

The House reassembled after lunch at half-past two of the clock, THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

MOTION RE. FOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY—continued.

SRI A. M. THOMAS: When my speech was interrupted by the statement of the hon. Home Minister, I was referring to the question of the cost of production which we have to bear in mind when we approach this question. I mention that as far as West Bengal is concerned, it has been estimated—based on our surveys—that it comes to Rs. 24.30 nP. per maund of rice. Of course, that includes the labour of the family members also, all things taken into consideration. It comes to Rs. 24.30 nP. And on that basis and taking the trade margin and other things, you can find the level of price is rather legitimate. In Madras, it has been calculated and it comes to Rs. 19.05 nP. and in Andhra Pradesh, it comes to Rs. 21.

SRI T. S. AVINASHILINGAM CHETTIAR: More than Madras?

SRI A. M. THOMAS: More than Madras. So, these things have also to be borne in mind. Of course, based on the cost of production, we cannot obviously fix a procurement price in which case the price that the consumer will have to pay will be much more. Foreign experts who have come to this country, have often been of the opinion that as far as the agriculturist in India is concerned, he is not being paid a remunerative price. In fact some three days back, one expert who had travelled our package districts had discussions with my senior colleague, and he was definitely of the opinion that if you wanted to increase production, you would have to pay a remunerative price to the farmer. So, this aspect may kindly be borne in mind when we approach this question. Of course, we cannot afford to give price support of the level that is being given in countries like the United States or for that matter any developed country in the West, because as far as India is concerned, 70 to 75 per cent. of the population directly or indirectly

depends on agriculture. So, if you protect that section to the extent that protection is given in the West, what would happen is that the entire burden would shift on to the 20 per cent. section, which would be an unbearable burden. So, there is a limit to our giving price support or a remunerative price to the farmer. That has also to be borne in mind.

In the USA, only 11 or 12 per cent. of the population is dependent on agriculture, so that the other 89 or 88 per cent. can afford to adjust, to subsidise the 10 per cent. That is a very material point which we have to take into consideration. There is, of course, a limit to the price that we can pay to the agriculturist. But whatever it be, it has to be borne in mind that he has to be paid a reasonable and remunerative price consistent with the circumstances obtaining in the country. Because we do not have a level of remunerative price for the farmer because of the limitation, what happens is that he will go in for more remunerative crops, for instance, cash crops. Cash crop is not a disturbing development, that is also necessary; we want cash crops also to earn foreign exchange and to meet our other requirements. Take, for example, jute. In fact, we want to earn foreign exchange by the sale of our jute goods. Take West Bengal which is always a difficult area. In fact, I had occasion to mention in the course of an answer on the floor of this House that in the year 1957-58, the jute production in West Bengal had been 1,830 thousand bales which had brought them an income of Rs. 24.75 crores. In 1962-63, production went up to 3,112 thousand bales and the income was Rs. 45.1 crores. So that in the course of three or four years, Madam, you may be pleased to find that Rs. 21 crores have been injected into the purchasing power of West Bengal on this one single item alone. And if this remains divorced from other circumstances, also perhaps it may not have much effect. But how was this jute production possible? It was by the diversion of paddy fields to jute production?

[Shri A. M. Thomas.]

So that, in two ways the price level has been affected. There is the increased purchasing power and then the loss of production because of diversion and all these circumstances have to be borne in mind when we consider this question. And I just make some comparison with some other countries in the matter of the price level as far as foodgrains are concerned. It is not that I want to take any satisfaction from the fact that our increase is perhaps less. It is not in that spirit that I say this. The consumer price index for food has risen more than in India, in Japan, Germany, France, Iran, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. Of course, in some other developed countries like the United Kingdom, USA, Belgium, Canada, USSR, and Switzerland, it has been less. But we may also note that the general wholesale price index number between 1953 and 1962 has risen much more in India than in the United Kingdom, USA, Belgium, Canada, USSR, Switzerland, which aspect I referred to at the beginning of my speech. It is only in France, Greece and Turkey, that the general price level index has been much more than in India.

So, we have this background. The high income elasticity of demand for foodgrains is natural in India where the bulk of the population has for long been living on marginal levels. There is the increase in population. In fact, the vicissitudes of weather do not affect that. There is a regular increase of more than 2 per cent. Of course, our food production has shown an average increase of over 3 per cent. per annum against the rise of only 2 per cent. per annum in population. The point to note is that the increase in food production has not been a steady one without fluctuations, whereas the increase in population has been uninterrupted.

So, this is the background according to me, with which we have to approach this question. And if we approach the question with this background, the difficult situation that we

found ourselves in during the recent months would certainly be explained. When I referred to the question of drop in production, Shri Akbar Ali Khan quite legitimately, of course, said that we were complacent, which I would say is not so. Is it because of complacency that at the end of the Second Plan we have been able to achieve the target? In fact, the last year has been an abnormal year. Human memory is short, I would respectfully submit. In a surplus State like Orissa, production came down because of a drought. In a heavily surplus State in wheat and rice, Madhya Pradesh, production came down by 30 per cent.—12 lakh tons. In the case of rice also it came down because of a drought, and it is well known that only 18 per cent. of the entire area covered by cereals is irrigated so that it is still a gamble in the monsoons. Of course by our development plans, irrigation facilities, and other things, it is possible to control the season to some extent, but this fact has certainly to be borne in mind. I would respectfully ask whether it is a question of complacency. In a country like the Soviet Union after 40 years of planning under a totalitarian regime, even they have to face that situation. (*Interruption*). I submit that it is not complacency. In fact, we are tightening up all the measures that would be necessary for increased production, and I may assure the House that in recent times no subject has engaged such concentrated attention as increased agricultural production. In fact, the administrative machinery is being geared up. Recently, as the House would have known, a Food Production Board has been constituted to concentrate on agriculture, to see that wherever bottlenecks are there, they are removed.

Having said this, I may draw the attention of the House to the measures that we have taken to meet the situation. In fact, as I have indicated, for Orissa which is a heavily surplus State, we had to give 45,000 tons of rice this year. For Madhya Pradesh,

we have to give 33,000 tons of rice this year. For West Bengal, although we undertook to supply to them only 1½ lakh tons of rice, we have supplied by this time about 2 lakh tons as against about 89,000 tons last year, so that we have supplied to West Bengal 1 lakh tons more than we supplied them by about this time last year.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: How much?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: We have supplied now 196,000 tons so that in the last two or three months in West Bengal as much as 30,000 tons of rice was being distributed through fair price shops every month. Apart from rice that we are supplying, the total distribution of wheat from Central stock during 1963 will be round about 11 lakh tons in West Bengal this year.

We have liberalised the distribution of wheat. During recent weeks, Madam, the prices of wheat have also risen in Punjab, U.P. and certain adjoining areas. This is mainly due to the heavy shortfall in production of wheat in U.P., which I have indicated previously. There has been a heavy drawal of wheat from Punjab to U.P. and as a consequence prices of wheat have risen in Punjab and Delhi also. We have taken measures also to meet the situation. Distribution of wheat from Central stocks in Punjab, Delhi and U.P. has been stepped up. The Punjab Government have set up fair price shops for distribution of wheat and atta. During the current month the Punjab Government have been allotted 40,000 tons of wheat of which 10,000 tons is for distribution as wheat and 30,000 tons for conversion into atta and for distribution of atta through fair price shops. The Punjab Government are getting wholemeal atta milled specially for themselves by the mills for distribution through fair price shops. They have been assured that any additional quantity of wheat required would be made available to them.

With regard to the position in Delhi also, especially when Members are here, they would certainly be con-

cerned with the situation obtaining in this capital of our country. There are as many as 205 fair price shops for the sale of wheat here. In fact, they have been practically dormant all these few years. We are just trying to see that they are activated and they meet the requirements of wheat of the public. With the rise in price the demand has gone up, and these fair shops have been advised to draw the maximum possible supply of wheat from Central stocks. There have also been reports, Madam, that the atta prices also are going up. In fact, they should not have gone up even to the extent of a single *naya paisa* because of the prices of wheat products are fixed. We supply the requirements of the mills at the subsidised rate of Rs. 14 per maund of wheat and there should not be any rise in the price of wheat products. Any price rise in wheat products, if pointed out, would certainly be sternly dealt with. In fact, as far as the mills in Delhi are concerned, they have as many as 4,000 retailers, and we have asked these mills to give the list of all these retailers to the Food Supply Department so that the Inspectorate may exercise adequate check on the distribution at controlled prices. We have alerted the Inspectorate, and frequent inspections of the fair price shops and retailers' shops are now being made. The mills have also been alerted that they have to exercise complete control over their retailers; otherwise steps would be taken even against the mills. In fact, Madam, after we found a little increase in the wheat prices we have taken other steps too. It is our idea to rush in wheat stocks. There is absolutely no difficulty for that. But all the same there is a tendency for people to purchase indigenous wheat. In fact, they are prepared to pay any price.

SHRI N. VENKATESWARA RAO (Andhra Pradesh): We take it for granted that the Minister gives us facts and nothing else. Why is he using "in fact" in practically every alternate sentence?

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: They are very material.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What else do you want?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: I do not think it deserves any answer. With regard to wheat I was saying that we are in a position to supply any quantity that is in demand, but as far as the consumers are concerned, especially the well-to-do consumers, they have definitely a preference for indigenous wheat, and they are prepared to pay any price because they can afford to pay. As far as the vulnerable section of the population is concerned, there is this imported wheat available at the rate of Rs. 14 per manud, and wheat products are also available at the rate calculated for this wheat that is imported. The consumers' preference we are also keeping in mind, and we will see that as much white wheat as possible is distributed through these fair price shops because, although this red wheat is more nutritious and it has got more protein content, perhaps the flour of the white wheat might be better for having chapatis and other things, and we are trying to see that as much white wheat as possible is diverted for the purpose of supply through these fair price shops.

Hon. Members would certainly be putting the question as to what are the steps that we are taking, and the obvious answer is that the first and foremost requirement is increased production. There is no dispute with regard to that fact. The Government is accused of not taking a long-term view, whether it is foodgrains or sugar. The measures which had been just mentioned to this hon. House would indicate the long-term approach that Government has made, about which there is no disagreement whatsoever.

With regard to the question of buffer stock operations, in fact it is a well-known fact that buffer stocks are the only solution for shortfalls in production. But there is a limit within which we will be in a position to build up the buffer stock that we have targeted for, that is 4 million tons of wheat and 2 million tons of rice.

With domestic production not up to requirement the build-up is bound to be slow, since it has to depend almost entirely on imports so far as rice and wheat are concerned and domestic production as far as sugar is concerned. As I have indicated previously in other connections, of course we are trying to procure as much as possible for our distribution requirements through fair price shops and, if possible, some quantity for the building up of buffer stocks. Now, with regard to another thing, we have not been complacent at all in this matter. A few years back, two or three years back, our storage position was very bad and even the storage that we had, the hired storage and other things, were quite unsatisfactory. But in this direction, the progress has been quite satisfactory during the last three years, and we are already progressing towards the three million-ton target for the Third Five Year Plan. So, by the end of the Third Year Plan, we would certainly be having three million tons of storage capacity of our own, and that first class storage.

The system of licensing is already in force. We are now going to strengthen the administrative machinery to provide the necessary checks and inspections which, unfortunately have been neglected because of lack of staff in the States. We have been imposing more and more restrictions on trade, as for example, margins, linking retailers with wholesalers, regulation of exports and imports through licensed importers and exporters, compulsory procurement and voluntary procurement at procurement rates which are admittedly below the lowest market rates in most places. The difficulties of procurement at such prices are obvious. In spite of it, the Government has been able to procure in 1963 twice the quantity that it could procure last year, despite the shortfall in production of nearly three million tons. This is not a sign of complacency or inaction. It is proposed to intensify measures further in order to profit from the better crops and to

prevent trade from pushing up prices to higher levels during the loan season. The lines on which the Government is proceeding are in the direction of requiring a substantial security from the licensed dealers, the notification of stocks and inspection of stocks, regulation of prices based, if possible, on ruling prices of paddy during the period of purchase, linking of the wholesalers with the retailers, strengthening the machinery to check the accounts and stocks of the traders in relation to the margins that have been fixed and ensuring that they do not profiteer, and the establishment of purchase organisations for purchasing paddy and, if necessary, rice in selected areas.

I will now come to the question of sugar. When the question of sugar is considered, the House would naturally expect me to refer to the situation which has developed which necessitated these controls on 17th April, 1963. In fact, when such difficulties occur, we naturally resort to controls. And how controls can be irksome can be seen even from our experience in regard to sugar. So, this also is something which the House may kindly bear in mind. (*Interruption*). I may just point out about the carry-over in 1960-61. The sugar year, as is well known, starts from the 1st of November and lasts till the last day of October. The carry-over in 1960-61 was six lakh tons. In 1961-62, it was 12,60,000 tons. In 1962-63, that is the year which has just come to an end, the carry-over was 10,26,000 tons. So, it was not at all a small quantity. In fact, we had a carry-over of a million tons when we started this sugar year. In fact, our production forecast in spite of bad crops was about 24 to 25 lakh tons. Even the industry which has become wise after that, has put the production between 24 and 25 lakh tons minimum. That was even two or three months before the season was to end. And if production was round about that level, certainly with this carry-over of a million tonnes, we could have certainly managed the situation. And

the hon. House knows the importance of promoting exports in order to earn foreign exchange. In fact, in the last three years, we have earned foreign exchange to the extent of Rs. 60 crores, and I submit that it is no mean achievement at all.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: In which items?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Sugar alone. In the last three years, we have earned foreign exchange to the extent of Rs. 60 crores. In fact, I submit that it is no mean achievement.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa): What has been the amount of subsidy?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: In fact, in regard to the last year, we may not have to bear any subsidy. It is only with regard to the previous years. Even if subsidy was necessary, because of increased production in 1960-61 and 1961-62, we had necessarily to find markets for exports. And there is one other factor also. Apart from the question of the need for the much-needed foreign exchange, I may submit that in order to stabilise the industry, to put the industry on a sound basis, we have to do it; in this House also opinion has been voiced that we must have some exports, four or five lakh tons. That has been the consensus of opinion. From our internal production, we must build up exports. In fact, which is the best time to build up an export market, which is the best time to earn foreign exchange? It is when the international prices are higher. There was a time when there was a glut of sugar, when opinions were voiced in this House that there was a crisis of surplus. At that time, the international price was £ 22 per ton of sugar. Even incurring a loss of Rs. 400 per ton, we had to export because there was so much of sugar here. Not only that. We wanted foreign exchange also. So, this is the best time to export some quantity and earn foreign exchange.

Apart from that there is another aspect also. I had occasion to represent this country at the United Nations Sugar Conference. I was leading the Indian Delegation and we

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asked for export quotas. What the international Conference will consider is that they will see what has been our performance before giving export quota. In fact, in 1958, when I attended the United Nations Sugar Conference, they asked me how I wanted a quota of three lakh tons. In 1956-57, we exported about 1.47 lakh tons. They are all very intelligent people. I was told, "previous to that, within a period of two to three years, you have imported into this country fourteen lakh tons. So, you have exported from your imports. So, how are you entitled to an export quota?" That was the question. In fact, I had no answer because it was a quite a legitimate question to be put. So, it is necessary that we should have an export quota and that quota is based on the performance. When we went to the last Sugar Conference it did not come to any agreement with regard to quotas. We wanted at least about five lakh tons export quota. It was in the preliminary discussions, and the Conference was not inclined to give us that quota. Whatever it might be, without coming to any arrangement with regard to the quota, the Conference broke. Now, in the next Sugar Conference, when the quota is settled, it will be dependent upon our performance. And in the course of these three or four years, we have been able to show a good performance. Certainly, our quota also will be based on this. It is well known that in order to earn foreign exchange, we have to curtail consumption to some extent within our own country. And I hope that this House will give its whole-hearted support that even at the risk of some shortage within this country, we have to maintain these exports. I think the hon. House will give its whole-hearted support to that measure.

3 P.M.

Now there was another point and there I said that about this year we had 31.86 lakh tons for internal consumption as well as for exports. In fact, because of this bullish tendency

we had released larger stocks in the early part, and later on, when we came to the month of April, we found that our stocks were only 12-13 lakh tons and we had still 5 or 6 months to cover, so that the control became inevitable.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: The hon. Minister was saying that there was 10 lakhs carry-over and 25 lakhs production. This came to 35 lakhs. How does it come to 35 lakhs?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: 21.6 lakh tons current year's production.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: Only 21 lakh tons. What has happened to the 25 lakh tons?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: The difficulty arose because of that . . .

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: What happened to the 25 lakh tons he was speaking about?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: That was the estimate of the industry.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Uttar Pradesh): And what was your estimate? That was the estimate of the industry. What was your estimate?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: We also thought that there would be a production round about that figure and, in fact, Madam, nobody thought that the production would be so low as it is. 1962-63 has been a very bad agricultural year as far this country is concerned; and not only for this country, as a matter of fact, in the case of sugar, it has been a bad year for almost the whole world also, and it should be interesting to Shri Santhanam to hear that we are now being approached by several countries to send them 5,000 tons of sugar, 10,000 tons of sugar, and so on. In fact there is a world shortage in sugar.

SHRI K. SANTHANAM: Is it only in the succeeding year you find out whether the preceding year has been good or bad?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: No, in fact we knew, when we had this 10,98,000 tons carry-over. (Interruptions). Yes, it is very easy to be wise after

the event. Now, one fact which has to be borne in mind is that, although the crop was so bad, gur production was more or less at the same figure as the previous year's so that, although there was this lower production in sugar, the bad season did not affect gur production at all; it fell on sugar, crystal sugar. So, that was a reason to which I will later on come with regard to the necessity for regulation of supplies to the sugar factories. So these controls became inevitable, and also quotas had to be allocated to the various States, and what I ask the House, Madam, is only to reconcile themselves to this position, as far as this year is concerned, that we have to be more or less satisfied with the same quantity that this country was consuming in the year 1961, and I do not think it is too much to ask of this country when the gains are so overwhelming, namely, the higher prices for sugar in the international market and the large foreign exchange that we can earn by exporting sugar.

SHRI M. RUTHNASWAMY (Madras): There is the population increase also.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Yes, of course it is there so that this House, I am sure, will appreciate the situation when they say that there is no sugar available and make complaints based on the grievances of the public. In fact, some discussion has been asked for on the question of the working of the sugar factories and also the question of regulation of supplies, the ban on movement of gur etc. Before that I would also come, Madam, to the prospects for the next sugar year. In fact, the target, as is well known, has been put at 33 lakh tons. We have sub-divided this target between the various States. That we have not fixed an unrealistic target would be borne by the fact that in 1960-61, when the installed capacity was much less, we were able to produce round about 30 lakh tons, and this year we have fixed this target

for the various States—U.P. is the major producing State—on the basis, more or less, of their performance in 1960-61. In fact, for U.P. the target that has been fixed is 15 lakh tons—they produced in 1960-61, 14.3 lakh tons. For Bihar, the target that has been fixed is 3½ lakh tons, and so on. We have fixed targets for the various States on this basis and we have come to this figure, and these targets have not been fixed arbitrarily by the Central Government, but in consultation with the various State Governments we have fixed these targets thinking that they are possible of achievement provided the same conditions are also made possible, namely, the regulation of supplies and assurance of cane supplies to the various factories.

Now, out of 189 factories, 148 factories have already started crushing much earlier than they used to crush in previous years. The total number that was crushing at this time last year—on 7/12—was 140 factories. Not only that, eight more factories are there this year, and all these factories have started crushing much earlier than they did during previous years. And in regard to sugar production also, the production of all factories up to 30/11 is 2,55,000, whereas the corresponding total production during last year was 1,17,412. Last year, although there was lesser production the factories started much earlier, and the lead that we have got on the 30th of November is 83,000 tons of sugar, and compared to the previous year—1961-62—when we produced 27,00,000 tons, the lead is 1,36,000 tons, whereas for the best year, for the year 1960-61, even regarding that year we have had a lead to the extent of 16,000 tons. In fact, this trend of production is by all means quite satisfactory and I am sure, Madam that this trend in sugar supply will be kept up. Also there is a cushion in this target that has been fixed, that is, even if it is a production of 30 lakh tons, even then, taking into account the internal consumption and the exports, we have certainly a

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cushion, and even if it comes to only 30 lakh tons, I have no difficulty to manage; not only that, we can comfortably manage.

Madam, I may just refer also to the question of gur, jaggery also, because . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: What is that? Vagary? Vagary is what we are told.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: My difficulty is with gur quota. There is some agitation, and so on. The difficulty is that I have to face now two Communist Parties, not only one Communist Party. Hitherto, till one year back, it was only one Communist Party; now it is two Communist Parties and my difficulty arises on account of that also.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: It is no less in the Congress Party.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Yes, and I have to deal with the vagaries of the Communist Party also.

AN. HON. MEMBER: Do not they cancel each other?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Madam, with regard to gur we may just bear in mind the picture. In fact, gur movement we just calculated for the purpose of granting quota for the various importing States. The movement comes to 5.3 lakh tons in the whole one year while the production of gur comes to 58 lakh tons. So, the movement is roughly 10 per cent of the total production. That becomes the subject-matter of inter-State movements. This is a very important aspect which we have to consider when we consider the question of gur. So the bulk of the production, that is, 90 per cent of it is consumed in the producing areas. So, it is obvious that as far as the bulk of the consumers is concerned, the prices have been brought down. In fact, 20,000 tons of sugar we are allotting to the

State of U.P., the largest State of the country with a population of over 7 crores. It has been said, "What is this quota of 20,000 tons for the largest State?"

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: What is the consumption . . .

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: I am not yielding. In fact, as far as gur is concerned, U.P. is a major producing State; and it is perhaps the sole producer of khandsari. So it is necessary that in the interest of the consumers of U.P. the prices of gur and khandsari are settled at a reasonable level.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: It is totally wrong.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: And now what is the price level? It is round about Rs. 21 to Rs. 22. In fact, with that level of prices the sugar-cane producer gets Rs. 2 per maund. His interests are also taken care of. So this picture may kindly be borne in mind by the hon. House when the House discusses the question of gur.

As far as the 90 per cent. quantity is concerned, or as far as the bulk of the consumers are concerned, the assurance is there that gur and khandsari will be available at a reasonable price. Now, of course, we have to take into account the needs of the importing States. That we have taken into account. We are allotting gur quotas on the basis of the imports to these various importing States in the last two years. For example, in November the movement came to only 20,000 tons but we have allotted a quantity of 30,000 tons to these importing States in November. In December, though the movement was only 20,000 tons we have given 39,000 tons, that is, roughly about 40,000 tons. In fact, one major importing State is Gujarat. On the basis of their past movement they were entitled to a much lower quantity. But even then we gave them first 7,000

tons and another 3,500 tons. In all 10,500 tons has been given to Gujarat whereas the entire movement was only 20,000 tons in December. Of course, as months proceed, for example, in the months of February and March, we will be certainly allocating larger quantities to these importing States. So, to the extent possible we are taking care of the importing States also. As far as U.P., Bihar, Madras, Andhra and Maharashtra are concerned, in fact, they would welcome this because the gur prices have come to quite a reasonable level.

Now, this will also show, Madam, how it was necessary to regulate supplies to the mills; otherwise the production target could never have been reached. I submitted that the entire drop was on the production of crystal sugar. Therefore, it was necessary that the prices for sugar-cane were kept at a level up to which supplies were possible to the sugar mills. In fact, one-third of the supply of cane that is produced in this country goes for the manufacture of crystal sugar and two-thirds to gur and khandasari. Sugar industry, Madam, is the most controlled industry here. The sugar-cane prices are fixed, cost of production is fixed, ex-factory prices are fixed. Everything is fixed. So it is not possible to control only one sector of a particular industry leaving two-thirds of the sector out of it. So some control of supply for the manufacture of khandasari and gur is inescapable, and I hope the House will certainly appreciate the situation.

In fact, as far as the distribution is concerned, when supply is short of the demand, there will always be some difficulty which is to be put up with. We have, however, tried to see that the distribution machinery is geared up. There is no possibility of increased supplies unless production keeps up. The key to the solution of shortage is, therefore, more production. In the meantime, we have to ensure that sugar distribution takes place equitably. We have,

therefore, tried to distribute quotas to States keeping in view the level of consumption in 1961 when sugar was controlled and also the availability of alternatives like khandasari and gur. It is for this reason, for instance, that the quota of sugar to U.P. or Maharashtra might appear low as compared to the population, but we must not forget that in U.P. a substantial amount of local production of khandasari and gur is available which is not available to other States like Punjab, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh to the same extent. Similarly, in Maharashtra,

We must not forget that the State Governments are also responsible to their own population and any attempt to impose from the Centre a particular method of distribution would be wholly wrong. It would also detract from the responsibility of the State Governments to distribute what they have within their own areas according to their best judgment. Our attitude in this respect is guided by these considerations. The State Governments are trying their best to deal with the problem. When we take into account the fact that the method of distribution follows the same lines as that of foodgrains, it is not as if sugar is a class by itself.

Madam, I will take just one minute with regard to the position in Delhi because our judgment will certainly be coloured also by the situation obtaining in Delhi. Of course, I am not myself satisfied, Madam, with the way in which distribution arrangements have been made for sugar. In fact, we have ourselves taken note of it. We have had discussions with the Delhi Administration. We are trying to plug loopholes so that distribution in Delhi also is made in a very satisfactory manner. There is absolutely no difficulty to maintain proper distribution in Delhi having regard to the quantity that we allow for Delhi. Even in times of free market operations the consumption in Delhi was 6,500 tons per month. In the last

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three months we have given to Delhi on an average 7,500 tons. So, it is a question of managing a situation. It is not a question of depletion of supply but the way in which we are in a position to distribute that quantity.

The Delhi Administration, in fact, once or twice adopted methods which were not foolproof. They issued certain cards to the retailers. Some retailers managed to print bogus cards. Then these cards were produced before the wholesalers against which sugar was obtained which naturally escaped into black market. The Delhi Administration has now decided to replace these cards. The distribution of the new cards took a few days which created difficulties for retailers to whom these cards could not be issued in time. The distribution of new cards is almost complete and the position will now improve.

The Delhi Administration has also strengthened their organisation for inspection and supervision of activities of dealers with a view to checking malpractices on their part. The set-up of the Civil Supplies Directorate is being reorganised and augmented to enable them to cope with the increased responsibilities relating to sugar and gur. It is proposed to divide Delhi into six zones and to put each zone under the charge of a Chief Inspector assisted by ten inspectors and some clerical staff.

As regards gur, with the imposition of restrictions on inter-State movement of gur, quotas of gur have been fixed for various importing States. The quota fixed for Delhi for the month of November was 1,000 tons. According to the requirements of Delhi we would be issuing additional quota also every month.

So I may assure the House that everything possible will be done in the case of distribution of sugar and gur as far as Delhi is concerned.

I do not intend to take more time of the House. I move the motion.

The question was proposed.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: I move:

"That at the end of the Motion, the following be added, namely:—

'and having considered the same, this House recommends that the minimum price of sugarcane be fixed at Rs. 2/- per maund for all sugar factories in U.P. and Bihar.'"

The question was proposed.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Madam, listening to the speech of the hon. Minister of State in-charge of Food, one would feel that there is nothing to worry about it as far as the food situation of the country is concerned, that only some trouble took place in Calcutta and that was also for some days and that is all which should cause us a little worry, if at all.

Such an approach to a problem so serious as the food problem is highly improper and extremely harmful. The hon. Minister sought to drown in a plethora of chosen statistics the real issues that must be faced by the country today as far as the food problem is concerned. It is not necessary for the Minister to come here and give us a few statistics and relate something which has been done, minor things. One would have expected him that in the middle of the Third Plan he should critically review the entire food situation and see whether there is any need for a radical orientation in the food policy in all its vital aspects. Unfortunately, neither in that House nor here the Government or the Ministers in-charge have chosen to do so. We regret this attitude on the part of the Government.

When some four years ago, Mr. Patil took charge from his predecessor, Mr. Jain, we pointed out in this House at once at that time that what was needed was not merely the change of Minister but what was needed really

was a change of policy. We were highly critical of the manner in which Mr. Patil sought to tackle this problem. If I have to refer to it now and then here, it is not because I want to, as far as the Minister is concerned, flog a dead horse. I want to call to mind certain bitter experiences of the past. Looking about it I find that Mr. Patil has left us—the Food Ministry and us—with only a sack-full of bluffs and some little buffer stock and indeed it is on the basis of bluffs, pure and simple and some buffer stocks, which he said he would be building, that he tried to solve the problem that we are facing. We said that it was a mistaken approach and in the last debate in this House on food, in December 1959, the spokesman from our side pointed out that one of the cardinal tasks that must be faced was to go in for widescale food purchases through State trading in foodgrains. Nothing of the kind was really done and we were told by the Minister that his approach in this matter was a pragmatic one. I shall come to that later. Let us see how they had treated us over the last one year—the Government side and the Minister in-charge. I shall just quote some of the statements made by them. In September 1962, Mr. Patil spoke in Bombay and said:

“By and large the food position was quite satisfactory”

and he added:

“The position will be better rather than worse”.

That is what he said in September 1962. Speaking at the Price Sub-Committee of the Congress Parliamentary Party, in October Mr. Patil said again that the food position was very satisfactory. He said actually:

“There are enough stocks both of rice and wheat”.

He said this in the Congress Party's Price Sub-Committee in October 1962 and this was reported in ‘The Statesman’ on 17th October 1962. In the

beginning of the year, the Food Ministry issued a certain communique or statement in which they countenanced the criticisms that were made by the press about the food policy of the Government and they characterised the public criticisms in the press and otherwise as—the public criticisms about slackness and rise in the prices —“based on madequate and mistaken appreciation of the food situation”. Then in April 1963, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh said in the Lok Sabha:

“There was no reason to draw a pessimistic conclusion about the food situation.”

Let us come to our hon. Minister here, Shri Thomas. He spoke in Coimbatore recently and said:

“The Centre had been able to tide over the short-fall in production especially in rice with a considerable degree of success”.

This is what the Minister said but what did the facts say? And we have not yet disinherited the Planning Commission or disowned it. The Planning Commission in a note to the Consultative Committee expressed its disappointment at the very slow rate of agricultural production. Mr. Patil was in the habit of taking no note of what the Planning Commission stated, stated as ridiculous some of the suggestions made by the Planning Minister and the Planning Commission. I will not go into the domestic polemics of the Congress Treasury Benches in this matter

Let us see what the situation is in this period in 1963 in the light of the statements that I have quoted, that statement that fell from the precious lips of our Minister. Now, they say that the foodgrains production has gone down. To these matters I shall come later. This is admitted now but when we deal with the production, I shall deal with this particular matter.

Now, we find that in the beginning of the year, Assam was facing food scarcity and rice was selling in

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Gauhati at Rs. 35 per maund. That was in May, in the early part of the year. Silichar—again in Assam—was facing food scarcity and in Hailakandi in the same State there were food demonstrations taking place. That was Assam.

In West Bengal, in October this year—about food prices I shall speak later on—the cost was Rs. 50 to Rs. 55 per maund. Yet the Chief Minister there was saying that there was no food crisis there. I have before me the speech made by Shri Shankar Das Banerjee, the Finance Minister, in the West Bengal Assembly, while introducing the Budget for 1963-64. You will find that there was no indication there that the food situation would be so bad in West Bengal as it turned out to be. In fact, he was trying to make out that the situation was improving, that the overall index in 1961 was not very much above that for 1953-54—the bumper crop year and he says here:

“This shows that there is progress as a result of the grow-more-food efforts of the State Government. But we must not lose sight of the fact that agricultural output in India still continues to be controlled by monsoons and so modern methods should be used to put our production in this vital sector of our economy beyond the vagaries of nature.”

This is what he said. And then coming to the prospects for 1962-63, he said:

“I want to draw the attention of the people of this State to the possibility of our food production being below normal.”

He says that the production will be below normal. I shall come to this matter later. Further he says:

“Reports have come to the effect that paddy producers are holding on to their paddy stocks, resulting in appreciable rise in the price of

paddy compared to the past year.” And then he said:

“The situation will be met by drawing on the Central food-stock.” This is what the Minister said there in the West Bengal Assembly. At that time the Government of West Bengal said that their food deficit was 7 lakhs. Later on it was increased to 17 lakhs in the middle of the year; in October, it was stated to be 27 lakhs. Mr. Prafulla Sen declared that it was 27 lakhs and not less than that. That is how they approached the problem. Therefore, West Bengal was plunging into a critical food situation, but those who were in-charge, they took no notice of it. They had the Defence of India Rules in their hands which they used against us, but they did nothing in order to bring the food situation under control. This is the scandalous story and I shall have to come back to it later, when I deal with West Bengal specifically. In Orissa, in the beginning of the year—and remember Orissa is a surplus State—they were facing difficulties and Mr. Pradhan there declared that the situation was assuming alarming proportions.

In Rajasthan, famine conditions prevailed and the Chief Minister, Shri Sukhadia, declared that 2.8 million people were affected in his State as a result of famine conditions. In Madhya Pradesh, food production declined by 12 lakh tons and according to the Government statements, Gujarat and Maharashtra also faced scarcity, also some parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. These are statements made by the officials and Ministers there or by this Government here. Now, you see that a large number of States were affected this year either by famine conditions or by food scarcity. But do I get any indication of this picture in the speech made today? No, nothing of the kind. All is well, they say, and yet the story is this.

This certainly does not speak well of the Government's analysis and approach to the situation. And Madam

Deputy Chairman, this is not accidental. These developments that took place over the years were not accidental. This is what I want to say. The Government wants to explain it away as being due to the vagaries of nature. Mr. Mahavir Tyagi coined an English word and said it was also due to the "vagarious" policies of the Government. I am using that expression for I suppose it is all right. In English, if a poet can coin a word in England, we can also do it, I suppose. In that way we understand it.

Now, Mr. Thomas came with a fantastic statement in the other House and I was shocked when I read it. He said that the rise in prices was because of the Plan investment in our expenditure. He said this in the Lok Sabha. Such a statement you will never find as an accepted proposition in the report of the Third Plan. I have got it here and I shall deal with the question of prices and then I shall show that the Minister was saying something which is clearly in contradiction of what has been stated in the Plan.

Therefore, Madam Deputy Chairman, what we need today is a much deeper analysis of the problem. I am stating these things now because I should like the new Food Minister who thinks he would be satisfied with a tenure of less than three years, to tackle the problem in its fundamentals, that is to say, the problem of production, the problem of distribution and the problem of prices. These are the three main fundamentals. On the food front, there must be a very effective concentration of attention on the part of the Government and that is what I am pleading for here. I have stood here not to answer all the points that have been made. They could be demolished. I have stood up here to seek a radical reorientation of the food policy of the Government in these three vital respects. They are inter-connected. One is connected with the other and they should be taken as an integrated whole. There should, therefore, be an integrated

approach as far as the food question is concerned.

Let us now take up the first question, namely, the question of production. At the root of this problem lies this question of, shall we say, the instability in the production, the cyclic decline in the actual production, and the chronic gap between production and the requirements. That is what is happening and we are never near stability. In 1948, speaking on the All India Radio, the Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, broadcasting to the nation sometime in June, to be exact, on the 27th June, 1948, said that by December 1952, India would attain self-sufficiency in food. That was the promise made to the nation. Where are we now? After fourteen or fifteen years, of progress, we are more or less, in the same position. Some slight improvement may be there, but we have not turned the corner. Then, two years ago, we were told that by the end of the Fourth Plan, that is to say, by 1971, the country would attain self-sufficiency in foodgrains. We do not hear these things said here any more. Recently, Mr. S. K. Patil, during his last visit to the U.S.A. told his American friends that in a matter of 5 or 10 years we shall be attaining self-sufficiency in foodgrains. But then, our experts, according to newspaper reports, are saying today that it will take another 20 to 25 years before we can achieve self-sufficiency in the matter of food. This is what is reported in the papers. Therefore, it may take another generation before we gain self-sufficiency in food production.

AN HON. MEMBER: With all this planning.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: That is what is stated. At this present rate I doubt whether in 20 years even, we will gain self-sufficiency.

Now, Madam Deputy Chairman, I shall touch on what the Prime Minister said. The trouble with the Prime Minister is that he says good things

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and then forgets. Having spoken good things he never asks the Minister to implement those things. Inaugurating the Agricultural University in Ludhiana, in the State from which the present Food Minister comes, the Prime Minister said on 8th July, 1963:

"I often hang my head in shame when I think that a nation with 70 per cent. of its population engaged in agriculture, depends on foreign countries for its food."

He was speaking on the failure to achieve self-sufficiency. Have you heard that critical note in the speech made by the hon. Minister for Food? No. Self-sufficiency is not to be talked about now. If it had not been achieved, then it had better be forgotten. Forget it, although the Prime Minister had reminded us of it. What am I to do? I would like to know whether other heads will be hung in shame for not having achieved self-sufficiency in the matter of food. I should like to hear from the Food Minister whether these sentiments are shared by him or not. I fully share those sentiments, taken as a nation and . . .

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: And you don't hold the Prime Minister responsible for the present food situation?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes, as the head of the Government he is responsible. Certainly as the Head of the Government, he is and that is what I submit. These are good sentiments spoken out and then forgotten. Those sentiments are meant for public consumption; but when it comes to implementation, it is Mr. S. K. Patil who has the better of the Prime Minister, not Bhupesh Gupta or somebody else in this House. That is the position.

This is the position and each year we have been importing foodgrains and my calculation, Madam Deputy Chairman, is that by now we have imported nearly foodgrains worth two

thousand crores of rupees. Certainly, by 1960, it was worth fifteen hundred crores of rupees and if you take the recent years, in no year have we been importing less than one hundred and twenty crores of rupees worth of foodgrains from abroad. I can give you the figures. In 1959-60, the import was of the order of one hundred and forty-one crores of rupees; the next year it was of the order of one hundred and ninety-two crores of rupees; the next year, it was of the order of rupees one hundred and twenty-nine crores and in 1962-63, it was of the order of one hundred and forty-one crores of rupees. Such is the position today. We live on P.L.-480 and yet, at the time of signing this particular agreement, some years ago, it was said that that would be the first and the last, and that after we got the deliveries under that agreement, of about seventeen million tons of foodgrains, there would be no need to have any further agreements or import. Shri S. K. Patil, got the Cabinet to sanction the second P.L.-480 agreement and we were told that some more foodgrains would be coming under it and figures have also now been given. Things have not improved. We go on in the old way, as far as foodgrain supply is concerned.

Now, the production part is also very very important and unless we make an improvement there, we cannot get out of the ruts into which we have fallen but nothing has been done in that regard too. Initially, for the Third Plan, the target fixed was one hundred and ten million tons but it was suddenly reduced to a hundred million tons. Now, we have not achieved even the target of eighty million tons and there are only two years to go. Am I to believe that in the next two years we are going to achieve the Plan target? No, not at all. It would be very lucky for us if we could somehow or the other attain eighty or eighty-two million tons. Therefore, we shall be below the target to the extent of eighteen to twenty million tons. This is the prospect and even this depleted target, reduced

target will not be achieved and the shortfall will be of the order of about eighteen to twenty million tons. That is the problem.

Now, with regard to production, if you take the last few years, you will find that instability in production has been the main theme. In 1957-58, production of foodgrains went down by 6.7 per cent.; in 1960, it went down by 3.9 per cent. and in 1962-63, it has fallen by two million tons compared to the previous year. Therefore, in these six years, we have three years where there has been decline in production. This is a sign of instability, sign of stagnation, certainly is not a sign which one can write home about and the Minister should so eloquently talk. Rice production has fallen in the year under discussion from 34 million tons to 31 million tons and in West Bengal alone they say that the deficit is twenty lakh tons less. Now, the deficit is there. I am taking the Central Government figures. Rice makes for fifty per cent; of course, other cereals are also there and, therefore, there is such a fall in rice production; it affects the entire food front.

Now, what is the solution for this? How are we to increase production? No suggestion has come from that side. I should like to know whether there will be any re-thinking on this question. We hear talks about land reforms and so on but the crux of the matter certainly is agrarian reforms and agrarian relations and this brings me to the question of agrarian reforms. As long as three per cent. of the people in the villages hold thirty per cent. of the land under cultivation, you cannot have incentive there. Production will continue to stagnate in this manner and we cannot get out of the stagnation even if for some seasonal reasons food production goes up in a particular year. Seventy per cent. of the agrarian population has either no land or has uneconomic holdings. This has been pointed. How to change this picture is not for me to repeat here. We can do so only by going into the question of

agrarian relations and yet we find that in the Kerala Assembly recently the old Agrarian Reforms Act has been amended, modified and replaced by another by the Congress Government in which rents have been raised considerably for one thing and secondly, wider scope has been given for eviction, because in the exempted category larger sections of people have been brought in, including the landlords and so on.

This is what is happening in the country and I do not think, if you pursue this policy, we can ever make a turn in the situation by way of substantial improvement. We cannot do so. We do not require either a Plan or a Food Minister to have a good monsoon, or rains. Rains will come. They are not contingent upon having this or that gentleman or Minister in-charge of the Food Ministry fortunately; otherwise, there would perhaps have been difficulties in having rains also. I do realise this. We know that when you plan you take into account not only the good days, forgetting the bad days. In fact, when you set a target of a hundred million tons, you certainly did not overlook the fact that there might be some bad days. Then, why do you come and tell us that production of foodgrain has not come up because of bad weather? Am I to understand that the Planning Commission and the Government did not have any concern about this matter, did not take into account that in our country sometimes rains come and sometimes rains do not come in the way that they should? There is what is called the vagary of nature. This is, therefore, a lame excuse. It is an attempt to cover a basic policy failure on the part of the Government. We should get the food policy to be based on a minimum stable production. If you think that we need eighty million tons or ninety-two million tons of foodgrains for the people, we must see that this becomes the minimum, failure of rain or whatever may be the other vagaries of nature. We at least must state that this much we are going to have. No, their

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line is not that and yet, if the rains are good, if production is good, they disgorge the statistics to take credit for the rains and when bad weather comes, they just brush this aside and say, "What can we do? The gods have not favoured us." Well, I think this certainly is not a responsible approach on the part of Government.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: That is what we call failure of planning.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No, you object to the very Plan. There is no trouble with the Plan but the trouble is with the difficulties in the Plan, the trouble is with those who are implementing the Plan.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: That is what we say.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: No, you do not say that. However, Madam Deputy Chairman, I say here that we need an orientation of the policy with regard to land. We want land to be given to the tillers of the soil. Fourteen years of bitter experience and national shame which the Prime Minister expressed have convinced everybody that unless we take courage in both hands and bring about radical agrarian reforms it would not be possible for India to attain the objective of self-sufficiency in foodgrains.

Now, let us come to the question of distribution. The problem arises undoubtedly from an overall deficit. Mr. S. K. Patil would have us believe that it is only of the order of four per cent. and that that is creating all the trouble. I do not know what is the overall deficit but the concentration of land in the hands of the few, as I said three per cent. of the population controlling thirty per cent. of the cultivable land, is really the basic cause for food falling into the hands of profiteers and traders. Because these people at the top in the villages are again linked up with the profiteers and speculators, that is how the market-

able surplus which may be one-third or one-fourth of the gross output goes not into proper channels of distribution but into black and subterranean channels of distribution and into the stocks of the hoarders. And the private banks are helping the process by reckless credit expansion, not in favour of the producer in the sense of the tiller of the soil or in favour of the co-operatives but advancing moneys of the order of Rs. 132 crores to the profiteers and speculators. So the banks come into the picture but the hon. Minister does not say this. Yet the Finance Ministry in its note has maintained that there has taken place credit expansion and quite a good part of it has gone to speculation in foodgrains and so on. I should like this fact to be admitted by the Food Minister and I should have liked him to tell us exactly how he is going to change this situation in this respect. Therefore, in the very nature of agrarian relations we have this institution of profiteering. The distribution of foodgrains should have been undertaken by the Government but here we heard a lecture today. I do not know if they read the Five Year Plan which they themselves wrote. I did not prepare this Five Year Plan. I would invite the attention of hon. Members to Chapter VII, page 13 of the Plan. The concluding portion of that Chapter says:

"It is, therefore, envisaged that Government would set up and promote the necessary co-operative and State agencies for purchase and sale of foodgrains at appropriate stages so as to strengthen its power to influence the course of prices and to prevent anti-social activities like hoarding and profiteering from getting the upper hand."

This is what the Plan has said. In this Chapter it is also said that there should be continuous purchase and sale over a wide front. I am using the words of the Plan. They have also further suggested more and more addition to domestic purchases as production increases. What was the fine

of the Planning Commission? If food production goes up, purchase more and more, purchase on a wider front, enter the market, employ all the agencies and help the co-operatives. This is the line given by the Planning Commission. Have they implemented it? I would like to know what they have done. I say that they have not implemented it but on the contrary they have gone in the opposite direction. Mr. S. K. Patil publicly announced that State trading was no good and it was buried. In his Bombay speech he said that it was dead and gone. And when the Planning Commission suggested 'you fix a minimum price' he said, 'No, a minimum price should not be fixed'. The Planning Commission suggested to the Food Ministry to go in for internal procurement and then they procured only 6.5 lakh tons as against a target of 1.5 million tons. Even in this respect the Government did not carry out the very modest suggestions of the Planning Commission and did not attempt to achieve the target set by themselves. Therefore, I say it is on that score that failure has taken place.

I want to point out to the House that the Planning Commission is being ignored, their recommendations are being ignored. What is the use of having a Plan if we do not implement its basic and important suggestions? What he said, on the other hand, today is amazing. He says that we should adjust ourselves to the rising prices, whereas the Third Five Year Plan says that everything should be done to control, to bring down prices and, in that connection, makes many suggestions as to how to bring down the prices or check the prices. Which am I to believe, the Minister's speech or the Third Five Year Plan? If you think that I have to believe the Minister's speech, then tear off these pages from the Planning Commission's Report. Why fuss about all this? What is the use of writing all these things here in the Plan and getting the Parliament to pass it if later on the Ministers were to ignore and violate

all the solemn commitments to the nation and Parliament? I should like to know the answer from the hon. Minister, sitting there, in this matter.

State trading in foodgrains is suggested now, I find by Mr. Malaviya in public speeches and even by other Congress members but in the other House the hon. Minister said, 'My approach in this matter is pragmatic.' Yes; your pragmatism is pregnant with the possibilities for hoarders and speculators. I do not want this kind of pragmatism. This is another way of saying, 'I shall not go in for it; I shall stick to the position which has been decided by Mr. S. K. Patil.' I would like the hon. Minister here to tell us where we stand with regard to State trading. Does he or does he not consider that State trading has an important part to bring about an improvement in the system of distribution and in ensuring that whatever we produce is put to the best use instead of being diverted in large quantities in the hands of speculators? A clear stand is needed today and I would ask hon. Members opposite to state clearly that State trading has an important role to play. We refer to the Asoka Mehta Committee's Report. I do not agree with some of the things said there but it did make certain suggestions and the hon. Minister said in the other House that somewhere we stand between *laissez faire* and State trading. Where do we stand? We would like to know clearly

In this connection, I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to what is happening in Bengal. In the editorial of 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' of 6th December, it is stated that unless the Government comes forward to procure rice at a reasonably fair price direct from the cultivators, the new crop will, within a few weeks, go to augment the jotedars and the wholesalers. The Government is powerless to deal with the matter and the whole game is being managed. This is what is said by a paper which

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is owned by one of the Ministers of the West Bengal Government, Mr. Tarun Kanti Ghosh, Minister in-charge of Industry, not by a Communist paper or an opposition paper. Yet we find there is no effort made to procure rice in West Bengal. At least in the surplus areas rice should be bought although the state as a whole is deficit today.

Now, I come to fair price shops. In 1962, there were 46,669 fair price shops and in 1963 the number has gone up to 56,209 and the Minister takes comfort in the fact that he has increased it by ten thousand. But are they adequate? Can they control the situation? If the intention of having fair price shops is to ensure supplies and also to have control over the market, then certainly India needs many more fair price shops than these 56,000. Yet from this little achievement—it is hardly an achievement—the hon. Minister seeks to take a lot of personal comfort. I do not like this kind of approach to be supported by Parliament. We need many more fair price shops. As far as distribution is concerned, we know the stocks are going into the hands of profiteers and we cannot control it. Mr. Ajit Prasad Jain said very clearly while making a speech at the Agricultural in February and laid emphasis on this aspect of the matter. I would draw the attention of the hon. Minister to what he said. He said:

"In the Second Plan however it (foodgrains production) was relegated to the background. Not only the initial allocations were meagre but the targets of production of both foodgrains and cash crops were raised without any new additional allocations being made. This caused a severe setback to agriculture which during the last two years had remained stagnant."

He was speaking in February 1963 and, therefore, according to him the situation in 1961 and 1962 had remained stagnant. This is a certain statement

of a former Food Minister of the country.

4 P.M.

We have foodgrains production and distribution and in the scheme of distribution we must give a fair price to the producer, to the peasant. At the same time, we must operate in the market on a large scale and that can be done only through State trading and other agencies, in order that we can buy and sell foodgrains on a much wider scale. Their solution is buffer stock. We are told now that they are going to build a buffer stock of 4 million tons of foodgrains, out of which two million tons will be comprised of rice. We are told that will solve the problem. This, again, is a wrong approach. I would ask the hon. Minister to give up this buffer stock approach. Not that we do not need buffer stock. We need it. These are supplementary things. These are secondary things, a second line of defence against a bad day. These are not measures on which we can pin our main policies. That we cannot do. But Mr. S. K. Patil thought that buffer stock would do the trick. It has not done it.

As far as the price is concerned, I was again surprised how he juggled the figures with regard to prices. There again, because he gives his statistics, I will give the statistics from their book which he had not given. If you take 1952-53 as the base year, in 1956 the price of food grains was 90.8. Having declined, compared to the previous year, in 1961, it rose to 117. I refer to food articles. That means plus 26.7. It went up by 26.7 points. As far as cereals are concerned, the prices rose in 1961. It went up by 16.7 points. A rise has taken place in 1962, compared to 1961, as admitted by the Government. In October 1963, the figure is 133.1. Therefore, there is a continuous rise. If you take for the food articles the base year as 1933, in July 1962 the price of food grains was 553 points and in July 1963 it was 591 points. If you take one year,

September 1962 and September 1963, the rise in the price of rice which has taken place is of the order of 14.4 per cent. compared to 5 per cent. in the corresponding period in the previous year. These are all official figures. They are not given here. They are not properly presented in order to draw a realistic picture of the situation. Therefore, I say, there is no point in trying to make out that price rise is not taking place.

Here, I must come, before I touch sugar and finish, to the problem of West Bengal. I do not wish to take the time of the House about West Bengal because I am discussing the general food policy. I have demanded agrarian relations to be changed and improved. I have demanded that there should be State trading in food-grains and they should start it. I demand that the price line should be held. I further say that there cannot be any reconciliation with the false thesis that if development takes place, there should be a rise in prices. This is rejected by the Planning Commission. We cannot accept it today. When there is scarcity, there is a rise in prices and you support it. When there is a bumper crop, there is a rise in prices and you support that also. You are running with the hare and hunting with the hound. We would like the Government to stop such things—once and for all and implement the recommendations of the Planning Commission in this regard and take advantage of the rise in production with a view to procuring more stocks and build up domestic stocks also, under the control of the Government, in order that they can control the entire market operations better. And that is possible only when you go in for State trading. So much so in the matter of distribution I am distressed to draw the attention of the House to one little thing, how sometimes things are done. Co-operatives are supposed to distribute things better to the consumer. They gave licences, permits, to certain concerns here for gur to be imported from Uttar Pra-

desh. The Delhi State, Central Co-operative Stores were given a permit to import 300 tons and another wholesale consumer stores 200 tons. They were asked to import 200 tons. I find that, having imported it, the Delhi State Central Co-operative Stores were selling a quintal of gur at Rs. 85, whereas I find that another concern, the Shahdara Gur and Khandsari Syndicate, a trading concern, was selling it at Rs. 67 per quintal, the price fixed by the Director-General of Civil Supplies. In other words, this co-operative was making a profit of Rs. 18 per quintal compared to the price at which the trade was selling it in the open market. I do not know how it happened. I have got photostat copies of the two cash memos. One of them, the Delhi State Central Co-operative Stores, Ltd., No. 442, shows that it was being sold at Rs. 85. I have got also cash memo No. 58 of the Shahdara Gur and Khandsari Syndicate which shows that they were selling it at Rs. 67. I am told that an important Congress leader is associated with this co-operative, as the Chairman, and he seems to have said in the Lok Sabha that he was sad to sell it at a higher price—it is interesting and in his speech he said—because the cost of gur transport to the Store came to from Rs. 6 to Rs. 8 per quintal. That included the money that had to be paid for getting wagons. I should like to know why money should have been paid for getting wagons. Is it bribe? Then, it stands to reason that an important Congress leader was giving bribe or his co-operative store was giving bribe to the railway authorities. We do not know why we have to make additional expenditure for getting wagons. Some day we will have to spend some money for buying a ticket, also, apart from the price of the ticket. This is the position. Well, I say this in sorrow. Co-operative is a good thing but co-operatives should not behave in this manner. We are all for co-operatives and promotion of co-operatives and certainly the Government should look into the matter and tell these people

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that they should not behave like this. As far as the co-operatives are concerned, they are supposed to sell at a cheaper price to the consumer and they are for the benefit of the consumer and they are meant to prevent food being speculated upon, or falling into wrong hands, private traders and so on.

As far as Calcutta is concerned, some reference has been made. All I can say is that Calcutta saved you, in the sense Mr. Prafulla Sen first said the deficit was 7 lakh tons. Then he said 17 lakh tons. Suddenly, in the middle of the year he said the deficit was 27 lakh tons and that at once came as something which enabled and encouraged these people to hoard stocks. The traders and so on hoarded the stocks. While he was saying that the deficit was 27 lakh tons, he said Bengal had no food crisis at that time. Prices were going up. Nothing would be done. When the people asked him, he said that the trade was behaving well and there were plenty of stocks. I have got all the quotations with me of his speeches from newspaper cuttings. I am not mentioning them. But then when the price rose to Rs. 55 the people came forward and compelled the godown keepers and the traders to disgorge 200 maunds of food-grains at Rs. 35 per maund. Only after that the West Bengal Chief Minister came to what is called a gentleman's agreement with these traders who held stocks illegally in this manner and tried to starve the people of Calcutta, to fix a minimum price of Rs. 35, instead of fixing it at Rs. 25 or 26. He thought that now that the people had got it, all right, let me fix it at that. He did not take into account the consumers' interest. It was his duty to apply the Defence of India Rules or other emergency regulations or the Essential Commodities Act in order to compel these people to disgorge their stock at the proper prices which are sanctioned by law and which are sanctioned by the Government of India. I should like to know what the Government did in the mat-

ter. Was there any enquiry as to why such a thing happened? I do not think that we need a Central Minister here only to supply rice and wheat to West Bengal or other States. That should be done. But for that we need a good godown keeper or storekeeper. We do not need a Minister for it. We need a Minister for regulating and guiding policies, for seeing that policies are implemented, for seeing that proper directions in line with the Plan are given and are carried out by the State Governments. Nothing of the kind was done. I think the Central Government failed in that respect also. The West Bengal Government tries to get away by putting the blame on the Central Government or suggesting that the Central Government had not done its part. Anyhow the Central Government's duty was to see that the Essential Commodities Act was used in order to discourage the hidden stocks, and up to now nothing is being done.

I demand for West Bengal adequate supplies, I demand that much greater supplies should be given because it is a deficit State. Regarding Calcutta, it is the responsibility of the entire country, and because of the division to jute production the food production has gone down. If we had stuck to food production on the land which had been diverted to jute production, West Bengal's production would have been much better. But jute has to be produced in order to earn foreign exchange for the overall needs of the economy. If that is so, the Central Government should render greater assistance to it. But at the same time I would like the Central Government to go into the question of West Bengal's food policies and see how they are being administered, because that aspect has to be borne in mind.

As far as sugar is concerned, I do not wish to say very much. All I say here is that our target of 33 lakh tons will not be attained. That is number one. Mr. Ajit Prasad Jain was right when he said that the Government

should thank itself if it could achieve 27 lakh tons instead of 33 lakh tons. The sugar production fell to 21 lakh tons and at the same time they were embarking upon heavy export of sugar denying the consumer that article. Denying it to the people they were exporting it by giving subsidies to the sugar industry amounting to Rs. 15 crores in order to earn a foreign exchange equivalent to Rs. 11 crores. This was said by Mr. Thomas in the Lok Sabha in reply to a Starred Question. The number of the question I can give, but I do not wish to give it here. Such is the position. Therefore, today it is not enough to tell us that you are earning foreign exchange. You are denying the people sugar which they need. It is a very vital consumer article, and you cannot play with that article. If foreign exchange is short, we have to devise other means. On the one hand you are subsidising the sugar industry who are cheating the Government, defrauding the Government and the consumers, and on the other hand you are trying to make out that this export is essential for the overall needs of the economy. Shri Ajit Prasad Jain was quite right when he warned that there should be caution in the matter of export of sugar from our country.

I suggest, therefore, that some of the sugar industries should be taken over under the Industries Development and Regulation Act. That should be done. They are cheating. Cane is lying idle, this is what I say, and this is what is admitted by the Government and the Uttar Pradesh Government. What did they do? They fixed the sugar quota on the basis of income. Can you imagine such a thing? Rich people will eat sugar, other people cannot eat sugar unless they fall in the higher income category. That law is taken away, I know, but you can see the mentality when they fix such things. They are denying a just price to the sugar-cane grower. Two rupees minimum price should be fixed for the grower in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. That is absolutely essential today. Enough pampering of the industry has

been done. They have cheated the Government by all kinds of manipulation. They are not paying the income-tax due from them. They are denying what is the just price to the cane growers and trying to hold the country to ransom as far as sugar is concerned. But you are not taking action against them. I demand action against these sugar mill owners for behaving in this manner. I want to suggest the nationalisation of the sugar industry. Consider it. At least use the powers under the Industries Development and Regulation Act to take over the sugar mills which are not making renovations and at the same time getting the subsidies which are not utilised for the machineries properly, the recovery from where is very small, and these are considerations which the Government should take into account.

Madam Deputy Chairman, I do not wish to say anything more. I think that we have reached the stage when we must give up talking in routine terms. Routine questions and routine replies are not enough today. Statistical jugglery on this side or that side would not do. The fact remains that we cannot attain the target and we shall be behind it in a very big way. It has been suggested that by the end of 1971, taking into account the growth of population, we might be needing 130 million tons of foodgrains. How on earth are we going to achieve that target if we go on at the present rate? I should like to know that from the Minister. If we cannot attain that target, it will not be merely hunger and scarcity or famine conditions in the country but the rate of growth will come down still further. It will have an adverse effect on the economy as a whole, and the Prime Minister, I think, is quite right when he said that we go up or down with the agriculture, because it counts for nearly 50 per cent. of our national income. Look after that, 50 per cent. of our national income in a proper way, through a proper policy, and much will have looked after itself. Look after this sector of our economy with greater

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attention, with vigorous policies. Only then can we get out of the rut and make a better impact on the situation. Solving the food crisis certainly does not lie, however important it may be, in either building up buffer stock or giving occasional supplies. Solving the food crisis lies in increasing agricultural production, both the yield per acre and generally, and at the same time in seeing that whatever is produced goes to the consumer while giving a fair price to those who till the soil.

The price factor, as I have said, is very important. Price Stabilisation Committee or whatever you call it, have that, or any other arrangement, but the prices have to be brought under control; and food prices cannot be controlled today unless we decide in a firm way to go in for large-scale State trading in foodgrains, which is the crying need of the hour. Thank you.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): Madam Deputy Chairman, I wish to thank the Minister of Food for giving us this opportunity of considering the food situation, and I wish to thank him also for the very high and handsome compliments he had paid for the deliberations by this House. In his very lucid and very elaborate speech he has explained to us as to how this situation in the recent months has come to occupy our minds and our attention. He has told us that this shortfall was unexpected, and he has given the reasons for it. He has explained how this shortfall has been responsible for this situation. Whereas in 1961-62, we had a total production of 79.7 million tons, in 1962-63, it fell to 77.5 million tons. In rice alone the production fell by 2.8 million tons. Since by far the larger section in this country consumes rice and since we had such a heavy shortfall in rice, naturally people began to feel that there was scarcity in foodgrains, whereas there was no scarcity of foodgrains in other kinds, for instance, in millets and cereals.

Now, the Government have tried to make the best of the situation by coping, with it, by allotting more and more quotas of rice and wheat to the States which were hit hard, including the hon. Communist Party leader's State, West Bengal, and by opening more and more fair price shops as the situation demanded. Up to March 1963, there were 47,700 fair price shops. By the end of June, the fair price shops increased to 51,800, and by the end of September it went up to 56,300. This can by no means be termed as negligible. They have been able to enlarge the scope of the fair price shops as our resources and means could afford. The supply of wheat and rice up to the end of October have been 956,000 tons, as against 721,000 tons for the corresponding period in the previous year. That shows that the Government have been very much alive to the situation and that they have tried their best to send more supplies.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Not millions, lakh tons.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: Sorry, I stand corrected. Rice in lakh tons, wheat in million tons.

Now, the hon. Shri Bhupesh Gupta was saying, "I demand for West Bengal, West Bengal has been neglected." Well, those coming from the deficit States can justifiably envy the favourable situation of West Bengal vis-a-vis the Government supplies. If I give certain figures, it will be very clear to the House. The supply of wheat from January to October, 1963, to West Bengal has been 892 thousand tons, whereas during the last year for the corresponding period, it was 538 thousand tons. I am taking the highest figure of supplies. The next highest was Bihar which got 359 thousand tons. Whereas it was 359 thousand tons for the whole of Bihar, for West Bengal it was 892 thousand tons, and for U.P., which has a very thick population, the supply for the same period was 358 thousand tons. And my

friends here still say, "You have neglected West Bengal." We have got a grievance against the Government for being partial to West Bengal, although the situation in West Bengal perhaps did demand that measure of generosity from the Government. Now, in regard to the fair price shops, in West Bengal, the number of fair price shops up to date has been 11,997, whereas the next highest figure is in Maharashtra. That is only 9,294. In Bihar, it is 8,880, whereas in Kerala, which is also a deficit State, the number is only 6,371. So, these figures show very clearly that the Government have done well by West Bengal and West Bengal has no grievance. Perhaps, if the Government's resources permitted, they would have supplied more to West Bengal than to other States because West Bengal shouts louder and Calcutta shouts louder.

AN HON. MEMBER: Loudest.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: Yes, loudest. I stand corrected.

Well, the hon. Minister of Food has told us at very great length as to how this unprecedented situation will be overcome by him. He says that apart from other measures that he is taking, he will be building up a buffer stock of four million tons of wheat and two million tons of rice. Perhaps, this will be by procurement. My own experience in the matter of procurement has been that the Government has to be cautious. They will have to build up buffer stocks. I quite see the point because in order to counterbalance any deficit from the expected estimates and on account of vagaries of nature, they will have to have a buffer stock but this buffer stock has to be very carefully planned. Now, I read somewhere that there would be compulsory procurement in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. I do not know if this is right. If this is right, I wish to give a word of caution. This procurement has to be proceeded with with great caution because if you procure in a particular State rather heavily, it tends to in-

crease the prices of those foodgrains in that very State. That has been the experience of the States where procurement has taken place. If procurement is necessary, well, let them go slow about it, taking great care to see that this procurement does not give a spurt to any rise in prices in those States. The situation that we have to consider today is not this temporary situation which we have today but a permanent situation.

The food situation has been eluding solution for a long time. We have had deficits for a long time. We have had to import three to five million tons a year. In a country which has about 300 to 320 million acres under crop each year, where 66 per cent. of the population at least is engaged in active agriculture, this sharp shortfall should not have been there. It is a challenge to us, it is a challenge to the whole population. It is a challenge as well to Shri Bhupesh Gupta, to the patriotism of his party, to people who say that unnecessarily a scare should not be created and it is their bounden duty to see that they help in the process of increasing agricultural production, food production. It is a challenge not only to the Government, it is a challenge to the people as well, it is a challenge to our intelligence, it is a challenge to the intelligence of the Government departments, it is a challenge to the efficiency of the Ministers, it is a challenge to the patriotism of the people as well. We have to accept this challenge. After all, you cannot go on continuing imports from foreign countries. Imports may not be always to our disadvantage as I am going to show.

As the House knows, P.L. 480 is not entirely to our disadvantage because those P.L. 480 funds are used or deposited within the country, and are used to our benefit on a corresponding amount being deposited by the Government. Although in the food account, they are a debit, for the country they are an asset because they got spent for the use of the country, for libraries, for univer-

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sities and for other things. So, in that way, it has not been a disadvantage but the very fact that we import foodgrains is a challenge to us, which challenge must be met. There was in 1959, I think, a Ford Foundation team which went into this. They called it a crisis, a food crisis in India, the Indian food crisis, and they submitted a report. And they say that freedom for India does not count much if there is no freedom of food. If people do not have food, they do not value their freedom so much. They even barter away their freedom for food. There have been instances. Therefore, they suggested that we should tackle this food problem on an all-out emergency basis. They have recommended additional, adequate funds. They have recommended top priority and the Government have given earnest consideration to this.

As the House knows, the Prime Minister sent out a circular to all the States two or three years ago requesting that the portfolio of agriculture in the States should not be neglected, they should be entrusted to an important Minister. And I think the National Development Council considered this question and they said that as far as possible the Chief Ministers in the States should handle the portfolio themselves. And then they have started a Food Production Board in the Cabinet itself at the Centre, and the National Development Council has decided that an Agricultural Production Board should be started in each State with the Chief Minister as the Chairman, and an Agricultural Production Co-ordination Committee or Board should be started in each State with the Chief Secretary as the Chairman. They have started an Agricultural Machinery Board for supplying machinery. They have taken many steps in addition to the normal measures. The Government have been doing their very best in this regard. But with all that—we have exceeded a little in the Second Plan our targets of food production—it is not kept up in the first two or three years of the Third Plan,

and we doubt very much whether the progress and achievement of the Second Plan could be kept up in the Third Plan as well, unless earnest and vigorous attempts are made. I wish to throw out my own suggestions in this regard. They may not be very pleasant but I wish to be excused because I am speaking from experience.

Madam, the first thing is—and the Government would, I think, agree—that so far as the producing agency is concerned, its voluntary interest and its enthusiasm must be won. For instance, in industrial labour relations, we go out of the way to invite labour and give it even participation in the management and to do everything for labour. This is just to see that the industrial relations are good and the industrial output will be increasing day by day. Should we not show some consideration for this producing agency, namely, the farmer? Mr. Thomas has shown—I am very grateful to him—how agricultural products, even today, even at these increased prices, are not paying to the agriculturist. He has shown that very correctly, and everyone who has intimate connection with agriculture at least will agree with that, and if at all anything, that is an underestimate, not an over-estimate. When that is so, how can we expect the farmer to produce unless he is enthused?

Well, Madam, in the nation's councils the farmer is nobody. The Planning Commission, which is overweighed on the side of theory, has nobody to assist it in this regard, one who can bring to bear practical experience of rural conditions, of village life and of agricultural conditions on the deliberations of the Planning Commission. This I have been urging time and again all these eleven years that I have been here. But still it has not appealed to the Government, and I think that, if this question has to be solved, then the Government have to give the farmers a place; the farmers must know that they have an equal interest in the country's councils, an equal place in the country's councils. There are

Import Councils; there is no farmer represented. There are Export Councils; there is no farmer represented. Madam, I once wrote a letter to the Prime Minister about this and he sent it on to the concerned Minister, and the concerned Minister said, "Why should the farmer be represented?" Now, don't you know that when a commodity has suddenly to be exported, its price goes up in the market, and when you stop its export its price falls? Supposing now groundnut exports are suddenly stopped. Well, before that, because a certain price for groundnut is prevailing, I wish to grow groundnuts thinking that I will get a good price for it. But by the time the crop comes into my hand, its export will have been stopped. The market will be down, and I lose, so that there is no relation between export and the farmer's interest. This has to be considered.

There are several commodity committees; I do not know on how many farmers are represented, and if anybody does represent the farmer, it will be only an urban man representing the farmers. This the Government have to earnestly consider. There is the difficulty as to how to choose a farmer, which I quite see, whereas in labour there are labour unions and they can easily be represented. Farmers cannot so easily be selected—I quite see—but make a beginning. Select a known man, a man who has got agricultural interest, and you will see that the farmers will get interested; they will organise themselves and they will take a co-operative line. Now one may ask, "Are we not doing enough for the farmer? And should not the farmer be grateful". It is true that the Government are spending in a hundred ways for the farmers. But have the Government ever taken care to see that all the ameliorative measures reach the farmer in the form the Government intend them to be? To mention only one instance, Government give agricultural credit, Government supply credit to agricultural co-operative societies. And here, Madam, when they borrow at 3 to

4½ per cent. interest, they lend to farmers at 9 to 12 per cent. There have been instances where they lend at 9 to 12 per cent. interest. Where is the good? Which farmer will be grateful? And by taking that loan he will be spending at least one-tenth of the money to bribe the people concerned, same with regard to fertilisers—no farmer gets fertilisers at the cost price; same with regard to agricultural implements. So, why should the farmer feel grateful when what he gets, he gets just as they would otherwise get in the black market? I am grateful to the Government for evolving all these schemes, but I am very sorry, am distressed to see that the Government have not followed up to see how these schemes are executed, whether the benefits of these schemes are going to the farmer in a full measure. They are not, and this is a very important question the Government should think of and should go at.

The other point which I would like very humbly to represent to the Government is this. We have cultivated in our services an attitude of, what I should say, Mughal courtiership, that is to say, I must please my superior; my superior must please his superior, and so on, regardless of truth. And this is a tendency which is there. Therefore the Ministry, at no time, can get at the exact and actual truth. I can give you a number of instances, if not in the field of agriculture, in other fields, where wrong estimates have been given, wrong figures have been given, which they cannot support, and where crores of rupees have been spent on those estimates. I do not mean to say that they were purposely given. My point is to say that the subordinates are not encouraged to give their independent judgement. In a foreign country, a superior officer—I have seen and have some experience with some firms—whenever there is a scheme, he calls for the man concerned—he is a subordinate—and asks, "Hello Jim, what do you think of this?" He takes his advice. If he agrees with the advice

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tendered, well and good. And if he does not agree, "All right, Jim, I have heard you 'You do like this', he will say 'But here 'No', subordinate counsels are not taken into consideration, and if a subordinate has the temerity to advise, to suggest, then that will be taken as impertinence. Now, we have to encourage the tendency of truthfulness in the services. If our services have to be useful, particularly in a field like agriculture, truthfulness has to be encouraged; otherwise you will never get true returns. I know how in the Community Development Blocks—I have got to examine the accounts, I have gone to several of them—wrong, untruthful accounts are given. It is not because they want to give false accounts, they want to please their superior, because they think their advancing in their service depends upon their pleasing their superior. Well, this attitude must be discouraged, this must be given attention to, it should not be ignored; I am speaking from experience and I think most of the Members will agree with me in this regard, and this truthfulness must be encouraged.

And then the food habits must change. Well, the Government have been experiencing food shortage, food difficulty, for all these years, but no propaganda is being carried on for changing the food habits. I find from Mr Thomas's speech elsewhere that there is no elasticity in our food habits, that is to say, if we are used to rice alone, we want rice alone. Even when rice is not available, we would rather starve than do with wheat. But with sufficient education, with educative propaganda, these habits can be changed. I think Mr Thomas stated that before the Second World war not many had seen wheat, that many did not know, rather nobody knew how to prepare from wheat. But there was propaganda, because there was shortage of rice there was propaganda for wheat, and now many people in Kerala know how to prepare from wheat, and I

think they use wheat also. So it is a thing which people acquire if there is propaganda or talk on the subject. Now there is no attempt made.

There has been a lot of waste in higher circles, and that is not prevented, there is no propaganda to prevent it. I do not mean it should be prevented by force. I am not advocating that, but more educative propaganda, such as is carried on, for instance in the Communist countries. I would like somebody to copy that system of propaganda, educative and constructive propaganda. Their other propaganda, one may call it bluff, that and this. But this sort of educative propaganda, they must copy from them. Food habits must change. For instance, people must be taught how to use vegetables, not to waste vegetable products, must be taught the value of vitamins, that and this. No attempt is made, no strong attempt has been made on this basis by the Government.

And then in certain States land revenue is being increased. Of course, many farmers can pay the increased land revenue on wet lands—I do admit—but as far as dry farming is concerned, please prevail upon the State Governments not to increase land revenue there because, Madam, wet crops can only be grown where there is sufficient irrigation facility. But dry crops can be grown without irrigation, even if there is a little rainfall. In fact, the Government have paid very little attention to dry crops. It is dry crops that can save the situation wherever there is food shortage. For instance, a crop like jawar, a crop like bajra, a crop like navane in the South, a crop like ragi sustains a majority of the population today, wheat-eaters and rice-eaters do not form the majority of the population, it is these millet-eaters that form the majority of the population today. Whereas these millets can be grown in abundance no encouragement is given to millets. Here I would make a suggestion. Land on which millets are grown could be

exempted from payment of land revenue. That would be an encouragement and you will have millets. People who cannot find rice and wheat can use millets which are much better in food content than wheat or rice. So exemption from land revenue is one thing for dry farming.

Madam, our friends on the opposite are carrying on propaganda against the seventeenth amendment of the Constitution making all sorts of allegations. I will indicate one allegation. It is the thin end of the wedge to convert holdings into co-operative farms. They are saying that this is a step to deprive the small proprietor of his proprietorship and then convert this into collective farming. They say that the Government will be gradually depriving them of their land, they will acquire the land from them and so on. This is a vicious propaganda. I have not seen any attempt on the part of the Government to counter this propaganda.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Let the Congress Party do it.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: The Government have to counter this propaganda.

Then there is the question of agricultural implements. I have several times suggested that at no time have the States made attempts to assess well before time the needs of agricultural implements that they would require. If you want agricultural implements to be supplied in time to the ryots, we have to make an assessment of their needs at least three years in advance. Only that way they will be assured of getting their implements in time. But that is not being done. That is easy to be done. Similarly, the need of fertilisers should be assessed. I will not take more time. I will go to sugar next.

Madam, sugar is a sweet commodity but I am surprised to find that it has created bitterness. Mr. Thomas has

made it very plain—I agree with him—that we should try to export sugar as much as possible. It may mean some sort of sacrifice on our part. That is because, as he said, we earn foreign exchange. Now is the opportune moment when the international sugar price level is favourable to us and this is the opportune time to capture markets. And once we capture the market we can hold it and we can have guaranteed exports to these markets. So we should not lose this golden opportunity for exporting sugar. Whatever our domestic difficulties, that we can adjust, but exports must be maintained, and as far as possible the attempt of the Government should be to have more and more exports and thus capture more and more markets, perhaps to our permanent advantage.

About price, now I agree that a remunerative price should be given. But that price cannot be uniform. The yield in Maharashtra is different from the yield in Mysore. And the yield in both these places is different from the yield in Uttar Pradesh or Punjab or Bihar altogether. A uniform price would be discouraging to those who have higher recovery and lulling those who are having a poor recovery into a sense of security. That is very bad. So I would like the Government to base the price of cane on the recovery basis. And there I stop.

Madam, it is amazing that in Bihar, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh there has been a tremendous fall in the production of sugar. In 1960-61 in Uttar Pradesh, 14.3 lakh tons were produced. In 1962-63, it fell to 8.52 lakh tons. In Bihar in 1960-61, 3.85 lakh tons were produced which fell to 1.71 lakh tons in 1962-63. In Punjab, 1.22 lakh tons were produced in 1960-61 which fell to 62,000 tons. Well, this is a very revealing figure. Now, it is well known that these factories are not very remunerative. They are not economical. The Government have to take a long-term decision about these factories whether to allow

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them to go on or do something else. If they place them on par with other this, then are they going to subsidise? If they place them on par with other sugar factories in the South or in Maharashtra, then what is the use of giving them subsidies, or can they be switched over to any other crop if they cannot be usefully kept on to this thing? If they cannot improve their machinery, if they cannot give a greater recovery, it is better for the Government to buy over these things, transfer the machinery to co-operatives in the South. They have to find out if the machinery is good enough; otherwise they have to do something. Some permanent solution must be found with regard to these factories; otherwise this sugar situation would always be a headache to us.

Now, Madam, we produced 58 to 62 lakh tons of gur and allied products and still we are in short supply of sugar internally. That means there is something wrong somewhere. So this adjustment has to be made regarding distribution, this, that and the other.

One point more about sugar. Since sugar is now a precious commodity, fertilisers for sugar must be earmarked. I do not know if they are earmarked today at least for those factories which are remunerative.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Their entire requirements are met.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: I am glad to find that their entire requirements are met.

I will finish, Madam, with just one word. Whatever I have said, the Government must impress on the services a sense of urgency with regard to the food situation. I do not see this sense of urgency anywhere. I am fairly well acquainted with the rural conditions. I fairly closely move with the officers in the States but I

find no sense of urgency with regard to the food situations. This is a long-standing problem. It is not creditable that we should go on importing. We should be self-sufficient in food at least in a short time. I should like to say that the Government must earnestly devote their attention to this problem. I know, in the Food Ministry, fortunately, now we have got a very good, devoted team of three Ministers. I have no quarrel with them. They are very earnest and devoted people. But the same earnestness they must be able to inject into the services, both here as well as in States. The State Ministers require inspiration from the Centre. I do not know what steps they will take. Let us hope that the situation will ease in the days to come.

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : महोदया, यह बड़े खेद की बात है कि शासन खाद्य-संकट की गम्भीरता को कम करके दिखा रहा है। इस बात को स्वीकार कर लिया जाना चाहिये कि खाद्य के मोर्चे पर हम बुरी तरह से विफल रहे हैं, उत्पादन घटा है, लक्ष्यों की पूर्ति नहीं की जा सकी है, मूल्यों में वृद्धि हुई है, समुचित रीति से वितरण नहीं हो सका है और भविष्य के लिये भी ऐसी खाद्य-नीति या कृषि-नीति का निर्धारण नहीं किया जा रहा है जिनसे आगे आने वाली योजनाओं के उत्पादन लक्ष्य पूरे किये जा सकें।

बड़े आश्चर्य की बात है कि जब अनाज की पैदावार बढ़ जाती है तब सरकार आर्थिक नियोजन को शाबासी देती है, अपनी पीठ ठोकती है, लेकिन जब पैदावार कम हो जाती है तब मौसम के ऊपर दोष डाला जाता है। दोनों बातें साथ नहीं चल सकती हैं। हम नियोजन इसलिये करते हैं कि मौसम के कारण उत्पन्न होने वाली कमियों को, तनावों को, पूरा कर सकें लेकिन हर एक विफलता को छिपाने के लिये मौसम का हवाला नहीं दिया जाना चाहिये। अनाज की पैदावार

क्यों घटी है—इसके कारणों पर गम्भीरता से विचार करना आवश्यक है। मेरी दृष्टि में एक बड़ा कारण यह है कि दूसरी पंचवर्षीय योजना में हमने खेती को जितना महत्व देना चाहिये था उतना हमने नहीं दिया, खेती की तुलना में हमने उद्योगों पर अधिक बल दिया, यह जानते हुए भी कि जब तक खेती की पैदावार नहीं बढ़ेगी हम उद्योगों के लिये आवश्यक कच्चा माल भी प्राप्त नहीं कर सकते। हमारे देश में रुई की कमी है, जूट की कमी है, गन्ने की कमी है और इस कमी का इन फसलों से संबंधित उद्योगों पर भी प्रभाव पड़ रहा है। हम विदेशों से रुई मगा रहे हैं जिससे विदेशी मुद्रा खर्च हो रही है। हम अपने देश में जो व्यापारिक फसले हैं और जिन के सत्र में कहा जाता है कि उन के अच्छे दाम मिलते हैं और जिन को बोने के लिए लोग उत्साहित भी होते हैं, उन व्यापारिक फसलों की भी पैदावार नहीं बढ़ा सके और देश की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा नहीं कर पा रहे हैं।

तीसरी योजना में खेती के महत्व को फिर से बढ़ा कर देखने की कोशिश की गई है। लेकिन यहाँ योजना को कार्यान्वित करने का सवाल पैदा होता है। कृषि के प्रश्न पर केन्द्र और राज्य के बीच में कोई समन्वय नहीं है, केन्द्र सरकार के अनेक मंत्रालयों में भी समन्वय नहीं है। आज कम्यूनिटी डेवलपमेंट के मंत्री यहाँ पर उपस्थित होने चाहिये थे। कम्यूनिटी डेवलपमेंट का भी खेती से सम्बन्ध है, सिंचाई का भी खेती से सम्बन्ध है। लेकिन राज्यों में ये मंत्रालय अलग अलग मंत्रियों के हाथ में हैं, उनके बीच में कोई तालमेल नहीं है, व सारे प्रयत्नों को संगठित करके खाद्य के मोरचे पर किसानों को अधिक पैदावार बढ़ाने के लिये प्रेरित नहीं कर पा रहे हैं।

दूसरी बात यह है कि जब कभी खाद्य सकट खड़ा होता है हम ऐसे तरीके अपनाते

चाहते हैं जो न लोकतांत्रिक ढाँचे में ठीक बैठते हैं न व्यावहारिकता की कसौटी पर कस कर उन्हें अच्छा साबित किया जा सकता है। खेती के मामले में हमारे नेताओं का ध्यान कम्यूनिस्ट देशों की तरफ जाता है, हम कम्यूनिस्ट तरीके अपनाना चाहते हैं जबकि सच्चाई यह है कि कम्यूनिस्ट देशों में खेती को अभी तक समुचित रूप से संगठित नहीं किया जा सका है। सोवियत रशिया भी अमेरिका से गेहूँ आयात कर रहा है, २५० करोड़ रुपये का गेहूँ मगाना चाहता है। चीन में खाद्य स्थिति अच्छी नहीं है, वह भी विदेशों से आयात कर रहा है। हम अपने देश में खेती में कम्यूनिस्ट तरीकों को लागू पैदावार नहीं बढ़ा सकते।

सहकारी खेती का नारा दिया गया था जिससे किसानों के मन में अनिश्चितता पैदा हुई है। भूमि सुधार किये जाने चाहिये। जो जमीन को जोतता है, बोता है, वह जमीन का मालिक होना चाहिये। लेकिन जो जमीन का मालिक बन गया उसको यह विश्वास दिलाना चाहिये कि किसी भी हालत में उसकी जमीन छीनी नहीं जायेगी। अगर संविधान के सत्रहवें संशोधन के विरुद्ध प्रचार किया जा रहा है तो खाद्य मंत्री को इस अवसर का लाभ उठाना चाहिये और इस बात का एलान करना चाहिये कि जहाँ जहाँ सीलिंग लागू कर दी गई है, भूमि की जोत निर्धारित कर दी गई है, वहाँ किसानों से जमीन किसी भी हालत में नहीं ली जायेगी; जितनी जमीन सीलिंग के अन्दर आती है किसान उस के मालिक रहेंगे और अगर उन की भूमि छीनी जायेगी तो उन को बाजार भाव से उचित मुआवजा दिया जायेगा। एक ही घोषणा में सारा प्रचार खत्म हो जायेगा। लेकिन अगर आप के मन में कहीं यह चोर बसा हुआ है कि आप आगे जा कर छोटे किसानों की जमीन छिना कर, उस जमीन को इकट्ठा कर के, उस पर सामूहिक खेती कराना चाहते हैं, तो, मैं आप से निवेदन

[श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी]

करना चाहता हूँ, कि देश की जनता इस बात को कभी स्वीकार नहीं करेगी। किसान का जमीन के साथ समना हाँती है, वह छाती फाड़ कर . . .

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: We do not want to deprive the small workers.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: That is what is being done.

SHRI M. GOVINDA REDDY: That is to be assured.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Yes, let there be a declaration from the Government.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: But their declaration does not mean anything.

SHRI P. L. KUREEL URF TALIB (Uttar Pradesh): They are not true to their word.

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : हाँ, एक बात और भी है, आज आप घोषणा कर दें कल बदल भी सकते हैं। इसलिए, यह जो संविधान में संशोधन आ रहा है, इस में आप विश्वास दिलाएँ कि सीलिंग से नीचे की जमीन किसान की नहीं ली जायेगी—सीलिंग तय होनी चाहिये, किसान जमीन का मालिक होना चाहिये। अगर चोर दरवाजे से सहकारी खेती लाने से किसान की प्रेरणा बढ़ेगी नहीं, उससे पैदावार भी नहीं बढ़ेगी और नौकरशाही के हाथ में अधिक ताकत जायेगी। चकबंदी बहुत अच्छा सिद्धान्त है, सभी दल चकबंदी से सहमत हैं, लेकिन जब चकबंदी को आचरण में लाया जाता है तो वह किसान के उत्पीड़न का कारण बन जाता है और चकबंदी का विरोध करने की स्थिति पैदा होती है। हमें अपनी सीमाओं को देखकर अपनी नीति निर्धारित करनी चाहिये।

जहाँ तक वितरण का प्रश्न है, सरकार ने मध्यम मार्ग का अवलम्बन किया है।

कुछ हमारे मित्र यह सुझाव देते हैं कि सरकार पूरी तरह से अनाज का व्यापार अपने हाथ में ले ले। मैं इस सुझाव से सहमत नहीं हूँ क्योंकि मेरा मत है कि इससे न तो किसान को उसकी फसल का उचित दाम मिलेगा क्योंकि सरकार कम दाम निर्धारित करके उसका माल खरीदेगी और इसे उपभोक्ता को भी उचित दाम पर चीज नहीं मिलेगी। संकट के समय उपयोग के लिये सरकार को भंडार बनाने चाहियें, सस्ते गल्ले की दुकानें खोलनी चाहियें, लेकिन खुले बाजार और सरकारी सस्ते गल्ले की दुकाने साथ साथ चलनी चाहिये। हम अगर उत्पादन से लेकर वितरण तक अनाज का व्यापार अपने हाथ में ले लेंगे तो इस देश में असंतोष पैदा होगा। कंट्रोलों का अनुभव बहुत कटु है। जनता का स्वभाव नहीं बदला, नौकरशाही का काम करने का ढंग नहीं बदला। और हम इस बात को न भूलें कि यह लोकतांत्रिक देश है। आप को भी हर पांच साल के . . .

श्री तारकेश्वर पांडेय (उत्तर प्रदेश) : एक सवाल मैं रखना चाहता हूँ . . .

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : मेरा निवेदन है कि समय बहुत कम है।

श्री तारकेश्वर पांडेय : एक मिनट समय बढ़ा दीजिये। एक सवाल मेरा यह है कि जब इतने बड़े देश का शासन आप का यह पालिया-मेट चला सकती है और एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन चला सकती है, पुलिस रख सकती है तो क्या यह हुकूमत स्टेट ट्रेडिंग चला कर, बीच में नफा खाने वालों को वन्द नहीं कर सकती है? यह सवाल मेरा आप से है।

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : बीच में जो नफा खाने वाले हैं उनका नफा बन्द होना चाहिये, उसके लिये कदम उठाना चाहिये। लेकिन वे कदम ऐसे न हों कि उनसे पैदा होने वाली कठिनाई आज की मृताफाखोरी की कठि-

नाइयों से भी बढ़ जाय। हम किस स्टेट ट्रेडिंग की बात कर रहे हैं? आज सहकारी संस्थाओं को बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है और कहा जा रहा है : व्यापारियों की जगह सहकारी संस्थाएं लेगी। मगर सहकारी संस्थाएं किम तरह से काम कर रही हैं, इसका दिल्ली में एक ताजा उदाहरण मिला। मेरे मित्र श्री भूषण गुप्त ने उसकी ओर संकेत किया है। मैं उसका विस्तार रूप से इस सदन के सामने रख देता हूँ।

दिल्ली में दो कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स चलते हैं और उन कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स का अधिकार दिये गये हैं कि वे उत्तर प्रदेश से ५०० टन गुड़ लायें। उत्तर प्रदेश से गुड़ के आने पर राक लगी है। किसानों को अगर गुड़ का अधिक दाम मिल रहा था तो सरकार को गुरेज नहीं करना चाहिये था। लेकिन, एक बार गुड़ पर रोक लगा दी और दूसरी बार कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स को परमिट दे दिये— ५०० टन गुड़ लाने का परमिट दिया गया। मगर वह गुड़ किस भाव पर खरीदा गया और वह दिल्ली में किस भाव पर बेचा जा रहा है? दूसरे सदन में कहा गया कि इस मामले की जांच की जा रही है। जांच करने की कोई आवश्यकता नहीं है। यह बात तो जो कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स के सचालक है उन्होंने स्वयं स्वीकार की है कि उन्होंने गुड़ में मुनाफा-खोरी की—वे मस्ते दाम में गुड़ लाये, उन्होंने महंगे दाम पर उसको बेचा और एक क्विन्टल पर कम से कम १७ रु० उन्होंने मुनाफा कमाया। क्या मुनाफाखोरी व्यापारी के लिये बुरी है और कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स के लिये बुरी नहीं है? अभी दिल्ली के कुछ व्यापारी पकड़े गये हैं। उन्होंने दामों की सूची नहीं लटकाई या दामों की सूची में एक चीज का दाम लिखना रह गया तो डिफेंस आफ इन्डिया रूल को काम में लाया गया है। क्या कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स के पदाधिकारियों के खिलाफ डिफेंस आफ इन्डिया रूल काम में नहीं लाया जा सकता है? क्यों नहीं

गृह मंत्रालय इस में कड़ी कार्यवाही करता कि किस भाव पर गुड़ खरीदा गया और किम भाव पर बेचा गया। इसकी रसीदें हैं। मगर कहा जा रहा है कि “श काउन्सिल” दिया गया है। मेरा निवेदन है प्र.इ.वा. फेरी केस है, “श काउन्सिल” देने की जरूरत नहीं है और इस मामले में पुलिस को, सेन्ट्रल इन्टेलिजन्स को तसवीर में आना चाहिये। मेरा आरोप है कि मुजफ्फरनगर में जो गुड़ खरीदा गया उसकी रसीद में भी दाम बढ़ा कर दिखाये गये हैं—गुड़ सस्ता खरीदा गया, रसीद में महंगा लिखा गया। दिल्ली में और भी महंगा लिखा गया—स्टोर के सचालक भी इन बातों से इनकार नहीं कर सकते। मगर उनको कोई हाथ लगाने का प्रयत्न नहीं करेगा क्योंकि वे कांग्रेस के नेता हैं, संसद के सदस्य हैं, वे मुनाफाखोरी कर सकते हैं, इस राज्य में उनको मुनाफाखोरी करने की छूट है। मगर कोई दूसरा सूची गलत लिखेगा तो डिफेंस आफ इन्डिया रूल में पकड़ा जायेगा।

मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूँ कि वे कोआपरेटिव स्टोर्स किसको माल बेचेंगे। क्या उनका काम है व्यापारियों को माल बेचना या उपभोक्ताओं को माल बेचना? इस कोआपरेटिव स्टोर में एक व्यापारी के जरिये गुड़ मंगाया और व्यापारी के जरिये यह गुड़ बेचा गया। यह कोआपरेटिव स्टोर दिल्ली में ५० फी सदी कोयला बेचता है, मगर जनता को नहीं बेचता, व्यापारियों को बेचता है और इसके ऊपर ३५,००० ० महीने मुनाफा कमाता है।

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Vajpayee, it is 5 o'clock. How much more time would you take?

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: About five minutes more.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would you agree, Mr. Sinha, and would the House agree to give him five more minutes?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes, yes.

5 P.M.

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : सवाल केवल गुड़ का नहीं है, चावल का भी है। खाद्य मंत्रालय ने इन कोआपरेटिव स्टोरों को चावल दिया था। १३ अगस्त, १९६३ को मिनिस्ट्री ने ५०० टन चावल का कोटा कोआपरेटिव स्टोर को दिया। दिल्ली में चावल के भाव बढ़ रहे थे। कोटा इसलिए दिया कि दिल्ली में चावल लाया जाय और उचित दाम पर जनता को बेचा जाय। मगर उस कोआपरेटिव स्टोर ने चावल बेचा नहीं, इसने सेन्ट्रल वेयरहाउसिंग कारपोरेशन में ४१८० बोरे चावल ले जाकर जमा कर दिया। क्या यह जमाखोरी नहीं है? कोआपरेटिव स्टोर चावल जमा करे, इसकी क्या आवश्यकता थी? वह चावल जनता में बेचने के लिए दिया गया था और आज भी ४१८० बोरे में से १९८० बोरे वेयरहाउसिंग कारपोरेशन में जमा हैं, क्या यह जमाखोरी नहीं है और क्या उसके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही नहीं होगी? सरकार की इस सम्बन्ध में क्या नीति है?

हमारे खाद्य मंत्री जी ने लोक सभा में कहा कि जांच की जा रही है। जांच किस बात की करनी है? यह तो साबित हो गया है कि उन्होंने मुनाफा कमाया है। और उन्होंने एक बात और कही कि हमने गुड़ इसलिए मंहगा बेचा कि रेलवे के वाहन लेने के लिए हमको रिश्वत देनी पड़ी। उन्होंने तो रेलवे मंत्री जी को भी चुनौती दी है। रेलवे मंत्री जी को वे चुनौती दें या न दें, लेकिन हमारे गृह मंत्री जी यह घोषणा करते फिरते हैं कि हम दो साल में भ्रष्टाचार खत्म कर देंगे। वह यह भी कहते हैं कि रिश्वत लेना ही जुर्म नहीं, रिश्वत देना भी जुर्म है। यहां एक कोआपरेटिव का संचालक, संसद का सदस्य, कांग्रेस का एक बड़ा नेता सदन में खड़ा होकर कहता है कि हमको रेलवे

वाहन लेने के लिए रिश्वत देना पड़ी। क्या उनके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही नहीं होगी? यह रिश्वत उन्होंने कहां से दी थी? क्या अपनी जेब से दी थी? या यह कोआपरेटिव स्टोर के हिसाब में बतलाई गई? प्रश्न है कि रिश्वत के लिए उनके खिलाफ कार्यवाही क्यों नहीं होनी चाहिये।

सरकार अगर मूल्यों को आगे बढ़ने से रोकना चाहती है तो कठोर दंड दे, कठोर कार्यवाही करे। सवाल एक व्यक्ति का नहीं है, सवाल एक दल का भी नहीं है। अगर आप देश में सही वातावरण बनाना चाहते हैं तो उसकी शुरुआत घर से होनी चाहिये। सरकार की नाक के नीचे दिल्ली में भ्रष्टाचार चलता रहे, सहकारिता के नाम पर एक आर्थिक साम्राज्य बनाया जाय; कोयले का, कपूर का, गुड़ का, एकाधिकार कोआपरेटिव स्टोर को दे दिया जाय यह स्थिति सर्वथा अवांछनीय है। कपूर में ४०० फीसदी मुनाफा हो रहा है और इस कोआपरेटिव स्टोर को दिल्ली में कपूर लाने का सर्वाधिकार दिया गया है। यह कोआपरेटिव स्टोर घड़ियां मंगा रहा है। और किस को दे रहा है? आम जनता को नहीं दे रहा है, व्यापारियों को दे रहा है और मुनाफा कमा रहा है। आप कहते हैं मुनाफाखोरी खत्म करेंगे। यह मुनाफाखोरी खत्म करने के ढंग नहीं है। मेरा निवेदन है कि इस कोआपरेटिव स्टोर के पदाधिकारियों के खिलाफ कड़ी कार्यवाही होनी चाहिये। सरकार मुनाफाखोरी, चोर बाजारी रोकना चाहती है या नहीं, यह एक उदाहरण से मालूम पड़ेगा। विजलेंस कमिशन कायम करने की घोषणा से मालूम नहीं पड़ेगा।

मैं आखिर में एक बात कहकर खत्म कर दूंगा। मैंने संशोधन दिया है कि उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार में गन्ने के दाम २ रुपये प्रति मन होना चाहिये। गन्ने के दाम कम निर्धारित करने से बड़ा असंतोष पैदा हो रहा है। असंतोष की यह लोकतंत्रीय सरकार चिन्ता न भी करे,

लेकिन अगर गन्ने के उचित दाम न मिलें तो मिलों को ठीक गन्ना नहीं मिलेगा । फिर खंडसारी पर, गुड़ पर कितना ही नियंत्रण लगाये, गन्ने की मिलें जितना गन्ना चाहती हैं और जितनी चीनी बनाना चाहती है उतनी पैदा नहीं कर सकेंगी और ३३ लाख टन चीनी उत्पादन करने का लक्ष्य प्राप्त नहीं होगा । आपको विचार करना चाहिये कि गन्ने के दाम कम से कम २ रुपये मन कर दिये जायें । उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार के किसानों की आर्थिक स्थिति पहले ही खराब है और अगर इस रूप में उन्हें कुछ सहायता दी जायेगी, उनके साथ न्याय किया जायेगा तो सरकार के लिए बहुत ही उपयुक्त होगा । धन्यवाद ।

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION RE. ESCAPE OF MR. DANIEL WALCOTT FROM SAFDARJUNG AIRPORT

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Sinha we will have the half-an hour discussion.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA (Bihar): How many minutes do you give me, Madam?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: About twelve or thirteen minutes.

SHRI RAJENDRA PRATAP SINHA: Thank you. Madam Deputy Chairman, this Walcott episode and the debate which has been its aftermath, have vindicated at least one virtue of the hon. Ministers and this honourable Government. They have vindicated what our ancients had preached, that they do not see any evil, nor do they hear any evil. Madam Deputy Chairman, this episode does not only indicate bungling at the airport, but it also gives an inkling that our officials—here became practically stupified when Mr. Walcott was at the airport. At this stage, the debate in the other House has disclosed, confusion became worst confounded. Now, what are the facts of this case? There was a fifteen minutes confabulation among

the various Ministries of the Government and an order to chase was issued, indicating that the intercepting planes could not shoot at the fugitive criminal. I do not know what was the intention of the Government or of the order and how it was at all possible for the Hunters which went after the Piper plane to intercept it or bring down the plane without shooting. How was it possible for the Hunter pilots to cajole Mr. Walcott to return to the Delhi airport? Then it was a well-known fact that radar could not screen a plane flying at low altitudes of 2,000 or 3,000 ft. It was given out that the plane flew in the direction of Lahore. But the Home Minister said that actually it flew in the direction of Karachi. On such casual information, the Air Force was asked to pursue this plane.

I maintain, Madam Deputy Chairman, that by the issue of this order, our entire air defence and the Air Force, have been brought to ridicule in the public eye. The order for this chase has been described by no less a person than the Home Minister of India as a superfluous chase. If it was a superfluous chase, then why was such an order at all issued. The other point which emerges is how was it that the military command carried out such a casual order? The Defence Minister must satisfy us as to how the military command functions. It was stated by the Minister himself that the Air Force was meant to intercept hostile violations by enemy aircraft. Then why was the Air Force asked to perform a police duty and to pursue and chase a fugitive criminal, in a plane which was not armed, and with this rider that you cannot shoot that plane?

Now, these are very important points which emerge out of this episode. We must be assured that our military command here functioned on proper authority and we must also be assured that they acted within the rules in obeying an order which was described here by the Home Minister as a superfluous order.