

[Shri B. Gupta.] hon. Minister, honourable as he is, to take immediate steps to live up to what he has said because the administrative policy of the Government in the economic field is not one which gives one much confidence and hope. Therefore, Sir, judge it from any angle. We are not raising the question of socialism or capitalism. Judge it from every angle and you will find that this is—I will repeat again—a gilt-edged nationalisation meant for the capitalist class. It promises no help for the country until and unless they change their mentality, mend their ways and set their foot on the right path, a path that is there, if only they will take to it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister.

(Shri B. K. Mukerjee stood up.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no time, Mr. Mukerjee. I have called upon the hon. Minister.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE (Uttar Pradesh): When he is going to reply, let me put my question also. Now this is the question. We are satisfied with the assurances given regarding the Corporation and the Council and the Advisory Committee. But I am afraid.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please put the question straight. Don't make a speech.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: How am I then to explain it? The question is that we are not satisfied with the explanations given by the hon. Minister in this connection. That is the representation of **labour**

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mukerjee, you are making a speech. You wanted some information. Put your question straight; I will not allow any Member to make a speech.

SHRI B. K. MUKERJEE: I wanted to know whether he will give us an

assurance that whatever he has stated here regarding the workers' retrenchment and regarding the workers being associated in the Corporations and the Committees to be appointed under this Bill, will be honoured.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You must take him at his words.

SHRI RAJ BAHADUR: Sir, it remains my pleasant duty to thank all sections of the House for the expedition and enthusiasm that they have shown for this Bill to be gone through and also for the co-operation that has been extended by them. We know, Sir, that we are not impeccable nor are we immortal as suggested by one of the Members opposite. We propose to face this task in all humility. This is the first step, a very great step, a very great experiment and we hope that cooperation and goodwill will flow from all sides of the House. This is a national venture and we shall try to make a complete success, as best as we can. I thank the House once again.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed." The motion was adopted.

SCARCITY CONDITIONS IN RAJASTHAN

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mathur to raise a discussion on the scarcity conditions in certain parts of Rajasthan and the aid given by the Central Government in this regard.

5 P.M.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR (Rajasthan): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I speak with great grief and sorrow. I speak with feelings of great disappointment. While I speak with deep feelings, I assure you that I will not permit myself to be carried away by any sentimental over-flow. I would also not forget to express my deep gratitude to **you** for

allowing this discussion in the interests of the suffering masses in Rajasthan. I have got here with me quite a number of statements from responsible and reliable persons, from Members of Parliament who have toured the area, from Members of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly who have seen the conditions there for themselves, from the correspondents of the most reliable and first-rate daily papers in this country who have sent their special representatives to those areas and statements from institutions, institutions which have nothing to do with politics, absolutely non-political institutions all devoted to social and relief work, institutions like the Marwari Relief Society, institutions like the Red Cross, the Rajasthan Relief Society and many philanthropists who have contributed to the relief of these suffering masses, who have nothing to do with politics. Within the short time at my disposal, I will not try to go - through these various statements to which I have referred, but would make a brief reference to only one or two statements which are absolutely non-controversial. I have no intention and I have no inclination to enter into any controversy in this matter, because I feel, and feel very strongly, that even on the information which has been given by the Government, I will be able to make out a case so strong and irrefutable that the House will go all in sympathy with me.

"Reports of acuta famine conditions in Bikaner division have been made by spokesmen of the Marwari Relief Society, Calcutta; the Bikaner Relief Society, Rajasthan; the Red Cross Society and many Jodhpur philanthropists who recently toured the affected areas. They contradict the claim of the State Revenue Minister; Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadiya. that people were not subsisting on tumba-seeds, *bhurat* and *khejri* barks."

The Marwari Relief Society which is working in conjunction with the Government there issued an appeal in this connection and in the appeal they say:

“मारवाड़ी रिलीफ सोसाइटी कलकत्ता ने स्थिति की भयंकरता को देख कर बीकानेर में अकाल सेवा कैम्प खोला है। आस पास के गावों के लोग काफी संख्या में मदद के लिये शाखा कैम्पों में पहुंच रहे हैं।

राजस्थान सरकार ने जो थड़ा बहुत रिलीफ कार्य चालू किया है वह स्थिति को देखते हुये नगण्य सा है। इसमें भी विशेष खेद की बात यह है कि मजदूरों को दो-दो तीन-तीन सप्ताह और कहीं-कहीं चार-चार सप्ताह तक मजदूरी नहीं चुकाई जाती जब कि आवश्यकता इस बात की है कि मजदूरों को या तो रोजाना नहीं तो कम से कम दूसरे दिन मजदूरी चुका दी जाय।

♦["Realising that a terrible situation had arisen, the Marwari Relief Society, Calcutta, has opened a Famine Relief Camp at Bikaner. The people of the neighbouring villages are reaching the branch camps in large numbers to get relief.

The relief work that the Government of Rajasthan has undertaken is altogether inadequate considering the situation. Moreover, it is regrettable that labourers are not paid their wages for two to three weeks and sometimes for four weeks together whereas it is necessary that they should be paid their wages at least on alternate days, if not daily."]

Sir. one of the hon. Members of the House of the People, Mr. Bhargava, had himself gone there and he has said that he had seen with his own eyes conditions which are of a very alarming nature and he himself has certified that thousand.) of cattle have perished there, and when I talk of cattle, I wish the House to appreciate that the cattle wealth of Rajasthan, particularly in those areas constitutes the entire wealth of these people and

♦English translation.

[Shri H. C. Mathur.] the entire economy of these people subsists on their cattle wealth. There is also no denying the fact—that for the last three consecutive years these areas have been affected by famine. Even during the last year when the famine conditions were not half so acute as they are today, the Rajasthan Government had to sanction about Rs. 84 lakhs to carry on relief work in some of these areas, and even that relief was considered to be absolutely inadequate. The conditions this time are far more serious and even on the showing of the Government, even according to their own reports, reports submitted in writing, they admit that the economy of those areas has been completely shattered and if adequate relief is not given, the people will have to face starvation. Sir, in the same report they admit that they are not at all in a position to give any adequate relief. So, we are left with the very clear position that there is no adequate relief and the Government of Rajasthan is not in a position to give that relief. There is no denying the fact from any quarter including the Government that Rajasthan, particularly the Bikaner Division is having very acute famine conditions. Thousands of families there are in dire distress, thousands of people, hardy people, who have always braved such situations. If this was the first famine, I would not have raised it and the people there would have borne it as they are used to the hard conditions of life, but since this is the third year in succession. I submit that those people are on their last legs. And the Rajasthan Government itself I submit, is on its last legs. They have strained all their resources and they find that they are not in a position to cope with the situation. Their clean confession is before us.

MH DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can speak up to 5-15, because there are three more speakers. I want to give them five minutes each.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: I will cut short my speech, Sir. But how unfortunate it is that in spite of these acute conditions, famine has not been declared in these areas? They still call these areas scarcity areas. I would like to know from the hon. Minister under what conditions he would consider these areas as famine areas. I cannot visualise any situation more serious than what is obtaining there, and still these areas have not been declared as famine areas, because they do not want to take the responsibility. How unfortunate it is that we shirk our responsibility and we call ourselves a welfare State. This question was raised in the House of the People on the 24th April and the hon. Minister, in making his speech, said, or rather complained, that he had no information whatsoever from the Rajasthan Government and that in spite of repeated reminders, he was getting no information from them, as if he meant that, if he had received timely information, he would have rushed relief and succour to these people. But I submit, Sir, that the Rajasthan Government had submitted information in the fullest details, not once, not twice, but thrice, not only to the Food and Agriculture Ministry but to the States Ministry and the Finance Ministry. It is most unfortunate that the Deputy Secretaries and Under Secretaries were fiddling with the Ales while our Ministers were in blissful ignorance. Sir, the hon. Minister who was speaking on the floor of the House had himself gone to Jodhpur and paid a visit to that place and it was to the Minister personally that a detailed note had been handed over by the Revenue Minister of that State giving him all the detailed information and telling him what assistance he expected from these people. Not only that. The Minister had rushed down to Delhi simply for this purpose and with no other aim or objective but to make the position of Rajasthan famine very clear to the Central Government because he knew he had not enough to cope with the situation. He met the Minister for States, he met the Secretaries, he hand-

ed them over the reports. I expected that something would be done but to my great disappointment. Sir, nothing whatsoever has been done, at least to my knowledge till the day before. The hon. Minister while speaking on the floor of the other House also gave us some idea of the extent of relief which was being given to Rajasthan and while giving us some idea about the relief which was being given, he told us—I am quoting his words—that about 13,70,000 people were being employed per day. That is, they had opened so many relief centres in those affected areas that 13,70,000 people were employed there. I was simply stunned. I don't know how he calculated that because even if the minimum wage of 8 annas is given, then to the labour alone we will have to give about Rs. 7 lakhs a day which will come to more than Rs. 2 crores per month and we have to cover 3 to 4 months. The total sanction, the House will be surprised to know, was not more than Rs. 35 lakhs. I could not understand this. The hon. Minister might say that he was wrongly informed but my complaint against him is that he did not even care to give a single minute's thought to what he was talking. Even then he had known that there were 26 lakhs of people and how can he claim that out of the 26 lakhs affected there were 13,70,000 people who were employed every day on labour. It only shows what thought and consideration our Ministers give to the material which is placed in their hands and they complain of not getting the information. Now I wish to lay particular emphasis on this point that last year when the famine conditions were far less acute, when things were much better, the Rajasthan Government had to sanction at least Rs. 84 lakhs and now when the situation is so serious and so acute, they have at their disposal only about Rs. 34 lakhs and could it be more true than to say that the Central Government is only making a fun of the situation when they sanction about Rs. 3 and 4 lakhs for gratuitous reliefs? The hon. Minister for States when he was there, saw for himself that the dependents of the lab-

ourers could not subsist on the 8 annas which they got and that no relief was; being given to the members of their families. The Minister had therefore to sanction immediate relief to those people but again, the question of funds arose.

Sir, I will only say one word more. The hon. Minister further stated on the floor of the other House that now that the attention of the Central Government had been pointedly drawn to this, very grave affair by the Members of Parliament in a most pointed and forceful manner, he would expedite matters and he would do all that he possibly could in this case but ever since that statement was made—I speak on certain information which I have—nothing whatsoever has been done and I wish also to say that it was not the first time when the hon. Minister's attention was drawn. As a matter of fact, the Maharaja of Bikaner made a statement on the floor of that House in the month of February. Then a short notice question was tabled and speaking on the floor of this House on the Appropriation Bill I said that my first thoughts went to the scarcity areas of Rajasthan where hundreds and thousands of families were living on the brink of starvation.

In conclusion I would submit that in-1939 a British Chief Minister went to the Maharaja of Jodhpur and asked— it was in 1939 when the Second World War broke—for a donation of 3 lakhs for War Fund and the prompt reply was, 'Where is the money'? Just after one month we had to declare famine in the State of Jodhpur and a crore of rupees was sanctioned for the relief of the people. That was the rotten monarchic rule. Now we are a Welfare State. Am I to understand that our Ministers here will always be arguing only about the barren rules and the barren formula that they cannot give more than 50% for relief of famine and the State Government will all the time say that they have strained all their resources and that they have u«

[Shri H. C. Mathur.] money whatsoever and this quarrel between the Centre and the State will go on and thousands of families will be starving to death. Thank you.

DR. K. L. SHRIMALI (Rajasthan): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I shall be as brief as possible. During the last few days there has been a good deal of controversy with regard to the scarcity conditions in Rajasthan. On the 24th April 1953, the hon. Dr. Deshmukh made a statement in which he said that hardly any reports had come to him from September 1952 from Rajasthan Government and his complaint was that in spite of several reminders, the Rajasthan Government had not cared to inform the Central Government about the actual conditions in Rajasthan. On the other hand the Chief Minister is reported to have said (The Statesman, 13th May 1953) that Mr. Sukhadia, the State's Revenue Minister, had given all the necessary information to the States Ministry in the month of January when a grant of Rs. 18 lakhs was sanctioned by the Centre for relief work. Another note prepared by the Minister was given to Dr. P. S. Deshmukh in March. A third note was despatched to the States Ministry in April and the Chief Minister regrets that no reference to any of these notes was made in the official statement during the recent debate in the House of the People. Now, these are two contradictory statements and as it concerns the lives of thousands of people, we expect the hon. Minister to clarify the position.

Sir, the situation in Rajasthan is very serious, and since 1948 there has been scarcity of rains in one part or the other. In some parts there have been excessive rains and in others there has been scarcity. The people of Rajasthan are very hard-working and they are habituated to bad weather and indifferent climate but on account of this continuous scarcity and famines all their stamina is breaking down. "Unless the Government adopt a long range policy to meet the famine. I am afraid the situation in Rajasthan will ■

•become very serious. As far as I know the Chambal project and other irrigation works, are proceeding very slowly. Rajasthan is the biggest desert in India and mere gratuitous relief from year to year will not help the people. Gratuitous relief, though it gives immediate help to the people in maintaining physical existence, destroys the moral stamina of the people. Of course when there is an emergency, gratuitous relief is necessary; but ultimately the people must learn to depend on themselves. The Government have to take a long-range view and create those conditions which may enable the people to maintain themselves.

The greatest difficulty which the Government of Rajasthan are facing today is that they are not able to take advantage of the formula which the Finance Ministry has evolved for giving financial aid to the States. According to that formula a grant equal to 50 per cent, of the expenditure on gratuitous relief is given and this includes the expenditure on water transport, non-recurring expenditure on cattle fodder, cattle preservation etc. And then a loan of 50 per cent, of the annual expenditure on 'non-productive works' is given. This also includes expenditure on digging and deepening of wells. But the special conditions in Rajasthan are such that they cannot take advantage of this formula. I will give only one example. Roads are classed as productive works with the result that they qualify for neither grant nor for loans. But in the desert of Rajasthan, soon after a road is prepared, it disappears and there is nothing there except sand.

In 1952 the Government were requested to grant Rs. 64,54,900, which was incurred on purely unproductive relief work on account of famine and scarcity of rains in 1951. Against this the Government of Rajasthan could claim only Rs. 3,92,000 as grant and Rs. 12,98,000 as loan from the Central Government in the year 1952. At pre-

sent the total population of the affected area would be nearly 22,66,659 and even if relief for all these people and fodder for the cattle is calculated at the barest minimum, the total expenditure on the various items of relief would come to about Rs. 1,27,65,000 besides *taccavi* loans of Rs. 30 lakhs and 5 lakhs. Against this the State of Rajasthan has provided Rs. 37,50,000 and Rs. 30 lakhs as *taccavi* loan and the Centre has provided Rs. 10 lakhs for roads and Rs. 9 lakhs for water supply in rural areas. The Government have still to find the balance of Rs. 70,50,000 and unless Government can find this sum of money I am afraid the situation in Rajasthan will be very serious indeed. I would strongly appeal to the Finance Department to go through this whole question and consider the special conditions which prevail in Rajasthan and see that relief is given to the people. In a democracy, human life is respected. The dignity of the human personality is considered to be the supreme consideration and no Welfare State can allow the lives of thousands of people to be sacrificed. I do hope that both the Finance Ministry and the Food Ministry will go through this whole question very carefully and clarify the actual position with regard to scarcity conditions and give necessary relief to the people of Rajasthan.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ranawat, you have to close at 5-30 P.M. only five more minutes.

SHRI M. S. RANAWAT (Rajasthan): Yes Sir. The question is so vast and difficult and the House, this Parliament and perhaps the country at large is so ignorant about this part of our country that we from Rajasthan feel that we are in this big ocean of India a lost country or rather a lost nation—one of those lost nations of old. When we speak of Rajasthan, people seem to think of something far away, something in a far-off distance and in spite of the Rajasthan Government writing to the States Ministry

and to the Food Ministry and files going between them, the situation has come to a very acute stage in Rajasthan. In old times in the small States there was a Famine Code and the British Government of India took a very serious view if a famine was declared in any of these regions. So the Ministers of those days used to fight shy of declaring any famine. If they did it, the Government had to spend a large sum of money according to the Famine Code and the Government of India would like to see things properly done for themselves. But we see very much the same sort of thing happening even now under the Government of India of the present day. We feel shy of facing things as they are. If in Bikaner it is felt the condition is not serious, then I will say there will be no serious condition in India anywhere. We are only feeling shy of facing things. Of course I do not say that there are no other parts—for instance in Chittor district—where there are famine conditions. There also the condition is bad. But when these things are grouped together in a vast area, probably the House will agree with me—and it has been accepted by Rajasthan Government in their report—that they have to be considered as famine conditions. The area affected is as much as 80,000 sq. miles. Some of your States are smaller than that area. Bihar is only 70,000 sq. miles and Orissa is only 60,000 sq. miles. You can imagine the vastness of the area affected. Of course the total population of Rajasthan is not....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You need not go into those comparisons. Please come to the situation in Rajasthan.

SHRI M. S. RANAWAT: But otherwise the country will not understand it and that is why it has been ignored all these years. If I say this here, some notice at least may be taken. The population affected is 33 lakhs and not 20 lakhs. Of course, you may point out a few well-to-do houses but they will be always there in all areas.

[Shri M. S. Ranawat.]

The other point to be borne in mind is that the resources of Rajasthan are definitely limited, its manpower is limited and probably its ways of working are also limited. It is a new Government and they are learning the art of administration there and it will take some time. But the Government of India cannot really advance such reasons. Here you have experienced and senior Ministers. The Home Minister is a very experienced man and he is in charge of the States also and *he* can, if he wants, say "Well, we will give so much money. You have to save human lives." Sir, this idea of Welfare State, you have to bring home ~to the actual people. You have ended the princely States. But democracy will reach the people only when they feel that something is being done for them. The Rajasthan man is a brave man. Every year he suffers difficulties and he lives by himself. He is really not much concerned as to which Government comes and which Government goes. "Baba, I live my life" he used to say. But now with the Welfare State idea, he feels that things now are something worse than what they were before under the old autocratic rule. At least in those days if something was wrong, the Maharaja of Jodhpur would come forward with a crore of rupees or so. But now we have no money. Rajasthan Government have not got the money. They have to come to the Centre and ask. "If you don't do these things, what is going to happen to us?" Some hon. Members have pointed out the seriousness of the situation, no doubt. But I say if within these two months you do not take a serious view of the matter and do something, it will be a case for which the whole of humanity, the whole of India will have to be ashamed before the country and before God. if you believe in God. And then lately. Sir, the leader of the Opposition in the Rajasthan Assembly, who was previously a Minister of the Bikaner State, has issued a statement in today's *Times* of India. I quote the relevant portion, Sir:

"Questioning the veracity about a large number of Government relief works, mentioned in Mr. Sukhadia's statement, Mr. Jaswant Singh said that, barring a few annually undertaken public works, which were done even in normal days, no major work had been undertaken in Bikaner tehsil to remedy the situation."

I can tell you, Sir, that the Rajasthan Government has no more money and no more resources with which to face this abnormal situation. The Centre as usual will talk so much in a roundabout way imposing it on the Rajasthan Government to prove, as if in a criminal case in a court of law, that the people there were really dying and before this is proved to the satisfaction of the Centre more people would have died. So I would appeal to the Centre not to go into red tapism at this critical moment and I would request the Finance Minister and the Home Minister to go together to the spot to make a study of the situation and give as much money as is required there. Whether it is to be given as gratuitous relief or as a loan or as any other form this can be settled later.

There is another trouble the Rajasthan people are facing. Their cattle is wealth and if their cattle die they will die too, as Rajasthan is a pastoral country and agriculture is only a by-profession for them. So you must save their cattle and give them all facilities. That is all I appeal to you. Sir.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (DR. P. S. DESHMUKH): Sir, this is the second opportunity for discussing the conditions in Rajasthan. We do not want to say that the conditions in Rajasthan are good or are satisfactory. This has not been the case of anybody, neither of the Central Government nor of the Rajasthan Government but what I would like to point out and especially when so much has appeared in the press.....

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Are you satisfied with what you have done?

SHRI P. S. DESHMUKH: Sir, a cer DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: The policy of the tain amount of scarcity has been ad Central Government has been stated more mitted and from the year 1951-52 as than once. We have in-1 dicated what the -a matter of fact the conditions have responsibility of the Central Government is. It been rather bad and the Rajasthan is unfortunate that the hon. Members of the Government from the year 1951-52 to House forget that we have a certain 1952-53 have spent over two crores of Constitution by which we go. Tners I are rupees. That will itself show, as my also certain policies which are J decided hon. friend who spoke first of all ad upon, which we are to follow. I must contradict mitted, that the Rajasthan Government the impression that the Central Government has was perfectly alive to the circum the full responsibility of famine conditions and tances obtaining there. Even ittei I scarcity conditions. The policy of the Central that and even recently

{Prof. N. R. Malkani rose to interrupt}

"MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Wait a we give them some ways and means minute please. accommodation. Those are the specific things to which the Central Government is committed. I wish it were possible for the Central Government to give everything that was asked by the State Government. But the House should realise tha£ when there are scarcity areas all over the country It is not possible for the Centre to rush in with all the help asked for by a particular State. We can go to a certain extent only.

SHRI P. S. DESHMUKH: Even after that it cannot be said, Sir, that the Rajasthan Government was either j complacent or was neglecting its duty. Even in the year 1953-54 the Rajasthan I Government which had in fact stopped its relief works in August 1952 had to restart them in November 1952 j and had to continue them till the month of March 1953. So, Sir, I would like to point out that it is not a fact that the Rajasthan Government has been negligent or has not been sufficiently careful to look after the ^people under its care.

SHRI M. S. RANAWAT: Nobody blames the Rajasthan Government.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: I am glad you don't. If my hon. friend wants to blame me I do not think he has much ground to stand on. (*Interruption.*)

I would like to disregard the interruption as it disturbs my line of argument.

The responsibility of the Central Government is definite and limited.

PROP. N. R. MALKANI (Nominat ed): Sir, my question

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wait till he finishes. He refuses to give way. Please wait till he finishes, , and don't disturb him.

Now I find that some misunderstandings have arisen out of my speech in the other House, and when I complained about lack of reports my complaint referred to the fortnightly reports which we expected from the State Government. I never said there was no report. It was another report which was given to me. it was a sort of a statement given to me in the first week of March that stated the circumstances up to the end of the last year, namely 1952. Secondly in that report there was nothing which the Ministry of Food and Agriculture rifts in a position to do and so that was naturally forwarded to the Finance Ministry because it was essentially a matter of accommodation and a matter involving financial assistance.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: How would those periodical statements have helped you, Sir?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Those periodical statements would have enabled me to answer the questions that were put on the 24th of April and I would have been in a better position to give details of the circumstances obtaining there, but those could not be had because the statement that I had was not up to the 15th of April.

So far as one thing is concerned I confess I am guilty. *(Interruption.)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: So far as the number of workers engaged in relief work was concerned. I do admit that I said that they were 13,70,000. I am sorry that was a complete misstatement but it was based on a telegram received from the Rajasthan Government. Of course, I do not wish to blame the Rajasthan Government but that was the basis on which I went. Of course at that time- I had no time to calculate as my friend has done now. All the same I confess that this was a mistake. Also this figure of 13,70,000 which was given in the telegram that I received was also repeated in a letter confirming this telegram. It seems that it was probably a mistake made for only 13,000 people but at the present time*(Interruption.)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: I may inform the House that, at the present moment there are nearly 50,000 people who are engaged in relief works.

Now as soon as this debate on the 24th of April was over, we contacted the Rajasthan Government. They sent their Relief Commissioner here and he apprised us of the situation. At that time, Sir, we were.....

(Prof. N. R. Malkani rose to interrupt.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: He has not given the floor to you, Mr. Malkani. Please resume your seat.

PROF. N. R. MALKANI: I want to give some facts.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Two Members cannot stand at the same time. He has not given way to you.

PROF. N. R. MALKANI: I may quote his own report.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please resume your seat.

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: Soon after the debate of the 24th of April we obtained the facts and only the other day the hon. Minister for Revenue also came here and all that he asked the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to give them were some transport facilities for getting the fodder from other areas to the scarcity areas. It was stated by him that there was no fodder scarcity in the State as a whole but that it was only a question of transport and this assistance we are giving.

Other assistance that they need is, really speaking, advance for *taccavi* loans and it is a fact that unless we do something to help the agriculturists to tide over the present difficulties, the production for the next year will suffer. And it is in that view that I have shown sympathy and to my hon. friend, the Finance Minister, will say how far it is possible for him to help, although it is not the responsibility of the Centre to cater to the needs of the agriculturists and to arrange for *taccavi* loans. It is the responsibility of the State and they must accept it.

So, for the present, Sir, I must say that there are many misconceptions and in spite of the assertion that many Members of Parliament and other people have gone there, I have full faith and confidence in the reports of Mr. Sukhadia. He travelled in that area for full seven days. It is absolutely untrue that there had been any

starvation deaths and that most of the people are living only on barks. The situation is difficult and we want to give them food. *Taccavi* loans also should be made available to them. At the same time we must arrest the tendency to exaggerate. Many Members both inside the House as well as outside, I am sorry to say, are interested in exaggerating the position.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What has Mr. Sukhadia stated in his report?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: He has Stated that there has been no starvation death, that these barks and other things were arranged by certain interested people. He has taken signed statements by those people who were made to produce them in order to exaggerate the situation. So I do not want to dwell upon this, but I should like to assure the House that so far as our position will permit, we shall give every assistance to the Rajasthan Government from the FVod and Agriculture Ministry, and whatever the hon. the Finance Minister can do, he will also do it. But the House must understand that there are limitations. They should also help :is to tide ever the difficulties and not exaggerate the situation.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: I would only ask ©ne question. Is it not a fact, Sir, that the situation this year is far more serious than it was last year?

DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: It is a little worse.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: And is it not a fact, Sir

'ME. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. You said only one question.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: Just this also, Sir. Is it not a fact, that the provision made this year is half of what it was last year? While the situation has worsened, the budget provision is reduced to half of what it was last year.

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DR. P. S. DESHMUKH: There are many facets to a situation and a mere comparison like this would not help us.

SHRI B. GUPTA (West Bengal): Will the hon. Deputy Minister for the Fa mine Department

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is not Deputy Minister.

SHRI B. GUPTA: I must have been mistaken. Will he give us the latest definition of famine?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please look into the Famine Code.

THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE (SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir. So far as the factual information is concerned, what has been supplied to me is this that the Rajasthan Government has spent Rs. 20 lakhs from November 1952 to March 1953. This year there is a provision for relief of Rs. 37J latches and Rs. 30 lakhs for the *taccavi*.

Now, Sir, I think it is unfortunate that hon. Members are approaching this problem in a somewhat combative spirit. There is always bound to be a certain amount of difference of opinion in the appraisal of a situation.

AN HON. MEMBER: Better go and see.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: It is not a combative spirit. It is desperate spirit.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Please do not disturb.

' SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH: If I am asked to go and visit every State before I make a statement about it. it will not be possible for me even to do what I find possible to do now. But I think, Sir. these interruptions illustrate the kind of spirit which I deprecate. If hon. Members will listen

rShri C. D. Deshmukh.] patiently, they will understand the implications of the problem and the difficulties. One does not want, to be inconsiderate or unsympathetic. Taking the general dimensions of the figures concerned, they are not so very serious as to come in the way of our taking decisions. It is not as if the Government of India is going to be broke, if certain requests made by the Rajasthan Government were to be acceded to. As far as I can see, the position is that in the beginning we did not really get regular reports; at any rate, some of the reports came a little later than they should have, but at this stage that is no great matter. The general constitutional position has already been referred to by my colleague and that is that there is no responsibility on the Centre for any expenditure on famine relief. It is only on broad humanitarian grounds that Central assistance has been broadened from precedent to precedent. It started with the Bihar famine, I think, about* two years ago when the Centre undertook to give half the cost of gratuitous relief as an aid. Next came the Saurashtra famine or scarcity, whatever you may choose to call it—and we agreed to advance half the cost of relief works whether they were included in the Five Year Plan or not. Then the definition of gratuitous relief itself has tended to expand on account of the inclusion of expenditure on fodder or work in the work centres or drinking water and so on and that is where the position remains at the moment. Now, Sir, the House must have studied the statements, I think, which were supplied by my colleague and I would like to refer to this. (*Turning to the Deputy Chairman*) You are looking at the clock, Sir. I do not know whether it means that I must finish my answer.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You can take two to three minutes.

SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH: It is an important point. Here in column 5. Population affected, it shows Madras 98

[lakhs. Madhya Pradesh 15 lakhs, Bombay 47 lakhs, Mysore 44 lakhs. Rajasthan 22 lakhs and then there are some other figures, 8 lakhs, 3 lakhs and so on. Any policy decision that I have to take is a decision which must apply to all States alike. I cannot afford, in the interests of the general community, for which I am responsible, to make any special terms unless of course I there are very extreme and special circumstances. Now, so far as Rajasthan is concerned, at last we have in our hands the Rajasthan Government's own appraisal of the situation and the needs of that situation. We have received from them an application for a grant to cover certain items and a loan to cover certain other items.

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: What is the amount demanded?

SHRI C. D. DESHMUKH: It is about two crores. One is about Rs. 86 lakhs and the other is about one crore and as the speaker said, who seems to have been very well briefed, the capacity of Rajasthan Government runs only to Rs. 37 lakhs of expenditure on relief and Rs. 30 lakhs for *taccavi*. But now for the last two years we have been trying to persuade the Rajasthan Government to try and bring out economy in administrative expenditure. We know the legacy which they have inherited of a somewhat cumbersome administrative system. We also realise that it takes a little time to cut away

the dead wood, so to speak, or to rationalise overlapping agencies. Now, they have not attempted to carry out that, task very well. How much will be realised by the completion of that process, I am not in a position to say—probably Rs. 20 lakhs or Rs. 25 lakhs. The other item on which they could contract expenditure is development expenditure which is not included in the Plan. That was of the order of about Rs. 50 lakhs last year and there is a similar provision or perhaps a larger provision than Rs. 50 lakhs this year. There are, of course, resources which they represented to the Planning Commission they might be

able to raise. One can understand the difficulties in the way of substituting sales tax for customs, although, I believe that if they were to bring about that change, they would probably add to their resources. Then there is the question of agricultural income-tax. There perhaps one can understand the difficulty of imposing tax in a year in which there are scarcity conditions. In any case, so far as the Finance Ministry is concerned, we are not quite satisfied that the Rajasthan Government are fully playing the game. In other words, if they would make some effort to contract expenditure somewhere, they would find the Centre then willing to meet them in trying to resolve this situation which has arisen, because, as I said, the dimensions of the figures concerned are not really of any great importance. It has an implication of exhibiting certain state of affairs that is dangerous and not the actual position. Now, for instance, in regard to the loan which they have asked for, they have included a very large amount for taccavi. So far as the examination made in the Food and Agriculture Ministry is concerned it looks as if their estimate is a bit too high. But that is a matter which can be settled by the experts of the two Governments. When that is done and when the Rajasthan Government is in a position to respond to us in regard to the contraction of expenditure—and that should not take very much time; I do not want them immediately to carry out everything, but to express their willingness to try and meet us—then I feel quite sure that we should be able to extend to them assistance and even perhaps sometimes stretch a point in their favour as for instance in taccavi. I can say that so far we have not made any advances to enable State Governments to make taccavi advances. But one realises that if in a State there are no funds available and the production itself is likely to go down for lack of agricultural finance, obviously it is somebody's business to find money to enable that productive endeavour to be undertaken. So, I think that, now

we are possessed of all the factors of the situation and I am hopeful that we can find a solution out of the difficulties which have been represented by hon. Members, though, as I said, in a combative manner.

THE TEA BILL, 1951!

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI T. T. KRISHNA-MACHARI): Mr. Deputy Chairman, I beg to move: That the Bill to provide for the control by the Union of the tea industry, including the control, in pursuance of the International Agreement now in force, of the cultivation of tea in, and of the export of tea from India, and for that purpose to establish a Tea Board and levy a customs duty on tea exported from India, as passed by the House of the People, be taken into consideration.

Sir, this measure is one that integrates two existing measures, namely, the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938, and the Central Tea Board Act, 1949. The need for the integration of these two measures has been found because the existing enactments have followed no particular pattern. The control that the Tea Board exercised over the tea industry was nothing very precise. The Board was composed largely of plantation interests, with a few growers' representatives thrown in. The domination of one interest, though a very vital interest, has done the Board no good. Apart from the Tea Board, there is the Tea Licensing Committee which was exercising its functions which devolved on it under the existing legislation. The functions of the Board under the present Bill have been widened. They will include regulation and control of sale for internal consumption or export. They will include control over quality of tea and over the issue of licences of those engaged in blending. They will include also adoption of measures for increasing the productivity of labour, including securing of better working conditions for.