

[Shri A. M. Thomas.]

Officers subordinate to Central Government under the said sub-section. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1783/59.]

Sir, I further beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (6) of section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, a copy of a statement showing two Orders issued under section 3 of the said Act to Railway authorities prohibiting and restraining the movement of stocks of rice and paddy from the Railway goods-shed. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1784/59.]

TARIFF COMMISSION REPORTS RELATING TO (I) FAIR SELLING PRICES OF CAUSTIC SODA, ETC. AND (II) CONTINUANCE OF PROTECTION TO PLASTICS INDUSTRY, AND RELATED PAPERS

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION (SHRI B. S. MURTHY): Sir, on behalf of Shri Manubhai Shah I beg to lay on the Table, under sub-section (2) of section 16 of the Tariff Commission Act, 1951, a copy each of the following papers:—

I. (i) Report (1958) of the Tariff Commission on the fair selling prices of Caustic Soda, Chlorine, Hydrochloric Acid and Bleaching Powder.

(ii) Government Resolution No. CH(I)-31(36)/58, dated the 27th October, 1959.

(iii) Statement under the proviso to sub-section (2) of section 16 of the Tariff Commission Act, 1951, explaining the reasons why the documents referred to at (i) and (ii) above could not be laid within the period mentioned in that sub-section. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-1779/59 for (i) to (iii)]

II. (i) Report (1959) of the Tariff Commission on the continuance of protection to the Plastics (Phenol formaldehyde Moulding Powder and Buttons) Industry.

(ii) Government Resolution No. 27(2)-T.R./59, dated the 8th December, 1959.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-1778/59 for (i) and (ii).]

ALLOTMENT OF TIME FOR CONSIDERATION OF THE MOTION REGARDING FOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

MR. CHAIRMAN: Three and a half hours are allotted for the discussion in respect of the Government motion on the food situation in the country.

REFERENCE TO NOTICE OF MOTION FOR PAPERS ON THE POLICE FIRING IN MYSORE

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Mysore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have given notice of a motion calling for papers regarding the police firing at students in Mysore on the 8th and 9th instant in connection with the Inter-University Youth Festival. I thought the Minister was going to make a statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have sent it to the Minister. That is all we can do. We are awaiting his decision.

MOTION RE FOOD SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI A. M. THOMAS): Sir, I move:

"That the food situation in the country be taken into consideration."

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, generally it is customary for such a resolution to be moved by the Cabinet Minister himself.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I know that. The Minister will reply to the debate and he just took my permission to allow Mr. Thomas to move the motion now. The Minister will come and answer it.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: If you have given the permission, it is all right.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Sir, last time we had a Food Debate in this honourable House in the last week of August. I had occasion to intervene in the debate and my senior colleague replied to the debate also. Now I have moved this motion when there is an improvement all around in the food situation in the country. Last time when we were discussing the food situation in the country, a great deal of concern was expressed about the price situation especially in the State of West Bengal, and some hon. Members took also very serious objection to the lifting of all the controls in the State of West Bengal. Sir, I am glad to state that now the situation in West Bengal is comfortable. I am sorry, Sir, it is not very much palatable to my hon. friend to hear that the situation in West Bengal has improved because there would not be a ground for further agitation and for all sorts of demonstrations and other things.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: So, it is not a comfortable thing for my friend, I know that.

Immediately after the decontrol of price—since my friend seems to object to my statement, I would just deal with what exactly the present situation in West Bengal is. Immediately after the decontrol of price of rice in June, 1959, there was some rise in open-market prices of rice. Thereafter the prices started declining. The declining trend was, to some extent, offset for a while when the news about the floods in West Bengal was received in early October. Since then

there has been a steady decline in the prices of foodgrains, especially that of rice.

There has been a fall of Rs. 5 to Rs. 8 per maund in the wholesale prices of rice since July 1959. The wholesale price, for example, in Calcutta on 24th July, 1959 was Rs. 31 per maund for fine varieties of rice. It has now declined to Rs. 26 per maund on 4th December, 1959. In Contai, the price of coarse rice on 24th July, 1959 was Rs. 25. On 4th December, 1959 it has declined to Rs. 21 per maund. I had also recently occasion to see a news item in the leading papers from West Bengal that price of coarse rice has come down even to Rs. 19.25, or something like that. That also shows, Sir, that there is definitely a decline in trend in the prices in West Bengal.

Sir, I may also inform the House what exactly the general situation is. Generally speaking, the prices of foodgrains this year have remained lower than those in the corresponding periods of last year. The index number of wholesale prices of all cereals touched the peak of 109.8 during the week-end 24th October this year, as against the peak of 115.5 reached last year during the week-end 30th August. Similarly, in the case of index number of wholesale prices for rice, the peak reached this year was 112.9 for the week ending 24th October, as against the peak of 118.9 reached last year during the week ending 20th September, 1958. The index number of wholesale prices of wheat this year, after the harvest, rose only to 101.2 as against 112.2 reached last year in the week ending 8th November, 1958.

So far as wheat is concerned, the prices in the main wheat producing States are falling even during this lean period when normally the prices should rise. Except for jowar and ragi, the position is equally good in the case of other foodgrains also. The jowar crop this year has been dama-

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ged in certain States owing to excessive rains; their prices this year are higher than those prevailing during the last year. As, however, the production of *kharif* crops is quite good and the prospects of *rabi* crops are bright, the reports from jowar producing areas are reported to be very encouraging, and it is expected that the prices of jowar will also ease down.

Sir, I must concede that the prices of rice in the South this year have been higher than what they were last year.

[MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

This can be attributed to several factors which I do not want to detail at this particular stage. However, we expect that after the main crop is harvested in January, 1960, the prices of rice in the South also may ease down.

Sir, the House would expect me also to give the crop prospects for the year 1959-60. Well, it is too early to make any firm estimates, but all the same the House would expect me to give an interim picture based on some of the reports that we get in the Ministry. Sir, the available reports indicate that during the current season several parts of the country were affected either by floods or by drought resulting in varying degrees of damage to standing crops. Several districts of West Bengal, delta districts of Andhra Pradesh, coastal districts of Orissa and parts of Bombay, Mysore, Assam and Jammu and Kashmir were visited by floods, while eastern U.P. and north Bihar were affected by drought in August and September.

In West Bengal, which was affected by floods twice, first in August and later in September-October, the floods were rather extensive in eight southern districts, namely, Murshidabad, Burdwan, Midnapore, Nadia, 24-Parganas, Hooghly, Birbhum and Howrah. However, Sir, in many areas of the

State, not affected by floods, the crop is expected to be better than last year.

The same is also true of the State of Andhra Pradesh. The conditions of drought prevailing in eastern U.P. and north Bihar during August-September were relieved by good showers received in September-October, though in eastern U.P. showers came rather too late in the season. Sir, the position of the rice crop in the South on the whole is quite satisfactory. In Madhya Pradesh the rice crop is reported to be very good this year and in Punjab also the crop is reported to be good. Sir, taking the country as a whole and taking a country like India where occasional floods or droughts are bound to occur—and it is a recurring phenomenon—the prospects of the paddy crop appear to be satisfactory from the all-India point of view and it is reflected in the present trend in the prices of foodgrains which have been showing a tendency to fall.

Sir, we had in 1958-59 good crops. There had been a record production of 73.5 million tons. For the year 1959-60 also the prospects are good and we expect that there would be a further definite improvement in the situation.

Sir, often criticism had been levelled against what the Government had done with regard to the question of State trading. Sir, when my senior colleague spoke last time in this House, he indicated to this honourable House the lines on which his mind was working, how to improve the food situation in the country and I have to submit that subsequent developments do not indicate that there has been any necessity for him to revise the opinions that he held at that time and that he shared with this hon. House. Sir, with regard to State trading, the hon. House knows that at the meeting of the National Development Council held in November, 1958, it was decided that the Government should take over the wholesale trade in foodgrains with a

view to controlling the prices and minimising the spread between the prices received by the farmers and the prices paid by the consumers throughout the year. That scheme envisages two patterns. One, the ultimate pattern which will consist of a system under which the farmer's surpluses will be collected through service co-operatives at the village level and will be channelled through the marketing co-operatives and the apex marketing co-operatives for distribution through the retailers and through the consumers' co-operatives. The other, the interim scheme which envisaged that till the co-operatives were fully developed and the ultimate pattern of State trading in foodgrains was reached, there should be an effective control on the wholesale traders in foodgrains and we have taken a number of steps in that direction. The hon. House will recollect that there was yesterday a question concerning this. That arose when the Prime Minister himself came forward with a statement that some difficulties had been experienced in implementing the interim scheme of State trading. Sir, the Prime Minister also was good enough to mention to the House that as far as the Food and Agriculture Ministry was concerned, it pushed through the scheme and that the implementation of the scheme lay more in the State sector rather than within the province of the Central Government. As far as the Central Government is concerned, it did everything in its power to implement the interim scheme also. Some steps have been taken with the licensing of wholesale traders for the purchase of foodgrains on State account.

Sir, with regard to the method of purchase also, I do not want to take up the time of the House by detailing the measures but it is sufficient for me to say that in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Mysore and Madras, procurement was made mainly by a levy on wholesale traders and millers. There was a maxi-

mum controlled price also noticed for all the States except Orissa and these controlled prices really become the effective purchase prices for purchase of foodgrains by Government.

Sir, since this interim scheme was sought to be implemented, we began to face difficulties from the very start and serious difficulties were experienced in Bihar and West Bengal after the introduction of the levy scheme. The difficulties which we faced in January, 1959 over this control price are quite well-known to the hon. House. We had also conducted certain surveys as to how these difficulties came about and we noticed that the arrival of rice and paddy in the market of West Bengal sharply declined and during a certain period rice practically disappeared from the market. A large number of rice mills had to stop working in Bihar and in West Bengal also due to lack of arrival of rice; serious difficulties were experienced by the consumers and in spite of the fact that the State Government distributed large quantities of rice through fair-price shops, the position soon became untenable. Whatever the State Government asked for we supplied but even then the State Government was not in a position to control the prices. So, the general experience as far as we are concerned is that procurement of foodgrains in deficit States from wholesale traders and millers is an extremely difficult proposition and our efforts in that direction created more problems than we attempted to solve.

Sir, we are just thinking how these difficulties are to be met as far as procurement for the next paddy season is concerned. During the next *kharif* season, our tentative decision is that the deficit States like West Bengal, Bihar, etc. are not to undertake procurement of rice and paddy. In the South, Madras and Mysore have decided not to purchase rice this year. The

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Madras Government, as the hon. House knows, had been pressing for the splitting up of the Southern Rice Zone, which we have not been able to accept so far. So, as it appears, purchase of rice and paddy this year will be made only in Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra, U.P., Orissa and Assam. We are also thinking of some modification in the Zonal system. When the Minister for Food and Agriculture spoke on the 31st August in this House, he said that as far as he was concerned, his preference was for larger Zones and there was reason also for him to make a statement like that because the object of State trading is to maintain a reasonable price level of foodgrains, because that is the basic factor of our plan and of all our development projects. But even there we found that by cordoning the surplus States we have not been able to mop up the entire surplus from the surplus States and, at the same time, we have also not been able to control the prices in the deficit States. Of course, since the surplus States are cordoned off, it would be possible to keep the prices in the surplus States at a reasonable level and as far as Madhya Pradesh is concerned, our procurement operations there have served as a price support to the farmers, because since we were paying fixed price for our procurement the farmers were assured of a reasonable price also. Otherwise prices would have gone down further. But, then, as far as the deficit States are concerned, our commitments grew larger and larger. We have not been able also to keep up the price level. It has been stated in this hon. House that the difference between the price level in the deficit States and the surplus States is very wide. Of course, even only a few furlongs or a few miles away from the surplus States, the disparity was so large that it could not be said that the price level was being kept. In certain cases, it is double the price, I mean the difference in price between a surplus State and a deficit State.

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI (Bombay): Hundred per cent., or more.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: As my friend Shri Desai says, it may be even a hundred per cent. Perhaps the prices in deficit States would have gone up by hundred per cent. over the prices obtaining in the surplus States. It was absolutely necessary that there must be some re-thinking on this aspect of the question and although we had not taken any final decision with regard to the re-shaping of the zones, we are seriously thinking as to how to meet the situation, and what change should be made. The Minister for Food and Agriculture, after the last Session of Parliament, went to West Bengal and had discussions with the Chief Ministers with regard to the joining of West Bengal and Orissa. As I have already said, it is the view of the Food and Agriculture Ministry that joining up surplus with deficit States is distinctly beneficial and in that direction it has been working and it is also attempting to get the consent of the concerned States. Of course it is not desirable, although we have got the powers to do that, to impose anything on the States, especially since we have to take into account the circumstances of each State and we are examining the circumstances of the State of Orissa.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU (Uttar Pradesh): What does the Deputy Minister mean by saying: 'We do not want to impose anything on the States.' What is it that he has in mind?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: As far as possible, we want to proceed with the consent of the States concerned.

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI: If the consent is not given, what will you do?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: If it is not given, perhaps the Centre may have to exercise its own power of control with regard to these matters. Some

difficulties have been pointed out by the State of Orissa which we are looking into and it is possible that we may be able to get the consent of the State of Orissa to join with West Bengal.

With regard to the joining of Madhya Pradesh and Bombay, which is another zone which we can form, which would not only be self-sufficient but perhaps a surplus one also, we have not been able to hold talks as we had with Orissa and Bengal but after decisions have been come to with regard to West Bengal and Orissa, we will be devoting our attention to that aspect of the question also.

SHRI S. C. KARAYALAR (Madras): If the proposal regarding putting together Orissa and West Bengal is put through, will it mean that it will be a single zone and there will be no restriction on inter-State movement of foodgrains?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: If it is formed as one zone, there will not be any restriction between Orissa and Bengal, with regard to inter-State movement. If further restrictions are put on movement, the object we have in view will be defeated. That is the case with regard to zones. After the last debate, the House would certainly have come to know that we have taken a firm decision in the matter of the continuance of the Southern Rice Zone consisting of the four States in the South. Of course the States of Andhra Pradesh and Madras have been impressing on us the necessity of dividing the zone and forming each State into a particular zone. When they urged the splitting up of the zone and forming each State into a particular zone, they said that they would be in a position to make supplies to the Central stock which can be utilized for meeting the deficit of the other States. The Andhra Pradesh Government undertook that they would perhaps be in a position to procure about 4 to 5 lakh tons.

The Madras Government undertook that they would be in a position to procure about 1½ lakh tons so that both together would be in a position to procure about 5 to 6 lakh tons. The House may also consider, especially the hon. Members from Madras and Andhra Pradesh who may perhaps urge the splitting up of the zone, the commitments that we would have to make with regard to supplies to Kerala and Mysore. Moreover, Mysore has stated that in case each State is formed into a separate zone, it would require 2½ lakh tons of rice. The Kerala Government said that they would require about 7 lakh tons of rice. So both together would come to 9½ lakh tons, that is about a million tons of rice and what the surplus States have undertaken to supply would come to only 6 lakh tons, so that we will have to find from the Central stocks about 5 to 6 lakh tons more and we are not in a position at present to meet it.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Do Madras and Andhra Pradesh supply 10 lakh tons to Kerala and Mysore now?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: No. I would invite the attention of hon. Members to the situation that we had to confront in West Bengal. The deficit of West Bengal at first was calculated to be about 6½ lakh tons of foodgrains but in the course of a year we would be supplying to Bengal about 12 lakh tons, so that when a deficit State is cordoned off and its natural sources of supply are cut off, we cannot proceed on this mathematical calculation that so much is the only deficit.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The hon. Minister is speaking mostly of West Bengal perhaps on the assumption that I might speak. I am not going to speak. The whole of India you should talk about.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: He was speaking of Andhra, Mysore and Madras.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: My friend, as usual, jumps to a conclusion which is not quite legitimate. What I was saying is, if a heavy deficit State like Kerala is cordoned off and if its sources of supply are cut off, we are bound to make good its requirements and the requirements may not be perhaps the exact quantity which is normally supposed to be the deficit. We will have to make good much more. We have also to take into consideration the contingency that we are not in a position to wait till the surplus States procure grains and make them available to us. We cannot say to the deficit States like Kerala 'You wait till Andhra procures and gives it to us and then we will give you'....

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: If this is the position, then what happens to the question of State trading in foodgrains?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: That is what I said. It has often been stated on the floor of this House, my senior colleague made it very clear the other day when this matter was discussed, that as far as he is concerned, State trading is only a means to an end. What exactly is the end? It is the maintenance of a proper price level and what is to be done? If State trading is necessary for the maintenance of that price level, of course State trading has to be adopted and it is not also correct to say that we have abandoned the scheme of State trading.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: You will abandon no mistake of yours.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: In the course of this year, I may just give information to my hon. friend on the distribution front; throughout the country about 48,000 fair price shops are functioning and we have already distributed or we would be distributing by the end of this year about 4 million tons of foodgrains, both wheat and rice, and I do not think that is a small quantity. That is a big quantity, and

what is the object with which we are maintaining buffer stocks? The object is certainly the maintenance of a reasonable price level. Even with regard to the surplus States, we found, with regard to State trading, that we have been able to procure—the Centre and the States together—so far about 12.92 lakh tons, that is, about 13 lakh tons of rice and 3.45 lakh tons of paddy. So to the extent. . .

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: From which State this procurement was made?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: Mainly it was from Madhya Pradesh. From Madhya Pradesh we procured last year more than 4 lakh tons of rice. We have also received certain offers from the next harvest. We have been able to procure from Orissa about a lakh and a half tons of rice and in Andhra we have procured about 96,500 tons, or about a lakh.

AN. HON. MEMBER: From Punjab?

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: In Punjab they have been able to get one lakh tons of rice and 1,40,000 tons of wheat. Subject to correction, these are the rough figures and I think they are correct.

I was surprised to hear my hon. friend Dr. Kunzru saying that it seems that State trading in foodgrains has been abandoned. That is not so. There will be State trading if the circumstances warrant that we should have it for the maintenance of reasonable price levels. Sir, this is all I have to say with regard to the question of zones, also with regard to the scheme of State trading.

Sir, it is well-known that the solution of the problem depends on increased production. We have been able to produce 73.5 million tons last year and as I have already said in the beginning of my speech, with regard to the next year, namely 1959-60, we expect that also will be a good year. In spite of the increased production

we have not been able to become self-sufficient, because of several circumstances, as for instance greater demand for foodgrains. The demand for foodgrains has gone up because of the developmental expenditure and the purchasing power that we are injecting. Due to these the demand for foodgrains has gone up, so much so that this question of self-sufficiency has, of course, to depend on the circumstances that obtain at a particular time.

The Ford Foundation Team which visited India recently, as hon. Members know, laid considerable emphasis on a substantial increase in production and suggested that the target of production for the Third Five Year Plan should not be less than 110 million tons. Our own tentative assessment of consumption requirements of the country by the end of the Third Plan period would be 100 million tons and for a comfortable food supply position to be secured efforts should be made to raise food production to 110 million tons by the Third Five Year Plan.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL (Punjab): That is exactly what the Ford Foundation has said.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: This will mean an increase of 37 million tons above the record production of last year and we will have to achieve that within a period of about seven years and every effort will have to be made to reach this high target. A national urge will have to be created among our farmers and it will be necessary to give all possible incentive to them for producing more food. I hope that in the discussion that will follow now hon. Members will try to devote their attention to the production aspect also. Sir, I move.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA (Uttar Pradesh): I want a little clarification from the hon. Deputy Minister with regard to this basic question and it is whether it is not a fact that in our anxiety to feed the deficit States we are making the surplus States also

deficit. That in my view is the only result of this zonal system now.

SHRI A. M. THOMAS: In fact, all these aspects should be taken into consideration.

The question was proposed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There are sixteen speakers and so the Opposition Group will take about 15 to 20 minutes each and Congress Members will take 10 to 12 minutes each.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD (Uttar Pradesh): Mr. Deputy Chairman, after listening to the speech of the hon. Deputy Minister of Food, I have really started wondering whether the new Food Minister has any policy at all. There was a policy earlier and some people thought that that policy had failed, though the hon. Food Minister at that time thought that it had partially succeeded. Yet there was a policy to attempt State trading in foodgrains. We had our opinions about the manner in which State trading in foodgrains will have to be implemented, but as I said there was a policy. Unfortunately today there seems to be no policy at all. Has State trading been abandoned? The categorical answer that is given is that it has not been abandoned. Then what has been done about it? So far as I could understand, the hon. Food Minister took a very strange position in the speech he made in this House after assuming office, when he pleaded for more flexibility and greater recognition of realities and that sort of thing. He referred to Rafi Saheb and said that he tackled the situation because he pursued a flexible policy. Now, I don't mind the Food Minister being flexible, but I do want him to enunciate some policy. Is he going to stick to State trading or not? Or is he going to give it up? My presumption is that he wants to give it up, but he does not want to say so and he wants to do it by stages and gradually and ultimately bring about free trade in foodgrains. I am personally opposed to that sort of handling of the whole situation and to that policy being implemented. If

[Dr. Z. A. Ahmad.]

State trading in foodgrains is to be given up, let the Food Minister say so categorically and clearly. Let him say that we are moving in the direction of giving up all State trading in foodgrains and of restoring complete free trade.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: What is State trading in foodgrains? Nobody has defined it.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: Yes, but that is a different matter. Nonetheless, my very first point is that there is no policy at all. And if you have no policy at all, I submit that you cannot tackle the situation. We may disagree with regard to a policy. Dr. Kunzru may say that State trading in foodgrains is absolutely a wrong policy. I may say that State trading in foodgrains is a correct policy. But without any policy, you cannot make any advance whatsoever.

Sir, a rosy picture has been painted, that the prospects are good for the future, that for the next year the prospects in foodgrains are good, that prices in certain areas are falling, that in certain other areas the prices had not fallen as much as they had anticipated and so on. Sir, this sort of complacency we have come across again and again whenever we have discussed the food situation. Earlier Food Ministers also used to say, "Here the prices have fallen. Here prices have not fallen to the extent we thought, but the next crop is good". Every time some sort of lull, some sort of complacency, was sought to be created and even now the same sort of picture is painted. My contention is that things are bad and although here or there prices might have fallen a little, the basic factors operating in the whole situation have not been tackled properly. As long as you keep your eyes closed to the basic factors of the situation, you cannot tackle the situation.

Sir, the House will remember that three years ago there was a tremendous amount of complacency and there

was the feeling that the food problem had been solved. In 1958 there was a tremendous increase in production and yet in Bengal and in a number of other States, the prices tended to rise. No explanation was given for that. I have got the figures here. If you take the index of production, we have gone up from 68.8 million tons in 1953-54 to 73.4 million tons in 1958-59. During this period, the wholesale price index of food articles with the year 1952-53 as the base, rose from 106.7 to 115.2. Now, I cannot understand this discrepancy; while production is increasing the cost of food articles is also going up. This has to be explained. Unless this is explained, we really cannot come to grips with the situation. My contention, Sir, is that the last Food Minister implemented the policy of State trading in foodgrains in a very half-hearted manner, in a sort of weak manner.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (Rajasthan): He did not believe in it.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: He may or may not have believed in it, I do not know, but I am of the view that there is no other way out for solving the food crisis but to take to State trading in a big way. We cannot solve the food crisis unless we develop this idea of State trading and make it a really big scheme for the purposes of stabilising food prices and for bringing about a proper distribution of food in this country. I am a great believer in State trading because I feel that our marginal deficits and marginal surpluses are creating tremendous fluctuations in prices of foodgrains. Therefore, the State has to enter the market as the biggest purchaser and seller of foodgrains. The State has to create an apparatus for direct purchase of foodgrains from the peasants.

SHRI H. P. SAKSENA: What do you say about the zonal system?

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: I am coming to that. The State has to curb the activities of monopolistic dealers in foodgrains. The State has definitely to

lay down the proper level of prices which is fair to the consumer as well as to the producer and the State has to create an administrative machinery in order to enforce that level of prices. Now, if that is to be done, I think we have to move very rapidly and very firmly in the direction of developing a proper scheme of State trading. My criticism of the last scheme is that it was not, in the real sense of the term, a scheme of State trading. It was just an arrangement made by the Government of India or the State Governments with big dealers in order to get some definite quantity or a quantity determined from time to time by them at specified or unspecified prices. In fact, in the last scheme as implemented by the former Food Minister, the whip-hand was with the big monopolistic trader. He was the person to mobilise the quantity of foodgrains needed by the Government and the Government just stepped in in order to impose a levy on him or buy a part of the total purchases that he had made. Now, that being so, Government could not intervene effectively and the big monopolistic trading interests managed to blow up both the schemes of controlled prices as well as the scheme of State trading. I would have gone into the details but I have not got much time. If you analyse the whole scheme of State trading as it has so far been implemented, you will see that the great bulk of procurement was made through wholesalers licensed by the Government and the total amount of foodgrains directly purchased by Government is very small. That wholesaler holds you to ransom; he dictates the price. In West Bengal and Bihar, you had to give up the whole scheme because the wholesaler blew it up from inside. In other places, as in Punjab, you were compelled to buy foodgrains through syndicates of wholesalers at prices fixed by them. In certain cases, you were entirely dependent on the purchases made by the wholesalers and on the reports that they presented. In Uttar Pradesh, for example, fifty per cent. of the pur-

chases made by the Government was through a levy imposed on the purchases made by the wholesalers. I am sorry, Sir, it was not fifty per cent. but the entire procurement of the Government was made by a levy of fifty per cent. imposed on the purchases made by the wholesalers. This being so, Government came to a condition where it found itself totally helpless. The entire market was controlled by the big trading interests. Then there was the problem of fixation of prices. The unimaginative manner in which prices were fixed by Government really enabled the big landed interests and big trading interests to make it impossible for the Government to get enough quantities of foodgrains at that price. I shall give you certain figures to show how strange and how extraordinary was the position in regard to the prices that were fixed by the Central and State Governments. Take, for example, wheat. The peak price of wheat in the year 1957-58 in Uttar Pradesh was from Rs. 22.86 to Rs. 27.59, depending on the quality of the wheat. The price fixed by the Government for procurement this year varied from Rs. 13 to Rs. 17. The peak price in Punjab for the earlier year ranged from Rs. 21.75 to Rs. 27.59 and the control price fixed by the Government varied from Rs. 14 to Rs. 15. In Rajasthan, the peak price in the previous year ranged from Rs. 18.75 to Rs. 20 and the price fixed by the Government ranged from Rs. 13 to Rs. 15. In Madhya Pradesh, the peak price was Rs. 26 and the price fixed by the Government ranged from Rs. 13 to Rs. 16. Sir, see the tremendous difference between the Government price and the prevailing market price. Naturally, in these circumstances those agriculturists who have got surpluses would not part with their surpluses, and secondly, the bigger merchants would be able to persuade them to hold on for some time till the entire price mechanism was blown up and the free market was restored when they would be able to sell foodgrains at higher prices. Take, for example,

[Dr. Z. A. Ahmad.]

rice. Coarse rice in Punjab was selling at Rs. 20/- in the previous year. This was the peak price and the Government fixed a price of Rs. 16/-. In Andhra it was Rs. 22.40 while Government fixed it at Rs. 16.5. In Assam, it was Rs. 21.25 while Government fixed a price of Rs. 10.5. I can give more figures, but I have not got much time. The absolutely unimaginative, the bureaucratic manner in which prices of foodgrains are sought to be controlled and fixed is seen from the figures that I have given just now. Now, Sir, I would say that if you really want to control prices and if you really want to ensure proper distribution of foodgrains throughout the country, you have to work on that principle which was laid down by the National Development Council in its Resolution of November, 1958. I think it was in November or perhaps October, I do not know, that it laid down the principle of State Trading and said that the wholesale trade has to be controlled by the State in order to ensure proper distribution of foodgrains throughout the country and to fix prices at a level which is just and fair both to the producer and to the consumer. Now if that principle is to be followed, I think our present Food Minister has to give up his vacillations. If he cannot give up his vacillations, then he should say definitely that he does not believe in that principle and that he wants to scrap the whole scheme of State Trading. Then we shall know what he wants to do but he does not say that. So I presume that he is still interested, to some extent, in State Trading. If he is still interested in State Trading, then I would like to place before him my proposals or my suggestions for what they are worth.

Firstly, the Government should enter the market as the biggest trader. Now, I am sure Dr. Kunzru will not like this idea. The Government should enter the market as the biggest trader in foodgrains displacing monopolistic trading interests and

mopping up a big part of the marketable surplus mainly in the surplus States and to some extent also in the deficit States because there is a marketable surplus even in the deficit States. Now that does mean that the grip of monopolistic trading concerns has to be broken and the Government has to operate in the market with much larger funds. Unfortunately, today the funds are provided by banks for speculative purposes and although some time ago the Reserve Bank decided to restrict speculative activities by restricting the loans that were given, in recent times, certain relaxations—I do not have the figures now—have been made and more credit is now being given in various ways for speculative purposes. My contention, therefore, is this that the Government should operate with much larger funds at its disposal in the market.

AN HON. MEMBER: Purchase from whom?

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: I am coming to that; I have got composite proposals. They have to restrict the operation of the bigger traders by fixing maximum stocks that any individual trader can hold at any one time. If this is done, then the smaller businessmen who will suffer on that account because of restrictions on private enterprise have to be absorbed in the State Trading mechanism set up by the Government and that mechanism has to be an independent mechanism as far as possible, a mechanism which will make the cultivator sell direct to the State as much as possible. I am saying that because during the interim period you may use the services of some of the bigger traders.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: As in China for instance?

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: I do not know China. Perhaps the hon. Member knows more about China than I do.

Now, the third point I have is that the wholesale and urban retail prices of all foodgrains should be controlled

simultaneously. It is a strange position today that the prices of wheat and rice are sought to be controlled but the prices of jowar, bajra, etc. are not being controlled. That is an anomalous situation because as any student of economics knows, the law of substitution operates in various ways and the businessmen resort to blackmarketing in jowar and other foodgrains. My friend, the Deputy Minister, said about jowar prices. Because you control wheat and rice but you are not controlling jowar, bajra, etc., speculative activities start flowing in that direction. So the wholesale urban and retail prices of all foodgrains should be controlled simultaneously.

The next point is this. As I have said earlier, if direct purchase by the government has to be undertaken on as big a scale as possible, then necessary arrangements have to be made for that. The problem of warehouses is again and again before us. I cannot understand why the Government which spends millions and millions of rupees on all sorts of things cannot formulate a plan of systematically developing warehouses in all those parts of the country where procurement can be made directly from the peasants on a big scale. So there must be a scheme whereby warehouses can be built at all the places and procurement can be made on a big scale.

Fifthly—and this I consider to be a very important suggestion, and I suppose it has been discussed earlier in this House—they should set up a proper machinery for price stabilisation; that means appointment of price fixation boards which will take into account all developments and bear in mind all factors, namely, the cost of cultivation, cost of living of the peasant, the procurement requirements of the Governments, review the prices from time to time and create a system of flexible prices whereby the peasant and the consumer are both fairly treated and the Government is also able to procure from the

peasant the quantity of foodgrains that it requires. I would submit, Sir, that these boards should be constituted in such a manner that they enjoy the confidence of all political groups and parties and popular organisations. The Government should have its representatives and other people also should be properly represented so that in a united manner we can tackle the question of prices.

The next thing I would say is this. In this interim period if you appoint purchasing agents, do not allow them to carry on trade on their own. If they are your purchasing agents, they are your purchasing agents and nothing else, because if you allow them to trade on their own, they may indulge in all sorts of undesirable activities like hoarding, blackmarketing, etc.

Then the Essential Commodities Act should be so amended as to make its punitive provisions stricter and to provide for a more honest administrative machinery to implement this Act.

If all this has to be done, popular co-operation has to be enlisted and I would appeal to the Food Minister to devise ways and means of getting the co-operation of the people at all levels, not only at the Centre but in the States, in the Districts, in the Tehsils, at every level. People should come forward on their own. They should feel enthused and offer their grain to the Government at those prices. What is happening today is, you operate through certain commercial agencies. They have got their own self-interest and naturally people's enthusiasm is not unleashed. If you want to unleash people's enthusiasm, then go directly to the people, enlist their co-operation and make them feel a sense of responsibility and supply foodgrains to the Government so that while some parts of the country are properly fed other parts need not go hungry.

[Dr. Z. A. Ahmad.]

Last but not the least is the question of increasing production. I am afraid that is a very big question.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: That is the crucial question.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: Later on....

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Your scheme falls without that.

DR. Z. A. AHMAD: I quite agree but then we should fix some time in order to discuss that question properly. Without increasing food production all our planning will fail. The Food Minister and all others who are concerned with this question should sit down and find out ways of tackling this. There should be an all-out national effort to increase food production in all possible ways.

These are the few submissions that I had to make.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Shall we adjourn for an hour for lunch and meet at two?

HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 2 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at two of the clock, MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the question of food is being frequently discussed on the floor of this House and the other House. We discussed this subject only three or four months back when the new Minister had taken charge of the Food and Agriculture portfolio. We then thought that probably he would make a change in the old rut from which the food policy suffered. On the floor of this House we made

suggestions, but from the lucid speech which the hon. Deputy Minister made this morning we find that they are still in a state of disorder and chaos. He said that this year would be a good year, as good if not better than last year, when we produced about 73.5 million tons of food. What is the use of quoting these figures to us, when the food situation remains as it was a year or two ago? It is very difficult to speak with restraint on the situation as it is being handled. It has been admitted on all hands that there are deficit States and there are surplus States. I have made some sort of a rough calculation and I find that in India 40 per cent of the people live in the deficit States, whereas 60 per cent of the people live in surplus States. The bulk of the deficit States is what may be called the industrial areas, where most of our industrial production is handled. Let the surplus States realise that any disturbance in the overall economic situation of our industrial belts like Bihar, West Bengal or Bombay is going to recoil on them within a year or two. Food price and food supply is the real backbone of our economy. And if this primary produce, which is the primary need of the people is, if I may say so, tinkered with, as it is being done, there is no good future for our whole planning. Let it be clearly understood. What is this we are facing in this country? In surplus areas the prices are half or sixty per cent of the prices in the so-called deficit areas. The figures have been quoted.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: For instance? At least in my part there is no such big difference.

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI: There is. In the State of Bombay, the price of wheat today is Rs. 28 per maund and the price of rice is Rs. 36 per maund. That is what is going on, though in certain fair price shops cheaper quality is being supplied. But the overall price is this. It was stated to us this morning that the index number of prices, compared

to a year or two ago, is about 101. That is the figure which I remember. That means the prices are more or less as they were about two years back. It is a very misleading figure. The overall index may be there, but that means that the overall wholesale price of the country includes 60 to 70 per cent higher prices in the deficit areas, which even from the surplus States' point of view is not good because there the prices must be even below the price mentioned in this index number, that is, even less than 100. It may be 90 or it may be 80. Now, with such variations and fluctuations in the prices of food, how are you going to give impetus, a sort of inducement, to the farmers in the surplus areas even to produce more food? This is a very important point which I would like the Food Minister to consider.

Sir, State trading in principle is quite good provided you are able to carry it out. It is no use giving State trading as a sort of holy slogan. If you cannot carry it out, say that you cannot carry it out, cannot execute it, so that you can get out of the old rut and find out something else. It cannot be done in a half-hearted way either by the Centre or by the States.

Then, you have tried the zonal system. May I say that the zonal system has utterly failed? What is the zonal system when you talk of zones, you talk of zones by States? The real idea behind the zonal system is that in the situation obtaining in the country as it is, there are surplus States, there are deficit States. They should be associated with each other in such a way that any two or three States which are grouped become more or less self-sufficient. That is how I understand the zonal system. Either you have larger zones, definitely without any reservation, keeping the surplus zones with the deficit zones, or do away with the zonal system once and for all and try to think of something new. This is the only way to handle the food situation. I may also appeal

to our friends who are coming from the surplus food States that if they are surplus in food—I had occasion to say it last time when the discussion was going on—the Bombay State is surplus in cloth. Bihar State is surplus in coal. Bengal is surplus in jute. The U.P. is surplus in sugar. Think of a situation when this regionalism will go to such an extent that those States will say: "We do not want to give you cloth, unless you give us food. We do not want to give you sugar at the fair and proper price unless you give us food." Is that a healthy condition in a country like ours? The whole economic situation of the country, the whole planning, will undoubtedly depend upon the stabilisation of food prices. From one place to the other, whether you go from Kashmir to Cape Comorin or from Dwarka to the Naga Hills, the price of food must remain more or less on an even basis. That, I believe, is the basis of the food policy which the Food Minister must consider.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: Would it not have relation to the purchasing power?

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI: Now, with regard to the purchasing power that has been trotted out to us, the purchasing power also depends upon 50 per cent of the food prices, because food forms more or less 50 to 60 per cent of the cost of living. You will be surprised to know that in the State of Bombay or Bengal, the whole cost of living is affected by food prices. Even the prices of vegetables have gone up, the prices of other things are going up, and everything that constitutes the budget goes up. I may tell you of one figure that one and a half years back the cost of living index in the main urban areas of the Bombay State or the West Bengal State or the Bihar State was, say, 100, and it has now become 150. That means everything has gone up. Now, this can be ascertained from the fact that in the City of Ahmedabad the dearness allowance which the people

[Shri Khandubhai K. Desai.]
were getting was about Rs. 70, and last month it has gone up to Rs. 100 because it is associated with the cost of living.

Then, in the surplus areas also let us see who is benefited by this. I have made a sort of calculation and I find that in surplus areas too the overall urban population is not more than 15 per cent. Now, is this policy being followed in the interests of the 15 per cent. urban population? Eighty-five per cent of the population is living in rural areas for whom it is said that some incentive must be given for giving them more for their produce. Now the whole of this policy requires to be completely overhauled. How it is to be overhauled, I cannot say at this stage. I would only point out that this policy of half-hearted zonal system, quarter-hearted State trading and, if I may say so, as far as agricultural production is concerned, this policy of sloganising is not going to give us food, nor will the prices go down. We do realise what is wrong with us, not that we do not realise it. As somebody pointed out this morning, production must increase. But production cannot be increased by simply making exhortation. It will have to be seen to in every village.

A suggestion was made on the floor of this House as in the other House that the Food and Agriculture portfolio must be the main portfolio in every State and at the Centre. What do we find in the States? I do not want to say anything adverse about the poor Food Minister or Agriculture Minister in the State, but the Food Minister is invariably, if I may say so, the junior-most Minister in the State, who is never considered by anybody. There may be exception. A suggestion was made effectively by no less a person than our Prime Minister that for the time being, as an emergency measure, the Food and Agriculture portfolio be held by the Chief Minister. Then he would get all the assistance, then he

would get everything that was required to produce more food. (Time bell rings.) Now as the bell has rung, I would have to curtail my speech. I personally believe that the country, whether it is a deficit State or a surplus State, I mean in any commodity, for the purpose of planning should be considered in my view as a whole. The price stabilisation about which we are talking must apply to all commodities, and if they are able to carry out State trading for any item in the other commodities, they must do it; but if they are not able to do it, let them try to find out some other way of dealing with this affair.

Sir, there is one other question to which I would like to refer. In a State like Bombay or West Bengal where there is a large concentration of industrial population, the working classes, unless they are kept satisfied with regard to the food position and the cost of living, I do not see any good augury for the success of our Plan. And when once these nerve centres of our economic stability are disturbed, that will in its wake disturb willy-nilly, whether one likes it or not, even the so-called surplus areas. This is a cardinal point to which I want the Food Minister to draw the attention of his colleagues not only in the Government of India but his colleagues in the States.

Sir, I would have gone on for some more time, but I conclude my speech with these words.

श्री अभिमन्यु रथ (उड़ीसा) : उप-
नामपति महोदय, इस महत्वपूर्ण विषय
पर बोलने के लिये हमारी पार्टी को १५
मिनट का समय मिला है जिसमें से मेरे
हिस्से में ३ मिनट बोलने का है।
इतना थोड़ा समय मिलने के बाद उसका
उत्प्रेषण करना भी अच्छा नहीं, इसलिए
मैं संक्षेप में बोलूंगा।

मान्यवर श्री जी ने अपने भाषण में
कहा कि उड़ीसा एक महत्वपूर्ण स्टेट है।

उड़ीसा के ही विषय में कहकर मैं अपनी सीट पर बैठ जाऊंगा। उड़ीसा सरप्लस स्टेट इसलिये है कि वहां की जनसंख्या एक करोड़ ४६ लाख के भीतर कम से कम एक करोड़ २२ लाख आदिवासी जनता है। वे लोग बहुत गरीब हैं और उनकी परचेजिंग कैपसिटी अच्छी नहीं है। इसकी केबीज, आम की गुठली और विपणन, जो कि एक प्रकार की जंगली जड़ी होती है, उसको उबाल कर खाते हैं। इन चीजों को खाकर वे अपना जीवन निर्वाह करते हैं और जो चावल धान उनके पास होता है उसको बेच देते हैं। इस पर आप कहते हैं कि वह सरप्लस स्टेट है। आपके हिमाचल में यदि उड़ीसा सरप्लस स्टेट है और आप वहां में बंगाल को खाद्यान्न भेजते हैं तो उसमें हमें कोई ऐतराज नहीं है। इस साल हमारे यहाँ हारवेस्ट अति उत्तम हुई है और कम से कम एक, दो लाख मन चावल, धान उड़ीसा से बाहर भेज सकते हैं। लेकिन उस एरिया की आदिवासी जनता के लिये खाद्य का मुश्किल बंदोबस्त सरकार को दो चार जिलों के भीतर बफर स्टॉक बना कर करना चाहिये। सरकार नियंत्रण तो करती है लेकिन नियंत्रण का सुगठन करना सरकार से होता नहीं। हमने देखा कि छत्तीसगढ़ एरिया जो कि मध्य प्रदेश का एक भाग है, उसको भी सरप्लस एरिया के भीतर रखा गया, लेकिन हमारे यहाँ बारह लाख की जनता के भीतर एक ही जिले में साढ़े ८ लाख ऐसे आदिवासी हैं जो लोग आम की गुठली, महुआ के फल, इसकी के बीज वगैरा खाकर अपना भ्रष्ट पोषण करते हैं। ऐसी हालत में बस्तर, छत्तीसगढ़, कोरापुट, कालाहंडी इलाकों में रहने वाले आदिवासियों के लिये खाद्य समस्या का हल नहीं निकाला जाय तो भविष्य में वहाँ खाद्य संकट उपस्थित हो जायगा। **केन्द्रीय सरकार** से मेरा यह कहना है कि वहाँ ऐसा प्रबन्ध

किया जाय कि जो प्रोक्योरमेंट वहाँ हो रहा है उसके लिये तहसीलदार प्रोन्नत नायब तहसीलदारा को विशेष निर्देश दिये जाय। वे लोग गांव-गांव में जाकर कारनकारों को प्रोक्वेस्ट के पहले एडवार्स देकर धान का प्रोक्वेस्ट वर अर्थात् प्रोड्यूसमें में डाइरेक्ट परचेजिंग के तहत कि अपने एजेंटों को रखकर उनके जमाने वगैरे। जो प्रोक्वेस्ट एजेंट होते हैं वे दो साल महीने में सारा स्टॉक खरीद कर, सरकार को धोका देकर और जो सरकारी रेट होता है उसमें कम दाम में खरीद कर और सरकारी को चार, पांच २० अधिक में दिला कर अपना फायदा कमाने हैं।

ऐसी हालत में मेरी सरकार के सामने यह प्रार्थना है कि वह प्रोक्वेस्ट के पहले कुछ ऐसा प्रबन्ध करे जिनके द्वारा वह सीधा किसानों में अनाज खरीद सके। सरकार को चाहिये कि हर चार या पांच पंचायत, गांवों के बीच एक अनाज की कोठी बनाये जहाँ पर किसान अपना अनाज जमा कर के सरकार को बेचें।

डा० राज बहादुर गौड़ (आंध्र प्रदेश) :
वेयर हाउस हो सकते हैं।

श्री अभिमन्यु रथ : वेयर हाउस नहीं हो सकते हैं क्योंकि वहाँ की कडीशन ठीक नहीं है। सरकार किसान से जो भी अनाज खरीदना चाहती है वह सीधा प्रोड्यूसर से खरीदकर स्टॉक करे। जब तक सरकार इस तरह का कोई प्रबन्ध नहीं करती तब तक प्रोक्वेस्टमेंट के कोई मानी नहीं होंगे। आजकल हालत यह है कि वहाँ पर प्रोक्वेस्टमेंट के होते हुए भी ब्रैक मार्केटिंग चलता है। उदाहरण स्वरूप मैं आपके सामने यह बात कहना चाहता हूँ कि बस्तर जिले में एक आफिसर जिन्हें तहसीलदार कहा जाता है नियुक्त किये गये हैं। वे इस तरह का काम कर रहे हैं, मैं नाम बतला सकता हूँ और अगर माननीय मंत्री जी मेरे साथ कोई आफिसर भेजें तो मैं उस आदमी को दिखला सकता हूँ।

[Shri Abhimanyu Rath.]

That officer collects one rupee per bag to procure the paddy from the procurement agent.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI S. K. PATIL): Why did not the hon. Member bring it to the notice of the State authorities when he found it?

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: I have brought these things to the notice of the State authorities and I do not know what the State officers and the State Ministers are doing. I brought it to the notice of the State's high officers. They turn a deaf ear to these things. I brought a C.I.D. officer. He was sitting by my side and I got that State Procurement Officer. He charged eight annas per bag simply to weigh. In one day he collected Rs. 87 from one procurement agent. But in spite of my repeatedly persuading the officers nothing has happened.

तो ऐसी हालत में मेरा सरकार से यह कहना है कि जब तक वह सीधा प्रोड्यूसर से अनाज नहीं खरीदेगी तब तक वह बफर स्टॉक बनाने में कामयाब नहीं हो सकती है। बफर स्टॉक सरकार तब ही रख सकती है जब उसका प्रोक्योरमेंट करने का तरीका अच्छा होगा। जिस तरह से आज कल सरकार प्रोक्योरमेंट कर रही है अगर वही नीति सरकार की जारी रही तो वह कभी भी अपनी पालिसी में कामयाब नहीं हो सकती है। इसलिए सरकार को इस बात का ध्यान रखना होगा कि उनको जो प्रोक्योरमेंट और डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन की पालिसी है वह इस तरह की होनी चाहिये जिस से किसान को किसी तरह का नुकसान न हो और जो एजेंट इस समय बीच में आ कर सरकार को ज्यादा दाम में अनाज बेच रहे हैं वह बन्द हो जाय।

हमारे देश में खाद्य, प्रोक्योरमेंट करने की, प्राचीन समय से व्यवस्था रही है। मैं इस बारे में ज्यादा कहने की योग्यता नहीं रखता तब भी मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ:—

“यादत भ्रामते जटारम
तावते सत्व ही देहिनाम
अधिक योमेवन्वते
सस्थेन दंडर मरहती”

आदि समय में, वैदिक युग में, हमारे देश में इस तरह की व्यवस्था रही कि जब कभी देश में खाद्य संकट हुआ—जब देश में खाद्य सामग्री सुचारु रूप से लोगों को प्राप्त नहीं हुई तो जो लोग खाद्य होर्ड करते थे उन्हें दंड दिया जाता था और सरकार उन लोगों से अनाज जबर्दस्ती लेकर अपने गोदामों में रख लेती थी। लेकिन आजकल सरकार की यह नीति है कि जिस एरिया से वह प्रोक्योरमेंट करना चाहती है वहां बगैर खाद्य द्रव्यों के दाम निश्चित किये यह एनाउन्स कर देती है कि उस एरिया से इतना अनाज खरीदा जायेगा। इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि सरकार के जो एजेंट होते हैं वे पहले से ही अनाज को खरीद लेते हैं और ज्यादा दाम में सरकार का बेच देते हैं। इस तरह से जो ज्यादा पैसा उन्हें मिलता है वह आफिसर अपने पाकिट में कर लेता है। इस तरह से आजकल एजेंट अनाज को सीधा किसान से खरीद कर होर्ड कर लेता है और ज्यादा दाम में सरकार को बेचता है। By that time the price goes to Rs. 3 or Rs. 4 per bag.

मैं आपके सामने एक उदाहरण देना चाहता हूँ। जिस समय उड़ीसा और बंगाल का एक जॉन बनने की खबर थी उस समय कोटपाड़ी जिले में धान का दाम १४ रुपये से २१ रुपये हो गया था। अगर सरकार बफर स्टॉक बनाना चाहती है तो उसे सीधा अनाज किसानों से खरीदना चाहिये। सरकार २५, ३५ या ४० परसेंट तक अनाज सीधा किसानों से खरीद सकती है और ६० परसेंट अनाज को वह जोन्स में भेज सकती है। जब तक सरकार इस तरह का प्रबन्ध नहीं करेगी तब तक खाद्य स्थिति ठीक नहीं हो सकती है। और न वह अपनी नीति में ही कामयाब हो सकती है। यही मुझे कहना है।

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the question that we are considering can be divided into two parts. We have first to grow more food and secondly to see that the available food is properly distributed. Let us take the first question which is the crucial question first. We have been told that the year 1958-59 was a bumper year. It may have been a bumper year, but let us see what the yield per acre has been. The total quantity of foodgrains may be appreciably more than the quantity produced in the previous year which was a bad year. But the average per acre is not such as to give us any satisfaction. Take for instance the kharif and rabi crops and the pulses separately. We find that there were about 180 million acres under kharif crops and the total quantity of cereals produced from these acres is about 49 million tons, which means that about 3-2/3 acres produce one ton. Then take the rabi crop. The total rabi cereals amount to about 12-1/3 million tons, and the total area under them was a little over 39 million acres, that is, a little over three acres produce one ton. The kharif yield is always better than the rabi yield, but the result is not such as can satisfy us particularly in our present condition.

Now, take the pulses. The total yield of pulses is only a little over 12 million tons and the area under these pulses is about 59 million acres. That is, about five acres produce one ton. Now, I have no doubt, Sir, that every effort is being made at the present time by the authorities to increase food production. But the result does not appear to me to be satisfactory. That is the first thing that we have to attend to. I have brought this point to the attention of the Government more than once, but I do not see that any adequate effort has been made by Government to create those conditions or to take full advantage of those conditions on which more intensive agriculture depends.

Now, Sir, what are the factors on which increased yield depends?

Obviously, the most important of them are three in number—adequate irrigation, an adequate supply of good seeds and a liberal supply of chemical and non-chemical manures. We were told that full use of the resources available would be made in the Community Development areas. But what is the story that the last report on the Community Development Projects and N.E.S. Blocks tells us? We learn from it, Sir, that the proportion of Blocks reporting shortages in the case of seed and chemical fertilisers are as follows:

Seed—

Paddy—57 per cent.

Wheat—44 per cent.

Chemical fertilisers—

Ammonium Sulphate—38 per cent.

Superphosphate—33 per cent.

The report goes on to say that in quite a number of these Blocks the shortage can be considered serious inasmuch as the supply is less than 50 per cent of the quantity indented. Sir, in these circumstances I think one would not go far wrong if one were to say that the quantity of foodgrains produced in 1958-59 was more due to good weather than to any special effort made by the Agriculture Department of the Government of India or the Agriculture Departments of the States.

Now, Sir, I should like to ask in this connection to what extent effect has been given by Government to the recommendations made by the Agricultural Administration Committee and the Ford Foundation Team. We know that in a general way the proposals made by both these bodies have been accepted by Government, but I should like to know to what extent the accepted recommendations have been translated into practice. The Agricultural Administration Committee made a number of valuable recommendations, but I want to refer only to two sets of recommendations, one relating to the establishment of a proper agricultural orga-

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 nisation and the other to the establishment of a proper agricultural research organisation. Now one of the most important recommendations made in the Chapter regarding agricultural organisation relates to the establishment of a Farm Education Service, which is to have three branches, the National Extension Service, the Agricultural Information Service and the Farm Advisory Service. Now, if these Services are established, we shall then be able to see that the results of the researches carried on in our laboratories reach the humblest villager. Besides, he can be given advice with regard to the best method of taking advantage of the work done in the laboratories. The Farm Information Service will, by spreading the general knowledge of the work done by our scientists, create an atmosphere in the villages which would incline the cultivators to take the proposals made to them by Government more seriously than they do at present.

Now, Sir, the Ford Foundation Team has laid great stress on the supply of chemical fertilisers and has further suggested that special efforts ought to be made in regard to certain crops in certain areas. Well, this is not a new suggestion. In principle this suggestion was made by the Bengal Famine Committee about fifteen years ago, and I should like to know to what extent effect has been given to it. Doubtless in some areas the use of more fertilisers is attempted to be concentrated. But how far have we succeeded in these efforts and what methods have we used in order to overcome the obstacles in our way?

Now, Sir, I come to the question of the proper distribution of food. Now, Sir, the Prime Minister was very keen some time ago on State trading in foodgrains and I believe he is so still in theory. But it was clear from the answer given by him to my supplementary question yesterday that this question was approved by

the National Development Council although it was not on the agenda of the Council and no preparations had been made previously by the Planning Commission to supply the National Development Council with adequate information on this complicated subject. All that he said in his own defence, because it was he who sprung this surprise on the National Development Council, was that the matter had been under discussion for a long time. So we go on discussing many matters, but when we want to come to a sound conclusion on a difficult problem connected with these subjects, then we ask for consolidated information on all the points on which a correct solution depends. The Chief Ministers of the States may have agreed to State trading under pressure from the Prime Minister, but obviously they did not have such material before them as would have enabled them to offer their considered advice.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: I do not want to interrupt my hon. friend, but did not the Prime Minister say that in subsequent discussions in the National Development Council this matter was repeatedly and in detail discussed at various levels, by the Chief Ministers as well as at the secretariat level and in the departments?

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Yes, Sir, we know the Prime Minister did say this, but we know also, Sir, what the result of official pressure on the States is. We have some experience about the production of more food. We were told in 1956 that the States had agreed, without any additional allocation of funds, to make every effort to increase the production of food from 75 million tons, which was the target tentatively suggested by the Planning Commission, to 80 million tons which was suggested later, and it was said that the States had all been consulted and had voluntarily agreed to it. But we know what the result was. There is a controversy on the subject still going on between

the Central Government and the States and I suppose that in the same way the Chief Ministers, having committed themselves once in the National Development Council, could not go back on it and at the secretariat level the decision arrived at by the National Development Council had to be accepted. Well, Sir, now how . . .

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: There is nothing on record that anybody objected.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Well, Sir, there is nothing on record even in the case of the 'Grow More Food Campaign' that any State objected. But we know what the result has been.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: Surely that is a different matter; it is a matter of implementation; it is not a matter of decision; you come to a decision after full care and detailed knowledge of the subject.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: There was no detailed knowledge of the subject when the N.D.C. agreed to it. That is admitted.

Then, Sir, how is this proper distribution to be brought about? My hon. friend, Shri Z. A. Ahmad, dealt with this subject in some detail, but he could not come to the question of the production of more food. I was waiting for it because that would have been the most important part of his speech. He practically said that the purchase of food and its distribution should be carried out entirely by a Government agency. Had he carried is argument a little further, he would have probably said that the production of more food—that being the crucial question—also ought to be undertaken by the State directly. In other words, he was advocating that we should imitate the system followed in the Communist countries.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: What is that system?

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Collective farms. The Government takes over the production of all the foodgrains. No purchasing agency is needed, and then it distributes it through its own agency.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It is a large-scale buying by the State.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Yes, carry the argument only a little further. He was unfortunately unable to deal with the question of production which was the crucial question.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, if we move forward, ultimately we will come to that.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: Yes, that is exactly what I wanted to say. On that point, I think the Food Minister has taken up a very sound position. He said in August last, and the Deputy Minister repeated it today, that state trading in foodgrains, however important, was only a means to an end. I entirely agree with that attitude, namely that we have to achieve a definite purpose. State trading in foodgrains, as is being seen now or has been fully seen now, is not as simple a question as it was supposed to be. You have to deal with a large number of agencies, and even when you have full control over all these things, you may not be as quick in supplying the needs of a million and one areas where food has to be sent as the private trader is at the present time.

Again, Sir, take the question of forming zones. There is dissatisfaction among the surplus areas. What the surplus areas say is this: If a deficit zone is combined with a surplus zone, the wholesale dealers from the deficit zone in purchasing their requirements from the surplus zone offer high prices and thus push up prices in the surplus area also. This is not a matter that can be lightly brushed aside. I admit that we cannot think only of the surplus States. We have to think of the deficit States

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too. But, if the Central and the State Governments can pool their efforts so as to purchase the quantity of food required by the deficit areas, it would not be necessary to form zones. But, even when zones are formed—and I am not totally against the formation of zones—it will be very difficult to find zones which are absolutely self-sufficient. According to the information that I have received from the Food and Agriculture Ministry, it seems to me that the Central Government will have to make special efforts to feed the population of Bombay and Calcutta. You may have a zone, for instance, consisting of Bombay, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. It will be self-sufficient provided the needs of Bombay city are separately looked after. Similarly, Orissa and Bengal may form a self-sufficient zone . . .

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: A part of Madhya Pradesh, i.e., Chatisgarh may be taken to Orissa side.

DR. H. N. KUNZRU: . . . because what Bengal produces is sufficient for itself minus Calcutta.

Sir, here are there various considerations to be taken into account, the need of various agencies, the complications of the question, the friction between the surplus and the deficit areas and so on. Only after these considerations should a sound policy be evolved. I am sure that this matter has been considered in the Food Ministry and memoranda have been prepared on it. If there are any such memoranda, we should like to be supplied with them. We have a right to ask for full material in order to enable ourselves to form a sound judgment. Sir, if these things are done, I think that it may not be necessary for us to import as much food as we do now from outside.

Sir, we say that prices are coming down. I have no time to deal with this subject. I do not agree with that view because we have for ourselves seen that while prices have gone down

for two, three, four, five or six months, they have subsequently risen because of the operation of other causes to which the Food Minister referred quite frankly in the debate that took place in August last.

Besides, you have to see what the prices of gur, oil-seeds and groundnuts are at the present time. The prices of gur and groundnuts have shot up considerably, which means that we may well be apprehensive of a general inflation in prices. Up to the end of November, 1959 we had exported about 3,600,000 tons of foodgrains and even in these circumstances we cannot fully keep down the inflationary pressure. It is obvious, therefore, that this matter requires much more thought than has been given to it, and let me repeat that we should like to avail ourselves of the thought given to it by the Food and Agriculture Ministry.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA (Nominated): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, before expressing my views on the food situation, with your permission I would like to make a few preliminary observations. In the first instance, I might inform you that as a new-comer I would have liked to wait a little longer before participating in the deliberations of this august assembly for that would have given me time to become fully conversant with the Rajya Sabha rules and conventions, and still more, to establish personal contacts with the hon. Members, with many of whom, I am afraid, I do not have even nodding acquaintance. Sir, I attach great importance to personal contacts, for they go a long way in promoting mutual goodwill and understanding which are so very necessary for the successful working of democratic institutions.

Sir, the purpose of discussion in democratic legislatures is different from that elsewhere. The purpose is not to make a few debating points, not even to display one's ability and skill in speaking or to play to the

gallery or create an impression on the outside world. We are expected to place our views frankly before each other and then try to arrive at some agreement and understanding and failing that to agree to differ. But in any case we have to submit to the views of the majority for, in a democracy, it is not the intellect and intelligence or mature judgment of the few but the collective wisdom and considered verdict of the many or the majority that is supposed to prevail and guide the Government. But the present is an important occasion for we are discussing a very vital problem, the food situation in the country and I felt I should speak. The food situation had deteriorated during the last 4 or 5 years. We had expected to become self-sufficient by 1951 or so, but we find that the situation has become worse.

Sir, before I proceed further I may tell the Food Minister that he was not well-advised in likening Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to a banian tree. It was particularly an unhappy analogy for the Food Minister to use for the Prime Minister. A banian tree which provides shelter and protection to many does not yield a grain of food and does not solve our food problem.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: But it produces many Ministers.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: Not only that. Some of our critics had taken advantage of it and said that it provides 'shelters to reptiles and undesirable elements also' and I hope he will reconsider this for he will be the last person to suggest that during the stewardship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister the food problem will not be solved.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I did not like to interrupt the hon. Member. But what he says has nothing to do with food and, therefore, it may not come in my speech afterwards. He has utterly misquoted me and he did not know what I was

talking and he does not know even now what he is talking about.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I know what I am talking about.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: The quotation was not on food. It was a special television interview on Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, if he wants to know it in which there were a thousand good things said and what I said was not in disparagement of him but in exalting him greatly, as I thought. I am merely saying all this lest this should create an impression which is totally wrong. What I said was: He is the greatest asset to this country. I am quoting it completely because he has misquoted me. I said:

"Even so, sometimes greatness has its handicaps just as a banian tree shelters millions of people but under its shade biologically nothing grows. It is not the fault of the banian tree."

But it has nothing to do with disparagement of the Prime Minister and if the hon. Member wants to connect it with the food problem or any other story, he is free to do that.

DR. R. B. GOUR: But you have grown under it.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I never meant to suggest that he has spoken in disparagement of the Prime Minister. I said that as Food Minister it was particularly unfortunate for him to use that simile.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: It was very fortunate of me to have said so.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I do not agree with Ministers going about and making speeches like that. They have got important things to do. I know there is one Agricultural Minister—he is not here—who has brought out a book consisting of all the speeches about rice revolution.

SHRI SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE (Bihar): It is not a party meeting.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: After all, it is a fight between a Minister and an ex-Minister.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: The hon. Member knows all this as he was a Minister.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: On a point of order, Sir. Is it not the practice that when an hon. Member is making his maiden speech, he should not be interrupted?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: We never knew that he was making his maiden speech.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I had expected that not only you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, would extend a little more latitude but the hon. Members also will exercise a little more forbearance when I am delivering my first speech in this House. But I may tell Shri Patil through you that I have great regard for him. We have been friends for so many years. He also knows that I have had the proud privilege of being associated with the Prime Minister for a period perhaps longer than any one else present in this House.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: Question.

(Interruptions.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Please come to the food situation.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I will come to the food situation. I have said that I would make a few preliminary observations before coming to the subject of food. I hold, and every one of us holds, the Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, in the highest esteem. He is, if I were to describe him, Gandhiji's discovery. He is Gandhiji's greatest gift to the nation and I submit if we could bear with him, and he could bear with us, he would take us along. The difficulty is that many of those whose duty it is, constitutionally as well as morally, to tell him frankly as to how they feel on particular questions, remain

silent and when they go out, they talk all sorts of things. (Interruptions.) In this book I have made a number of suggestions about the food problem and have said that the difficulty with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is that if others round him do not speak out their mind, it is difficult for him to act. After all, he is a democrat. I have known that on many questions where he had held a different view when he was convinced that the majority held a different view, he accepted the other view and implemented the majority view to the satisfaction of all concerned even though he did not hold that view earlier. Take, for instance, the case of increase in food production and reducing price. It was in 1956, I think, that a decision was taken by the National Development Council that the food production should be increased by 40 per cent. and the prices should be reduced by 20 per cent. The Prime Minister had made that statement on the floor of the Lok Sabha but after he had left and gone abroad, at a meeting of the Food Ministers held in Mussoorie there was an open discussion between the Planning Minister and the Food Minister, and the Food Minister had stated as I have pointed out in this book, that he did not agree with that suggestion of the Prime Minister although he had remained silent. He did not believe that the price could be reduced. So, I submit that this is not a satisfactory state of affairs.

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: Will you please quote the name of that book?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He will show it to you later. Go on Mr. Saksena.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: Sir, I wanted a little forbearance from the hon. Members here.

Sir, I was pointing out that I have given thought to this problem and have made suggestions and I know the crux of the problem is not merely

distribution but its production. Now, there are a few pertinent **3 P.M.** questions that I would like to ask the hon. Food Minister. Unless we are prepared to concentrate all our energies and attention on the food problem itself, leaving other matters apart, I do not think we shall be able to make much headway. There is the example of Mr. Rafi Ahmed Kidwai. He did not make many speeches. He did not go about telling all these things or giving interviews or broadcasting his views. He went about his business as to how things were to be done, where the shoe was pinching, where things were slack and the result of it we know. It is said that it was due to favourable monsoon and not so much to his effort. I am one of those who believe that even God helps those who help themselves. But once we start with this presumption that we are not in a position to produce sufficient food for the requirements of this country, we cannot make the effort necessary to produce the desired result. Unless we burn our boats and leave no chance for escape we shall not be able to solve the problem. Gandhiji has taught us a lesson. When he wanted us to boycott foreign cloth, he said, 'We may even go naked but we will not use foreign cloth.' He was in Lucknow when we were burning foreign cloth and then at that time he said, 'You are burning foreign cloth but what am I doing?— There must be something to show my earnestness about it' and then he decided to give up even the dhoti, kurta and topi that he used to wear and he took to loin-cloth. I call it a 'loin-cloth' gesture. Unless our decisions are accompanied by that kind of 'loin-cloth' gesture to show our earnestness and determination, we shall not be able to enthuse the people or solve this problem in a year's time or even in 10 years' time.

I may also remind the Food Minister that if he were to read Gandhiji's writings, he would know that during the last war, the food problem was

very acute. Gandhiji had said at that time—"We should not in any case depend on any foreign help for the supply of our food. We may have to go without food or to depend on subsidiary food"—the words used were 'even eat roots', but "we must not make ourselves dependent on foreign countries for supplies of food." But, unfortunately, the trend of opinion has been that we want to import even foodstuffs, not only foodstuffs, but even milk powder. Now we are going to have buffer stock through bank arrangements, from America. I know that the U.S.A. is too anxious to dump its surplus grains on any country and if they are not able to do that, they will have to dump them in the seas or burn them. So we have to be clear in our minds as to what is to be done. It is not an idle criticism. I have given thought to it and if the hon. Food Minister will refer to his files or record or to the Planning Commission, he will find that I have sent a number of suggestions for increasing food production but they would not be considered. I have sent them through the Prime Minister himself. As Dr. Kunzru has pointed out, there has been increase in food production but there has not been any increase in the yield per acre. What is the reason? You have supplied fertilisers, you have supplied good seeds, you have given irrigation facilities and credit facilities but the yield per acre has gone down. What is the reason? You may say one thing or the other, that either the yield of the soil has decreased or something else. But to my mind, the answer is that the land is not getting a proper quota of labour which it was getting when our village economy was not a cash economy but a kind economy. You see, whenever they required labour, labour was available and labour used to have a share in the harvest and they were not to be paid in cash. Now because they do not have cash, they cannot afford to engage the requisite labour.

The other pertinent question I would like to put is this. The Food

[Shri Mohan Lal Saksena.]

Minister is reported to have said in one of the Consultative Committee meetings that we did not have improved implements, chemical fertilizers and good seeds. There is difficulty about these, and therefore we have to import foodstuffs from outside. I do not agree. Again I will say that there is considerable scope for producing compost manure. Gandhiji taught it to us. After all there is so much wealth in the shape of human excreta and green manure. There is much grass growing every season and that goes waste. Why cannot it be utilized? The Minister says that only through chemical fertilizers we can produce. . . .

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: There are a few Gandhi Ashrams where human excreta is still used.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: For that I have given a concrete scheme that there should be co-operatives of labourers and workers in every village or for every 10 villages the arrangements should be that whatever labour is needed for a particular holding should be made available on reasonable terms, the owner paying a part in cash and the balance may be payable at the time of harvest.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wind up.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: It is agreed that in every village 10 acres of land remain waste every season. For one reason or other it is not being cultivated. What arrangements are we making for their utilization? At least 50 lakh acres are there like that. What arrangements are made to utilize the land? As Dr. Kunzru pointed out, 3 acres of land produce one ton. So over 15 lakh tons could be produced. Then there is land along the railway lines. We know in the foreign countries. . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Rajagopal Naidu.

SHRI MOHAN LAL SAKSENA: I am concluding. These are some of

the suggestions I would like to make and I would like the Minister to consider them.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU (Madras): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Deputy Minister very much impressed us with regard to the present food situation in the country but he came out with a statement that there is going to be a certain modification in the existing zonal system and I felt that he was going to split the present larger zones into smaller zones, into more viable units in the matter of food distribution. But what he has spoken amounts to the creation of larger zones than what they are at present. If we analyse the objects and reasons for creating the zones in 1957, the general objective in dividing the country into regional food zones was to rationalise the movements of foodgrains which were taking place in a haphazard and unco-ordinated way and to stabilise prices by shutting off competition from pockets outside of these zones. I want to mainly deal with the request of the Madras State in wanting a separate zone by itself and how repeatedly the approaches made by them had been turned down by the Central Government. In respect of the Southern zone, the basis on which it was formed was that the deficit of the three States of Kerala, Madras and Mysore, which was estimated to be about 4 lakh tons annually—Kerala with a deficit of 2.5 lakh tons, Madras with 1 lakh and Mysore with 0.5 lakh tons—could be offset by the surplus of Andhra which was estimated to be 6 lakh tons. Apart from meeting the deficit of these three States, it was expected that 2 lakh tons of Andhra rice should be going to places like Bombay, Saurashtra and Calcutta, which were the principal consumers of the fine Andhra rice. Sir, that was the object with which these zones were created. From the beginning the State of Madras was opposed to it. Madras, as we know, is more or less self-sufficient in the matter of foodgrains. The Madras State used to import certain finer varieties of rice from Andhra and

export a certain coarse variety of rice to Kerala. That was the state of affairs before the creation of these zones. When the zone was created, probably the Government of India wanted to see that there was a free flow of rice from Andhra to Madras and from Madras to Kerala. But unfortunately, the object with which the Southern Zone was created had been frustrated by certain events which I would like to narrate.

Sir, if we analyse the figures from 1954 to 1958, we find that the flow of rice from Madras to Kerala has been in abundance, but the inflow of rice from Andhra to Madras was not as was expected. In the year 1954-55 the movement of rice from Madras to other States was 1.58 lakh tons and in the later years it was much more. The movement of rice from Andhra had dwindled down in the year 1957-58 to a mere 18,000 tons. But the movement of rice from Madras to other States had gone up to 200,000 tons annually. And on an average nearly 15,000 tons had been flowing from Madras to Kerala, according to the figures available, both by rail and by road. Now compare the prices in Kerala State with the prices prevailing in the Madras State. In Kerala it is always the case that the price of rice is about Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 higher than the price in Madras per maund. As a result of that the Madras Government is finding it difficult to stabilise its price and the Madras State is not able to control its prices. It is reasonable, Sir, then to say that when there is a heavily deficit State like Kerala where the price of rice is ranging by some Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 per maund higher than what it is in the Madras State, and with an uncontrolled flow of rice from Madras to Kerala, even a more or less self-sufficient State like Madras cannot stabilise its price effectively.

SHRI KHANDUBHAI K. DESAI: Rs. 4 to Rs. 5 per maund or per ton?

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: It is per maund. I am sorry, not per ton.

So even a surplus State like Madras cannot stabilise its prices. Therefore, there is no wonder that, as the hon. Deputy Minister said, the prices of foodgrains in Madras and in the southern States are higher as compared with the prices of foodgrains in the rest of the country. That is why the Madras State has been agitating from the very beginning to have it as a separate area, to cordon it off from the rest of the southern States so that the Madras State itself could undertake the procurement of paddy or rice and supply to the chronically deficit State of Kerala. If that had been the case, then the prices of foodgrains would have been more or less normal in the Madras State and the prices in Kerala also would have been stabilised and the price of foodgrains in Kerala would not have gone up. But as a result of the creation of one big zone and the linking up of the surplus State of Andhra with the more or less self-sufficient State of Madras and the chronically deficit State of Kerala, the prices of foodgrains are not controlled and the consumers have to pay a heavy price in Kerala and at the same time the producers, either in Andhra or in the Madras State, are not able to get adequate prices. As one of the speakers here said, these foodgrains are being cornered by the millowners and the wholesalers in Kerala. At the harvest time they approach the big merchants and wholesalers in the Madras State and just buy foodgrains and then go back to their State and corner the stocks and then try to sell them at higher prices at the time when there is great need. That is why the Government of Madras have been pointing out the defect of the present arrangement. Madras Government has been saying this not on account of any zeal to preserve its autonomy. They are doing it with a desire to have a sort of administrative control over the prices as well as on the distribution.

Sir, there was a lot of appreciation as well as criticism with regard to State Trading. I for one would always advocate State Trading in

[Shri P. S. Rajagopal Naidu.]
 foodgrains. But as was stated by my hon. friend, Shri Khandubhai Desai, there should be whole-hearted State Trading, not half-hearted State Trading. State Trading should not be pursued in a half-hearted manner. In recent times I have seen an announcement made by the Government as well as probably an announcement by the Madras Government that there will be no price control and there will be no movement control at all. Only a month ago, they had insisted on movement control and they had said that only rice could go to Kerala and not paddy and as a result of that the price had come down. But later when the Government had announced that there could be a free flow of paddy from Madras to Kerala, the prices had gone up. So this sort of policy, an uncertain policy of the Government, is creating all these difficulties. I would only appeal that when we take to State Trading we should take it up in a whole-hearted way and see that effective control is there. We should not announce controls and after experimenting for some months immediately announce decontrol or say that movements between one State and another are unrestricted. (*Time bell rings.*) Only a few more words.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Only ten minutes can be given hereafter.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: That may kindly be applied to the next speaker, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: I will finish just now. I only want to mention the case of sugar. A couple of months ago there was a terrific shortage or scarcity of sugar in the country. I am sure I will be within my subject when I talk about sugar, for that also comes within the portfolio of the hon. Minister of Food and Agriculture.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Take some other occasion.

SHRI P. S. RAJAGOPAL NAIDU: I will take only one minute, Sir. Then the price of sugar had gone up by nearly 100 per cent and in some places even by 200 per cent. in the Madras State. And then a certain amount of control was introduced at that time. Now the crushing season has commenced and the sugar factories are producing sugar from November onwards. Why should there be this control still on the movement of sugar? Simply because there is this control, the consumers are not able to get sugar at favourable prices. I would only urge that when the crushing season commences that is to say, from November to April or May, let there be decontrol on the movement of sugar so that the consumers will be in a position to get more sugar.

Sir, I wanted to speak on some more points, but since the time is restricted, I am not doing it now.

SHRI ROHIT M. DAVE (Bombay): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would like to begin where Dr. Kunzru left over and that is the question of prices. Sir, in August, when the Food Minister spoke on the Food Debate, he underlined the necessity for a clear demarcation between the functions of the Union Food Ministry and the Food Departments in the States. He said that he would confine, as far as possible, the functions of the Union Food Ministry to discharging the responsibilities laid upon the Ministry by the Constitution. Now, as far as I could read the Constitution, one of the most important responsibilities of the Union Food Ministry is that it should see that the price of foodgrains does not fluctuate violently from time to time and from place to place. It was also to see that within the resources available and within the food stocks available, the prices are stabilised as far as possible. In this particular function, the Union

Food Ministry has so far not been successful; prices are fluctuating for no apparent reason from time to time and from place to place and prices fluctuate in the deficit areas as well as in the surplus areas. Prices fluctuate during a period when we have a bumper crop as well as during a period when there is a deficit in production. So, we have not been able to evolve any formula or machinery whereby it would be possible to control prices. We are told, Sir, that last year we had a bumper crop but in spite of the bumper crop, what do we find? In September, 1959, the consumer price index in Bombay was 145, 100 being the base in 1949. It was as high as nearly 50 per cent., but then it came down a bit and stood at 145. This is the situation in the country. In spite of a bumper crop, prices continue to fluctuate and it is a matter for concern. Since 1954, prices have a tendency—I am talking about food prices—to harden at high and higher levels. During scarcity periods prices rise, come down a bit, shoot up again still further and then stabilise at a higher level, and in that way from year to year the stabilised price is something higher than that of the previous year. This being the situation, it requires some consideration as to how we are going to meet that situation. I was trying very hard to hear what the Deputy Food Minister had to say but I did not find a single suggestion in the entire speech about the manner in which the Food Ministry intended to tackle this problem. We have been told that the wholesale trading in foodstocks by the State was a means to an end. I accept that proposition but the end has not been achieved and the means is left where it was. Difficulties have been pointed out; these difficulties may be genuine or may be such as perhaps could not be overcome. I do not know because I have not got the data to make up my mind but whatever be the reason, if State trading in foodgrains as far as wholesale trade is concerned, was going to be the means to an end, we would like to know from the Government as to

why that means is not being vigorously pursued so that the end might be achieved. Is it the contention of Government that the end has already been achieved, and that therefore we do not require to have resort to this particular means? If that is not so, why is not resort being had to this means is a question which can be legitimately asked. Sir, the Food Minister the other day rightly pointed out that ultimately it is the production which is the key to the solution of the food problem. He also pointed out that mere exhortation of farmers to produce more is not going to have any effect and that we will have to give them economic incentives in order that it may be possible and advantageous for them to produce more. As far as economic incentives are concerned, he said that he was thinking of establishing a statutory committee to go into the question of food prices. Now, Sir, all these facts are there but is it the contention of the Government that it is merely the question of prices which keeps down the production of foodgrains or is it that there are other remedial measures which should be taken in order that it may be possible for the farmer to produce more? The hon. Dr. Kunzru has already pointed out that increased food production can take place only when there are increased irrigation facilities, enough manure and good seeds. In each one of these items, we are lagging behind. Even the little irrigation facilities that are available are not being fully utilised for one reason or another. Argument goes on but the fact remains that water meant for irrigation is not being utilised; it is impounded for no purpose whatsoever. What are you going to do? Are you going to continuously argue about what is right and what is wrong or are you going to take some positive steps to see that all the irrigation facilities that are available are fully utilised and more facilities are created? The same thing is the case with reference to manure. We have been told that there is not enough manure, that the Food Ministry is arguing with

[Shri Rohit M. Dave.]

the Finance Ministry for more foreign exchange to be made available so that more manure could be produced and so on. Again, arguments go on, papers move from Ministry to Ministry but as far as the question of demand and supply of manure is concerned, I have got figures with me which show that not even fifty per cent. of the demand for manure is supplied today. What are you going to do about that? These are problems as far as production is concerned, but to my mind the still more important problem is the problem of organisation in the rural areas. As long as these fragmented holdings remain, it will not be possible for the farmers to take the best advantage even of the facilities that might be provided. We have been told that the system of service co-operatives is the sheet-anchor of the Congress policy and the policy of the Government of India. Is the Food Minister in a position, Sir, to give us figures as to how many service co-operatives have already been established, what areas they have covered and what is the number of people covered by this system? We were further told that the service co-operatives system was only a means to an end and that ultimately the set-up envisaged by the Government is joint co-operative farming. I would like to know what steps have been taken in that direction. We are now told, Sir, that as far as State trading is concerned, there were certain difficulties which could not be foreseen at that time. As far as joint co-operative farming is concerned, some of the friends did point out certain difficulties and we were told at that time that one should not look to the difficulties and that if there was determination, difficulties would disappear. We were told that if there was unflinching determination on the part of the people to see that joint co-operative farming was established, joint co-operative farms would be established. I would like to know as to how far we have progressed in that direction of making people determined to see that joint co-operative farming is ushered in as early as possible.

Sir, when we discuss the food situation, ultimately we are trying to find out the best possible way we can have to have the demand and supply in foodgrains ultimately equated at a price which is reasonable both as far as the producer is concerned and as far as the consumer is concerned. State Trading is not an end in itself. The problem of ensuring adequate price to the farmer and also a reasonable price to the consumer has to be tackled and with that end in view it was envisaged at that time that State Trading could be undertaken both in the surplus areas as well as in the deficit areas, in the surplus areas in order to see that the prices do not go down below a level which is reasonable for the farmer and in the deficit areas to see that the prices do not shoot up higher than a level which might be considered reasonable for the consumer. We are now told, Sir, that State Trading is going to be confined—or in effect it has come to be confined—only to surplus areas. In other words, whatever little State Trading is undertaken, whatever little procurement is being undertaken, it is undertaken only with a view to supporting prices. As far as the holding of the prices is concerned, there is very little State activity going on anywhere. The result is, there are some fair price shops. I also know that there are some grain shops which are recognised grain shops; in some of the States family cards have been issued; there is the quota system; there are restrictions on the movement of foodgrains; there are procurement prices that are announced from time to time; there are credit instructions for the supply of credit as far as foodgrains are concerned, etc. All these measures are there but these measures have failed to achieve the end which was in view. Therefore the question arises that if State Trading is not going to be envisaged in the same way in which it was once envisaged, what is the alternative? I know that production is an alternative but what are we going to do till we have achieved enough production? That is, Sir, the question to which I hope an answer will be forthcoming during the

reply to the debate by the hon. Food Minister.

SHRI P. D. HIMATSINGKA (West Bengal): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the question of food was debated in August last and Members had made their suggestions. The main question as regards food is more production. At present the Ministry of Food and Agriculture at the Centre is more a Ministry for distribution rather than for production. Production is entirely the responsibility of the States; it is the States which can help in production being increased. The Ministry of Community Development has something to do with production because it is in charge of the Community Projects. That is in charge of a separate Minister. Irrigation is in charge of another Minister. So, I feel that there should be some kind of co-ordination by bringing these allied subjects under one Ministry so that proper steps might be taken to implement the various schemes that are necessary to be put through in order to increase food production. It has been repeatedly mentioned in this House that what is needed is supply of better seeds in time, conservation and better use of manure, saving farm manure and other manures available in the country from being diverted to uses other than for agricultural purposes, supply of more water for irrigation purposes, small irrigation schemes and so on, but none of these steps can be taken directly by the Minister at the Centre. Therefore there must be some machinery whereby these steps can be regulated, can be controlled and taken in accordance with the necessities of the situation so that more food crop can be produced. Sir, it is a well-known fact that the gap between production and requirements is widening; in any event, it has not been made up and we have had to import foodgrains for the last several years and a very large amount of our money is being used up for that purpose. That can only be stopped if we could take proper steps for producing more food-crop and that is only possible if the steps that are necessary for doing so are taken.

At the present moment we have been hearing about State Trading in Food. I have not been able to understand whether the different Members who speak about State Trading are agreed as to the meaning of State Trading in Food. Some Members seem to think that procurement of foodgrains in the surplus States for being supplied to the deficit States is the main object of State Trading. Others feel—as I could understand from the speech of Mr. Z. A. Ahmad—that the whole scheme of procurement from the cultivator right up to supply should be undertaken by the Government. Sir, first of all we should have clear ideas as to what State Trading is and how far it is possible for the State to step in and replace the existing machinery. I feel that if proper steps are taken to procure food as may be needed from surplus States through the existing channels, that will be the least costly and that can be done with the least amount of wastage. The expenses will be very much less than would be the case if the States were to set up their own machinery and try to procure through channels which are not in the trade now. At the present moment in most of the States, dealers are required to take licences and they cannot hold more stocks than what is mentioned in the licence and they have to file periodical returns of stocks. Therefore to say that anything wrong can be done by licence-holders is rather not proper. Of course, there are some persons who do not behave properly but that in itself should not be a ground to discard the very large number of people—I think they are in lakhs—who are engaged in this business and who do this procurement from the small traders in the villages, bring the stocks to the towns and so on. If you are going to have your own machinery, it will be a colossal thing and I am sure it will be almost impossible for the State to make the necessary arrangements for procuring in the different States, in proper time and at proper prices. Therefore I feel that what is necessary

[Shri P. D. Hima, Singka.]

is that proper steps should be taken at proper times so that there may be co-ordination between the Centre and the States and the States may also be in a position through proper officers to give proper information to the cultivators in time as to the rotation of crops, as to the seeds to be used etc. Arrangements should also be made for the supply of seeds and fertilisers and other requirements of the cultivators in times of need. The officers at the district level, at the sub-divisional level and even at the village level should have more facilities to carry out their decisions, to make the necessary supplies without having to depend on long correspondence and red-tape which takes a lot of time. Therefore, I feel that the emphasis should be on production and every possible step should be taken to see that we have more food produced in the country. There is another difficulty. You know that commercial crops are also needed. In regard to cotton and jute practically our country has become self-sufficient. They have been able to increase their production almost with the same amount of land under cultivation by better method, by utilising better seeds, and other things. Similarly, the land under cultivation of food crops can give us much more if proper steps are taken and if we intensify our steps. I feel that rather than having these big irrigation projects, if we have small irrigation projects in the villages, which can be done at the village level, they will give better results because they can be utilised immediately. Nor will they add to a number of problems which I understand has already been created by these big schemes—water-logging, erosion and so on. Therefore, I feel that steps should be taken to have small irrigation schemes, supply of proper seeds, proper manure in time, and production of more fertilizers. Steps should be taken to see that additional fertilizer factories are set up to meet the demand for fertilizers in the country. I think that if these steps are taken and something

done in order to enable the Central Ministry to have a more co-ordinated scheme, that will give better results. Even at the risk of being misunderstood I feel that the Community Development projects should give more attention to production of food rather than building houses or supplying radio sets or such other things where money is being diverted, because the necessity is that our country must be self-sufficient. If we have the full quantity of food required in the country, other things will follow. Therefore, our attention and our emphasis should be on more and more production and every possible step should be taken to see that we avoid steps which divert our attention or our energies to other matters. Something must also be done to avoid wastage, wastage of food by animals and various other kinds of insects. Proper steps should be taken and in proper time to see that something is done to avoid all kinds of waste.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS (Orissa): Sir, I thank you very much for having given me an opportunity to have my say in this connection. While thanking, I must frankly express that I am very unhappy over one question, namely, that over a period of a whole year only one day should have been allowed for discussing this very important question on which hangs the prosperity of the nation, and which will save us from our dependence eternally on imports.

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Sir, I must frankly confess and protest that this Parliament is spending much more time, very disproportionately, on legislation, as if legislations, Acts and regulations can provide food and all that is necessary for this country, leaving little time for the discussion of important and essential questions. I stress all the more on this important issue. Having stated so much, I do not know how much time I have, Sir. Let me know how much time I have, so that I do not want to hang on favours.

***Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can take 15 minutes.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Thank you very much. First, let me state that this question of self-sufficiency was engaging our attention from the date of our independence. It was probably my hon. friend, **Shri Jairamdas Daulatram**, who as the Food and Agriculture Minister first took the vow of self-sufficiency and declared that we would not import anything from foreign countries. We were delighted and we thought that at least hereafter sense would dawn on the States, as also on the Union Government, and that no further dependence would be tolerated by this country. Promises are like cakes meant to be broken, and what have we done? Just the next year or two years later we had to break that vow taken very easily and very conveniently. Very soon they had to undo it. I could tolerate it for a year or two years because the exigencies or the circumstances might justify it. But if we are eternally to break a vow, where is the need for a vow? Having done so much I want to ask the Government whether even twelve years after their existence they have been able to stock the foodgrains that the **Purushottamdas Thakurdas Committee** recommended. That means about 1½ million tons of food for emergency. No. We have not been able to do it. Your statistics of food production, evaluation of the First Five Year Plan, all that I have seen. But nowhere you think of self-sufficiency. Therefore, the fact remains that we have not been able to build up the stock that was recommended by a Committee long, long before independence, well, some time before independence—I am sorry I said long long ago. My hon. friend with his fertile intelligence and resourcefulness has been able to go with a beggar's bowl from country to country and devise some other means of saving face. What is that device? It means that India shall be the food

bank of Asia and Asian countries. Clever as he is . . .

SHRI S. K. PATIL: May I interrupt the hon. Member? I have never yet gone to any country with a begging bowl or otherwise. And I have never said that India should be any bowl for Asia, etc. These are all his own conceptions.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I have nothing but admiration for my friend, because begging or otherwise he has been able to do something.

AN HON. MEMBER: He has not gone.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: He has gone. If I remember . . .

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: Not with a begging bowl.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: I am glad. But he was going to negotiate . . .

SHRI S. K. PATIL: I have never yet done so. Wherever I have gone I was the guest of that Government and not with any request of mine.

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Whatever it is, I stand corrected and I am delighted. I bless him in the matter. At least he has by his resourcefulness and cleverness found it possible to have a food bank in India, which will be useful for us, though the Government of India have not been able, in the course of these twelve years, to find out the 1½ million tons of emergency food stock that was proposed to be kept always.

Sir, having stated so far, I come to the question of production. Sir, one of my friends stated that the Government had very little to do with it. I join issue with him. The Government of India and the Governments of the States have everything to do with it. Who else is to do if not the Government of India? It is not only my hon friend's responsibility but it is equally the responsibility which devolves also on the

[Shri Biswanath Das.]

Ministry of Community Development. Both of them have to co-operate, and in the States the Revenue Department, the Agriculture Department, the Co-operative Department, the Forest Department and above all the Irrigation Department, all these must co-operate and that co-operation and co-ordination are a necessity. I am not yet satisfied that this co-operation is there or is forthcoming.

My respected and hon. friend, Mr. Kunzru, has spoken of the Community Development Project in terms of co-operative societies. It is a multi-purpose co-operative society. It has got very many activities to look after out of which irrigation is one, and I think it plays a very minor role where very important courses of action and active courses of action are called for. I have no time, Sir, and if I had time, I would have shown, I would have proved to the hilt, to the conviction of my hon. friend how the Governments, both the Union and the States, have failed, and failed miserably, with regard to the minor and medium-sized irrigation projects, not only in allotments but in conception, thought, action and operation. In all these cases I must frankly state that they have miserably failed, and I am prepared to bet in this regard to show to their conviction how they have failed. But who will take advantage of any advice that is to be offered to them?

Then, Sir, with regard to chemical fertilisers, I must frankly state that chemical fertilisers have a use. But do all these reach the agriculturists? Does my hon. friend know that a fairly good fraction of these reaches the manufacturers of toddy which today is the biggest cottage industry in villages?

AN HON. MEMBER: Toddy?

SHRI BISWANATH DAS: Certainly. May not be toddy but liquor. Call it toddy or liquor or drink. I am prepared to prove it. In fact, in the course of discussion with Vinoba-

ji two years back I said: "Do you know, Vinobaji, how our chemical fertilisers have been utilised? You will be surprised to learn even from the then Chief Minister of Orissa, Shri Nabakrushna Chowdhury, and from the State Bhoodan leaders how they are used." It is not peculiar to Orissa. It is the case throughout India. Therefore, let it be clearly understood that the so-called chemical fertilisers such as, ammonium sulphate, are not fully utilised for agriculture.

Then, as for production, we are told that production is not coming up because of land reforms. I fully agree with that view. Sir, unless and until you have land reforms, you may do anything, you may have anything, but you can never raise production. Why? Because, today the landowner feels, whether the land remains with him or not why should he invest? The landowner who is also the agriculturist feels: "Well, there is the ceiling, why should I invest my money? I do not know how it will affect me." Then again, Sir, the agriculturist, the *bhagchassi*, wherever he is, is a man who is a tenant-at-will and cultivates. He also feels: "I have no interest. I only hear something from newspapers. Why should I do it?" So, the land which needs attention and cultivation and devotion has been the first casualty in this country. My regret of regrets is that even today after twelve years of Swaraj and after talking so much of land reforms, this and that, the initial thing necessary either for the imposition of the ceilings or for land reforms, that is information, necessary statistical information, has not been collected. One thing will make my position clear. In a State so well up as Madras, the Revenue Minister of the State a few months back stated: "Well, if land ceiling is imposed, there will be about one lakh acres available for distribution." Why? After twelve years of independence and after so much talk of land ceilings, a Minister of a State, and that a Minister from Madras, a well organised State, with a

village Karnam and a village Kargee, two village officials for each group, to say: "Well, possibly we may get one lakh of acres", passes my understanding. I feel, Sir, that by now the Government should have come out with figures on their finger-tips and be able to tell us how much they would get from each State by the imposition of ceilings.

Sir, we have been talking of distributing land to the landless. Then why talk of co-operative cultivation? I have shown in my note "Defective Planning" how the Government have missed buses after buses not of their own creation but buses secured to take them to the destination of co-operative cultivation through the ideology of the Congress. These buses have been missed. If I had time, I would have explained to the satisfaction of this House how not one but two, three or four buses were missed, and the only bus available, as I have stated, is the bus of Vinobaji, the Bhoodan villages of four or five thousand. Why don't you have co-operative cultivation and show to the people that co-operation is effective and useful? My hon. friend, Shri Jairamdas Daultram, spoke of co-operative cultivation in the First Agricultural Ministers' Conference—I believe it was in October 1947. Twelve years have now passed. May I know why these buses are missed? What was the Planning Commission doing? It has been constituted since 1949. What is this Commission doing, with a very highly paid staff and with so many members? What have they done to justify their existence? Sir, all these go to show that the country's expectations have not been fulfilled and that this food dependence has not gone but is increasing. I appeal to the Government and say that we are prepared to place ourselves entirely, very many people even outside this House are prepared to place themselves entirely, at the disposal of the Government to fight this food crisis. But there is no use of appeal. The only thing which pains me is that Panditji and Shri Rajagopalachari should be quarrelling about

co-operative cultivation when both of them know so little about agriculture.

4 P.M.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: 'Sir, I entirely agree with my learned colleague who spoke last on the necessity of giving more time to an explosive subject like food. It is very necessary also that hon. Members should be permitted to make their contribution at length to this very revolutionary subject. I thought, when I listened to the able speech of my learned friend, the Deputy Minister, that he would indicate to the House the grave emergency which has arisen in this country in the matter of food and the steps that the Government were going to take in order to meet this emergency. It is not my opinion only that there is a grave emergency. During the last few years, there have been two grave emergencies which we have faced. One was the Bengal Famine in which three million people died and about which nobody worried. The second was the partition. And the third emergency that faces us today is not so much the Chinese front, but the other front, the home front, the front of food production. I am quite sure my learned friend referred to this report "India's Food Crisis and Steps to meet it" prepared by the Ford Foundation, and this is the first sentence, Sir, in this report—

"India is facing a crisis in food production."

What is this crisis? As compared with the target of 1957-58, we are a little over nine million tons short of production. The report says that within the next few years, that is during the pendency of the Third Plan, the demand will be for an extra 40 million tons of food production—40 million tons—which means 50 per cent. more than the present production of food, in order to meet the requirements of the increasing population. They have reckoned that a little over 8·2 per cent. per year must be the increase in food production during the next seven years. Now,

[Diwan Chaman Lall.]

that is a graduated programme, which means that where we produced one maund of food, we shall have to produce from the same area or from any additional area brought under cultivation, $1\frac{1}{2}$ maunds of food. It is not a small matter.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: What the hon. Member is forgetting is, that is with compound interest. It is not 8.2 per cent.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: The figure that they gave is 8.2 per cent. for the . . .

SHRI S. K. PATIL: The rise is every year. The next year's rise will be on that rise.

DIWAN CHAMAN LALL: Certainly. But what I am saying is this. I am glad that my learned friend agrees with the gravity of the situation. The gravity of the situation is compounded, I take it. It is a very serious matter indeed. What are the steps that my learned friend is going to take in order to meet this situation? If there is no food, there will be a revolution in this country. If there is a revolution, all the hopes that we have, Sir, will be washed away as if in a flood. Therefore, my learned friend who is now holding the portfolio of Food, with his well-known dynamism, must divert his attention immediately to the framing of steps for the purpose of implementing the needs of this country in the matter of food. What those steps are, it is for him to tell us. We can merely advise him. My learned friend, Dr. Kunzru, although he got lost in a controversy unnecessarily, did point to certain things that should be done. There are other hon. friends of mine—Dr. Ahmad who made a very fine contribution to the subject and other friends who got lost in this controversy about State trading. One must realise that these are all methods to be employed for the distribution of foodstuff. They do not go to the vital matter of the increase in production. Whether it is

State trading or whether it is co-operative trading, whether it is marketing by the Centre or marketing by the States, these are all methods of distribution. But when you have not got anything to distribute, what are those methods worth? They are not worth anything at all. The first essential, therefore, is that you must have something to distribute, to distribute on an equitable basis and on a reasonable basis among the increasing population of this country. Therefore, I would like my learned friend to divert his attention to this particular matter. There is no doubt whatsoever about it. Sir, I speak now as one of the active practising farmers in this country. My learned friend was good enough to say some time ago that since assuming office, he has learned the difference between kharif crop and rabi crop. Well, I hope by now my learned friend has followed the deep intricacies of production in the villages. What are the things that are needed? The first essential thing is to secure a basic stable price for our production. Whenever you increase the price of the produce, the result is greater production. You will notice now that, with the slight increase in the price of sugar delivered to the mills, every day many more acres are going under sugar production. Within the next year or two you will find a large number of areas coming under sugar—areas which had ceased to produce sugar—because it was not a paying proposition. How are you going to ensure a stable price? There are examples of other countries. Why not follow these examples? Is there anything wrong with that great country, France, where subsidies are given to every farmer? And there is a surplus of wheat production in that country. What is wrong with Great Britain where subsidies are also given to the wheat farmers? Why should we not introduce a system of subsidising the farmer, and say to him, "This is the world price. We shall give you over and above the world price so much. You produce so much." Is there any difficulty in following that example?

Take the United States of America. In a few minutes the President of the United States of America is going to address us. In his country, although it is not a socialist country, there is actually State trading of the highest type, namely, goods are taken away; the agricultural produce is taken away, it is guaranteed a certain price and put away in the bins. What you get under the programme of P. L. 480, the wheat of that particular account, is taken over by the State. It is all subsidised. You will have to look to this matter—subsidising your production—if you want proper production for the increasing population of this country.

There are other things to be done. For instance, where you have no irrigation facilities, why don't you go in for an increased development of tube-well irrigation? Where you have tractors why don't you go in for tractor stations? You have a tractor today; it goes out of order; your production is nil for the next season. You must have certain tractor stations in every area where you can get the tractors repaired or the agricultural implements repaired at cheap rates. There are a hundred other things that I would like to suggest to my hon. friend, but I am afraid that time prevents me from doing so, and I hope that another occasion will arise when we can discuss these matters threadbare.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Bombay): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, a little over a year ago you were kind enough to allow me to speak on the same subject. The Food Minister had nothing to say about it. His only answer was that the Prime Minister was seized of the subject, he was paying attention to it. And we see the result. Poor Prime Minister, how many things he is going to attend to? Is he going to attend to foreign affairs? Is he going to attend to the numerous guests who are coming here or is he going to attend to the food situation in the country? But having said that,

the blame for the present food situation must largely be placed at the doors of the Prime Minister. He has pushed the country willy-nilly into a policy to which it has been committed without knowing what the country was going in for. Yesterday, Sir, during question hour the Prime Minister told us about what the Planning Commission had agreed to, what the National Development Council had agreed to. Sir, I felt, as a democrat that the democratic method for him should have been to put the matter before Parliament first, he should have taken Parliament into confidence, and not pushed it through this Council and then brought it to the Parliament by a back-door method to take Parliament's approval to it. The country was not knowing what it was being committed to.

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: It is oligarchy.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: We are being committed more or less to a method that operates in what are called autocratic Soviet totalitarian States. Sir, I am not speaking for large landlordism: that went away from this country long ago. But I am speaking for the peasant-proprietor who has been the backbone of this country. We were faced with a serious food situation when the war broke out: the peasants were asked to produce more and they produced more. When our popular Government came in, the peasants were asked to produce more, and they produced more. But the greed of our Government has increased; they want to export; they want to export all that is produced on land. On the other hand they have removed the incentives that there existed for the farmer to produce more. He is being given hard knocks on his back and his backbone is broken, because he is being told at most places that he is not the owner of the land. Even if it be a little plot of land, of two acres or three acres, he is not the owner. But it must be realised . . .

THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): Who are saying that if he owns two acres or three acres he is not the owner of that land?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I wish the lady Member would look at the tenancy legislations that are being rushed through by the various Governments. What is the meaning of these legislations? Nobody has got a fixed tenure in that part of the country that I come from, where we have a large class of peasant-proprietors holding less than fifty acres of land. Today they are being told that their land is not theirs unless they cultivate it themselves; if there is a cultivator working for them, the land is liable to be given to him.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is a different matter.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Wait a minute. Do not be so enthusiastic about it. And the man who is given the land is also told the same thing that the land is not his.

SHRI S. CHANNA REDDY: (Andhra Pradesh): It comes under abolition of absentee landlordism.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: You are going in for collectivisation; you are bringing Sovietism in this country. (Interruption). Of course you are.

Then side by side we have got another show-piece of the Bombay Government, what is called a co-operative dairy farm. Therefore people who have got small lands are not interested in producing food; they produce only grass for their cattle. A van of that co-operative dairy farm comes in the morning and collects the milk from them. He gets 8 annas or 10 annas a day and he is happy; he does not want to produce more food. That is why we are short of food; in places where we can produce much more food we are producing less because . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: He is using the land for the purpose of keeping cattle and raising milk.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I am glad you are asking me this question. I was trying to say something about my friend or somebody who said about . . .

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY (Bombay): Is milk not food?

DR. R. B. GOUR: Milk was his food some years back.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: If that be the attitude, we are in for a revolution, Sir, because, before there was a revolution in France the Bourbons said, "If they don't have bread, why don't they eat cake?" And our Congressmen say, "If they don't have bread, why don't they go in for milk?" By so doing you are preparing the way for a revolution, because milk is not for the poor farmer; it is for the hotels and restaurants and the rich people in Bombay, where it is taken in air-conditioned vans. He hardly gets even the *chhans* (buttermilk) that he used to get formerly, because the whole milk is taken away.

श्री पां० ना० राजभोज (मुम्बई) :
एज-अडे-भी मिलते हैं।

श्री डाह्याभाई वी० पटेल : आपको तो मिलता होगा। लेकिन गरीब आदमी को नहीं मिलता है।

Sir, the basic approach to the problem of agriculture in our country is wrong. There is no incentive to the person who produces food. Members of this House may not know, but my hon. friend, the present Food Minister, will know that the Director of Agriculture of Bombay State, who retired only two years ago, said publicly at the reception that was given to him when he was retiring, that what was called the Japanese method of paddy cultivation was the method of paddy cultivation that he had learnt from the cultivators of Kaira district, who were the best cultivators of land

in the whole of India. Only in this country, unless you say that this thing has come from England or America or Japan or somewhere else

SHRI SONUSING DHANSING PATIL (Bombay): Khandesh cultivators are your rivals in production; you are not the only persons producing more.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: You are welcome; I welcome such healthy rivalry; certainly I do not oppose healthy rivalry.

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY: That is a matter of congratulation.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: And what have you done to him? I say, during the difficult war years this cultivator produced three crops of bajra in a year. He is no longer interested in doing it today.

SHRI ABHIMANYU RATH: An ex-Minister returning from his tour of China once said that China was producing something like 3,000 maunds per acre

DR. R. B. GOUR: Is he sure that he is not confusing paddy crop with guinea grass?

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Dr. Gour, I know what I am talking about and I stand on the soil which I know and which I speak about. I don't speak from books published in foreign countries that have been crammed but undigested by many people from his party.

SHRI PERATH NARAYAN NAIR (Kerala): Kaira cultivator owns, not cultivates.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Sir, an ex-Minister of our Government, Shri Khandubhai Desai, was speaking and he said that the food situation was in great disorder and chaos. I am glad he has realised this. But he realised it after he left the Government. But when he was in it, was he not res-

ponsible for the many policies of the Government that have brought about this situation?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He could realise it only after he had left it.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Sir, production of food and its distribution are being very often confused—there is talk of distribution of food through State trading and so on. These are different matters altogether. The first and basic problem is production of food; we have to produce more food. The secondary problem is certainly distribution and I do not mind whatever type of distribution you have.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: (Uttar Pradesh): So distribution is not so important.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I entirely agree with my friend, Mr. Sapru, that distribution is not so important; production is the more important thing; production of food is certainly a much more important part of the food problem.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: We are producing something more in any case, I mean the rising population.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: From the point of view of my friend it is a matter of no consequence whether food is distributed justly or not. As long as his class is not affected it is a matter of little consequence whether the poor man gets his food or not.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: I do not know why my hon. friend calls me a class, because I never spoke for one class; I am speaking for the average citizen of India, and I say that he is entitled to a fair deal and a fair meal which, unfortunately, the ways of this Government prevent him from getting. And why is it so, Sir?

A few days ago, in the debate in the other House, the Prime Minister quoted from a very well-known old book "Rajatarangini". There is the English translation by Mr. R. S.

[Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel.]

Pandit and I may be permitted, Sir, to quote a few paragraph from that.

DR R. B. GOUR: So you also read old books.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL: Here it is, Sir:

"Those who in this country desire to have mastery must at all times guard against dissensions among themselves, for in that case no peril arises from alien enemies as there is none for the Carvakas from the world beyond."

"Even for no offence in this country the dwellers in the dep'hs of the mountains should be fined, for, if they should accumulate wealth, they might become impregnable in the shelter of their fortresses."

"Action should be taken so that the people in the villages should not possess grain for consumption and bullocks for the area of the fields in excess of annual requirement."

That is procurement.

"For if they were to have excessive wealth they might become very terrible Damaras in a single year able to violate the authority of the king."

Here it is not the kings, it is the Congress bosses.

"When once the rural population secures raiment, women, woollen blankets, food, trinkets, horses, dwellings which are worthy of the capital; when fortifications which ought to be cared for are neglected through arrogance by the kings, and when they show lack of appreciation of the character of their officers, when from a single district is exacted the maintenance for the armed forces; when the civil servants have formed a league by matrimonial alliances with one another; when the kings take the

same view as the civil servants in the departments of state, then it may be known without doubt that there has been a reversal of the good luck of the subjects."

Are we not suffering from conditions similar to those referred to in this famous old book, Rajtarangini, from which our Prime Minister quoted a few days ago?

Sir, our approach to the food problem is not practical. It is guided by theories. If practical men, people who know what food is, what cultivation is, are consulted, there will be certainly more food; there will be more production. I mentioned a few instances. My friend, Mr. Patil, comes from the Ratnagiri District. I pointed out to the Food Minister last time. He was indifferent. In the bed of river Gad in the Ratnagiri District, large quantities of rice used to be grown after the first monsoon showers were over. This Government is not interested in doing it, nor in finding out why it has been stopped. There have been offers made to the Bombay Government to grow bumper crops in the beds of many rivers, Mahi being one of them. It has got a large mouth and large bed near the sea. Crops can be grown there. People approached the Bombay Government to allow them to grow crops in that river-bed, but they are not interested. Therefore, it is this dual control that is responsible for many laxities and for the inadequate food production. I hope, Sir, the new Food Minister will bring in a new approach and will look at the problem in a practical way and remove some of the bottlenecks created by so many officers in the Food Department.

श्रीमती सावित्री निगम (उत्तर प्रदेश) :

उपसभापति महोदय, फूड सिचुएशन के मोशन पर हम लोग सदन में इस समय विचार कर रहे हैं। श्रीमन्, किस तरह चालीस करोड़ लोगों के लिये ११० मिलियन टन खाद्य बढ़ाने की व्यवस्था की जाय और आने वाले कई वर्षों के लिए किस

तरह अपने देश में खाद्य उत्पादन को बढ़ाया जाय, यह विचारणीय प्रश्न हमारे सामने उपस्थित है। श्रीमन्, दूसरी बात हमें यह खयाल करनी है कि किस प्रकार प्राइस लेवल को एक रीजनेबल तरीके से मेनटेन करें। श्रीमन्, जितना गम्भीर विषय खाद्य का है उस पर आज सदन में जिस तरह की गैर जिम्मेदाराना आलोचनाएं हम लोगों को सुनने को मिल रही हैं उससे बहुत ही दुःख होता है। यह बहुत ही दुःख का विषय है कि हम लोग अपना अधिक समय इसी बात पर खर्च कर रहे हैं कि इस खाद्य की समस्या को हल करने में कौन कितना असफल हुआ है, सरकार कितनी सफल हुई या असफल रही और उसके लिए कौन कहां तक जिम्मेदार है और किस की जिम्मेदारी ज्यादा या कम है। अगर यह बात यहीं तक होती तो कोई हर्ज नहीं था लेकिन इसके अतिरिक्त अपनी पार्टी-मन स्वार्थों के लिए पुराने बदले, निकालने और व्यक्तिगत विरोध, प्रतिहिंसा में ही अधिक समय खर्च किया गया है। कितना अच्छा होता अगर हम फूड पालिसी के फेल होने के लिए कौन अधिकारी जिम्मेदार है और कौन जिम्मेदार नहीं है, इस प्रकार की बातों में अधिक समय नष्ट न करके केवल इस समस्या पर गम्भीर चिंतन करते कि आज देश की जो प्रमुख आवश्यकता है उसको पूर्ण करने के लिए किस तरह क्या क्या, कहां-कहां से हम सुधार कर सकते हैं।

श्रीमन्, समय बड़ा अनिश्चित है और देश के सामने एक बहुत बड़ा क्राइसिस है। श्रीमन्, कम से कम हम इस तरह की बातें न कह करके, व्यक्तिगत बातों को सामने न ला करके, विरोध और प्रतिहिंसा की बातें न कह करके, इस गम्भीर विषय में चिंतन करते और उसके बारे में सुझाव देते जिसके द्वारा हम देश

में खाद्य स्थिति को सुधार सकते हैं। यही राष्ट्र की सत्र से बड़ी सेवा होगी।

श्रीमन्, इस समय देश में इस तरह का वातावरण उत्पन्न करने का समय है जिससे यह समस्या शीघ्र से शीघ्र हल हो जाय। केवल सरकारी अधिकारी ही अन्न उत्पादन बढ़ाने के लिए जिम्मेदार नहीं हैं बल्कि हर एक व्यक्ति की जिम्मेदारी सामान्यतः उतनी ही है जितनी कि सरकार और सरकारी अधिकारियों की है। तभी हम अन्न के मामले में आत्मनिर्भर हो सकेंगे।

श्रीमन्, खाद्य मंत्री जी ने कहा Solution of the problem depends on the increased production लेकिन मैं इस बात में पूरी तरह से सहमत होते हुए भी यह कहूंगा कि यह और भी बड़े फैक्टर्स पर डिपेन्ड करता है। माननीय कुंजरू साहब ने कहा कि खाद्य की स्थिति में सुधार केवल प्रोडक्शन और डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन पर ही डिपेन्ड करता है। लेकिन मैं थोड़ा सा उनको बात पर संशोधन करती हूं। वह मार्केटिंग, स्टोरेज, कंजमिंग, फूड स्टोरेज, फूड वेस्टेज रोकने, चेन्ज आफ फूड हेबिट्स पर भी डिपेन्ड करता है। अगर हमें खाद्य स्थिति को सुधारना है तो इन बातों की ओर ध्यान देना अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। श्रीमन्, कुंजरू साहब ने बहुत से आंकड़े देकर उपज बढ़ाने के बारे में जो बात कही, मैं भी उससे सहमत हूं। लेकिन श्रीमन्, यदि हमें अन्न उत्पादन बढ़ाना है तो उसमें तीन चार फैक्टर काम करते हैं जिनमें अच्छा बीज, फर्टिलाइजर और इरिगेशन मुख्यतः है। लेकिन श्रीमन्, इरीगेशन का विषय इतना लम्बा है कि अगर मैं उसके बारे में कहूं तो बहुत समय लग जायेगा। मैं इस समय केवल फर्टिलाइजर की बात लूंगा।

[श्रीमती सावित्री निगम]

श्रीमन्, सबसे पहले मैं यह कहूंगी कि हमारी खाद्य स्थिति में सुधार न होने का खास कारण यह है कि हमारी खाद्य नीति में एक आर्गेनाइजेशनल क्राइसिस है। जिस तरह से हर प्रकार के ट्रेड के लिए बड़े बड़े आर्गेनाइजेशन बने हुये हैं, उस तरह से इस कृषि क्षेत्र में कोई आर्गेनाइजेशन नहीं है। इसीलिए लाखों करोड़ों रुपये का खाद्य जो गांवों में फटिलाइजर के रूप में विद्यमान है, वेस्ट किया जाता है और जला दिया जाता है। जो आर्टिफिशियल खाद है, वह एक सीमा तक ही उपज को बढ़ा सकती है क्योंकि हम हमेशा विदेशों से इस चीज को इम्पोर्ट नहीं कर सकते हैं। मेरा माननीय मंत्री जी से यह अनुरोध है कि वे जल्द से जल्द पंचायत लेवल पर या कम्युनिटी डेवलपमेंट के मातहत इस तरह का आर्गेनाइजेशन बनायें जिसका काम केवल यह हो कि गांव में जो फटिलाइजर हरी पत्ती के रूप में, मल मूत्र के रूप में, गोबर आदि के रूप में, वेस्ट चला जाता है, उसे तुरन्त रोक कर अन्न उत्पादन बढ़ाने के काम में लाया जा सके। इस कार्य के लिए कोई आर्गेनाइजेशन अवश्य होना चाहिये जिसका कार्य केवल गांव में फटिलाइजर के रूप में इतनी तरह की जो चीजें वेस्ट की जा रही हैं उन्हें रोकना हो, जिससे वह अन्न उत्पादन के कार्य में लगाया जा सके।

श्रीमन्, यह आर्गेनाइजेशनल क्राइसिस सर्विस कोआपरेटिव के मामले में बहुत बड़ा रोड़ा अटका रहा है, इसलिए मेरा अनुरोध है कि इस चीज के लिए कोई न कोई आर्गेनाइजेशन अवश्य बनाया जाना चाहिये।

श्रीमन्, एक बात मुझे और कहनी है वेस्ट लैंड के विषय में। श्रीमन्, हमारे देश में लाखों एकड़ लैंड अनइर्रिगेटेड

और वाटरलाग्ड पड़ी हुई है। जब हम नागपुर की तरफ जाते हैं तो लाखों एकड़ अनरिक्लेम्ड लैंड दिखाई देती है। मैंने एक बार पहले भी इस विषय में सजेशन दिया था कि जो इस तरह की वेस्ट, अनरिक्लेम्ड और गोखर जमीन पड़ी है, उसके लिए केन्द्रीय लेवल पर एक लेन्ड रिक्लेमेशन कमीशन बनाया जाय जिसका कार्य यह होगा कि इस तरह की जितनी जमीन है, उसको वह रिक्लेम करे। यह चीज स्टेट लेवल पर पूरी नहीं होगी बल्कि केन्द्रीय सरकार को यह कार्य अपने हाथ में लेना चाहिये।

तीसरी बात श्रीमन्, मुझे यह कहनी है कि कृषि विभाग के लिए वह दिन महान होगा जब फूड मिनिस्ट्री और कम्युनिटी डेवलपमेंट में क्लोज कोआपरेशन हो जायेगा। कम्युनिटी डेवलपमेंट ब्लाक्स में अन्न का उत्पादन फ्री एकड़ कहीं अधिक हुआ है। दूसरी बात मुझे यह कहनी है कि कम्युनिटी डेवलपमेंट के जहां जहां ब्लाक्स हैं वहां पर जिस तरह से सरकारी अधिकारियों, पंचायतों और ब्लाक वालों के कोआपरेशन से अन्न का उत्पादन बढ़ाया गया है वह हम लोगों के लिए एक प्रकार से बहुत बड़ा मार्ग दर्शन देने वाला है। मेरा अनुरोध है कि इस तरह का क्लोज कोआपरेशन हर स्तर पर, ऊपर से लगा कर नीचे तक, होना चाहिए। केन्द्रीय सरकार से प्रांतीय सरकार तक ही नहीं बल्कि पंचायतों और कम्युनिटी ब्लाक्स तक इस तरह का क्लोज कोआपरेशन होना चाहिए।

श्रीमन्, एक बात मुझे और कहनी है कि खाद्य मंत्री महोदय ने कहा कि फूड की डिमांड बढ़ी है। यह ठीक है कि फूड की डिमांड बढ़ी है और आगे भी बढ़ेगी। ज्यों ज्यों देश में जागृत फैलेगी, ज्यों ज्यों जनसंख्या बढ़ेगी, उसी के अनुसार फूड की मांग का बढ़ जाना एक स्वाभाविक बात है। लेकिन मैं यह कहूंगी कि इस तरह के स्टार्च

फूड गेहूँ और चावल का कंजम्पशन पर कैपिटल बढ़ जाना खास तौर पर न हमारे देश के स्वास्थ्य के लिए अच्छा है और न अन्न के लिए अच्छा है। अगर मैं गलत नहीं हूँ—अगर मैं गलत हूँ तो माननीय खाद्य मंत्री मुझे सही बतायें—तो कोई ऐसा देश नहीं है जो स्वास्थ्य के मामले में, वैज्ञानिक अनुसंधानों के मामले में और हर दिशा में आगे बढ़ा हुआ हो और जहाँ गेहूँ और चावल का पर कैपिटल कंजम्पशन हमारे देश के बराबर बढ़ा हो। बहुत से माननीय सदस्य कहेंगे कि हमारा गरीब देश है, इसलिए लोग और चीजें नहीं खा सकते हैं। लेकिन मेरा यह कहना है कि जितनी जगह में हम लोग चावल, गेहूँ आदि उपजाते हैं, उतनी ही जगह में आलू, शकरकंद आदि चीजें आठ गुना और दस गुना पैदा होती हैं। यदि हमारी मौजूदा फूड हैबिट्स में थोड़ा सा चेंज लाया जाय, न्यूट्रिशन डिपार्टमेंट में हर प्रांत के लिए न्यूट्रिशन डाइट चार्ट बनाकर खूब उसका प्रचार किया जाय, और यह भी बताया जाय कि गेहूँ और चावल की जगह आलू और प्याज पैदा करने से कितना लाभ होता है और इसके लिए कुछ सब्जीड़ी भी जाय, तो मेरा विचार है कि इससे हमारे देश का उत्पादन तो बढ़ेगा ही, उसके साथ साथ हमारी अन्न की समस्या पर भी कुछ न कुछ जरूर असर पड़ेगा।

श्रीमन्, विरोधी दल के एक सदस्य महोदय ने कहा कि जो नये खाद्य मंत्री बने हैं, उनकी कोई पालिसी नहीं है, लेकिन मैं कहती हूँ कि यह कितनी गलत बात है क्योंकि पालिसी की सफ़लता और पालिसी का सबसे बड़ा प्रमाण यह है कि उन्होंने आठ ही सबसे पहले जो एक यह एनाउंसमेंट किया कि हम ५ मिलियन टन का बफर स्टॉक कायम करेंगे, वह इतना बड़ा कदम है कि जिसने उनकी पूरी पालिसी को खोल कर रख दिया है। हमारे देश में ही नहीं बल्कि तमाम देशों में विश्व बंधुत्व की एक नयी कड़ी उन्होंने यह निकाली है कि World Food Bank बन

(Time bell rings.)

श्रीमन्, मुझसे कहा गया है कि मैं पांच मिनट बोल सकती हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to call two more speakers.

श्रीमती सावित्री निगम : आपकी इजाजत हो तो स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के सिलसिले में दो शब्द कह कर बैठ जाऊँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You please wind up.

श्रीमती सावित्री निगम : फूड स्टेज के रोकने के बारे में जो मैंने कहा, उस सम्बन्ध में मैं इतना और निवेदन करना चाहती हूँ कि हर स्टेट में मोबाइल प्रोटेक्शन यूनिट्स Mobile Protection Units—बनने चाहियें। बन्दर, चूहे, कबूतर और नील गायें जो लाखों टन अनाज खा जाती हैं उसको रोकने के लिए किसानों को पूरी तरह से शिक्षित किया जाना चाहिए।

एक बात स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के बारे में कहना चाहती हूँ।

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You send your suggestions to him.

श्रीमती सावित्री निगम : स्टेट ट्रेडिंग के विषय में मैंने अभी तक कुछ नहीं कहा है। अगर आप इजाजत दें तो एक मिनट में कुछ कह दूँ।

इसमें सन्देह नहीं कि रीजनेबिल प्राइस लेवल मेंटेन करने के लिए हमारी केन्द्रीय और प्रान्तीय सरकारों और पालियामेंट की स्वीकृति से यह स्टेट ट्रेडिंग का प्रस्ताव स्वीकृत हुआ था।

श्री पृथ्वीराज कपूर (नाम-निर्देशित) : आदरणीय उपसभापति महोदय, ...

डा० राज बहादुर गोड़ : अंग्रेजी में बोलिए।

श्री पृथ्वीराज कपूर : अंग्रेजी में बोलना कौन के लिए अंग्रेजी बूड़ बाहर से मंगाने लगे। अभी सीधे सुन सुन कर यह खयाल हो रहा था :

हैं मैं बेगार वह बदमस्त फसाना है दराज, दिल को धातू तो कहूं, उनको संभालू तो कहूं।

हालात ऐसे ही हैं, यह काम इतना बड़ा है...

DR. W. S. BARLINGAY: What does it mean? We could not understand.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ KAPOOR: That is our trouble. We have taken upon ourselves the task of having a language as the national language, but still we want to cling on to English, we want to talk in English. That is our trouble. All right. Have English.

What I wanted to say was this: The subject is vast but the time at our disposal is so short that both the things do not fit in and, at the same time, the desire to say the right thing also is not there. We want always to have an opportunity to hurt someone and an opportunity to call a dog 'a mad dog', and an opportunity to say something and mix up things with party politics always. Even in things like food we bring in party politics. But I do not want to do that.

Practically, there are two things in the case of a dying patient—'acute' and 'chronic' disease—and if the doctor goes on thinking how to remove the chronic disorder for ten years, the patient would be dead by the time he finds out the remedy. Similarly, some Members are just thinking about the chronic disease and not bothering about the acute symptoms.

Even after everything is done as we desire—about land distribution, about ways of cultivation, Khad, this, that and the other—the crop will take months to come. But the acute problem, I submit, can be solved today, if we all think of it and make up our minds. Why not the Members of the

Rajya Sabha make up their minds and say? "From today two days in a week we will not take rice"? Let other people follow us. People go on wasting time discussing the food problem. But who produces the food? The cultivator. And who eats it? The city man. I would not make it a political issue. The city man or the cultivator is as much a citizen of the country as anybody else. Sir, I am not trying to hurt the poor people.

Sir, if we want to solve the acute food problem today, we can do it. Our Prime Minister many times issued appeals to forego one meal a week. Why not the Rajya Sabha give the lead to the people: 'half-rice, half-bread, and two meals a week' and we will not be the poorer thereby? If you want to see examples, look at me. It is not like Marie Antoinette saying: "If you cannot get bread, eat cake." I would say 'not cake but eat grass'. There is no question of laughing at it. We have to cultivate that habit. We have shut ourselves from the past and we do not probe into the future and the result is that we have been lost in-between. In the past, how our ancestors solved the food problem? Our Rishis undertook Vratas, hundreds of them. The result is that food was there in plenty and food was preserved by them that way. On the other hand, all of us, including the hon. Members, quarrel on the table—*roti lao, fer lao, ye kharab hai, fek deo*, and all that. We waste too much food this way and we waste people's time discussing about it. That is our trouble. Why not give a lead?

Our Institute at Bangalore is doing useful research work in food and I would request the hon. Food Minister to give as much publicity to it as possible, to give publicity to the great work that the sons of the soil, our scientists, are doing there at Bangalore, so that the people can know what food can give them real strength. They do not need rice in

so much quantity. They do not need so much of *geoon* (wheat), Bajra or maize. They do not need so much of all these things. The Pathan's strength was not in eggs, as somebody says. We do not get eggs, we eat Pistha which is called grass. Even in Punjab, the Punjabis do not eat it but the Pathan eats it. But we have discarded all these. I am not talking about the Mayor or the City. That is the trouble. We consume the food produced by the cultivator.

DR. R. B. GOUR: Mr. Kapoor . . .

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ KAPOOR: You can never shout me down. Who produces the food? That is created by the cultivator. We waste it in the city. Let us propagate about it, let us give a lead. You do not produce, you have no right to waste it or even to eat it. You can eat it, if you like, but carefully, with respect. You are not producing it and do not waste. You deprive the people who need it.

Similarly, about the work being done by our scientists, that work should be given as much propagation or publicity as possible. People do not know about it. We are not suffering from scarcity. We are suffering from lack of knowledge because we have shut ourselves from the past and we are not probing into the future. We do not know about the calorific value of the things that modern scientists have given us. We do not know the real value of the things which our past generation or ancestors have given us. Why during Ekadasi or navratri we eat Singada and not Ann? It is because Singada gives you a typical type of vitamins and that is given for 7 days or 14 days in a year. But to-day we only create muddles in these things. Similarly during Ramzan, some may prepare big food, but mainly very little is made of wheat. Even during marriages, we waste a lot. All these chronic troubles are there and they

have to be solved. Grow more food, produce more children and it will go on but there are other things. There should be self-restraint and that will come through knowledge. Let this knowledge go to the people, to the villages and more to the towns and city people who waste the food that is produced by the village man and he is being made poorer and is losing his strength which could have been used again for producing more food. Thank you.

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR (Punjab): Sir, I am only going to say a very few words. So much has been said that I do not think there is much left for me to say. Only I do wish to emphasise that the food problem is the main problem before the country and every ounce of energy, every rupee that we have should be spent on this. It is the main heartache for the poor today. How can a man bring up his family when atta is selling at two seers for the rupee and dal is selling at over Rs. 12/- a seer? How do you expect him to live? How do you expect him to be healthy? The strength of a nation depends on the amount of nourishment its people get. They are living below the subsistence level and this is a problem that is far too serious really to be debated in 2½ or 3½ hours. We have got a new Minister here. He has not really had the time. I feel sorry for him because the States are autonomous and he cannot always get them to do what he likes. Therefore the first suggestion I would like to make to him is to see that food becomes a Central subject and that the Food Ministers in the States are his agents for carrying out a policy that is uniform and that will yield results. I entirely agree with all those who have gone before me and said that there is no incentive for the farmer to produce. I come from a land of farmers. I have lived with farmers. I have had land, but what is happening today? In the Punjab, when the

[Rajkumari Amrit Kaur.]

refugees came over and took such lands as they were given they produced and produced very much more than before the partition but what is happening today? Because of the policies which do not leave one any sense of security, the people who know how to produce, are selling their lands and are leaving them and landless labour are going there who do not know what to do. You are never going to have production in this way. You can have production in this country, twice the amount that is being produced—it can be done if the farmers have the incentive to produce. Also, why should he not be given the incentive to produce grain crops rather than money crops? Naturally a man will produce a money crop as it pays him but give him the incentive to produce food. There should be subsidy for grain crops so that not only does production increase but the people wanting the food are able to get it to eat. Now, whatever we get is also adulterated. I would like the Minister to turn his attention to that because even the calorific value of the little food the poor man gets is reduced. Likewise, what are we doing for stopping soil-erosion, what are we doing about afforestation? Defore-

station is going on apace, and all these have an indirect and bad effect on production. What about protection of our crops from pests? What about the lack of proper warehouses? This question has been raised before. What about the destruction of crop by wild cattle because of this foolish legislation—I will say so—of banning cattle slaughter? We should reduce the number of wild animals which are destroying the crop. I believe I am right in saying that 25 per cent. of the crops are destroyed by pests and wild cattle.

With these few words, I would like to say lastly that nothing can be done without the co-operation of the people and that co-operation will be forthcoming if our policies are clear and if we can approach the farmers in the proper spirit.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister will reply on Monday. I think we should adjourn now. The House stands adjourned till eleven tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at twelve minutes to five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 11th December, 1959.