices if they become corrupt and then much more so when officers are shielded, when the high-ups are shielded for their corruption: it gives a sort of licence to these people. It gives them freedom. Then of course we get notes from Nandaji saying that he has taken action against this officer and this man has been suspended. What is the use of taking action against a small fry here and there? Why not ask the transport operators and they will tell you how many times or how much money a lorry driver has to give every time he passes from one State to another. Take a lorry from Punjab to Bombay and see at how many places the lorry owner has to fork out money, whether his cargo is legal or not. That is the real crux of the problem and that is why we are getting these high prices and the difficulties. The Food Minister soon after he took charge, at a conference of the leaders of parties, admitted that the zonal restrictions were the root cause of all this trouble, but he has not been able to rise above all this to scrap the zonal restrictions.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU (Uttar Pradesh) : How can he ?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : Then he will not be able to get out of this mess so long as the zonal restrictions remain.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU : May I explain ? Our Constitution is of a federal character. He has to carry the States with him. The Food Minister is not a super man. He cannot impose his will upon the States. It is no use blaming the Centre for it.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : The hon. Dr. Sapru is an eminent lawyer and I do not want to contradict the proposition he has made but I am putting forward the proposition from a commonsense point of view, from the ordinary consumer point of view and from the experience of so many years. We have been with controls practically from the date we got Independence, for the last 18 years and every time you touch anything with control, the prices shoot up. Is there anything you

have controlled and the prices have gone down ? Anything that you touch, anything that this Government touches goes up in price.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU : Ordinary economics will tell you that where there is shortage there must be control.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL : Therefore ordinary economics will tell you that the way to bring down the prices is to increase production and to increase production we must learn from people who have done it if we do not know it. That is what I am trying to tell these friends but they will not listen. Why do you not persuade your friends ? May I ask Dr. Sapru to persuade his friends to do so. I have been pointing out this to them and when they do so, when they try to learn also, they do it with such ill-grace. May I point out that at the recent ECAFE meeting a Minister from the Government of Taiwan came and offered their rice seed. With what ill-grace it was taken ? When the shipment was ready they sent telegrams asking where to send and whom to send and nobody knew what to do about it. It is because of this that we have not tackled the problem of property. I agree that the normal law of economics is to increase the production to bring down the prices. What is the Government doing for the past 18 years ? For 18 years we have been in this mess and we have been told that our food supply is short by 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. and for 18 years we could not do what other countries have done. Is it not a shame for the Government that it has throughout been telling us every time this thing and every time they want more powers, sweeping powers when we know that they are not in a position to use them properly and judiciously ? If it is a kind of one matter or one strain of corruption, it is a different matter but corruption seems to be the order of the day everywhere. I told you the example of the lorry driver. I suggest to Dr. Sapru to ask his friends—he is too old and I will not put him to the trouble of taking a lorry right from here to Bombay but he can ask his operator friends—and he will know that at every 'nakha' people have to pay otherwise something goes wrong, he is hauled up and he is called to the police station. Under these circumstances how can you

[Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel.]

get the prices down? We are passing through a difficult period. Under these circumstances, I would not like to hold up the measure that the Minister is trying to move. I say that he is doing this with the best of intentions, I do not contest it but I am very very diffident as to the step he has taken and whether it is a step in the right direction. Instead of using this energy, this money that is being spent on control, if half the energy and effort are used for increasing the production, we would be out of this mess. In this Bill what I miss, what I would like to see is the protection to the small cultivator, to the small trader. I see that a lot of power is taken and the power may be used against the hoarders, I have no objection. I am willing to concede it but is it not our experience that people who are in the eye, politically or otherwise of the village officials or the District Congress, are harassed by the use of all sorts of power? Therefore I am reluctant to give whole-hearted support to this measure.

**श्री सुरजीत सिंह ब्रटवाल (पंजाब) :**  
वाइस चेयरमैन साहब, मैं ईसेशियल कमोडिटीज बिल को सपोर्ट करने के लिये खड़ा हुआ हूँ। हमको इस वक़्त जब कि खासतौर पर फूड और आयल्स की शार्टेज है, उस वक़्त इस तरह का बिल लाना बहुत जरूरी था और इस वक़्त इसको लाना चाहिये था। इस बिल में बहुत सी चीज़ों के बारे में फ़ारमर्स को भी प्रोटेक्शन दिया गया है। उन्हें यह प्रॉमिस किया गया है कि उन्हें उनके प्रॉड्यूस की रीजनेबल प्राइस मिलेगी। इससे पहले यह बात कभी नहीं सोची गई थी कि इस देश में भी किसान बसते हैं। मगर इस बिल में कम से कम यह सोच लिया गया है कि जो मेन चीज़ है, जिस चीज़ के लिए हमें दुनिया के सामने भूख मांगनी पड़ती है, उसको जो प्रॉड्यूस करने वाले हैं उनकी भी कुछ कद्र हमें करनी है और इसीलिए मैं इस बिल को सपोर्ट करता हूँ। मगर मैं इस बिल को सपोर्ट करते हुए मिनिस्टर साहब से यह रिक्वेस्ट करना चाहता हूँ कि जिस वक़्त यह बिल तैयार किया गया था अगर उस वक़्त

इसके साथ ही साथ यह भी ख्याल कर लिया जाता कि किसान को प्रॉड्यूस करने के लिये किन-किन चीज़ों की जरूरत होगी और वे भी उन्हें फिक्सड और रीजनेबल प्राइसेज पर मिलेंगी? अगर इस तरह की बात इस बिल में इंकलुड कर ली जाती तो बहुत अच्छा होता। मगर इस बिल में इस तरह की बात नहीं की गई है और न ही मिनिस्टर साहब ने स्टेटमेंट के जरिये कोई इस तरह का डिक्लियरेशन किया। अगर वह इस तरह का कोई डिक्लियरेशन कर देते तो बहुत ही अच्छा होता।

हमें बहुत सी स्ट्रेजेज पर खुराक के लिए जगह व जगह बंदोबस्त करना पड़ता है और जब तक हम इस चीज़ को ज्यादा प्रॉड्यूस नहीं करते तब तक हमेशा ही हमें दूसरे मुल्कों के सामने भूख मांगने के लिये भागना पड़ेगा और वे जिस शर्त पर हमें खुराक देंगे उस शर्त पर हमें लेना होगा। इसलिए यह बहुत जरूरी है कि जब किसान के लिए “जय किसान और जय जवान” का नारा लगाते हैं, तो हमें यह भी देखना चाहिये कि जो चीज़ हमारे देश के लिए इतनी ज्यादा जरूरी है, जो उसको प्रॉड्यूस करने वाला किसान है, उसको किन-किन तर्कों का सामना करना पड़ता है? इस बिल को लाने से पहले हमको उन्हें सात्व करने का कोई तरीका जरूर निकाल लेना चाहिये था कि उसके लिए जो जरूरी चीज़ें हैं वह उसको सही वक़्त पर मिल जायेंगी या नहीं? मुझे पंजाब में किसानों को जो तर्कों हैं उनके बारे में थोड़ा तजुर्बा है। यह भी मैं बड़े जोर से कह सकता हूँ कि पंजाब के किसान देश में किसी भी जगह के किसान से खुराक प्रोडक्शन में कम नहीं हैं। मगर उनकी जो जरूरतें हैं उनको हमने हमेशा इग्नोर किया है। इसलिये मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से यह रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि उनको सस्ते छोटे ट्रैक्टर मिलें, फर्टिलाइजर्स मिलें और अच्छे सीड उनको मौके पर दिये जायें। जिस

वक्त कि बिजाई का मौका हो उस वक्त उनको वह सीड मिले और वह एक फिक्स्ड प्राइस पर मिले। यह नहीं हो कि हम सीड का बन्दो-बस्त तो कर दें, लेकिन जब किसान सीड लेने के लिये जाय तो जिस का दो रुपया किलो मार्केट दाम हो, वह उसको चार रुपया किलो पर खरीदना पड़े। ऐसा सिस्टम नहीं होना चाहिये। जिस तरीके से इस बिल में हम फार्मर को कम्पेल करते हैं कि तुमने जो कुछ प्रोड्यूस किया है वह हम तुम से ले लेंगे और अगर तुम नहीं करोगे तो तुम को यह सजा दी जायेगी, उसी तरीके से इसी कानून के मुताबिक क्या उस किसान को यह हक नहीं है कि जो चीज उसको जरूरत है वह उसको भी मिलनी चाहिये और वह भी रिजनेबिल दाम पर मिलनी चाहिये और जिस वक्त उसको जरूरत हो उस वक्त मिलनी चाहिये। जब हम करोड़ों रुपये का फारेन एक्सचेंज इस खुराक को बाहर से लाने पर खर्च करते हैं तो क्यों नहीं हम उस खुराक को बढ़ाने के लिये किसान को यह जानकारी करा दें कि भाई, जो चीज तुम को खुराक प्रोड्यूस करने के लिये चाहिये वह ठीक दाम पर और जिस वक्त तुम को जरूरत होगी उस वक्त मिल जायेगी। मैं दावे से कहता हूँ कि अगर हम किसानों को जितनी प्राब्लम्स हैं उनको हल कर दें तो यह खुराक के लिये हमारे मिनिस्टर साहब को वह नहीं करना पड़े जो उनको अभी करना पड़ता है। कभी अमेरीका में, कभी इटली में, कभी कहीं भिकमर्गों की तरह हमारे देश के लिये खुराक इकट्ठी की जा रहें हैं, कभी किसी देश में बच्चों को दिखाया जाता है कि किस तरह से हिन्दुस्तान में लोग भूखे मर रहे हैं। मगर हम भूखे नहीं मर रहे हैं। आज तक मिनिस्टर साहब ने खुराक के लिये चाहे जो कुछ भी किया हो, चाहे बाहर से या कहीं से किसी तरह का बन्दोबस्त किया हो मगर उन्होंने किसी को भूखे नहीं मरने दिया। फिर भी मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से यह रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि वे ऐसे तरीके से काम क्यों नहीं करते हैं कि उनको

दुनिया के सामने तमाशा न बनना पड़े और वह सारी चीजें जो इसी देश में प्रोड्यूस हो सकती हैं वे क्यों न यही प्रोड्यूस की जायं।

कुछ दिन की बात है। यही दो महीने पहले हमने डिवैल्युएशन किया। उस वक्त जिस ट्रैक्टर के दाम बीस हजार रुपये थे, सडेनली दूसरे दिन जब किसान बाजार में उसको खरीदने जाता है तो उसके दाम 27 हजार रुपये हो जाते हैं। उसके दाम 27 हजार रुपये क्यों हो गये? उसके ऊपर आज तक क्यों कोई ऐक्शन नहीं लिया गया? उस ट्रेडर या बिजिनेसमैन के ऊपर हमने आज तक कोई ऐक्शन क्यों नहीं लिया? आज तक हम कोई ऐसा आर्डिनेंस क्यों नहीं ला सके कि जो चीज पहले की इम्पोर्ट की हुई है उनके दाम नहीं बढ़ेंगे और जो लोग उनके दाम बढ़ायेंगे उनको हम यह सजा देंगे, वह सजा देंगे, फार्मर को तो हम इसके लिये कम्पेल करते हैं कि तुम्हारा जो प्रोडक्शन है उसको हम ले लेंगे और अगर तुम यह नहीं करोगे तो तुम को यह सजा देंगे, वह सजा देंगे और उसको हम "जय किसान" कहना चाहते हैं मगर उसकी जो जरूरत है वह हम पूरी नहीं करते हैं। इसके साथ-साथ हम बिजिनेसमैन को कम्पेल नहीं करते हैं कि तुम अगर यह नहीं करोगे तो तुम को यह सजा दी जायगी। मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि डिवैल्युएशन के बाद ट्रैक्टर्स के सिलसिले में वे क्यों नहीं नोटिफिकेशन कर सके कि पहली प्राइसेज पर किसानों को ट्रैक्टर्स मिलेंगे और इसमें क्यों देर की गई। इस तरह से डाह्याभाई पटेल साहब जो यह कहते हैं कि करप्शन है उनको हम खाहम-खाह सबूत नहीं देते कि करप्शन है जब हम उस बिजिनेस सोसाइटी से कुछ नहीं कहते हैं जो यह कहती है कि हम जिस दाम पर बेचना चाहते हैं उसी दाम पर बेचने दिया जाये।

दूसरी चीज हम ने बिल में यह कही है कि किसानों को एक फिक्स्ड मिनिमम प्राइस

[श्री सुरजीत सिंह ब्रटवाल]

मिलेगी। मगर उस किसान की यह बद-किस्मती है कि उस प्राइस को फिक्स करने को फिक्स करने वाला कोई किसान नहीं होगा, उस प्राइस को फिक्स करने वाला कोई हाई आफिशियल होगा या कोई और होगा जिस को खुराक के प्रोडक्शन पर क्या खर्चा होता है इसका पता नहीं होगा, इसकी कोई नालेज नहीं होगी। तो मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि जब ये प्राइसेज फिक्स करनी है तो वे उन किसानों को जो ऐक्चुअली प्रोड्यूस करते हैं उनके नुमाइन्दों को उस कमेटी में लें ताकि किसान को यह फीलिंग हो जाय कि जब देश की खातिर मुझ छोटे को इतनी इज्जत दी जाती है तो मैं भी देश की खातिर खुराक पैदा करूँ। इसलिये सिर्फ आफिसर्स से, डिस्ट्रिक्ट कलेक्टर से या डिप्टी कमिश्नर से ही सलाह न ली जाय। मैं तो कहूंगा कि स्टेट्स में जो ऐग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर्स होते हैं उनको भी पता नहीं होता है कि किसान की दिक्कत क्या है, उसका खर्चा क्या होता है। वे ऐग्रीकल्चर मिनिस्टर होते हैं इसलिये वे मान लिये जाते हैं कि उनको हर किस्म की नालेज है। इसलिये मैं रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि किसान का जो खर्चा प्रोडक्शन में होता है उसकी अच्छी तरह से जांच करने के लिये वहां ऐक्चुअल जो प्रोड्यूस करते हैं उनके नुमाइन्दे होने चाहिये। इसके अलावा यह जो प्राइस फिक्स करने का कमीशन हमें बनाना है या जो कुछ करना है उसमें देर क्यों की जा रही है? आज आप टी को ले लीजिये, कोल को ले लीजिये या जो भी दूसरा प्रोडक्शन होता है जिस को किसान नहीं करता उसको ले लीजिये, उसके लिये बिश्री बाद में होती है मगर उसका दाम हम रीजनेबिल जो होता है, प्राफिट दे कर के पहले फिक्स कर देते हैं ताकि उसको किसी तरह से कोई घाटा न हो इसलिये मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से फिर एक दफा अदब के साथ अर्ज करूंगा कि वे किसानों की इन दिक्कतों को देखें। यह ऐक्ट, यह बिल यूसलेस होगा जब तक हम खुराक की प्रोड-

क्शन नहीं बढ़ायेगे और खुराक की प्रोडक्शन तब बढ़ सकती है जब हम किसान की हर दिक्कत को देखेंगे। इस मौके पर हमारे मित्र, अपोजीशन पार्टी वाले बर्डा जोर से कहते हैं कि करप्शन है, उनको हर चीज में करप्शन नजर आता है। हम उनको ऐसा कोई चांस ही क्यों दें? हम अच्छे तरीके से यह प्रूव कर दें कि जिस को जो चीज जरूरत होती है, वह उसको मिलती है और वहाँ करप्शन नहीं है, मगर अभी हमारे ऐक्शन ऐसा प्रूव नहीं करते हैं। इसलिये मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से फिर एक दफा अदब के साथ अर्ज करूंगा कि वे इन चीजों को देखें।

श्री बी० एन० मंडल (बिहार) : उप-सभाध्यक्ष जी, अभी जो इसेशियल कमोडिटीज (अमेडमेंट) बिल आया है, मैं समझता हूँ कि यह बिल इसलिये आया है कि कांग्रेस गवर्नमेंट ने 20 वर्ष तक अपनी नीति में जो गड़बड़ घुटाला किया है उसी का यह नतीजा है कि आज इस देश में इस तरह का बिल लाने की जरूरत पड़ी। यह सही बात है कि आज जो स्थिति है उस स्थिति में इस बिल को लाने की जरूरत है। लेकिन इस बिल को लाने की जो परिस्थिति है उस परिस्थिति के लिये अगर कोई जिम्मेदार है तो यह कांग्रेस की सरकार है और इस कांग्रेस सरकार की जो बीस वर्ष से नीति चली आ रही है वह इसके लिये जिम्मेदार है। मैं चाहता हूँ कि सरकार इस तरह का इन्तजाम अभी भी करे जिस इन्तजाम के जरिये इस देश का प्रोडक्शन बढ़े। जो प्लान बन रहा है उस प्लान में इसके लिये गुंजाइश की जा रही है। मगर इस तरह की गुंजाइश तो हर प्लान के समय की जाती है फिर भी उसका जो रिजल्ट निकलता है उस रिजल्ट को देखने से ऐसा मालूम पड़ता है कि दिन-ब-दिन इस देश में अन्न की कमी बढ़ती जा रही है। इसका सिर्फ यही कारण नहीं है कि इस देश में जनसंख्या बढ़ रही है बल्कि इसका कारण यह है कि अन्न पैदा करने में, उसको बढ़ाने में सरकार जो नीति अपनाती है वह अवास्त-

विक होती है और उस पर जो अमल होता है, वह भ्रष्टाचार दूषित कार्यवाही होती है इससे सफलता नहीं मिल पाती है और हर बार हम लो ो को अकाल का सामना करना पड़ता है।

पिछले साल भी इस तरह की परिस्थिति आई थी। तब डिफेंस आफ इंडिया एक्ट चल रहा था। डिफेंस आफ इंडिया एक्ट की 125 धारा के अन्दर जो कानून बना था हमारे बिहार में उस कानून को देखने से ऐसा मालूम पड़ता था कि जो बिहार राज्य की सरकार है वह इस बात को भूल गई है कि वह आज़ाद हिन्दुस्तान में कानून बना रही है न कि उस वक्त कानून बना रही है जब हिन्दुस्तान गुलाम था। इस बात का ख्याल शायद हमारी बिहार सरकार को नहीं रहा। जो कानून बना था उसमें व्यवस्था की गई थी, उसमें कहा गया था हर किसान के पास जितनी जमीन है, उस जमीन में चाहे बालू हो, चाहे घास हो, घर हो, इस सबका बिना फर्क किए हुए जितनी भी जमीन है  $1\frac{1}{2}$  मन प्रति एकड़ के हिसाब से सभी लोगों को देना पड़ेगा। दूसरी व्यवस्था की गई थी कि प्रतिमन सोलह रुपये कीमत मिलेगी और किसान को अन्न बी० डी० ओ० के यहाँ पहुँचाना पड़ेगा। लेकिन इस तरह की कोई व्यवस्था सरकार ने नहीं की कि साल भर के अन्दर 16 रुपए से बेशी भाव न बढ़ पाए। इस तरह की कोई व्यवस्था नहीं की गई। उसका नतीजा हुआ कि पीछे जाकर उसी धान का भाव 32 रुपए हुआ और लोगों से लिया गया 16 रुपए के भाव पर। मालूम होता है कि किसान को लूटने की परम्परा जो शुरू से चली आती है वह आज भी बनी हुई है। हम नहीं समझते कि आज भी जो यह कानून बनने वाला है इस कानून के जरिए कोई ऐसी रोक लग सकेगी जिसकी वजह से साल के अन्त तक फसल के भाव दूने न हो जायें। इस तरह की व्यवस्था हो सकेगी इसमें हमें सन्देह है।

मैं चाहता था कि इस कानून के जरिए किसान से जो अनाज लिया जायगा उस अनाज की खरीद स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के जरिए से हो। स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के जरिए से जिस कीमत पर हो उसके बारे में मेरा यही कहना है कि वह कीमत इस ढंग की हो—चाहे वह बाजार भाव हो या जो कीमत हो—कि वह साल भर बराबर एकसी बनी रहे। इस तरह की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिये, लेकिन इस कानून का देखने से ऐसा मालूम नहीं पड़ता कि इस तरह की कोई व्यवस्था उसमें की जा रही है।

मैं यह भी चाहता हूँ कि अगर यह सरकार लोगों से धान या दूसरा अनाज लेना चाहती है तो उसके बदले में लोगों की जरूरत की जो चीज हैं उन चीजों को भी मुहैया करने की जिम्मेदारी अपने ऊपर ले, लेकिन इसकी भी व्यवस्था डम बिल में नहीं है। इसलिये जो यह कानून आया है उससे मैं समझता हूँ कि सिर्फ सरकार या सरकार के कर्मचारी भले ही नफा उठा ले, लेकिन जनता को कोई नफा होने वाला नहीं है। इस बात को भी ख्याल नहीं किया गया है जिस समय अनाज की वसूली की जायगी तो जिस किसान परिवार ने अन्न को उपजाया है उसके साल भर के खाने और खेती के लिए छोड़ दिया जायगा तब उससे अन्न लिया जायगा। इसकी भी कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है। गत साल बिहार में जो कानून बना उसमें भी इसकी व्यवस्था नहीं थी। इसका नतीजा यह होगा कि लोगों के घर से तो अन्न सरकार के घर में चला जायगा और बाद में आदमी चिल्लाते फिरेगे और उनको अन्न नहीं मिलेगा। इस तरह की बात बहा हुई और इस तरह की बात इस साल भी होगी, ऐसी मेरी आशंका है।

दुकानें खोल दी जाती हैं फेयर प्राइस शाप्स, लेकिन वहाँ अनाज की आपूर्ति हो नहीं पाती है और लोगों को अन्न नहीं मिलता है। ऐसा मालूम पड़ता है कि जो शहर के रहने



[श्री बी० एन० मंडल]

वाले हैं या जो मंत्रियों के इर्दगिर्द रहते हैं उन लोगों के लिए सारा इन्तजाम किया जाता है। देश की जनता खास कर वह जनता जो अन्न को उपजाने वाली जनता है जो देहात में रहती है उसके लिए कोई इन्तजाम इस सरकार के पास नहीं है। पालिसी और कानून बनाए जाते हैं, लेकिन उस पर अमल बुरे तरीके से होता है। इसलिये मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि आप अगर ऐसेशियल कमोडिटीज का कानून बनाते हैं, जो आज की स्थिति में बनाना जरूरी है, तो इन सारी बातों का ख्याल रखें, जैसा मैंने सुझाव दिया है वैसा करें। जहां तक अनाज लेने की बात है उसके बारे में भी जैसा मैंने कहा है खाने भर का अनाज छोड़कर, खेती के लिये जो खर्च होगा वह छोड़कर तभी उनसे लिया जाय। ऐसा न हो कि जैसा पिछले साल किया गया, बिहार सरकार ने कानून बनाया था कि जितनी जमीन है—चाहे वह जमीन किसी भी तरह की हो, उपजाऊ हो, अनुपजाऊ हो—प्रति एकड़ के हिसाब से देना ही पड़ेगा। कभी-कभी तो ऐसा हुआ कि लोगों को धान देने के लिए दूसरे अनाज को बेच कर धान खरीदकर तब सरकार को देना पड़ा। इस तरह का कानून बनाना एक नादिरशाही है। इससे मालूम होता है कि जो सरकार का दिल है उसने अभी तक जनतंत्र को कबूल नहीं किया है, अभी तक तानाशाही वाला दिल है। उसमें परिवर्तन नहीं हो पाया है। इसलिए इस आज की स्थिति में बिल का मैं विरोध करूँ या इस बिल को सपोर्ट करूँ, मेरी कुछ समझ में बात नहीं आती है। लेकिन मैं अपने मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर आप इस बिल को पास करते हैं तो आपके ऊपर जो जनतांत्रिक जिम्मेदारी है, देश के कांस्टीट्यूशन की जो जिम्मेदारी है—इन सारी बातों का ख्याल रखते हुए आप बिहार सरकार को और अन्य प्रांतीय सरकारों को कहें कि अपने बिल को उसी सांचे में ढालें

जिस से 125 के अन्तर्गत बना कानून जन कल्याणकारी हो वरना यह न हो कि लोगों को उसके लिए इस सरकार के खिलाफ बगावत करनी पड़े। गत साल जब हमारे प्रान्त की जनता बहुत व्याकुल हो गई तब विरोधी दल के लोगों को उसका नेतृत्व करना पड़ा और जो स्थिति उत्पन्न हुई उसमें कई लोगों को जेल जाना पड़ा। उसके बाद कुछ स्थिति सुधरी और तब लोगों की जाने बच सकी। ऐसी परिस्थिति उत्पन्न न हो यह मैं सरकार से कहना चाहता हूँ।

DR. SHRIMATI PHULRENU GUHA (West Bengal) : Sir, I feel that nobody will disagree in the true sense of the term, with regard to the desirability of the measures envisaged in the Bill which aims at regulating the supply and distribution of essential commodities in the best interest of the people of our country. It is not actually the wording but the spirit of the measure that has to be enforced.

In this age of inter-dependence, social controls have become very essential. The Essential Commodities Act was passed in the year 1955. The object of that measure was, according to me, to give assurance to the consumers that the commodities sold to them would be pure, be of standard quality and at reasonable prices. But what has been our experience? Unfortunately it has been disappointing and discouraging indeed. The consumers are cheated in three ways, namely by way of high prices, bad quality and less weight. Adulterated food-stuffs and edible oils are sold in the open market.

Today the position is that from State to State the prices differ. Not only that but even in the same State the prices differ from district to district and from area to area.

Sir, food is a main element, a main force in our society. So it should be seen very carefully that the prices of the food-grains are within the reach of the common people. It is true that now the country cannot produce foodgrains required in our country. It is often said that we have not increased the production of foodgrains. But that is not true. Production of food-grains has increased. But at the same time the population has also increased. There

is no parity between the increase in our population and the increase in foodgrains. So it is essential that something should be done and so long as in our country we do not have enough food, the distribution must be properly done. So a proper production of foodgrains is most essential.

The economic crisis, to my mind, is the result of less agricultural production in the country, less in the sense, compared to the population of the country. At the same time a section of traders, hoarders and blackmarketeers are trying to hoard stocks and push up the prices artificially. I do welcome the further amendment of the Essential Commodities Act of 1955. I do understand that unless powers are given to the officials no work can be done but, Sir, at the same time knowing our administration as we do, I am very hesitant. However, I have no objection to give full powers to the Government to deal with hoarders, profiteers and middlemen but my grievance is that although the Government has the powers, they are not being exercised effectively. I strongly feel that whenever Government take powers they should use the powers more effectively for the interest of the consumers.

Sir, I know we have very limited time. So I do not like to take much of the time of the House but I would like to place a few suggestions before the Minister for his consideration. I feel that a margin should be fixed for the traders and a ceiling should also be fixed so that commodities are sold to the consumer at a particular fixed price and no trader should be permitted to charge more than that. I further suggest that the Government should take steps—may not be immediately but that should be the aim—so that there should not be any intermediary between the Government and the food growers. We know that there is no machinery of the Government at the moment but at the same time we feel that steps should be taken soon by the Government so that this intermediary section of the people is done away with. I should like to suggest—not only suggest but I would appeal—to the Food Minister that he should see—may not be his Department but he should take it up with his colleagues—that not only the big plans are taken care of but also the small plans. What do we see when we go to the countryside?

There may be only a river or a rivulet and if only one tubewell or a pump could be had in a particular place full production could be had but because we go in for bigger plans these small things are not cared for with the result that we do not have enough production of foodgrains in the country. So I appeal to the Food Minister to sit with his colleagues, the Irrigation Minister or the Finance Minister and see that these small facilities are provided to the growers so that they can produce more foodgrains than is the case at present. In this connection I would like to say that it is often seen that whatever is needed for more production like seed, water, etc., is not received by the cultivator in time. That is a common complaint all over the country. It is no use telling that it is the fault of this Department or that Department or it is because of this or because of that. The net result is, the country is not getting the production. So I say that it should be the duty of the Food Department to see that all the facilities that are needed for more production reach the cultivators in time. Even this year in many places we have seen that either the seeds are not there or water is not there or manure is not there.

There is another point about giving loans to the farmers. The rules are so complicated that it is really impossible for ordinary farmers to go in for these loans. I would request the Food Minister to see that steps are taken so that the common village people, the ordinary simple growers, can get these loans either in commodities or in cash any time they want and so that they feel confident enough to take these loans. They do not have that confidence; they feel that they will get implicated; they do not understand these rules.

Lastly I would request the Minister to take steps not only against the hoarders and blackmarketeers but also against the officials—I am very sorry to say this—who help them. We feel that without the help of people in the offices the hoarders and blackmarketeers are not able to carry on their activities. They would not have the courage to do so. So steps should be taken not only against the hoarders and blackmarketeers but also against such officials who are found to be connected with them even remotely and they should be properly

[Dr. Shrimati Phulrenu Guha.]  
punished. If that is done these hoarders and blackmarketeers will be careful. If they know that the Government is taking strong action not only against them but also against the officers who are helping them directly or indirectly they will become careful and the Government officers also will come into proper form.

Another point I have. We often find that the foodgrains become rotten or the weight becomes very much less in the godowns, or in transshipment or at some other point. I would appeal to the Food Minister—I do not know what he could do but he should do something—to do something to see that the persons who are in charge of the godowns are properly punished if the foodgrains become less in weight or they get rotten while in their charge. It is true that we do not have all the facilities in the godowns but it is also true that if proper care is taken we can protect and save a good amount of our food. It is criminal for those people who are responsible for these godowns to allow the foodgrains to become rotten during storage and become unfit for human consumption or to become less in weight.

With these few suggestions I welcome this amendment.

**SHRI NIREN GHOSH (West Bengal):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, all these twenty years we have been seeing the Government saying again and again that they will control the essential commodities and the people will get them at controlled prices but it has never happened. Promises have been galore but the prices have been going on rising and the Government have never been able to enforce the controlled prices in the market and I am sure this post-devaluation Bill with all its high-sounding title is but a petty measure in order to hoodwink the people and it will come to nothing, because from our experience that is what we have seen. We have seen that the control prices are announced but the Government do not take the responsibility to give the people these commodities at those controlled prices

The traders are expected to do so. Now, what do the wholesalers do? They charge the petty traders much more than what is shown in the vouchers or in the ledgers. Unless the petty traders do that, they are

edged out of the business. So, lakhs of petty traders, crores of them, have to do it under compulsion. When we go to them they say: What can we do? The wholesalers give us at this rate and unless we sell it at least at this rate we cannot make the minimum margin of profit. So, all along it has been harassment of petty traders. It has been harassment of crores of people. The entire machinery of the Government, particularly the higher-ups, particularly the higher officials, the State Government and their Ministers are all involved in this profit and time and again these scandals have come out. This is the history of the control of essential commodities.

Now, I will give you one experience. Our State Government wanted to produce 15 lakh tonnes of foodgrains. It has procured five or six lakh tonnes of foodgrains this year. I interviewed the district magistrate of Malda and he mentioned this to me. "Almost the season is over. I have got a list of hoarders and big producers who have got surplus paddy. I wanted the permission of the State Government and they say, stop this, no more is necessary." All the big producers have not surrendered their grain. So, the 10 lakh tonnes of grain has not gone to the Government's stocks. It is with the big producers and who are those big producers? They are linked up not only with the Government machinery, but with the ruling Party, all the Congress MLAs from the countryside of West Bengal. They work for them. In this Bill also in the name of giving incentives to farmers, nothing is done. What I fear is that only the small farmers and traders will be punished. All the big producers, wholesalers and hoarders will go scot-free. So, in the Bill, if it is to be of any help, a distinction should be made between those petty people and petty producers, say, up to seven Bighas of land and the others. Their produce should not be commandeered or confiscated or taken over. The entire drive should be directed against the big landlords, the big producers and the big hoarders. But it is a fact that whenever we have gone to surround any big hoarders, the Government have surrounded us with a police cordon. That has been the story. So, I feel that this Bill, as it is drafted, will come to nothing. In the name of producers even it has given a blanket permission to big hoar-

ders to operative freely. Ultimately the Government machinery will move against the small producers who form 70 to 80 per cent of the producers. They will be harassed. That has been our experience all through.

Now, as regards the procurement drive, the affairs of the Food Corporation of India are a scandal. Now, this Corporation was set up to act as the main agency for handling foodgrains, but what has come of it? Let me tell you that the Chairman, a very competent person, Mr. Pai, was forced to resign from the Food Corporation. It is supposed to be an autonomous and independent body. It is supposed on its own to go into the market and procure foodgrains from all over India, but what are the figures? The Food Corporation of India, with an investment of Rs. 100 crores in 1965-66, procured six lakh tonnes of food and all the State Governments together procured only twenty lakh tonnes. The marketable surplus is 20 million tonnes of foodgrains. Of this the Food Corporation of India and the State Governments together could procure some 27 lakh tonnes of foodgrains. That is the story. The marketable surplus has become the black market surplus. This is the source of the sky-rocketing prices in foodgrains. The Bill does not deal with this fundamental phenomenon. It evades and bypasses it. This is the comment of a responsible journal, the "Capital", dated 4th November 1965. I shall read it out :

"The result is that the Corporation has not yet been able to get into its stride and tackle the nation's chief problem—food—particularly in relation to procurement of foodgrains, creating buffer stocks, holding the price-line and ensuring even distribution in various areas of the country. The position is made worse by the reported lack of co-operation from various State Governments—the surplus ones frowning upon the Corporation's procurement and storage measures, and the deficit ones expressing dissatisfaction with its performance. Even district collectors in certain States are reported to have shown off their superior power in dealing with the Corporation, and the latter has not been able to expedite things in the interior areas. But the Government of India has still not expressed itself clearly about the role of

the Corporation in dealing with the food problem. It is said that arrangements for introducing rationing in all the cities with a population of 100,000 and above are being finalised as a "national policy" without consulting the Corporation."

That is the position to which the Food Corporation has been reduced and this Mr. Pai was said to be a dynamic personality. He has had good connections in the banking circle and other circles and he was forced to resign from the Chairmanship of the Corporation. So, the amending Bill will not, in any way, make things better. The Bill itself, I suppose, will not make things better.

As regards edible oils, our country is short of edible oil. Gujarat produces a good quantity of edible oil. Now, the Mahagujarat Janata Parishad wanted a ban on the export of edible oils. The price of edible oil has risen from one rupee to anything between Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per kilo. That is the story of edible oil and what has the Government done? They have put them behind prison bars, because they wanted a ban on the export of edible oils, so that these people could get this commodity at a cheap price. This is how the Government behaves. Their excuse is that foreign exchange is required. Now, they say, tighten your belt, go without food, go without essential commodities. Half-starved must go quarter-starved, so that they can export.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I may inform the hon. Member that it is not being exported now and, therefore, there is no need for any agitation now for that. The agitation may be for something else.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Why did you take time? You could have done this very thing earlier. So, the Congress Party will take over all the rice mills. They will introduce State trading in respect of essential commodities, particularly foodgrains. In the annual sessions of the Congress these resolutions were passed and broadcast and people were assured all these. But it has ended in smoke. Nothing is heard of it. Unless the total marketable surplus of foodgrains is procured by the Government, unless there is total procurement and total State trading in essential commodities, you will not be able to check the hoarders and blackmarketeers, who are your patrons.

[Shri Niren Ghosh.]

From the experience of our own State we know. For twenty years all the big rice dealers have abundantly donated to the Congress election fund. They are the biggest patrons of the Congress. That is how the machination and the conspiracy that was cooked up during the British regime—and thirty lakhs of people died of famine—these hoarders have been nourished by the Congress regime. This Bill is not going to curb them or do them any harm. That is why in the name of essential commodities all that you will do will come to this—I again repeat it—that the hoarders, wholesalers and big producers will go scot-free and the entire people will suffer, and this thing I am sure will be voiced on the floor of Parliament again when things come in for a review.

Finally I also want to say a word. Even some expert appointed by the Government has said that all those agrarian reforms have failed. Why have they failed? Because in the district of Tanjore itself all those agrarian reforms are not implemented. No surplus land was taken. Everything is there. The owners hold such big lands as even 2000 bighas in various ways. Nothing has changed. The landless labourers or the poor peasants have not got land. Their debts have not been written off or moratorium put on debt repayment. So 80 per cent of the producers who are supposed to produce food for the entire country are being made poorer and poorer. They are being thrown off the land, and during the twenty years of Congress regime more peasants have become landless than during the hundred years of the British regime. With some fertiliser plants, with some package deal, with some Japanese deal, you can only touch the fringe of the problem. Our attention is getting diverted to producing cash crops and other crops that we are supposed to export to the foreign market. That is what the imperialists want us to do. But as regards our country getting food it will never be solved in this way unless actually the feudal remnants are abolished. It is necessary that this feudalism should be abolished completely, and whatever surplus land is there, even half a bigha, should be given to the landless and poor peasants and their debts should be written off, and cheap credit should be provided by the State. Only then

they will be enthused and they will produce more, they will produce double and India will get enough food. India was a fabulous country and it will again return to being a fabulous country, but I see no hope of that ever coming through under this benign Congress regime.

SHRI D. THENGARI (Uttar Pradesh) : The Bill provides for, in an indirect way, compulsory procurement of essential commodities. That means levy, and it is well known that a lot of discontent prevails among kisans. Can the Government claim that because of the levy system they could bring down prices last year?

The kisans should be paid the market price and not the post-harvest price. These post-harvest prices can in no way be described as remunerative or supporting prices. Government should enter the market and purchase foodgrains etc. according to the market price and not at the prices arbitrarily fixed by the Government.

This enactment will discourage producers from producing food crops. They will be more interested in the production of cash crops like tobacco, cotton, sugarcane, etc. Further, production of food crops will be affected adversely.

Besides, the system of procurement is also defective. The cultivator has to go to the Tehsil office to secure the price of the produce sold.

Again, the extent of levy is fixed on the acreage and not on the quantity of produce. This creates anomalies.

This Bill also provides for the forfeiture and confiscation of packages, vehicles and animals. This is wrong. This is out of all proportion. The prices of articles thus confiscated may in many cases be many times more than the amount of fine intended to be imposed.

This Bill confers extensive powers—this is most objectionable—extensive powers on the Collector and the executive. This is misused everywhere. This has given rise to the Bastar incident. Even the D.I.R. have been utilised for such oppression. To show how kisans are suffering because of these powers already given or conferred upon the Collector and the executive, I will read out the relevant portion of our petition from Madhya Pradesh which has been

signed by more than 5000 kisans: The petition says—I will read out the relevant portion :

1. हम लोगों को श्री पटवारी जी द्वारा ज्वार के लेव्ही कार्ड्स शासकीय निर्देशानुसार बनाकर दिये गये हैं। जितनी ज्वार निर्धारित की गई थी, उतनी हम लोगों के द्वारा कलैक्टिंग सेन्टर पर तुलवा दी गई है।

2. पटवारी जी द्वारा हमारे लेव्ही कार्ड्स पर 30 से 60 किलोग्राम प्रति एकड़ के मान से और लेव्ही लिख दी गई है व हमें हिदायत दी गई है कि हम यह ज्वार शीघ्राति-शीघ्र कलैक्टिंग सेन्टर पर ले जाकर तुलवा दें। हमारे द्वारा यह कहा जाने पर कि हमारे खेतों में अत्यल्प ज्वार हुई है वे निर्धारित लेव्ही की ज्वार तुलवाने के उपरान्त हमारे पास अपने परिवार के वर्ष भर उदर पोषण हेतु भी ज्वार कम पड़ रही है। इस पर हमें पोलिस का डर बताया जाकर कहा जा रहा है कि यदि ज्वार नहीं तुलवाई गई तो वरिष्ठ अधिकारी पोलिस की मदद से तुम्हारे घरों से ज्वार निकाल कर ले जावेगे।

3. इस क्षेत्र में समुचित वर्षा न होने के कारण ज्वार सर्वथा अपर्याप्त मात्रा में हुई है, ज्वार की पदावारी के मान से लेव्ही का निर्धारण नहीं किया गया है।

4. खेतों पर या हमारे खलिहानों में जांच की जाकर, लेव्ही निर्धारित की गई होती तो हमें अपने परिवार जनों के उदर पोषण में कठिनाई नहीं होती। पहले ही लेव्ही की ज्वार तुलवा देने के उपरान्त हमारे पास खाने के लिये भी ज्वार नहीं बची है व जसी कि पटवारी जी द्वारा हमारे लेव्ही कार्डों पर पुनः दुबारा लेव्ही निर्धारित की गई है, उसके अनुसार जबरन यदि अधिकारियों द्वारा पोलिस की मदद या किसी भी प्रकार से आतंकित कर हमारे खाने की ज्वार भी निकाल ली गई तो हमारे

सामने भूखों मर जाने के अतिरिक्त कोई विकल्प नहीं बच रहेगा।

हमारे पास यदि अतिरिक्त ज्वार होती व हमें विक्रय करना होता तो हमें इसके लिए वाध्य किया जा सकता था कि हम इस अतिरिक्त ज्वार का विक्रय कलैक्टिंग सेन्टर पर ही करें, किन्तु हमारे पाम अतिरिक्त ज्वार होने की तो दूर की बात है, किन्तु अपने खाने के लिये भी नहीं है।

This is just a sample of the result of the powers that the Collector and the executive are already enjoying.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE) : All that the orders of the State Government provide for is that enough quantities should be provided for the families and only the surplus should be procured through levy.

SHRI D THENGARI : I quite agree with the intention of the Bill, I do not disagree with it, but the difficulty is that for various reasons with which the hon. Minister is quite well acquainted the executive authorities do misuse their powers, and I am just bringing to your notice how these powers are being misused. Fortunately, while in the original Bill there was no right to appeal to the judicial court and only the State Government was to be approached for appeal after the Collector's order, now there is an amendment but I should like to insist that the judicial authority must be announced immediately; otherwise if there is delay, the cases would remain pending subject to the arbitrary authority of the Collector.

The Government has already become the biggest monopolist. For example, in Madhya Pradesh the Government procured jowar at Rs. 33 per quintal and sold it to the consumer at Rs. 43 or Rs. 44 per quintal. That is, the Government has taken Rs. 11 per quintal as profit.

1 P.M.

In the case of wheat, the Madhya Pradesh Government has purchased wheat at Rs. 65 per quintal and sold it at Rs. 75 or Rs. 80 per quintal.

[Shri D. Thengari.]

Thus, Government is itself profiteering. Similar reports are received from other States also. On account of this, prices shall not come down and the very purpose of the Bill would be defeated. The object of price-control is that the producer should get better prices and the consumer should get at cheaper rates. But today both are dissatisfied. Producers are not getting remunerative prices. The consumers also suffer. The reason is that the zonal system has not been abolished and there is no free movement on the plea that black-marketing would increase on account of the abolition of the zonal system. That plea does not hold good because even today when the zonal system is prevailing, the blackmarketeers are having their hey-day.

There are some suggestions about some clauses in the Bill. Whatever is confiscated by the Collector must be put up with the challan for the witnesses. The very article that is confiscated must be produced before the court, otherwise identification of the article would be difficult. Another thing is, where an order under section 6A is modified or annulled or where in a prosecution instituted for the contravention of the order in respect of which an order of confiscation has been made under section 6A, the person concerned is acquitted and if in either case it is not possible for any reason to return the foodgrains or edible oilseeds or edible oils seized, such persons should be paid therefor the market price obtaining then, and not as provided for in section 6(c)(2), the price as if these commodities had been sold to the Government with reasonable interest calculated from the day of the seizures of these commodities. For, more often than not, by the time we reach the stage of repayment, the actual price would have risen far above the price envisaged by section 6 (c) (2).

**SHRI N. PATRA (Orissa):** Sir, I rise to support the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1966. It is a very essential Bill brought forward before this House. At a time when we are short of foodstuffs the Government has done a right thing in bringing forward certain amendments to intensify the procurement levy through this amending Bill. Last year the Central Government had to distribute about eight million tonnes of foodgrains. This year it

is estimated that out of the Central stocks about 12 million tonnes of foodgrains may be necessary. Therefore this amendment is very timely and further, to hold the price line the Government has to augment their stock position. In order to hold the price line some buffer stock is also necessary. And the Central Government has a lot of commitments. That is, statutory rationing has been introduced in big cities like Calcutta, Kanpur, Bombay and such other places. To augment the supply in the statutory ration areas also procurement is necessary. But whatever steps the Government are taking in the form of making amendments to this Act, the pitiable thing is that they are not being implemented. This Act is not a new Act. Previously also there were some amendments to the Essential Commodities Act. But the provisions of the Act have not been implemented properly and the officers who are put in charge to implement this Act do not care to implement it successfully. And the Government have also set up the Food Corporation. It is working for the last two years. At the time of the establishment of this Food Corporation, we had hoped that it would come in a big way to create stocks necessary for distribution when scarcity conditions would arise. But from the working of the Food Corporation, we feel that the hope that we had cherished has not materialised. Last year, in 1965-66, the Food Corporation of India was able to procure only about 66 lakhs of tonnes, not even a million tonnes, when the marketable surplus was estimated to be about 20 million tonnes. And the Food Corporation of India, with a big staff and other paraphernalia—a lot of money is being spent on the organisation—was able to procure about 6.6 lakh tonnes only, not even a million tonnes. All the State Governments could be able to procure altogether about 2.7 million tonnes only out of the 20 million tonnes of marketable surplus. When we are in need of more stocks, we do not procure; we have been encouraging the mill-owner, the trader and the big landlord, in a way, to hold the stocks and when the lean months of the year come, they try to dictate the prices. You expect the peasant to surrender his stock to you at Rs. 13 or Rs. 14 per maund. Do you expect him to give it to the Government at a much lesser price? This goes into the

hands of the mill-owners. It is not going waste, I mean the marketable surplus. But somebody is procuring it. They are taking it into their hands, people with money, people who have access to get loans from the banks. Such are the people on whom the Government depends to help them in procurement. When you started the Food Corporation, you should have seen that the Food Corporation comes to the market in a big way and tries to create all the buffer stocks that are necessary. Against 20 million tonnes of marketable surplus estimated, the State Governments and the Food Corporation could be able to procure only 2.7 million tonnes. Therefore, I doubt; even after this amendment to the Essential Commodities Act, I do not think we will be able to either hold the price-line or give food to the people in some contingencies; if things go on in this fashion. I think a remunerative and incentive price is the only king-pin. If procurement, You have to ensure not only a remunerative but an incentive price to the agriculturist. At the harvest time neither the Food Corporation nor the State Government agency comes to the help of the poor agriculturist or the small tenant. As soon as the harvest is over, he has some obligation to meet. He has to buy his clothes. He has to pay his land revenue. He has to meet other contingencies. But at that time you do not come to his aid. And when this poor, middle class tenant is confronted with the bills of expenditure he is compelled to sell away his produce at a lesser price. The merchant or the trader who has been licensed to work on behalf of the Food Corporation of the Government of India takes advantage and offers some remunerative price, say 5 per cent. more, and corners the stock and when lean months come he tries to dictate the price. In such lean months why cannot the Food Corporation of India come to their rescue? Why do you have the Food Corporation of India and the trader at the same time? It is our experience that the mill-owners and the traders have all along been sabotaging procurement. You should be very careful about them and you should come out in a big way to help the agriculturists. Unless you provide him all the necessary credits, interest-free loans, you will not succeed even after you pass this Essential Commodities bill.

You have been assuring the country that after some time you will not depend on imports but with these shortcomings your assurances will not be fulfilled. Therefore if you want to be self-sufficient, you have to be careful. The Food Corporation of India should be very active, and your officials should be honest to implement the provisions of this Act.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA): Mr. Patra, it is time to wind up. Mr. Sri Rama Reddy.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY (Mysore): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, this is a very simple Bill with only 5 clauses. Clauses 2, 3 and 4 are the operative clauses which have a bearing on the manner in which this Act is proposed to be worked out.

Now, Sir, clause 2 deals with the price to be paid whenever any commodity is requisitioned to the producer by the merchant or the mill or whatever it is. This is not much of a controversial clause but for the fact that this price is proposed to be determined on the basis of any grade or variety of foodgrains, edible oilseeds or edible oils, prevailing or likely to prevail during the post-harvest period in the area to which that order applies. Here, Sir, it refers to the criterion on which the prices have got to be determined. The basis is the prevailing rates in the post-harvest period. I am sure this "prevailing rates" will give scope to plethora of disputes later on. For instance, Sir, what is the harvesting period? In our State we have, what is called, the rabi and the kharif harvesting seasons. But, in Bihar, for instance, apart from the kharif and rabi seasons, there is some other season too. Therefore, on account of various irrigation facilities that have been made available to the farmer, there is no definiteness about the harvesting period. For instance, in my State *ragi* could be grown at any time. Groundnut could be sown and harvested at any time. There is no definiteness. All through the year people are doing it because of the availability of waters. There is no inhibition on sowing or harvesting. Therefore, which is the harvesting period?

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: It is a well-known principle as far as different crops are concerned. Even in regard to particular crops, the sowing and the har-



[Shri Annasahib Shinde.]

vesting period differ. That will be taken care of.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: The hon'ble Deputy Minister may be right in thinking generally of the conditions that were prevailing hitherto but the agricultural system—sowing and harvesting—is all being changed. Now all the year round there is harvesting period in some parts. For instance, *ragi* is harvested all the year round, or even paddy—I am speaking from my personal experience. All through the year groundnut is being harvested. I have no objection to your saying “at the controlled price”.

In sub-clause (i) of clause 2 you have said “the controlled price”. That is all right. It can be depended upon provided you control it. There are so many foodgrains, inferior grains like *ragi*, *jowar*, etc., apart from superior grains like wheat and rice. There are so many other types of varieties of foodgrains for which the prices are not fixed. We seem to be thinking of operating this clause in a particular way to justify the Essential Commodities Act. But what is the effect that is going to be there if tomorrow the price of *ragi* has to be fixed? In this case you cannot say “post-harvested period” because there is no post-harvest period for *ragi*. If you depend on clause 2(i) there will be difficulty for you in the case of several foodgrains. So in both ways, I do not know exactly what is the mind of the Minister or the Government.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: Assuming for the sake of argument that there is error of judgment in regard to the post-harvest period, perhaps the price that might be determined by the court is not going to harm or damage the interest of anybody.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: What I want to point out is that it gives rise to plethora of claims and counter-claims. It should not be the intention of any Bill or any Act that emanates from this House to give scope to a lot of litigation. Well, I am a believer in democracy. In spite of this, all said and done, the least we govern the better. But, unfortunately we are operating in a period where shortage is the rule of the day rather than the

exception. Therefore, unless, the Government are armed with sufficient powers, they may not be able to do justice by all sections of the people. That is why I agree that such a provision is necessary. Why do you say “post-harvest period” at all? You can say “prices fixed from time to time”. That would have been quite enough. Not that I have objection for a thing like that. But to put unnecessary words into the clauses will create a lot of confusion later on.

SHRI N. PATRA: If you say “from time to time” it will also be injurious.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: That is my personal objection. Of course if there is still time, I have no objection to the Minister reconsidering it and redrafting it but these are the difficulties.

Coming to clause 3, I really congratulate the Minister for having given this concession to farmers. It deals mainly with confiscation of foodgrains and edible oilseeds, not oil. Very wisely they have excluded oils from this because oils are not supposed to be stored or reserved by the farmers. They simply refer to groundnut seed. I would point out that the Bill talks only of oilseeds. Supposing, instead of oilseeds, hoarding takes place in the form of kernels, you cannot confiscate. Supposing I hold about one lakh maunds of groundnuts, according to this I am not liable to be attacked by this Bill at all. Some disturbance cannot be interpreted like that. It is definitely stated as groundnut seeds. So it is not going to achieve the purpose for which seeds are mentioned, in the sense that I can store the groundnut kernel as such and I am free. This Bill does not bind me. Therefore even here I am sure that you are not going to succeed in your efforts to make available the essential commodities to the people in the form they require.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE: With your co-operation.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY: Of course. Therefore while congratulating the Ministry for having exempted the actual producer—and they are prepared to pay the price anyway when it is requisitioned from the producer and it will be quite good—please see if the word ‘groundnuts’ will

serve the purpose for which you have brought this Bill.

I will come to clause 4 which is also the operative clause here. I would illustrate it because I am not a lawyer and cannot talk about the legal aspect. Supposing I am a farmer, and I take one bag of my paddy or groundnut from my village to my daughter's village, about 20 miles away, now not only this bag is going to be confiscated but also my cart, my bullocks and everything. What is the justification for that? I am sure this is a very hard case and this should not be so.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY (Madras) : If it is taken by head, will they arrest the man and feed him also?

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : Therefore these are some of the difficulties which are there.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (West Bengal) : His head also should be confiscated?

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : These harsh things may be eliminated. You may fix some quota, say that it should not be less than 10 quintals. I cannot think for the Government but I am only explaining the difficulty in the actual working of this legislation that we may have to face. Therefore even at the earliest stage it is better that some of these difficulties are eliminated. I do not know if there is time for all that and if there is, I earnestly request the Minister to give his consideration to these aspects.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : It is a very important Bill in the sense that it involves certain basic principles of a policy nature. The primary object of the Bill appears to be holding the price-line of the foodgrains, edible oils and edible oilseeds. Naturally every section of this House would be interested in the matter of holding the price-line. There cannot be any two opinions regarding the Government's measure to hold the price-line effectively but I differ only on the *modus operandi*. The problem is, with this Bill the Government seeks to arm itself with an extraordinary power which was earlier conferred upon it by the D.I.R. The amendment has been necessitated because of the fact that the Government has decided to withdraw the D.I.R.

from certain areas of the country and therefore the Government requires that power of the D.I.R. for the maintenance of the price-line. Through you may I ask the Minister whether he is satisfied by the performance of the D.I.R. in the past few years that the price-line could be held simply by these extraordinary powers that the Government did enjoy? I would show by figures that the Government could not. Therefore my objection to the amendment is primarily arising from this point. I am ready to give power, extraordinary power, to the Government if I am satisfied, if I am certain, that by arming the Government with these extraordinary powers, the people will find some relief from the price rise but I do not find any hope in it because even after the promulgation of the emergency and the D.I.R. the prices continued to rise unabated. There is no doubt about the fact. I simply show certain figures which will prove how the price rise was there even after the D.I.R. was there. By March 1966 the price level rose by 36.5 while the sale price of the food article rose by 50 per cent. Regarding the index number of wholesale prices, in 1952-53 it was 100 and in July 1966 it was 164 and for food in July 1966 it was 189. You should bear in mind that all this price rise was there even when the Government was armed with the D.I.R. Therefore if those powers of the D.I.R. are simply incorporated in this Bill, can the Government assure the House that there will be no further rise in the price of foodgrains beyond 189? Then only the Government will have the moral and legal right to come with this Bill.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : It is not a mere reproduction of the D.I.R. but there are some substantial additions to it.

SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY : With all these powers, will you be able to hold the price-line? That is the question.

SHRI ANNASAHIB SHINDE : The Government intends.

SHRI CHITTA BASU : The Statement of Objects and Reasons has said that the necessity has arisen because of the relaxation of the D.I.R. and therefore you are coming with this amendment.

SHRI N. SRI RAMA REDDY : The object of the Bill is not stated there.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** Yes, in the Bill which has been submitted to the House. I do not oppose the very idea of procurement. I congratulate the Government that it has accepted the principle of procurement. I know that if the Government is to satisfy the needs of the people during a time of shortage, if the Government is to work for equitable distribution, it must have a large amount of stock at its disposal to equitably distribute it. Now let us see what is the procurement that the Government has so far done. Can the Government say that the Government is willing to have a monopoly procurement policy? No. Government has got no such policy. You would find it, Sir, from one set of figures which I quote from "Review of the Food Situation—July, 1966". Herein the Government says that the Government could only procure 27 lakh tonnes of foodgrains when the total marketable surplus was about 20 million tonnes as was pointed out by some of my friends in this House. But to me the figure is something higher than that. If the Government enters into the market with some basic and integrated price policy, the Government can procure at least some 20 million tonnes of foodgrains from the market to act as a buffer stock to be distributed equitably in times of food deficit and consequent distress to people. But what the Government has done? The Government, in 1965-66, could procure only 27 lakh tonnes, and the Food Corporation could purchase only 8 lakh tonnes. Sir, may I point out to you that unless this procurement policy is geared up, there will be no possibility of holding the price-line.

Now I want to draw your kind attention to another figure. Will the hon. Minister, Shri Subramaniam, kindly take the trouble of going into the production for rice which has been given in this book? From that I have taken some comparative figures showing what has been the production and what have been the market arrivals. In the year 1960-61 it is found that the total production of rice—I have taken simply the rice figure because I am a rice-eater, I am interested in rice, not in wheat, not in milo—had been 33.7 million tonnes, and in that year the market arrivals of rice expressed in 1000 quintals were 12,463. In 1961-62 the corresponding figures were 33.6 million tonnes, and 13,216 (in 000 quin-

tals). In 1962-63 the corresponding figures were 31.4 million tonnes and 12,547 (in 000 quintals). In 1963-64 the corresponding figures were 36.3 million tonnes and 10,003 (in 000 quintals). In 1964-65 the respective figures were 38.1 million tonnes and 7,052 (in 000 quintals), and this the hon. Minister will please note. What is the reason for it? Here lies the crux of the problem. Here the production figure increases and here the market arrivals figure decreases. That means it goes into the hands of hoarders and blackmarketeers; it shows that the foodgrains are hoarded; it shows that the rice is hoarded or the paddy is hoarded. Therefore, unless effective measures are taken to dehoard this, Government cannot have at its disposal enough quantity of foodgrains to be distributed among the people generally, and among the needy people in particular.

**SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI** (Rajasthan) : At what level it is hoarded?

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** I am coming. Sir, while I support the Government's policy of procurement, at the same time I will try to point out certain lacunae, one being that the Government has not taken over the responsibility of equitably distributing the procured rice. (*Time bell rings*).

I want a few minutes' time.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) :** Try to finish in two minutes.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** Sir, when the Government come out with the policy of procurement, they have not taken the responsibility of distributing equitably the procured foodgrains. What they have done in the matter of distribution, you can see here. The total population covered under statutory rationing at the end of June, 1966, was 2.5 crores. What is the population of our country? I think you have not forgotten it. And the population covered under informal rationing was 8.4 crores. Now informal rationing is no rationing, and in our State you will find that it parades under the name of modified rationing, that is, here there is no responsibility, no statutory responsibility on the part of the Government of feeding the people from whom they are forcibly taking rice and paddy by way of levy. I am not opposed

to Government's policy of procurement by way of a levy, procuring foodgrains allowing the producer a remunerative price, an incentive price, or a price based on some justified principle, but the Government must take on the responsibility of feeding those people, distributing among those people the essential foodgrains, so that they do not die of starvation. But what has this Government done so far? The Government has taken away forcibly rice from the growers but it has not taken the responsibility of feeding them in times of their distress, in times of their woes and hunger. Therefore, when you take the liberty of procuring, you must shoulder the responsibility of feeding the people. But you have not taken that responsibility. So this is a big lacuna, this is a big fraud actually which is there, and which is not to be supported.

Then, Sir, I come to the question of the procurement policy itself. West Bengal was pioneer in this matter. They fixed a target that they would procure 1.5 million tonnes of rice. But what happened to it? They could procure not more than 4 lakh tonnes. What was the reason? The reason I told you earlier, and it was that the Government did not dare to touch those big hoarders and big producers, to touch those people who even possessed land beyond the ceiling.

**SHRI SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE (Bihar) :** And you take out your *jhandas* and force the Government not to touch the cultivators.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) :** Without interruptions let him continue.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** With *jhandas* we want to help the Government to bring out the cornered rice and to feed the hungry people. But this Government fights shy of it, fails to touch them. This is the tragedy, this is the paradox and this is the whole story of West Bengal. Therefore, unless a very-well-thought-out principle is there, unless the Government takes to the policy of State-trading all over the country, Government's policy of procurement is not going to succeed—and Government cannot also take up the responsibility of feeding the people. Therefore, in this situation, what I want to say is that the Govern-

ment should announce its policy with regard to State-trading in foodgrains. Then, at the present moment, I can only suggest regarding a broad principle of State-trading. State-trading in foodgrains really means that the State actually trades in foodgrains without any intermediary agency. Instead of forcibly acquiring the produce through compulsory levy of procurement, the State must enter the market for purchasing foodgrains on a large scale on the basis of a rationally conceived and well thought out price policy in which a remunerative price shall be paid to the producer and a suitable price charged from the different classes of consumers in accordance with their income levels. This should be the broad policy of State-trading.

**THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) :** Mr. Basu, I am afraid I won't be able to allow you any further. You have taken fifteen minutes when I have been allowing ten minutes to everybody.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** Yes, Sir, I have almost finished. I would request the Government, since this is a very important field and since it involves the principles of procurement and since it involves the principles of distribution and also since the future food policy of the Government is also involved in this, I would be very glad if the hon. Minister can give his reply regarding the broad principles which I have tried to enunciate.

**SHRI K. S. RAMASWAMY (Madras) :** Mr. Vice-Chairman, the country is experiencing a big shortage of essential commodities, especially foodgrains and that too rice. We want essential commodities to be available at reasonable prices, especially foodgrains. But there is a rise in the prices of essential commodities and their prices are soaring high every day. So the Government has rightly come forward with this measure in order to check the prices from rising and to make the commodities available to the people in as equitable a manner as possible. But I think this measure is only a temporary one and the several sections in it with regard to prices and other things will be taken away after this scarcity period is over.

I am glad that the hon. Minister said in the House that a remunerative price should be given for agricultural produces. I congratulate the hon. Minister on having given

[Shri K. S. Ramaswamy.]

a higher price for paddy when he took over the Food portfolio. But it is now more than three years since the paddy price was revised. The prices of every other article have gone up by about 25 per cent during these years. So I submit that when the next price fixation is done this should be taken into account and a really remunerative price should be given to the producer. The prices of agricultural produce are always consumer oriented and not production oriented. We talk of essential commodities and their prices. But we should also remember that the cost of production in agriculture has also gone up very much. Therefore, let us see that all those things essential for the production of foodgrains are also given to the farmer at fair prices. Only then will he be able to produce more. And the remunerative price should be based on the cost of production and though it may be higher than the fair price, it is necessary in order to give the farmer the incentive to produce more.

In this Bill it is stated that the period of four months—I am referring to the *Explanation* in clause 2—means a period of four months “beginning from the last day of the fortnight during which harvesting operations normally commence.” This is the post-harvest period considered for fixing the price. My humble submission is that the same period in the previous year should also be taken into account. Only then can the rate of rise in the price can be appreciated properly. The market price is not necessarily the remunerative price because just after the harvest the price is very low. So the price should be fixed in relation to the price prevailing in the previous year.

Further all essential things needed for production purposes like tractors, implements, oil cakes and so on, that are needed by the agriculturist, should be given to him at a fair price. There should be a committee in each and every district at least, to fix the price and to mark the variations in the prices. In the State of Madras the price was fixed and in the granary of Madras, namely Tanjore district, the cultivators were satisfied with the price fixation. But the cultivators in Coimbatore were not satisfied with that price as the actual cost of production in Tanjore was less because there was the package programme going on there. Moreover the time of harvest also

differs as the hon. Member Shri Sri Rama Reddy rightly pointed out, from place to place. The times are not the same. Also in several other places there is only one crop whereas in several other places they will be having two or even three crops. So these factors also should be taken into account.

I am glad that the system of levy is to be followed in the procurement. If there is monopolistic procurement then it will result in great hardship to the people. Luckily the levy system is adopted. I want that farmers owning one acre of wet land and three acres of dry land should be exempted from this levy. I say this because at this level of price they cannot make both ends meet. So they should be exempted from this. Last time procurement was done in our place resulting in much harassment to our people. Of course, there was no law then such as this one for procurement. But some of the officers of the Government used the provisions of the Defence of India Rules and even sent policemen for procurement. Farmers never object to procurement as such. Some people, of course, do not give the grains just after the harvest. For that the police were used and people were harassed and in one house the whole lot of grain there was taken away leaving nothing even for their home consumption. Such things should not be allowed to happen. I also suggest that this levy should be collected just as they collect land revenue. There should be no harassment of the farmers.

With regard to clause 4 in this Bill, I want to say that the vehicles or the bullocks of the farmers should not be seized. We know that the Act for the prevention of cruelty to animals is in force now and the farmers and other villagers especially are very much handicapped by this measure because the policemen take away their bullocks even if there is only a slight cut or wound on the animal and their agricultural operations are affected. So I submit that such vehicles and bullock-carts should be exempted from this proviso. They may attach lorries and such other vehicles, but not these bullock-carts.

I also submit that after the levy procurement the agriculturist should be allowed to sell the remaining portion of his production in the open market. Otherwise it may be

all right with regard to the areas having statutory rationing because there the foodgrains are available and at cheap prices and the supply is assured. But in the areas which do not have such statutory rationing it is only in the open market that foodgrains can be purchased, especially in the villages. So the agriculturist should be allowed to sell his foodgrains in the weekly markets and other places. You may fix the quantity. But after the levy they should be free to sell it in the open market.

**श्री उद्धवराव साहेबराव पाटिल (महाराष्ट्र)**  
उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, यह जो बिल आया है वह उन लोगों के लिए आया है, जो खेतों पर काम करते हैं और 90 परसेंट लोगों से इसका ताल्लुक है। अगर इसमें खाने वालों की तादाद भी जोड़ दी जाय, तो सेंटपरसेंट केस में यह बिल सब लोगों से ताल्लुक रखने वाला होगा। लेकिन इस बिल को जिस जल्दबाजी से इस हाउस में लाकर पास करने की कोशिश की जा रही है वैसा नहीं होना चाहिये था। जैसा कि मेरे एक दोस्त ने कहा कि इस बिल का उद्देश्य प्राइस लाइन को रोकना है, लेकिन डी० आइ० आर० के तहत कई स्टेंटो ने प्रोक्योरमेंट की पालिसी अस्तिथार कर रखी है, मगर उससे भी कोई कीमत में उतार नहीं आया है और वह बढ़ती ही चली जा रही है। लेकिन मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अगर प्राइस लाइन को रोकना है, तो जो बुनियादी चीज हैं उपज को बढ़ाना, इस चीज की तरफ हुकूमत को देखना चाहिये।

हमारे देश में जो अनाज पैदा करने वाले किसान हैं, वे 80 प्रतिशत ऐसे हैं, जो खुद के लिए खाने के लिए अनाज पैदा नहीं कर पाते हैं, जिनके पास खेती में इन्वेस्ट करने के लिए या तो पैसा नहीं है या कूबत नहीं है। इस धन्ये में कैपिटल फोरमेशन का नाम होता ही नहीं है। 5 एकड़ से कम जिनकी होल्डिंग है, ऐसे 50 परसेंट किसान ऐसे हैं, जिनके ऊपर मुल्क को अनाज देने की जिम्मेदारी है। तो यह ऐसा धन्य है कि इन 18 सालों में इसके ऊपर बहुत बोझा पड़ा है। इस धन्ये

को न कैपिटल मिलती है और न ही मार्केटिंग के बारे में सहूलियतें ही मिलती हैं। इस गवर्नमेंट ने जितने प्लान बनाये हैं और 5 एकड़ वाले जितने किसान हैं, उन्हें शायद इन प्लानों से कुछ नहीं मिला है। किसान दौलत-मन्द होते ही, पैसा हाथ में आते ही, कैश क्रॉप पर चला जाता है। तो यह जो फूडग्रेन रेग्युलेशंस हैं, जो इसमें तरमीमे लाई गई हैं, मैं यह कहूंगा कि इसका जो असर हुकूमत बनाना चाहती है, वह अच्छा नहीं होगा। इसकी वजह यह है कि इसमें जो प्राइस पालिसी सरकार की है और आनरेबिल मिनिस्टर ने जो अभी कहा कि प्राइस कमीशन प्राइस बढ़ाने के लिये तैयार नहीं है, वह मैक्सिमम प्राइस है क्या? नहीं है। प्रोक्योरमेंट की जो प्राइस होगी वह क्या होगी, मैक्सिमम होगी, मिनिमम होगी, फिक्स्ड होगी या क्या होगी? यह प्रोक्योरमेंट की प्राइस जो मुकर्रर की जायगी, वह किस बुनियाद पर की जायगी? पोस्ट हार्वेस्ट की हिन्द सरकार ने जो कीमते जाहिर की हैं, मैं सरकार से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि कौन सा इकोनामिक ला उसमें अमल किया गया है, सोचा गया है? तीन साल का आपने पोस्टहार्वेस्ट प्राइस ले ली और एग्रेज प्राइस आपने दे दी। मैं मिनिस्टर साहब से कहना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सीमेन्ट की प्राइस ऐसी एडहाक आप रख सकते हैं या कपड़े की प्राइस आप एडहाक रख सकते हैं, क्या शुगर इंडस्ट्री की कीमतें कभी एडहाक आपने रखी हैं? यह किसानों की इंडस्ट्री समझ लीजिए, किसानों की छोटी हैडीक्राफ्ट जैसी इंडस्ट्री होती है, स्माल स्केल इंडस्ट्री जैसी और उसको जब ज्यादा सहूलियतें आप देंगे तब इस मुल्क में अनाज ज्यादा पैदा होगा, वरना आपने अभी जो प्राइसेज रखी हैं वह इस वजह से रखी हैं कि आप राशनिंग उन्ही एरियाज में करना चाहते हैं, जहां इंडस्ट्रीज की डिमांड है। कारखानेदारों की डिमांड है कि हमारे मजदूरों की कास्ट आफ लिविंग न बढ़े। लेकिन उनकी कीमतों पर अलबत्ता कोई पाबन्दी नहीं है। दो साल

[श्री उद्धवराव साहेबराव पाटिल]

पहले जब आपने राइस और गेहूं की प्राइस मुकर्रर की थी, उसके बाद से सीमेट की प्राइस आपने 30 रु० पर टन बढ़ाई, क्लार्क की 10 पर सेंट बढ़ाई। इस माल जो आयल पैदा हुआ है, उसकी कीमत मोर दैन 100 परसेट बढ़ी है। किसान अपने घर में आयल पैदा नहीं करता है। वह ग्राउन्ड नट पैदा करता है, लेकिन तेल नहीं। आयल केक की प्राइस बढ़ी, मिर्च की प्राइस बढ़ी और मजदूर और किसान का कास्ट आफ लिविंग बढ़ा है। इसका खयाल करके प्राइस मुकर्रर करने का इसमें कोई प्राविजन नहीं है। पोस्ट हार्वेस्ट के फोर मन्थ्स पहले की ऐसी बात है कि मैं आपको इस सम्बन्ध में एक मिसाल दे देता हूँ कि ग्राउन्ड नट अगर जून में बोई गई, तो नवम्बर में उसकी हार्वेस्टिंग हो जाती है। जून में, जुलाई में उसकी कीमत जो थी नवम्बर में वह कोई 160 रु० पर क्विंटल थी। अगस्त में ग्राउन्ड नट की प्राइस 175, 180 और 190 रु० पर क्विंटल हो गई। जिस किसान के पास यही धन्धा है, उसके हाथ में अपनी वस्तु की कीमत बढ़ाने का अधिकार नहीं है। अपने कपड़े की कीमत कारखानेदार मुकर्रर करेंगे, लेकिन ज्वार, गेहूं और ग्राउन्ड नट की कीमत किसान मुकर्रर नहीं करता। यह खरीदने वाले बड़े व्यापारी और एजेंट, दोनों मिल कर के उसकी प्राइस फिक्स करते हैं। अग्रेजों के जमाने में जो हमारी इकोनामी थी, आज बीस साल तक कांग्रेस के राज्य में वही चली आ रही है और उसमें कोई तब्दीली नहीं हुई है। हमारे देश में 90-95 फीसदी किसान ऐसे होते हैं, जो मौसम में अपना पूरे का पूरा प्रोडक्ट बेच देते हैं। इस साल ग्राउन्ड नट और काटन का यही हाल हुआ। नवम्बर में ग्राउन्ड नट निकाली और उस वक्त उसकी कीमत 110 रु०, 115 रु० फी क्विंटल थी और तब वह तीन रुपया, ढाई रुपया किलो तेल खाता था। लेकिन अगस्त में उसकी प्राइस 6 रु० किलो हो गई और ग्राउन्ड नट की 190 रु० पर

क्विंटल तक बढ़ गई। तो जब अपना माल बेचते हैं, तब वे सस्ते में बेचते हैं और उस वक्त उसके ऊपर साहूकार, कपड़े वाले, दवाये, आपकी सोसाइटी, आपकी रेवेन्यू और हर चीज का बोझा होना है। इसलिये जब तक यह मार्केट किसानों को गुफीद न हो उस वक्त तक इस देश में एग्रीकल्चर प्रोडक्शन बढ़ेगा नहीं। यह बात बीस साल के बाद भी इस हुकूमत ने समझी नहीं या तो समझी है तो यहाँ की इंडस्ट्रीज के दबाव की वजह से यह कोई असूल अपनाना नहीं चाहती या उसको अख्तियार नहीं करना चाहती। इसमें यह जो प्राइस पालिसी है, मैं सरकार से यह कहूँगा कि आपने जो ऐडवाइस प्राइस रखी है—मैं इस ऐडवाइस प्राइस ही कहूँगा—यह तो कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन और मजदूरों की कास्ट आफ लिविंग, इन दो बुनियादों पर जब आप कीमते देंगे तब इस मुल्क में अनाज काफी होगा। मैं तो यह कहूँगा कि आप इंडस्ट्रीज कितनी बढ़ाइये, जापान, जर्मनी, इंग्लैंड और फ्रांस के मुकाबिले में आपको फारेन मार्केट मिलना मुश्किल है और मनुभाई शाह साहब को जा करके यह करना पड़ेगा कि आप डेवलपमेंट कंट्रीज हैं, दया कीजिये, हमारे ज़रा जूते ले लीजिये, हमारा ज़रा कपड़ा ले लीजिये। लेकिन अगर आप इन किसानों को काफी फायदा दे दें तो मुझे उम्मीद है कि गेहूं, चावल और ज्वार भी हम एक्सपोर्ट कर सकते हैं। इस मुल्क में किसानों के लिये जो कुछ कहा जाता है, उसका इस पार्लियामेंट में शायद एक फीसदी भी खयाल नहीं है। इसलिये पहले तो मैं यह कहूँगा कि इस विल को लाने से पहले जो आपने प्राइस कमिशन मुकर्रर किया है, वह कमिशन आपने काहे के लिए मुकर्रर किया है। हर साल आप मार्केट एरिया पकड़ लीजिये। कानपुर मार्केट है और वहाँ बीस मील के अन्दर जितने विलेज हैं, वहाँ कास्ट आफ लिविंग आपको बराबर मिल जाता होगा। जैसे शुगर इंडस्ट्री को आपने दिया है, गो उत्तर प्रदेश की शुगर इंडस्ट्री में शुगर परसेटेज कम है, लेकिन इंडस्ट्री की हिम्मत अफ़ज़ाई

करने के लिये आपने उनको भी वही सहूलियत दी है और दक्षिण की शुगर इंडस्ट्री के मुकाबले में उनको ज्यादा प्राइस दी जाती है। यही वजह है कि आज शुगर की यह हालत है कि आपको क्या किया जाय, मुल्क में उतनी खपत नहीं है और न बाहर उसको कोई पूछता है ? तो जब तक किसी धन्य को प्राइस प्रोटेक्शन आप न दें, तब तक वह बढ़ नहीं सकता और इसमें यही चोज़ नहीं है। बाकी कितना वसूल करना है और किस तरह से वसूल करना है यह कलेक्टर और तलाटी की मेहरबानी पर है। इस कानून में यही है कि प्रोक्योरमेंट के सिलसिले में तलाटी जितना ऐंकेज लगायेगा, उसी ऐंकेज पर लेवी होगी, चाहे तुम्हरे जो हुई हो या न हुई हो। वसूली भी कलेक्टर की मेहरबानी पर है। यहां मिनिस्टर साहब कोई भी सिद्धान्त कहते हो लेकिन वहां कोई सिद्धान्त नहीं चलता है। वहां जो पटवारी होगा, जो तलाटी होगा उसकी मर्जी पर वह पूरा किया जायेगा। जितना ऐंकेज वह लगायेगा उस बुनियाद पर उनको लेवी देनी पड़ेगी। इसलिये मैं यह कहूंगा कि इस तमाम कानून में आपने कारखानेदारों को यह तसल्ली दी है कि हम कुछ न कुछ कर रहे हैं, प्रोक्योरमेंट बग़रह कर रहे हैं। मैं मानोपली प्रोक्योरमेंट की इस वजह से हिम्मत अफ़जाई करता हूं कि उसमें प्राइस उसको मिलेगी। बहुत से लोगों को यह ग़लतफ़हमी है कि फ्री मार्केट होने से किसानों का नफ़ा होता है। मैं कहता हूं कि नहीं क्योंकि फ्री मार्केट में प्राइस तब बढ़ती है जब किसान का पूरा अनाज, पूरी ग्राउन्ड नट बाज़ार में आ करके स्टॉक हो जाती है, कोई व्यापारी बैंक के डिपॉजिट पर खरीद करके जब उसका स्टॉक कर लेता है तब कहीं उसकी प्राइस बढ़ती है। दो फीसदी किसान भी ऐसे नहीं हैं—महाराष्ट्र की तो मैं जानता हूं—जो साल भर अपना अनाज, अपनी ग्राउन्ड नट अपने पास रख सकते हैं। इसलिये मैं पहले हुकूमत से यह कहूंगा कि अगर सही मानों में आप खुद का खाना चाहते हैं, अमेरिका के गेहूं से आप तंग

आ गये हैं और अगर आप अपने मुल्क को आज़ाद रखना चाहते हैं, तो जिस तरह से आपने शुगर इंडस्ट्री की प्राइस फिक्स की है उसी तरह से आप गेहूं, ज्वार वगैरह की कीमतें कास्ट आफ प्रोडक्शन और मजदूरों की कास्ट आफ लिविंग को ध्यान में रख कर फिक्स कीजिये तब आप इस कानून से इस मुल्क की हालत बदल सकते हैं। जब तक आप यह नहीं करेंगे तब तक आप मानोपली प्रोक्योरमेंट करें या फ्री छोड़ दें, उससे कोई फायदा नहीं होगा। मैं किसानों की जानिब से आपसे कहूंगा कि हमें फ्री मार्केट की ज़रूरत नहीं है, लेकिन किसानों को 25 या 20 फीसदी नफ़ा दे दीजिये ताकि दूसरे साल वे उसको उसमें डाल सकें। आज किसान की यह हालत है कि वह न कुछ रखता है और न कुछ खाता है। प्रोक्योरमेंट के बारे में मैं यह कहूंगा कि प्रोक्योरमेंट में आपने कलेक्टर को जो पावर दिया है, उसका तजुर्बा बहुत बुरा है। कलेक्टर आजकल जुडीशियल अथॉरिटी नहीं रहा है। कांग्रेस कमेटी का हुक्म कलेक्टर को मानना पड़ता है। मैंने देखा है कि कई किसान ऐसे थे, जिनका तीन सौ बैग ज्वार था, उनको छोड़ दिया गया, लेकिन 20 या 21 बैग वाले किसानों को प्रासिक्यूट किया गया। कलेक्टर के बजाय, सेक्शन 7 में पेनाल्टी का क्लॉज है, वहां कोर्ट को अधिकार है, वह अधिकार वैसा रखिए। ज्यादा से ज्यादा डिमान्ड नोटिस निकालने की जो ज़रूरत होगी वह काम मामलातदार या कलेक्टर को दे दीजिए। लेकिन पनिशमेंट और फारफीचर का अधिकार कलेक्टर को मत रखिए। वह बेचारा आजकल ऐसा लाचार हो गया है कि मिनिस्टर जो बोलेगा वैसा करेगा, कानून पर अमल नहीं कर सकता। यह हम देख रहे हैं, हमारा अनुभव है (*Time bell rings*) एक मिनट। आप पेनाल्टी का अधिकार कोर्ट के पास रखें। चन्द अधिकार जो कलेक्टर को दे रहे हैं न दीजिए। एक ही अथॉरिटी जुडीशियल कोर्ट के पास पेनाल्टी का अधिकार रखिए। इतना ही मैं सुझाव देता हूं।



**KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT (Delhi):** Mr. Vice-Chairman, we had first the Food Corporation Bill. Then we had some changes and some more Ordinances and now some of these Acts are there which are being amended. But I feel that the Government is going piecemeal in making improvements and in plugging the loopholes, etc. I feel that the farmer or his lobby does not exist and there is no faithful attempt or effort on the part of the Government to formulate policies which would really help him, help the food side of the economy of our country. That is why we have a chronic problem so far as food is concerned, whether it is distribution or procurement, all these years. The Government are so half-hearted in their efforts and so insincere in their work as far as the food problem is concerned, that some aspect of it always remains and one section or another always suffers, whether it be the consumer or it be the farmer. If the Government were sincere about it, if they had applied their mind to it, if they had carried out their policies properly, if their machinery was such that it would help them to implement it properly, I am sure that the problem would not have been what it is today. Even some Minister—not the present Minister but some other Minister—with whom we had a talk, showed supreme complacency and indifference to this problem. He said that prices could go up by a few rupees a maund. We do not care. Rich people can buy and the poor will be given food by us from the imported stock. There was a peculiar smugness, indifference or neglect or even lack of understanding of the situation by the Minister concerned and our entire deputation, which met him, came back very much frustrated and dissatisfied, because the Minister had no understanding of the problem whatsoever. On top of it they felt that if prices went up, they did not care. Today the prices have gone up so high, that you do not know what to do and you try to pacify the people by giving all sorts of lame help here and there, by a subsidy here or by a subsidy there, but it does not really solve the basic issue. I also feel that so far as the food problem is concerned, the implementation is done very defectively and very poorly and also there is a lot of mismanagement. The administration at the district level is extremely corrupt, whether it is procurement or whe-

ther it is not taking from the very small farmer. If it is a question of leaving out a certain surplus with the very big farmer, they will consider whether he comes from an important party or not. I am sure the big landlord, the big people will exercise their influence in such a way that the whole scheme can be brought to nought. They will be obliged and various favours will be shown to them. It depends upon the worth of the party concerned. If it is an important party or an interested party, they will make innumerable concessions to them. If the officers are to benefit from this party, they will again make some more concessions to them. But if it is an ordinary person, they deal with him with all their authority. I think so far as the district level administration is concerned, surely every second person takes money for the work done or so. There is no way to improve it. How can you change it? Also, the Government does not take action against all those people who are known to be and who are notoriously corrupt. If the Government is so helpless and if corruption is so widespread, I think the fruits of the labours of the Government or their policies would not be really available, when there are so many loopholes and so many snags in this. I had seen at one time that a number of raids were carried out in Delhi also by a certain person here, but I am sorry to say that the hoarders and blackmarketeers, etc. enjoy so much confidence and support of the high-ups that no steps can be taken against them. They are all let off. We cater to the rich people. We care for them. We listen to them. We obey them and I do not know, under these circumstances, how you can deal with them, with such defective controls, because unless we can get away from the clutches of these very rich people, the industrialists or the big business people or the rich middle-men, the society can never improve and this Government cannot justify its high ideals and its high policies and programmes. (*Interruption*). Please do not disturb me. If the Government want to follow their policies sincerely and honestly, if their intentions are good, then, I think, they should go about it in a more serious manner, because the country will not forgive the Government, if the Government fail the country today. I feel that the hoarders and blackmarketeers ought not to enjoy

so much prestige in our society, in our political circles, in our economic circles and in every other possible sphere. So long as we cannot get rid of these people we cannot get away from their influence and all the things that go with that. We cannot talk of socialism. Even to talk of socialism is absolutely futile and useless. We are not honest about it when we talk about socialism or when we cry for socialism. It is just a slogan to make a fool of the ordinary people.

As far as fixation of prices is concerned, I would like to point out to the hon. Minister that the fixation of prices after the harvest is collected, is wrong and absolutely incorrect. I agree with my friend there when he suggested that the price should be fixed much ahead of the time, even one or two years before. The people should know that if they grow wheat or rice or potatoes or some other thing, they will get this price next year, and not when the harvesting is on. What is the use of your fixing the prices then, because there will be again the same uncertainty? The prices will be low when the harvest is collected, because at the time harvesting is made, the prices always go down, as everybody knows it. If you fix a price at that time, it will fluctuate from State to State, from area to area. Wheat will be selling at one price in Punjab. There will be another price in Delhi. There will be another price in Rajasthan. So, also in the case of rice there will be a different price for it in Andhra, in Madras, in Punjab, in Bengal and elsewhere. You are being exceedingly unfair to the farmer. When you do not take the trouble to fix the price according to the convenience of the farmer, he has to fend for himself, he has to beg and he has to go about places. The middleman continues to fleece him. Those of us who believe in and talk about socialism. if we are sincere about the farmer, we ought to help the farmer and we ought to safeguard his interest. Otherwise, we should not talk about so-called ideals, etc. We fix the price of sugarcane for the sugarcane-growers in Punjab and elsewhere, but the mill-owners or these factory-owners do not buy the sugarcane from the people who are near them and who are growing sugarcane. They want to import it from UP and elsewhere, because the sugarcane is cheaper there and they have certain areas.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: How can that be?

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: I am stating facts and it is within my personal knowledge. In certain States, in Punjab, the sugar factories and other people are not buying the sugarcane grown in Punjab. They are buying it from elsewhere. They have some agreement with those people or they have some sort of . . .

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI S. D. MISRA): It will be more costly.

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: It is not costly.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Transport is there and it will also dry up.

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: Whatever it is, this is a fact. You may find out as to what is being done. Some of these people, who are factory-owners or at least the people who are managing the show, have not been wanting to buy from Punjab. They want to get it at a cheaper price. They want to discourage the growers and reduce their price, so that they may bring down their price.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I would like you to pass on the names to me.

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: Yes, I shall give it to you privately, because I know it to be true. Here, this is not the way to encourage the farmer. Also, when the produce is collected, there is uncertainty and difference in price from State to State. The price should be so fixed that the farmer has incentive and when the farmer has the incentive, he would say, let me grow rice or wheat. Otherwise, he may like to grow tomatoes or vegetables or pulses, so that he does not bother to run after the Government. He may shift on to some other cultivation. Therefore, in order to give them the right incentive, we must give them good prices, so that they would all like to shift to some other crop, i.e., to wheat or rice or some other crop so that the foodgrains problem is really solved and helped in this manner. I may also point out that as far as this confiscation and so

[Kumari Shanta Vasisht.]

on is concerned my suggestion is this that very small producers whose acreage is five acres and below should not be put to so much harassment and botheration and confiscation. I think the large farmers and producers should have the major burden of supply and procurement of foodgrains, but the smaller units should be exempted. That can be found out from the registers, etc.

One more point. During the raids in Delhi when all the foodgrains were checked and innumerable irregularities were found and charges were levelled against those people—they had excess stock; they were not keeping them in proper places; they were not kept in proper godowns; they had not given the correct names and so on—the Government and particularly the Home Ministry hushed up all those cases.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI): I should like to know what are the facts before the hon. Member says that the Home Ministry has hushed them up.

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: I will point out.

SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI: I would like to know which case the hon. Member says was hushed up.

KUMARI SHANTA VASISHT: I am saying it. Please hear what I am saying. Before the Home Ministry's Advisory Committee we raised the matter. The Home Minister, Mr. Nanda, said that he would reopen the cases, all the 70 cases which had been closed. When the cases were reopened, they were closed again. In the second meeting of the Committee I mentioned, "You must have some reasons for doing it; they have been closed; why are they closed?" So the second time again we raised it at the Home Ministry's Advisory Committee meeting and asked why those cases were not being followed up and pursued and challaned. Again the second time they said that they would take action but more than one year has passed and nothing has been done at all, though we had raised this question twice. A third instance I shall give of the working and the double standard of certain people in the Congress and the Government. They had raided all the foodgrain dealers in

Delhi. Overnight the head of the administration here or whoever it is, the Chief Commissioner overnight, within 24 hours gave a clean chit to all the foodgrain dealers and told a Press conference that everything was found to be perfect. I cannot understand how they can do it within 24 hours, how they can give a clean chit to everyone. The Chief Commissioner was at very great pains to emphasise that nothing was found to be wrong, that all the stocks were all right.

I feel that I can give one more instance. In Punjab certain raids were carried out. Also it is true that in certain parts of Punjab where people paid some money, their cases were closed and all irregularities that were found in the raids were taken care of. Where people have not paid, they are being pursued. This type of corruption cannot improve our image. We should see that this sort of thing is totally removed from the working of this set-up. Then only all our measures and policies will succeed.

Then distribution is most defective. That is one thing that has to be taken care of. Three years back we had pointed out during the debate on the President's Address that distribution should be improved. I again emphasise that unless Government looks after and improves and tones up the distribution system of foodgrains, this problem will remain.

श्री नरेन्द्र सिंह बार (पंजाब) : वाइसचेयर-मैन साहब, इतना कुछ कहा जा चुका है कि मेरे लिये बहुत बाकी छोड़ा नहीं है मेम्बरों ने और खास करके मेरी बहन ने जो खरी-खरी सुनाई है, उससे तो काफी हद तक वह मकसद भी पूरा हो जाता है लेकिन मैं . . .

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री महावीर प्रसाद भागवत) : मकसद पूरा हो गया है तो न बोलिये।

श्री नरेन्द्र सिंह बार : लेकिन मैं सुब्रह्मण्यम् साहब से बड़े अदब से कहना चाहता हूँ कि जहाँ तक जमींदारों का ताल्लुक है, उससे बहुत-सी चीजें छीनने के लिये तो बिल लाया जाता है, लेकिन उसकी इमदाद कोई नहीं की जाती। जहाँ तक मेरा तजुर्बा है, मैं अपने जिले के फार्मर्स फोरम का प्रेसिडेंट भी हूँ और उस बिना

पर कुछ कह सकता हूँ कि न तो हमारे लिये स्टोरेज की फैसिलिटी है और न किसी किस्म की हमारे लिए कोई फैसिलिटी है। तो मैं यह कहना चाहूंगा कि जमींदार के लिये जो दिक्कतें हैं, उसमें अगर उसकी कुछ इमदाद की जाय, उसको पैदा करने के लिये कुछ सहूलियतें दी जाय तो मुझे कोई एनगज नहीं होगा। अगर उसके ऊपर कोई थोड़ी बहुत कानून के जरिये ज्यादाती हो जाय। देखने में तो बहुत अच्छा और खूबसूरत कानून मालूम पड़ता है जहां तक कि उससे लेने की बात है, उससे लेने के लिये तो इसे आपरेटिव बनाया जाता है। लेकिन उसकी जो दिक्कतें हैं, वह दूर की जाय, तो हम समझते हैं कि हम कानून की कुछ ज्यादातिया भी बर्दाश्त कर सकते हैं। मिसाल के तौर पर जमींदार के पास फर्टिलाइजर नहीं है और वह फर्टिलाइजर के लिये जाता है, तो वह मिलता नहीं है। उसके पास नालेज है, वह काम करना चाहता है, वह आपके प्रोडक्शन को बढ़ाना चाहता है, आपकी दिक्कत को दूर करना चाहता है, लेकिन उसके लिये आप सिर्फ कागजी घोड़े दौड़ाने के अलावा प्रैक्टिकल कुछ नहीं कर पाते। मिसाल के तौर पर आपने डिजेल दिया लेकिन उसमें मिट्टी का तेल मिलाया गया और उससे मशीनरी का सत्यानाश हो गया। जितनी मशीनरी थी, उसका सत्यानाश हो गया। अपनी जमीन का गिरवी रख करके ट्रैक्टर खरीदा लेकिन ट्रैक्टर खरीदने के बाद ब्लैक मार्केटियर्स ने और तेल मिक्स करने वालों ने उनका सत्यानाश कर दिया। हमारे किसान को बहुत नुकसान पहुंचा। उसकी रिपेयर पर जो खर्चा पड़ा, वह उसे करना पड़ा। तो मेरा खयाल है कि यह सिर्फ कागजी घोड़े दौड़ाने वाली बात है और कभी यह देखना नहीं है कि उनकी क्या दिक्कत है और किस मुसीबत में होकर वह गुजरते हैं? आप किसी चीज को देख लीजिये, किसी एक मिसाल को आप लीजिये, बीज को लेने की मिसाल है, फर्टिलाइजर का मसला है, बहुत सी छोटी-छोटी चीजें हैं, जिसमें अगर उसे आसानी हो तो शायद थो मोर फंड में इमदाद हो। मिसाल

के तौर पर एक जमींदार को डिटरमिन करना है कि उसकी अपनी जमीन का मोयास्चर क्या है? उसके लिये एक निहायत छोटा सा आला है जो कि काम में आता है लेकिन यह उसको हासिल नहीं हो पाया और वह यह डिटरमिन नहीं कर पाया कि पानी के लिये कहां कितनी जरूरत है और क्या करना है? इसी तरह ग्राउन्ड लेबलिंग है, इसके लिये एक निहायत मामूली सा टेक्निकल तर्ज का इम्प्लीमेंट होता है। लेकिन इसके लिये उसकी इमदाद नहीं की जाती कि किसी न किसी तरीके से वह उसको मुहैया कर दिया जाय। इसी तरह से उस पर कई और मुसीबतें आती हैं। नो प्राफिट नो लास बेसिस पर ट्रैक्टर मिलने का ब्लाक लेबल पर इंतजाम नहीं है। होता क्या है? होता यह है कि उस पर दिक्कत आती है। लेकिन फिर भी उससे वसूल किया जाता है, जमींदार से प्रोड्यूसर से वसूल ही किया जाता है। बेशुमार आपके टैक्सेज हैं, आबियाने हैं, सुपर चार्जें हैं। अगर उनको तफसील से गिनाया जाय, तो मेरे खयाल में एक बहुत बड़ी लिस्ट बन जाती है। उसके अलावा जो आपका चन्दा है वह आता है, कभी रेड क्रास का है कभी कुछ है। आपकी अदालत में कोई काम हो नहीं पाता जब तक कि किसी न किसी किस्म का चन्दा न दिया जाय, वह चाहे रेड क्रास की सूरत में हो, डिफेंस सर्टीफिकेट की सूरत में हो और किसी सूरत में हो। यह मैं मान नहीं सकता कि वह चीजें आपको मालूम नहीं हैं, आपको इस बात का मालूम है। अब जो वह प्रोड्यूस करता है, उसको वह इन सब चीजों के लिये, यह सब देने के लिये बेचता है और बेच कर जब आता है, तो उसके पास चन्द दाने बचते हैं, लेकिन उसके लिये भी आपने यह नहीं देखा कि उसकी ह्यूमिडिटी और उसका टेम्प्रेचर वगैरह डिटरमिन कर के कही उसके स्टोरेज का बन्दोबस्त करें। वह बन्दोबस्त भी नहीं है। यह सब आप अच्छी तरह जानते हैं। जो छोटी-छोटी चीजें होती हैं, उनके लिये आप कुछ नहीं कर पाते। ब्लाक लेबल पर और मार्केटिंग कमेटीयों के

[श्री नरेन्द्र सिंह बरार]

जरिये से आप इनकी इमदाद कर सकते हैं, जैसे कि उनका जो गल्ला है, वह ठीक तरह से स्टोर हो। लेकिन उसकी चूहे से भी नहीं बचाया जा सका है, उसके गल्ले के स्टोरेज का भी बन्दोबस्त नहीं है और फिर आप कहते हैं कि हम इससे प्रोक्योरमेंट करेंगे और प्रोक्योरमेंट करने के लिये आप कानून ला रहे हैं। लेकिन आपने कभी यह नहीं सोचा कि गांव में रहने वाले जो खेतिहर मजदूर हैं, उनके लिये क्या प्राविजन है, वे कहां से खायेंगे ?

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

उसका क्या ठिकाना है ? जब आप सब उठा कर ले आये तो वह क्या करे ? तो फिर उसे जमींदार से, बड़े-बड़े लोगों से मदद लेनी होगी, उसको छिपा कर रखना होगा। वह खेतिहर मजदूर 20, 25 या 30 रु० में देगा और फिर वही आपको 40 और 50 रु० में लेना पड़ेगा। इसलिये अगर आप प्रोक्योरमेंट लाते हैं, तो मैं आपसे इत्तिजा करूंगा कि यह डिर्टमिन कर लिया जाय कि गांव में कितनी आबादी है, खेत में काम करने वाले कितने मजदूर हैं। मेरा कहना है कि जब गल्ला प्रोक्योर करेंगे, तो उनके खाने के लिये क्या तरीका सोचा है, वे कहां से खायेंगे ? ऐसा न हो कि गल्ला वे पैदा करें और उठाकर आप ले जाएं और बाद में वे शिकायत करें। फिर मजदूर के तहफुज के लिये गल्ले को वहां से हटाना होगा। जो भी आपने कभी कोई कानून लागू किया, जैसा अभी पंजाब में हुआ। वहां रेड्स हुए हैं, उसमें आपने देखा है कि सिविल सप्लाई वालों के सबसे बड़े आफिसर कैद हुए हैं। मैं कहूंगा कि आप इस तरह ज्यादा तबज्जह नहीं दे पाये, क्योंकि ऐसे कानून लाने से करप्शन को राहत मिलती है। उस राहत मिलने के साथ फिर आफिसर को ललचाने के ढंग होते हैं, फिर उनको पकड़ते हैं और मेरे खयाल में उनको सस्पेन्ड करते हैं और आफिसर को कैद करना पड़ता है और उस अरसे के लिये उनकी तनख्वाह देनी पड़ती है, आपकी भी बदनामी होती है, अखबारों में छपता है। तो यह मैं

आपके नोटिस में लाना चाहता हूं।

मैं आपका ज्यादा टाइम नहीं लेना चाहता। किसी अच्छे कानून के लाने पर हमें कभी ऐतराज नहीं है, बशर्ते कि उसका एफेक्टिव कन्ट्रोल हो। इस कानून में प्रोड्यूसर के लिए हैरास्मेन्ट नहीं होना चाहिए। देहात में जो हैरास्मेन्ट बढ़ता जा रहा है, उसको महज वह आदमी देख सकता है, जो उस माहौल में रहता है या जिसमें कभी वहां जाकर प्रैक्टिकली देखने की कोशिश की होती है। मैं आपसे रिक्वेस्ट करूंगा कि उन गांवों की तरफ तबज्जह दी जानी चाहिये और जमीन्दार को और प्रोड्यूसर को जिस चीज की जरूरत हो, वह उसको मिलनी चाहिये। मैं एक सजेशन दूंगा कि आप एग्रिकलचर डिपार्टमेंट को एक कम्पलसरी आर्डर दें कि फलों फलों जो हार्ड आफिशियल्स हैं, उनको और कहीं नहीं ठहरना होगा, सिवाय गांव में ठहरने के। जैसे आपने डेट कान्सीलियेशन बोर्ड बनाये थे और उसके मेम्बरों को हिदायत दी थी कि कोई मेम्बर गेस्ट हाउस में नहीं ठहरेगा बल्कि वहां जाकर के देहातियों के घर में ठहरेगा, ताकि वह उनकी तकलीफों को देख सकें और सही मानों में जान सकें कि क्या बात है। इसलिये मैं इत्तिजा करूंगा कि आपके आफिशियल्स डाक बंगले में जाकर, डिपुटी कमिश्नर के पास जाकर, बी० डी० ओ० के पास जाकर अपना टाइम जाया करने की बजाय अगर देहात में ठहरे, तो ज्यादा अच्छा होगा। यह चीज कम्पलसरी होनी चाहिये ताकि उनके सामने देहात वालों की दिक्कतें आएँ और उनका असली रूप उनके सामने आये और पर्सनल कांटेक्ट का मौका उनको मिले। मैं समझता हूं ऐसा आप करेंगे, तो काफी चीजों में काबू पा लेंगे।

देहात में तालीम कम होने की वजह से उनके साथ ज्यादातियां होती हैं। मैं एक ही लफज कहना चाहता हूं कि इसमें देहाती और शहरी के लफज को एक बहुत बड़े हाउस में गलत समझा जा रहा है। मैं यह नहीं कहता कि सब करते हैं यहां। मैंने देखा डिपुटी

चेयरमैन साहब कि किसी शहरी को डराने के लिए देहाती को पीटा जाता है, उसको सबको में लाकर नगा करके यह जुल्म करते हैं। उसको कुछ जुर्रत नहीं है कुछ कहने की, उनको हौसला नहीं है कुछ कह देने का। उसको डराने के लिये उस बेचारे को वहां लाकर जुल्म किया जाता है। इसलिये मैं आपसे इत्तजा करूंगा कि यह जो आप कानून ला रहे हैं, इसकी आड में हमारे ऊपर ज्यादाती नहीं होने पाए। अगर ज्यादाती हुई और इस कानून का मिस्यूज हुआ, तो हमको आपके ऊपर बहुत गिला होगी और हम समझते हैं कि आपने निहायत हमारे ऊपर ऐसी पावदिया डाली।

एक अमेन्डमेन्ट की वाबत जिक्र आया था कि किसी के कम से कम बुलक कार्ट को काफिस्केट नहीं करना चाहिये। मैं कहता हूँ चाहे बुलक कार्ट हो या ओर कुछ भी हो काफिस्केशन का जहां तक ताल्लुक है, इसके लिये सफिश्येन्ट रेस्ट्रेंट की जरूरत है, चाहे आप उसको पचायत के सिस्टम से देख लीजिए। यह डिसाइड करने के लिये बहुत नरमी रखी जाय। मैं आपका ज्यादा वक्त न लेते हुए सिर्फ इतना कहूंगा कि इसमें बहुत नरमी रखी जाय और अगर कोई ज्यादाती नहीं की गई, तो यह अमेन्डिंग बिल काबिले तारीफ हो सकता है और अगर इस बिल में उन सब बातों को कवर कर लिया जायेगा, तो मुझे कोई इत्तिफाक नहीं होगा।

थैंक यू।

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM.** Madam Deputy Chairman, the discussion in this House has gone on the basis, by and large, of accepting the principles of the Bill. But then naturally, considering the subject-matter with which this Bill deals, a much wider ground has been covered. I cannot agree more with many of the hon. Members, particularly the leader of the Swatantra Party, when he stated that the problem can be solved only by more production. That is the real problem. And it is not merely the problem of India. Now it is

recognised as the problem of all undeveloped countries. And I am sure the leader of the Swatantra Party would have gone through the literature from the Food and Agricultural Organisation and various other international organisations wherein the emphasis is being made that particularly in these underdeveloped and developing countries, the increase in population is outpacing the increase in production of food-grains and it is not merely in India that it has not been possible for us during the last 18 years or more to solve this problem. Even in some of the well-developed countries, the problem of agricultural production still remains a problem. Therefore we need not feel ashamed of what we have been able to achieve during these 18 years. We have kept up a record of increase which is comparable with any other country, if I may say so. But unfortunately, we had a deficit economy, to begin with, and with the increasing population our increase under production has not been adequate. I do not want to quote figures. I can give figures in regard to agricultural production during this year which have shown that we have made considerable progress in agricultural production. But that has not been adequate. I agree there. And it will not be adequate unless we increase the tempo of production, the pace of production, in the coming years and see that we produce enough within the country to feed the entire population, and that is our objective. And in that connection also, I am sure the House will have an opportunity to discuss the Fourth Five Year Plan where it is clearly said that we are giving the highest priority to agriculture and agricultural production. I am sure this hon. House will go into details and find out whether there is any deficiency there, where there is any lacuna there, whether there is any gap there. And I am sure if only they are able to make constructive suggestions, the Plan also could be improved with reference to our agricultural sector. And I am sure, during the Fourth Five Year Plan period, it should be possible for us to make all the efforts necessary and put in all the resources necessary for the purpose of making our country self-sufficient in food-grains.

Apart from that, I would like to lay down certain basic principles which are absolutely necessary to have increased production and that emphasis, that point,

[Shri C. Subramaniam.]

I have already made in this House. The first thing is this. Unless we modernise our agriculture, unless we utilise science and technology in the field of agriculture, whatever other efforts we may make, it will not be possible for us to produce enough to meet the needs of the country and for that purpose, it is also necessary that use of modern science and technology and all the material input necessary should be made available to the farmer in time and in sufficient quantities and at reasonable prices. That is why it is necessary for us to have better seeds, not only seeds with reference to the varieties that we have, but also new strains of foodgrains for better production. We should have fertiliser, we should have plant protection, we should have water, we should give credit to the farmer to get all these things. These are the basic things without which we cannot increase production. But basic to all these things is the price incentive. You cannot expect a farmer to go on producing at a loss. And therefore while we say that we should modernise our agriculture, while we say that while modernising agriculture the various material inputs should be used by the farmer, that could happen only if he is able to get a remunerative and incentive price. Unless we adopt these policies and implement them, whatever other effort we might make, whatever criticism we may make here, we may not be able to make any progress in the field of agriculture. And I hope and trust that this House, when the opportunity comes to discuss the Plan, will take these basic considerations into account and then give support to the Government and give support to the agricultural sector so that we may be able to adopt those basic policies and produce enough within the country. With all the effort, with all the desire that we may have and with all the zeal that we may have for the purpose of increasing production in the agricultural sector particularly, you cannot achieve production overnight to meet the entire needs of the country. It has got to be done during the next five years. That is the minimum period required, and we are hoping that with the new strategy which we have evolved it should be possible for us to produce enough of foodgrains within the next four or five years to meet the needs of foodgrains which we will require not only for the existing

population but also for the increasing population. But till then what do we do? That is the main question.

Madam, there are two aspects of the question. One is the immediate problem and the other is the short-term problem, that is to say, four or five years, till we reach self-sufficiency. And till we reach self-sufficiency—even after reaching self-sufficiency—it is necessary for the benefit of the poor consumers to have some regulated distribution at reasonable prices. It is that that we are trying to ensure by passing this amending legislation.

As already stated in my opening speech, this is restricted to two or three sections of the existing parent Act, for the purpose of improving the existing provisions. I have already explained how it improves the present position. But more than that, we are concerned with the immediate problem of the next two or three years. I am sure the hon'ble Members are aware that this is the lean season, pre-harvest season. The kharif crop is in the field. It will be harvested in the coming months of October/November. During this lean period we always get into difficulties not only during this year but in the past also. This is the period when the prices shoot up. If you see the statistical figures with regard to price strains, you will find that in the past years, during this lean period there is a tendency for the prices to rise, more so during this year when we passed through one of the worst droughts of the century where the production went down from 88 million tonnes to 72 million tonnes. Therefore, after a short-fall of 16 million tonnes from one year to another, to expect that we will have the normal functioning of the market, normal functioning of the distribution system is almost next to impossible. There are bound to be strains. There are bound to be difficulties. How best we are able to lessen these strains, how best we are able to get over these difficulties should be the concern of this House.

To the best of our ability we have planned for the purpose of equitable distribution throughout the country, in every State. To meet this situation we have made the plans. But, unfortunately, Madam, all our plans are being made to be upset, the plans of distribution. For example, something was said about West Bengal. I think Mr.

Niren Ghosh and Mr. Chitta Basu said something about the procurement policy there. The target fixed was 15 lakhs of tonnes. Then it was further reduced to 11 lakhs of tonnes. And then the State Government procures only 6 lakh tonnes. We put it to them: Who is responsible for this?

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** Your Government is responsible.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** Listen, please, Madam, naturally soon after the harvest it is the small producer who brings it into the market for the purpose of sale, as every hon'ble Member knows. Therefore, the West Bengal Government was able to mop up 5 lakh tonnes and a little more from the small producers, (*Interruption by Shri Niren Ghosh*) Yes, I am coming to that—who were forced to sell because of the circumstances soon after the harvest. They were able to do it. The West Bengal Government was planning to get the procurement from the bigger landlords. Then came the Bundh by the so-called leftist parties.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** No, no.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** I know the whole thing. Madam, it is this Bandh, it is this agitation . . .

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** You are shooting down the people

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** . . . I say categorically, the so-called leftists are functioning as the agents of the big producers. They came in the way of the West Bengal Government functioning there. In spite of using our legislative machinery, in spite of using our administrative machinery and even the police force for the purpose of getting foodgrains from the producers, these people came in the way and created conditions in which the West Bengal Government could not function. And, therefore, I categorically charge them that the so-called Bundh . . .

**SHRI NIREN GHOSH:** The Congress Government is standing in the way of the people getting food.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** . . . created conditions in which the West Bengal Government could not function and could

not carry on with the procurement programme. All sorts of obstacles were placed in their way. That does not matter. Let them think over it whether they did the correct thing or not. That is a different thing. But today, Madam, we are passing through one of the most critical periods for the purpose of distribution.

We are importing foodgrains from abroad. Naturally, our Communist friends, Right—I do not know, Left is also included—want to impeach me. I do not mind being impeached. They are doing all that because elections are coming. Let them criticise me. Let them criticise the Government. But now the lives of millions of people are at stake. Unless we are now in a position to distribute foodgrains that we are getting from abroad, particularly during this lean season, we are going to see a big tragedy enacted.

What is happening today? There is now a strike of the trucks. Who is behind this strike? Let the hon'ble Members there answer that. This stands in the way of unloading foodgrains and taking it to areas of shortage, and to the Railways. The strike is standing in the way of the unloading of ships and carrying food stocks to the people for whom this is got, to whom this has got to be distributed. They are standing in the way. .

**SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh):** Very sad.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** And then, Madam, they have declared that September 22nd and 23rd would be another big Bundh day. I tell you this is going to disturb . . .

**SHRI NIREN GHOSH:** You are not giving them food.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM:** You are standing in the way of giving them food. That is what you want. You want to create difficulty. This is your Bundh, (*Interruptions by Shri Niren Ghosh*). It is going further to disrupt the distribution machinery, transport machinery. And who is going to suffer? The millions of people for whom, they think, they are having these Bundhs. I want to say categorically if there is going to be any disruption in the distribution, the charge will be squarely on them. If they really care for the lives of millions of people. I appeal to them, not to play with



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their lives for their political purposes. Let them impeach me. But if they really care for the millions of people, I make an offer here. You may have your Bundhs, you may have your strikes, but let it not be done in a way which is likely to disturb the food distribution, which is likely to disturb the food production. Are you prepared to accept it that all your Bundhs and all your strikes will be subject to this.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : Stand up and say 'Yes'.

SARI NIREN GHOSH : It is a strike of the lorry owners, not lorry drivers. It concerns the owners of lorries and the Government and the taxes imposed by them. They do not touch big people who have hoarded stocks.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : Here is a very good offer. You promise at this stage that you would not disturb.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore) : They are out to create mischief.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : So this is the test. If they want food to be given to the people, I make this offer. Let them disturb all the other things, but let them not disturb food distribution and food production. This is a fair offer. But they are not interested in it. They want to create confusion. They want to disrupt the distribution machinery and tell the people that the Congress Government is responsible for it because the elections are coming. For the sake of elections, should we play with the lives of millions of people? It is a question which we will have to answer. Everywhere, Madam—I am sorry to say that—instead of co-operating particularly in this critical period, they are non-co-operating. We may have our fights during the elections. They may throw us out. That does not matter. But should they not co-operate particularly during this lean period when every ton which is moved has got to reach the bellies of the people and that only would save our people? Therefore, while we are considering this measure, while the people speak about it particularly that we should see that there is proper distribution, I appeal to them in all earnestness and sincerity and say : 'I am prepared to co-operate with you, let us pause at least during the three

months' lean period, difficult period, let us not create difficulties in the matter of food distribution." That is a simple thing in which they can come forward and co-operate with the Government if not on anything else.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : Let us hope so.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : This is the most important thing which we have to know and the people should know. The people should realise who are really now standing in the way of the people getting food, even whatever we have, how this distribution machinery is being disrupted, how obstructions are being placed in the free flow of foodgrains from the ports to the other areas. I am sure if they sit down and think for a while—while they speak for the benefit of the starving millions, I hope they sit down for once and think over this with a little bit of sincerity—I have no doubt in my mind that they would agree with my argument that particularly during this difficult period they should not bring in politics into food and play with the lives of millions of people. That is what they are doing, this dangerous game they are playing. I want to make it clear to this House, I want to make it clear to the country as a whole and to the people as a whole. This is what I wanted to place before you

As far as the measure is concerned, it is quite an innocent measure. We already have provisions for the procurement of foodgrains from the producers. What we are trying is to find out what should be the price to be given. I am in agreement with every Member who spoke about a remunerative price to the farmer. That is the thing for which I am fighting.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : I have failed.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I have not failed, I have succeeded but I have not succeeded so far fully and in that I want the co-operation of every Member for the purpose of giving a better price to the farmer, because that alone could give an incentive to him and apart from the incentive, the economic strength to him for the purpose of producing more.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : A reasonably fair price.

**SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :** Therefore what we are now trying to put down here is that a reasonable price, a remunerative price, should be given to the producers. At the same time we have to see that those who hold on to stocks do not get an undue advantage while those who are forced to sell immediately after the harvest are penalised. It is for that we have provided that even if a person holds on to the stock, if he has to sell later, he will get only the average price and he cannot take advantage of the lean season and ask for a higher price. Who will have the capacity to hold on? It will be only the big producers. As far as this is concerned, this is a reasonable provision as far as the average price for the post-harvest season of four months is concerned. As far as the other confiscation clause is concerned, we have already provided that the producer will not be affected. It is only the hoarders, profiteers, traders who commit breaches that will be affected, not every trader, not every businessman. It is only those who commit breach of the law, who commit offences, they alone will come under the provision of the confiscation clause. Therefore nobody need be afraid. These are the simple provisions and I hope and trust that the House will accept this Bill. I have already looked into the amendments and they are in my view, not necessary. They do not in any way improve the Bill; on the other hand sometimes they make it more difficult. Therefore I would appeal to hon. Members—only one Member has come forward with amendment—not to move them but to accept the Bill as it has come from the Lok Sabha. Thank you.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, as passed by the Lok Sabha, be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** We shall now take up the clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

*Clause 2—Amendment of section 3*

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** I move :

"That at pages 1 and 2, for lines 8 to 13 and 1 to 17, respectively, the following be substituted, namely :—

'(3B) (a) Where any person is required by an order made with reference to clause (f) of sub-section (2) to sell any grade or variety of foodgrains edible oilseeds or edible oils under sub-section (3A), the person shall be paid fair and equitable price for the foodgrains, edible oilseeds, or edible oils;

(b) the price to be paid under clause (a) shall be determined after taking into consideration the cost of production and price of other essential commodities'."

In this clause the fixation of price is being sought. In the amendment the Minister proposes that the price of the seized articles will be decided on the basis of the prevailing or likely to prevail rates during the post-harvest period in the area to which that order applies. To this I have given the above amendment. Under the D.I.R. the price of paddy or some essential commodities was fixed and I simply refer to the fixation of price in West Bengal as an example. The price of paddy was fixed between Rs. 14 and Rs. 16 per maund for the Government to procure.

**THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** You have spoken on this point.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU :** I want to speak. It is very important. I have a right to speak. I will not repeat. I can place at your disposal certain facts and figures to show that Rs. 14 or Rs. 16 was less than the cost of production for one maund of paddy. I can even show, I have no time, that to produce one maund of paddy in West Bengal it costs Rs. 20 but a peasant is being given a price of Rs. 14 to 16 for the finest variety of paddy. Therefore the price is not remunerative, not to talk of an incentive price. That is the reason which has discouraged or is likely to discourage the production of more rice in Bengal. Unless the peasants are given remunerative prices they will not produce. What is a remunerative price? That should be determined on the basis of the cost of production and also on the basis of the essential commodities a peasant is to buy from the market because he is to sell his paddy and buy his cloth, mustard oil and other essential commodities but if those factors are not taken into consideration, then the peasant economy is likely to be ruined and has already been ruined. Not

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only that but what I mean to say is this. On calculation you will find that if the Government purchase paddy at Rs. 14, the price of rice should not be more than Rs. 23 because I know coming from a village area, coming from a peasant family, that to produce one maund of rice we need  $1\frac{1}{2}$  maunds of paddy and what is the cost of that? It comes to Rs. 21 and we are prepared to give one rupee to the mill and one rupee as profit per maund. Then the price for the consumer should not exceed Rs. 23 but what is the price charged from the consumers in Bengal by the Government? They are charging Rs. 35 to Rs. 40. Why then the peasants are being deprived of their minimum or fair price? Therefore by amendment is that they should be given a fair and equitable price. And that fair and equitable price is to be determined taking into consideration the cost of production of that paddy or that agricultural produce and also taking into consideration the rising price level of other essential commodities a cultivator has to buy for his everyday life. But what is happening there? That is one aspect of my amendment.

Then there is another aspect of my amendment. You have said that the price will be fixed on the basis of the prevailing price in the post-harvest period, I think that the particular Minister is ignorant of peasant economy. Does he know anything about the peasant economy of our country?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should have said it in the other speech. Now you only speak on the amendment and show how your amendment fits into the Bill.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Immediately after the harvest the poor peasants have to sell their produce to the money-lenders, to the traders, to the big businessmen.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: All that you have already mentioned.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: So due to those distress sales the price falls and you want to fix up the price on the basis of the price which remained depressed immediately after the harvest. The price increases in course of time, after four months or five months or six months; the price increases in the lean period. Therefore, the price should be fixed

not on the post-harvest price level but on the pre-harvest price level, on the basis of the price prevailing during the lean period of the year. Therefore this is a vital amendment because, by this proposal of the Government, you are going to deprive the peasants, the millions of our peasants, of a reasonable price for their produce and thereby deprive them of the incentive to production, thereby causing damage to our national economy and furthering our dependence upon foreign countries for our food requirements which, I think, the House will never approve. Therefore I place my amendment.

*The question was proposed.*

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I am sorry I am unable to accept the amendment. I have already explained the rationale of the existing section.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you press your amendment?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I do.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That at pages 1 and 2, for lines 8 to 13, and 1 to 17 respectively, the following be substituted, namely:—

'(3B) (a) Where any person is required by an order made with reference to clause (f) of sub-section (2) to sell any grade or variety of foodgrains, edible oilseeds or edible oils under sub-section (3A), the persons shall be paid fair and equitable price for the foodgrains, edible oilseeds, or edible oils;

(b) The price to be paid under clause (a) shall be determined after taking into consideration the cost of production and price of other essential commodities.'"

*The motion was negatived.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill".

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 3—Insertion of new sections 6A to 6D*

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I move:

2. "That at page 2, for lines 29 to 34, the following be substituted, namely :—

'Provided that without prejudice also any action which may be taken under any other provision of this Act, foodgrains or edible oilseeds found surplus after deducting the quantity necessary for the members of the family and for agricultural operations, and seized in pursuance of an order made under section 3 in relation thereto, from a person engaged in the production of such foodgrains or oilseeds shall be confiscated under this section.'

'Provided further that section 6A shall not apply to the producers owning lands measuring less than five acres.'

3. "That at page 3, after line 21, the following be inserted, namely :

'(3) If any employee or officer either of the State Government or of the Central Government is found to have knowingly harassed any cultivator in seizing his foodgrains, edible oilseeds or edible oils, he shall be liable to prosecution according to law.'

*The questions were proposed.*

SHRI CHITTA BASU: One lacuna is here in this amending Bill. This amendment was not earlier in the Bill. It has been accepted or made in the Lok Sabha. So I feel that herein the real character of the hon. Minister has come out, because . . .

SHRI M. M. DHARIA (Maharashtra): How does it come?

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I am referring to class character, not to individual character. I have no enmity with him. I told you in my opening speech that there has been hoarding even in spite of the fact that there has been an increase in production of a certain variety of cereals, and I quoted from this book that there has been decrease in market arrivals, by which I sought to prove that there has been cornering of foodgrains, that there has been hoarding of foodgrains. And who are hoarders and who are the cornerers of these foodgrains? According to me—he may not agree with me—they are the big producers owning land in hundreds of acres, more than the ceiling limit. It is that class and the other classes

connected therewith who want to hoard the produce and thereby raise the price and then sell it in the market to get more price. As he was referring to the failure of the West Bengal Government for their failure to fulfil their target of procurement, I brought it to his notice. It is those big classes of landlords who have got enough produce but do not part with their produce, do not give it to the Government. It is because they could oblige the Government; they could make their produce safe by bribing the Government officials. That way they keep their hoarded stocks intact, and in this case he has not made any distinction between a big producer and a small producer. In the other amendment you might have seen that I want that the small producer should not be given trouble, should not be unnecessarily harassed, and I also referred to a particular basis, that the peasants and cultivators owning land less than five acres should not be brought under the purview of this section 6A, because what they produce is being consumed by their own family after setting apart a quantity for their own agricultural operations. But the big producers, they hoard it in order to have more price for it during the lean months. As the Bill stands, Government has not made any distinction between the small producer and the big producer. Under this Bill the big producers can maintain their hold without their hoarded stocks being seized.

SHRI SYED AHMAD (Madhya Pradesh): It seems he is officiating for Mr. Bhupesh Gupta. He has been taking so long for his speech. The Bill was scheduled to be finished within three hours.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am giving him five minutes for both the amendments.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Therefore I think that the distinction should be made. Unless this is done the hoarded foodgrains cannot be unhoarded, because all these foodgrains will be lying with them for as long as they like. Therefore, if the Government is serious to augment their procured stocks, they cannot but make this distinction. Therefore, my amendment is this that, under this law, all producers, irrespective of big or small, should not come to be governed by this section as it will ultimately defeat

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the very purpose of this Bill. Therefore I request that my amendments be accepted.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I am unable to accept this amendment because, in the parent Act, there is already provision for seizure.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Are you pressing both your amendments ?

SHRI CHITTA BASU : Yes, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The question is :

2. "That at page 2, for lines 29 to 34, the following be substituted, namely :—

'Provided that without prejudice to any action which may be taken under any other provision of this Act, foodgrains or edible oilseeds found surplus after deducting the quantity necessary for the members of the family and for agricultural operations, and seized in pursuance of an order made under section 3 in relation thereto, from a person engaged in the production of such foodgrains or oilseeds shall be confiscated under this section.'

'Provided further that section 6A shall not apply to the producers owning lands measuring less than five acres.'

*The motion was negatived.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The question is :

3. "That at page 3, after line 21, the following be inserted, namely :

'(3) If any employee or officer either of the State Government or of the Central Government is found to have knowingly harassed any cultivator in seizing his foodgrains, edible oilseeds or edible oils, he shall be liable to prosecution according to law.'

*The motion was negatived.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That clause 3 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 3 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.*

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : Madam, I move :

"That the Bill be passed."

*The question was proposed.*

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Now the time for this Bill has been allotted by the Chairman and therefore I will not allow speeches on the third reading because we have . . .

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : No. Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Please listen to the Chair. I am on my feet.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : I am listening of course.

3 P.M.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : This morning the Chairman announced that we have two legislative measures to be passed by this evening and he has allotted time. You have spoken and expressed your opinion. Only if you have something new to offer at the third reading stage of the Bill you will be given a very limited period of time. I do hope that you will have the necessary sense of responsibility when you speak.

Mr. Bhandari.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : उपसभापति महोदया, जो जिम्मेदारी सरकार ने अनाज के वितरण करने की ली है उसमें सब से बड़ी कठिनाई उसे यह हो रही है कि उसके पास वह स्टॉक नहीं होता, प्रोक्योरमेंट की जो पद्धति उसने अपनाई उसमें से वह उसे प्राप्त नहीं होता, और इसीलिये अब वह यह अधिकार लेना चाहती है कि उस सारे स्टॉक को जब्त कर सके ताकि उसकी स्टॉक पोषीशन में इम्प्रूवमेंट हो। मैं निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि खाद्य मंत्री महोदय का इरादा कितना ही अच्छा रहा हो लोक सभा में इस बिल को पारित कराने के पूर्व इस बिल के उद्देश्यों को ही उन्होंने समाप्त कर दिया प्रोड्यूसर को इस श्रेणी में से निकाल कर। अब प्रोड्यूसर हिन्दुस्तान का 80 प्रतिशत किसान है, आज हम उसको इस श्रेणी में से निकाल देते हैं,

प्रोक्थोरमेंट की जो तकलीफें हैं उसके कारण 80 परसेंट लोगों को इस श्रेणी में से निकाल देने के कारण उनकी स्टॉक पोजीशन में कोई सुधार नहीं होगा।

दूसरा मेरा यह कहना है कि मार्केटबिल सरप्लस ही अगर घटता जा रहा है तो फिर हम कंफिस्केशन के अधिकारों से भी इस अपनी कमी को पूरा नहीं कर सकते। मेरा यह निवेदन है कि सरकार एक गलत रास्ते पर शुरू से ही इस अन्न के क्षेत्र में चल रही है और उस गलत रास्ते के अन्दर उत्पन्न होने वाली कठिनाइयों को सरकार एक और गलत कदम उठा कर और ज्यादा करना चाहती है। यहां पर फूड कार्पोरेशन बना रखा है। जो फूड ट्रेडिंग कार्पोरेशन का उद्देश्य है वह अच्छा है, हमने साफ तौर पर कहा है कि हम फूड ट्रेडिंग कार्पोरेशन को बिजनेस प्रिंसिपल्स पर उसका फंक्शंस डिसचार्ज करने के लिये लगायेंगे। आज रेग्युलेटिव प्राइसेज का भी सवाल है।

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : All this does not concern the Bill before the House.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : मेरा निवेदन यह है कि इस प्रकार के मेजर्स लाने के बजाय आप अपने फूड ट्रेडिंग कार्पोरेशन के स्कोप को बढ़ायें, नार्मल मार्केट में उसको ला कर और उसी में से परचेज कर के अपनी स्टॉक पोजीशन बढ़ायें ताकि लोगों के सामने रेग्युलेटिव प्राइसेज का सवाल नहीं रहे और जो डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन की रिसर्पासिबिलिटी है वह भी स्टेट ट्रेडिंग कार्पोरेशन, फूड ट्रेडिंग कार्पोरेशन, अधिक से अधिक मात्रा में पूरी कर सकें। इसलिये मैं चाहूंगा कि इस मेजर के द्वारा जो अधिकार सरकार ले रही है उस मेजर को न ले कर के जो दूसरा रास्ता है उनको अपना कर इस अन्न संकट को दूर करने का प्रयत्न करे।

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : Madam, I want to say categorically that the hon. Minister has strung together untruths and half-baked assertions. But untruths and half-baked assertions do not make for arguments.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : I would repeat the same thing.

SHRI NIREN GHOSH : I am not repeating the same thing. I want to say that it was a lorry-owners' strike, not even a lorry-drivers' strike. It was all due to the action of the State Government and their taxes on the lorry-owners. But in order to hide his guilty soul he points his accusing finger at us instead of pointing it at the State Government and their taxes. We are not concerned with that at all.

Secondly, as regards the movement and procurement and other things, every suggestion that we made was spurned and turned down. Our suggestion that people with seven bighas should be let off was turned down. Our suggestion that the big dealers should be dealt with was rejected. We stated that the power should be given to the people's committees to unhoard the stocks; that was also rejected. Every one of our suggestion was rejected. And then when the people made peaceful protests and demonstrations and agitation, it was met with leonine violence. Also whatever assurances were given at that time have not been honoured up till now. They blame the Opposition leaders. We have repeatedly told them that they should fulfil those commitments. We said that statutory rationing should be introduced in all the towns and in the villages there should be full rationing in order to cover all those who have no stocks of food in the entire area. That was rejected. Again when these things have come up, they blame us. Six months have gone by and they have sat silently doing nothing. It is this Government that plays politics with food by placing their class interest above the interest of the ninety per cent of our people living in the villages and towns, the working classes. It is their politics. This cannot be in the nation's interest and it cannot be in the interest of the people to bring in politics in the food question. But in order to safeguard their own class interest they are doing it. I accuse the Government of being guilty of bringing in politics into the problem of food in order to safeguard their narrow interests and the interests of their parasites in the villages and the cities. As for the distribution machinery and its functioning, six months have passed and these demands of the people are there. For three months

[Shri Niren Ghosh.]

they have agitated. But nothing is done. What are the people to do? He is asking the people of every State—all over India to starve slowly day by day, to embrace slow death. And when the people start peaceful agitation then he says that the Opposition is responsible. We are not, and I say that this Bill is an anti-national, anti-peasant and anti-working-class measure and the Government is bringing it for the sake of a minute fraction of the people of this country, for the parasites and for playing politics with food . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That will do. Has the Minister got anything to say?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I have nothing more to add. I would again say that I made an offer to them and asked them if the bundh comes whether they will see that it does not interfere with the distribution. But no answer has come yet. I have nothing to say, Madam.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

#### RESOLUTION RE PRESIDENT'S PROCLAMATION IN RELATION TO THE STATE OF PUNJAB

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI JAISUKHLAL HATHI): Madam, I beg to move:

"That this House approves the Proclamation (G.S.R. No. 1069) issued by the President of India on the 5th July, 1966, under article 356 of the Constitution, in relation to the State of Punjab."

Madam, I would not like to go into the details of the history of the reorganisation of Punjab. If one wants to traverse that field one can go back right up to 1920 and narrate all the incidents one by one, step by step, till this present decision was taken. And one can also discuss a number of things. I know many of the hon. Members here would like to say things on the merits of the proposal of the Shah Commission on

the question of reorganisation, and even on the question of reorganisation itself they may have their own ideas. But this is not the occasion for us to deal with those things. For that purpose this House will have an opportunity when the Bill for the reorganisation of Punjab will be brought before the House next week.

I would therefore restrict myself to only the necessary details and facts leading to this Proclamation and for that purpose I shall take the starting point as 18th March 1966 when the Committee of Members of Parliament headed by the hon. Speaker of the Lok Sabha presented its Report on the demand for a Punjabi Suba. The Committee came to the conclusion that the Punjabi region should form a unilingual Punjabi State, the hill areas of Punjab included in the Hindi region which are contiguous to the Himachal Pradesh and have linguistic and cultural affinity with that territory should be merged with Himachal Pradesh and the remaining area should be formed as a separate unit which may be called the Haryana State. The Committee was also of the view that in case there were any boundary adjustments to be made among Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana a Committee of experts may be set up immediately to suggest necessary amendments. Accordingly the Government of India in their Resolution dated the 23rd April 1966 announced their decision to appoint a Commission consisting of Mr. Justice J. C. Shah as Chairman, Shri S. Dutt and Shri Phillip as Members for the purpose of determining the actual boundaries of the proposed reorganised units. The Commission presented its Report to the Government on 31st May 1966. The Commission marked out the areas of the present Punjab which will form the Punjabi-speaking State, those which will form the Hindi-speaking State, Haryana, and the rest which should be merged with Himachal Pradesh. As I said earlier, I need not go, nor is it necessary for us to go, into the details of these recommendations. They will be discussed at the proper time next week when the Bill comes before this House. But now I shall only explain the circumstances which created the need for the issue of the present Proclamation of the President under article 356 in relation to the State of Punjab.