

following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that the Address does not take note that even now more than sixty per cent of the people are illiterate.” (191)

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that the Address does not contain any assurance that the poor people will get rice at rupees two per kg. to enable the family to have meal at least once in a day.” (192)

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that the Address does not suggest any measures to help the poor people to get cloth at a cheap price within his reach.” (193)

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that the Address does not mention the necessity to decentralise some powers of Union Government so that the State Governments can play bigger role in the development of States.” (194)

DR. DATTA SAMANT (Bombay South Central) : I beg to move :

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that there is no mention in the Address of the failure of the Government to take appropriate measures at proper time to avoid sickness in textiles industry in the country and taking appropriate stern measures against mill-owners who have misappropriated crores of rupees rendering lakhs of workers jobless.” (247)

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that there is no mention in the Address that in spite of implementation of six development plans and spending huge amounts for alleviation of poverty there is marginal alleviation of poverty and fifty per cent population is still living below poverty line.” (248)

SHRI S.M. BHATTAM (Visakhapatnam) : I beg to move :

That at the end of the motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that in the Address, there is no mention of the failure of the Government to take adequate precautionary measure to protect the life of the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi even though she herself declared on more than one occasion and more specially in her last address in Orissa that there was a threat and danger to her life.” (255)

That at the end of motion, the following be *added*, namely :

“but regret that in the Address there is no mention of 330 million persons living below the poverty line and the ever increasing problem of unemployment and steep rise in prices.” (256)

15.31 hrs,

RESOLUTION RE : MEASURES TO ERADICATE POVERTY

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we proceed with the Private Members' Business.

[Mr. Chairman]

Before we take up the Resolution of Professor Madhu Dandavate, we have to fix time for this Resolution. Let us fix two hours to start with.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : Madam Chairman, I beg to move :

“That this House expresses its concern over the failure of the Government to lift vast sections of the masses above the poverty line and demands concrete measures to eradicate poverty from the country.)”

Madam Chairman, for a country like India—a developing country—the problem of priorities is of extreme importance. In a country like ours huge expenditure on expensive Asiatic or five star hotels or huge tourist centres or colour TV or for that matter on metro railway cannot be a priority in this land of Gandhiji. Eradication of poverty and the necessary developmental projects which will assist this process are really speaking the priorities. Our concern for eradication of poverty from five lakh villages in the country and also the poverty of the urban poor—that has to be the priority and looking from that point of view all the policies need to be re-oriented.

Madam Chairman, permit me to say that in a country like India in the developmental projects what we find is that more and more people are going below the poverty line. I think those who live below the poverty line can be described as orphans of our development and we have too many orphans of development in our country and that is the tragedy of our country.

While analysing the entire problem of poverty and taking cognizance as to how the problem of poverty is being tackled and what type of new projects and new development schemes are required let us first start with the very concept of poverty.

How do we define poverty? There are various ways in which ‘poverty’ has been defined in different countries but as far as our country is concerned even the existing Planning Commission has accepted a certain connotation of poverty line and during this discussion I would like to proceed on that basis.

According to the Planning all the persons who are not able to have in rural areas consumption of calories of the order of 2400 or those inhabitants of the urban areas who are not able to have consumption of 2100 calories, they are supposed to be the people living below the poverty line. That is the old concept and the present Planning Commission has already accepted this concept. This is in terms of calories.

If we try to have it in terms of income equivalent on the basis of 1979-80 prices it will come to Rs. 76 per capita per month in the rural areas, Remember, 76 per capita per month in the rural areas and Rs. 88 per capita per month in the Urban areas. These are supposed to be income equivalents of poverty line.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : It is 65 and 75.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I am quoting the figures from the Economic and Political weekly in which the Advisor to the Perspective Planning Division of the Planning Commission under his own signature has given this figure.

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : There is the Sixth Plan Document. In rural areas it is 65 and in Urban areas it is 75. Price base is 1970-71.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Anyway, I am proceeding on the basis of my own conclusions drawn from the documents which are on the basis of certain articles written and signed by certain individuals. If you come to the equivalent of 1983 prices in that case it is

Rs.108 per capita per month in rural areas and Rs. 130 per capita per month in urban areas. These have been calculated on the basis of a packet which contains bare requirements of food and certain non-food requirements. They are taken together and on the basis of that the entire packet has been worked out. If you accept this as 3 concept and as definition of poverty line it is interesting to note what are the dimensions of poverty in this country. The dimensions of poverty also can be explained on the basis of available data.

I will not speak without reference. I would like to place before the House as far as possible authentic information. Here I have the Economic and Political Weekly of April, 1984. There is an article by Shri S.P. Guha, Adviser, Perspective Planning Division of the Planning Commission. I quote those figures. What is the exact estimate of people living below poverty line? Of course there are varying estimates. But I would like to stick to those estimates which are acceptable to Mr Guha who is Adviser to the Perspective Planning Division of the Planning Commission. In 1961 it is estimated that 240 million persons lived below the poverty line. In 1978 the estimate which was prepared mentions that 309 millions lived below poverty line. Of course there is one more estimate. Enough documents are not available. But some research scientists have worked on that. Their estimate is this. In 1978 not 309 millions lived below poverty line but 370 millions. So the two probable figures available are 309 or 370 millions. The same author gives this figure. The annual increase in the number below poverty line is 3.6 million persons per year. Of course it takes cognisance of the fact that some persons who were below poverty line were lifted due to various anti-poverty measures taken by Government. At the same time because of renewed unemployment or because certain productive assets have not been made available in rural and urban areas certain new sections are driven below poverty line. If you take the aggregate number it is estimated that on an average the annual increase in the number

below the poverty line is 3.7 million persons per year. Roughly we can say that each year that passes adds to the persons below the poverty line an addition of 307 millions persons. If that is the proposition what is the poverty ratio? An important indicator of poverty is the ratio of number of people living below poverty line divided by the country's total population. Here we find that poverty ratio turns out to be 46.45 per cent on the basis of earlier estimates. If the subsequent estimate of 370 million is taken as correct, then what happen is this.

In that case the higher estimate on poverty ratio appears to be 56.6%. A simple meaning of these facts is that either 46.45% of India's population lives below the poverty line or 56.6% of India's population lives below the poverty line.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : But according to the mid-term appraisal, it is only 42%. It is according to the Planning Commission's Sixth Plan document. Earlier it was 50%.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI BUTA SINGH) ; Perhaps it suits him to quote, like this.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Yes but while replying you can lift some people above the poverty line. The figures that has been given by the hon. Minister, that is, 42% is also bad enough as far as the poverty is concerned. Then again, in 2000A.D. if you porejt these figures, it is estimated that 394 millions will be living below the poverty line, a disastrous picture. Of course, it is not always proper to mechanically project the same figures into the future. But after all, in economics the method of extrapolation is always utilised and, therefore, I have utilised that methodology of working out the figures for the future. We can imagine that if the same pace continues and at the same rate at which every year 3.7 million people are added to the number

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

of people living below poverty line, a dangerous proposal will emerge and in the year 2000 A.D. we might have 394 million people living below the poverty line. What will it mean? It will mean that in the year, 2000 A. D. those who live below the poverty line in India will be more than the population of India when India become free in 1947.

Whether we sit on the side of Opposition or the Treasury benches, the fact would be that in 2000 A.D. the number of persons living below the poverty line are going to be 394 millions, that is, more than the population of India when India was liberated in 1947. It is a staggering proposition and a dangerous proposition and therefore that is to be met. When my friend, Mr. Biju Patnaik, the former Chief Minister of Orissa was sitting by my side in the morning, I tried to find out certain figures relating to Orissa which is considered to be an extremely under developed territory of our country. I was told that in 1961 when Mr. Biju Patnaik happened to be the Chief Minister, he had quoted on the floor of the House as the Chief Minister of Orissa I was told of the figure of 35%—that 60 lakhs of persons were below the poverty line in Orissa and in 1984, it was 85%. That means 2.70 crores live below the poverty line in Orissa. I am deliberately choosing an illustration, an extremely backward area in the country where the per capita income is extremely low, where priorities for developmental activities are very low and where we find operations of economic activities are extremely low. Then, what about the findings of the National Sample Survey of 1983? I would refer to the latest National Sample Survey Report. The latest National Sample Survey was conducted in '83 and let me record my strongest protest that though a number of economists have demanded repeatedly, though a number of research fellows and scientists have demanded consistently that the National Sample Survey Findings of 1983 should be made available to the

public, even to this date the National Sample Survey findings are not made available to the public. I hope the new young Prime Minister will direct all the department concerned to collect the findings of the National Sample Survey of consumption expenditure made in 1983, so that we can discuss the proposition in the light of the latest figures that are made available. The Government is sitting tight over the findings including the persons below the poverty line. Latest figures is not available. We are only going back to some of the earlier findings that are available. Even if we take recourse to what has been said in the Five-Year Plan, we will be taking recourse to the old statistics. My friend will agree with me that the latest figures of 1983 have not been made available to this House. Parliament will know the latest picture of poverty only in the eventuality of making those figures available to us.

The *per capita* income growth from 1961 to 1978 is only 1.4 per cent per year and the poverty ratio have remained almost unchanged in this particular period and that is how the problem of poverty in this country has become extremely stupendous. Let us try to go into the causes of this poverty in the country before we go to measures and streamlining of these measures which are anti-poverty measures in the country.

The first and foremost aspect is the unequal distribution of land and other productivity assets and skills. We can very well estimate roughly that 25 per cent of the population is landless and 8 per cent of the population is unemployed in rural and urban areas. At any point of time in India about 21.5 million persons are supposed to be unemployed. Some who have got employment might lose it in the course of time, some may become unemployed and some may get employment. If we take into account the aggregate picture it is estimated that at any point of time in India 21.5 million persons are unemployed. This has also contributed to the dimensions of poverty.

Then, we have low *per capita* income growth and, therefore, there is hardly any trickling down. There are low land holdings without availability of inputs like seeds, water and fertilizers. And, here, Madam, I do not want to take much of your time, because the aggregate time that you are going to give to this discussion is nearly two hours, and obviously the time that I should take has to be commensurate with the aggregate time. I do not, therefore, want to waste time of the House, but only make a mention of a very interesting document.

I have with me 'An Economic Assessment of Poverty Eradication and Rural Unemployment Alleviation Programmes and their Prospects' prepared by the Institute of Financial Management and Research, Madras. It is a reputed organisation of social and economic scientists. They have a number of teams of workers, and they have been able to get the cooperation of R.M. Hanavar, V.M. Gumaste, K. Seetharam and Kala Rangachari. With the help of these eminent men, they have been able to compile the report. They have given various charts and figures in which we are able to find out how actually the various assets in this country are extremely meagre. I do not want to take much of your time, but would only indicate these figures. As far as these charts are concerned, they try to indicate how uneven is the distribution of assets. The distribution of income and distribution of assets is extremely bad. For instance, the chart that is given on page 3 of this report indicates that as far as durable household assets are concerned, they are only 5 per cent, live stock 6 per cent, implements and machinery 3 per cent, land 66 per cent and dwellings 20 per cent. This is the distribution of various assets. As I told you earlier, 25 per cent are landless.

Now, other features of Indian villages. In 1981, out of 5.5 lakh villages in the country, nearly 2 lakhs villages did not have a satisfactory or assured source of drinking water. Consequently, water-

borne diseases like cholera and guinea-worms were common. A recent study made by the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission has shown that even where such facilities were available, the scheduled castes and other weaker sections did not benefit much from them. This is the conclusion that they have drawn.

The report further says that from this discussion, it is clear that poverty and absolute deprivation are wide spread in Indian villages. According to the Sixth Five Year Plan documents, in 1979-80, one out of every two persons was suffering from absolute poverty in rural India.

As my friend, the hon. Minister is very much enamoured about the Plan Document, I am quoting this document now. According to the Sixth Five Year Plan document, in 1979-80, one out of every two persons was suffering from absolute poverty in rural India. That means in rural India, 50 per cent of the population is living below the poverty line. This is the position. There are so many documents and so many programmes and their consequent results have been mentioned in this particular report.

I do not want to take the time of the House by going into them. But, what is the remedy? To eradicate poverty in the country, what is being done? What is the inadequacy of the existing sources and various measures that are adopted by the Government? The growth rate must go up by 6 to 7 per cent. I am referring to the aggregate growth, i.e. agricultural and industrial growth. Unless we are able to ensure in this country an aggregate growth of 6 to 7 per cent, it will not be possible for us to meet the requirements of the task of eradicating poverty in the country. Then only we can be sure that unemployment will decrease. Incidentally I may mention that in China the growth rate for the last twenty years is about 5 per cent. Even then, the problem is not completely solved. But they are able to

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

eradicate poverty to a great extent. Population growth rate in this country is 2.2 per cent for the last twenty years. It has to be at least half of that. Of course, if we are able to achieve a zero growth rate of population, that will be an ideal solution. But knowing the potentialities of the people of this country, I am afraid, probably zero growth rate will not be achieved. But at least we should be able to halve this rate.

Land reforms are almost out of the agenda of various State Governments. No doubt, there are certain radical postures in certain Governments, but by and large, the problem of ceiling and effective implementation is just absent and as a result of that, you will find that the problem of eradication of poverty has become extremely difficult. In urban areas, as far as the organised sector is concerned, it is able to organise itself effectively and as a result of that the organised sector is the beneficiary of certain economic propositions. But as far as the unorganised sector is concerned, whether it is in the urban or the rural areas, it remained totally neglected and as a result of that the problem of poverty has become extremely difficult.

What is the way out? Measures are required to be streamlined. Various anti-poverty measures should be streamlined. We have the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). We have the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP). We have the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP). All these programmes need to be streamlined. Look at your own experience. What are the ways in which these are being implemented? Unless every rural worker and not necessarily landless one, is included in this scheme of National Rural Employment Programme, we cannot tackle the problem effectively. I represent a constituency which is 90 to 95 per cent a rural parliamentary constituency and I can tell you this from my own experience in a rural parliamentary constituency and also in many other parts of the State which are rural areas. I can

tell you that people, whether they belong to the Ruling Party or the Opposition, almost all of them from their own experience at the present moment, have come to the conclusion that any rural worker, not necessarily the landless, should be included in the RLEGP Scheme. And the reason is the small peasant, who has just half a hectare or one hectare, works on his own land and he and even the other members who work on the land have to be included and for that a change is necessary. Then, the merger of NREP and RLEGP Schemes is absolutely necessary. At present in the implementation of these schemes, there is a restriction on the number of days that a Worker has to work. Unfortunately, the position in the rural areas is such that this particular restriction regarding the number of days for which the workers are forced to work cannot be satisfied and as a result of that they are unable to become the beneficiaries of these particular schemes. And, therefore, I further propose that this particular condition regarding the number of days of work need not be imposed.

Let us come to the Food for Work programme. This is one of the important schemes. I welcome it. When Janata Party was in power, we tried our best to implement this scheme. I am very happy to recapitulate that during the Janata regime when we implemented it during 1977-79, 5 million tonnes of foodgrains were made available to it, to be given to the workers who were working under this scheme. It succeeded to a very great extent.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsganj) : Not succeeded.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Yes, it succeeded. Again, the Minister will agree with me. I will quote the Planning Commission. (*Interruption*) Why do you want to exercise your right of ignorance? For the edification of the hon. Member and for confirmation from the hon Minister, I shall quote from the Evaluation Committee. The Planning Commission itself has recently appointed

an evaluation committee to evaluate the success of the Food for Work and Antyodaya programme, in their own words—I shall never forget them. I will quote what the Evaluation Committee of the Planning Commission has said. It has said that the schemes like Food for Work and Antyodaya programmes which were undertaken between 1977 and 1979 helped the poorest of the poor. This is the word that has been used by the Planning Commission's evaluation committee. These are not the words of Madhu Dandavate. Please take note of it. Therefore, I do not look at it from a partisan angle. Even when the present Government undertakes the scheme and elaborates it and extends it to a number of regions, if it succeeds I will be the first to congratulate the Government for implementing the Food for Work programme, I am only telling you that even the evaluation committee.....

SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA : Sorry again to disturb you the programme is still continuing. Only the name has changed. Instead of Food for Work, it is known as the National Rural Employment Scheme. The name has changed, but the programme is still continuing. It is the Programme Evaluation Organization which evaluates it from time to time.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Madam, I have very carefully said that the Food for Work scheme has not been discarded. I made it very clear. I said that it should be extended to further areas. More foodgrains should be made available.

SHRI BUTA SINGH : It has been done on a much larger scale.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I will give the hon. Minister figures also, Formerly, 5 million tonnes were made available for the Food for Work programme. Now according to available information, half a million tonnes were made available. Therefore, my constructive proposal is : go on stepping up the

supply. Fortunately, you are in a position to supply more foodgrains for the Food for Work scheme. I congratulate you ; you have 21 million tonnes of foodgrains in your buffer stock. Utilize them, not only to give to the consumers and to the fair price shops, but also utilize them to give foodgrains to the various schemes that you have launched yourself and which you want to expand. All that I am suggesting is : Do not keep these schemes in cold storage. Try to tighten them up. If to-day only half a million tonnes of foodgrains are made available for the Food for work programme, more should be made available.

In IRDP and NREP schemes, there is massive corruption. I have come across this allegation from a large number of people who are involved in these programmes on the rural side. That is why I make this allegation. I can point out to you that some members of the ruling party themselves have complained and publicly written articles pointing out that there is large-scale corruption in these schemes. Articles have appeared in Maharashtra; articles have appeared in different States. I am not happy that corruption takes place. I do not want my politics to thrive on the corruption.

[*Translation*]

SHRI BAPULAL MALVIYA (Shajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, during the Janata Party regime, there the leaders had swallowed everything.

[*English*]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : One of the members of the ruling party is confirming what I have said. So, I am not taking any partisan attitude. It is the experience of all those people who come from rural constituencies—even the village authorities, various officers and bureaucrats are involved in a large number of corrupt practices. Therefore, this particular scheme has to be tightened up. I do not want to throw the baby

[Prof. Madhu Dandavate]

with the bathwater, because some people are indulging in corruption. The good schemes that the government has launched, I do not want those schemes to be thrown away and, therefore, I repeat, I do not want to throw the baby with the bathwater. I only want corruption to be eradicated, because if these schemes become successful, that will be a great instrument in eradicating poverty on the rural side. In Economic journals they have made a rough estimate. Some of the economic scientists have worked out and quantified this corruption impact; and they have said that as a result of this corruption which exists in these schemes, 60 per cent of the benefits which ought to go to the poorer people are not able to reach the poorer people; that is the end impact of the corruption practices in this field and, therefore, they should be removed. There are technical defects in IRDP schemes. They should be removed by providing a proper infrastructure. You go to the officers who are involved in running the schemes, you go to the planners who support these schemes, you go to the members of the ruling party in the rural areas, they say, the schemes are good but the necessary infrastructure is absent; and therefore, if a proper infrastructure is built up, these schemes can give you better benefits.

Not more than 25 per cent of the beneficiaries of the schemes are lifted above the poverty line for years. If you take the statistics you will find as a result of these schemes and other schemes how many people are lifted above the poverty line; and you will also find that that figure is not more than 25 per cent.

Then there is a scheme of Antyodaya. This scheme tries to identify 5 poorest families in every village and tries to make them stand on their own legs by giving them the productive assets and various types of implements. I think this scheme so far has been made effective only in a limited number of regions. I am sure this scheme can be extended to almost all the

areas. Here a veteran Gandhian like Prof. Ranga is there. I am sure he will join me in making a demand that the Antyodaya Scheme and Programme is the soul of Gandhian approach to economic problems. Gandhiji once said : "Who should get priority in the economic uplift in the country? Unto the last", the last man in the society lifts on his shoulders the burden of the entire society and when that lowest man is lifted up, the entire society will get lifted and the entire society will get liberated. Therefore, I would like the present Government to see that more allocations are made for this particular scheme.

I would in the end make one appeal to the new government and the new Prime Minister. There is a certain developmental prospective, I have been reading the various statements issued on behalf of the government; I have been trying to study the economic policy and the perspective of the new Government, I only want to warn the new and young Prime Minister that in this land of Gandhiji, don't be merely after sophisticated computerised administration in the country. No doubt computer will give you quick results, but if you only try to have the computerised sophisticated administration which will cater to the development of the top echelons in the society and hope that whatever is developed at the top echelons will percolate down according to the theory of percolation and whatever percolates down to the grass-root level will be the development of the grass-root level, reject that theory, because that theory is not Gandhiji's idea.

I would like to draw the attention of the old men in this House to a monumental book "Gandhiji—The Last Phase" written by an eminent Gandhian, Pyarelal. He has written an introduction to that book. At the close of that introduction—Prof. Ranga Pyarelal says, when the foreign dignitaries come to this country, we take them to the Gandhi Samadhi; we show them Five Star Hotels; we show them huge steel mills; and when they leave the country, they say, we have seen India, but where is

“Gandhiji’s India” ? And Pyarelal also questions, this is not the question to be asked from the government alone ; this is the question that each man owing loyalty to Gandhiji’s ideals in this country has to ask himself because we ourselves want to reorient our luxury-oriented life and therefore this aspect is also important. I would like the new Prime Minister to reject this percolation theory of development that is, have sophisticated computerised administration, which will be an elitist approach catering to the needs of the affluent and the semi-affluent classes ; allow the developmental activities to cater to the needs of affluent and semi-affluents, allow this kind of development to percolate down, and if at all that touches your life at the grass-root level, that will be the development at the grass-root level ! Reject this perspective. This cannot be the perspective of Mahatma Gandhi and I am sure if that is done. . .

MR CHAIRMAN : You have taken half-an-hour. Let me explain the position. There are eleven persons to speak on this Motion. Therefore, please conclude.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Madam Chairman, you will find that I am a disciplined Parliamentarian. I will say, bowing down to your wishes, I will conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can take some more time and conclude. Abruptly, you are concluding.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : have anticipated your remarks.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is one amendment, Shri Mool Chand Daga, you have to move your amendment.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : I beg to move :

That in the resolution,—

after “poverty line” insert—

“according to the scheduled programme because of increase in population”. (1)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Resolution moved :

“That House expresses its concern over the failure of the Government to lift vast sections of the masses above the poverty line and demands concrete measures to eradicate poverty from the country”.

Now Shri Ram Pyare Panika.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Robertsganj) : Madam Chairman, I have great regards for Prof. Madhu Dandavate. He is the senior-most Member of the House and today I agree with him on many points raised by him.

First of all, regarding the figures submitted by him about percentage, Honourable Minister of Agriculture has himself corrected them and said that in the mid-term appraisal of Sixth Five Year Plan, the Government had themselves accepted it to be 42 percent. There is no difference of opinion about it. Secondly, he has mentioned the causes of poverty. I do not disagree with him in this matter too. But I disagree with the views expressed by him about the achievements of the Janata Party. He said during the course of his speech that poverty could be eradicated from this country only if the agricultural production would be 6.7 percent per year. I agree to it.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : If you permit, I withdraw what I had said about the achievements of Janata Party.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : I want to remind him about the Janata regime, when he was the Minister of Railways. During the Janata rule, they had badly shattered the economy and

[Shri Ram Pyare Panika]

today they expect that agricultural production should be 6.7 percent, I would like to remind him that during 1979-80, they had shattered the economy to such an extent that agricultural production declined by 17 percent and the industrial production which was 10 percent during emergency period declined to 1.4 percent. These were their achievements. The economy which was progressing day by day was shattered by them by introducing the new element of rolling plan. The industrial infrastructure being the economic base of the country was destroyed by them. Production in every sphere had declined, whether it was steel cement electricity or coal. Due to shortage of coal not only power stations were closed but also passenger and goods trains had to be cancelled.

In 1980, our late Prime Minister assumed the leadership of the country. She promised that her Government would bring prosperity in the country and social disparities would be removed and she carried on country's administration on these lines and the results had come before us during this period of four years. Only yesterday, our President made a mention about coal, cement and electricity production in his Address. Our target of electricity generation was 19 thousand Megawatts during the Sixth Plan period. Despite all odds, we could produce 14 thousand Megawatts of electricity. Per capita utilisation of electricity is the criterion for determining whether a country is developed or not. Achievement in this respect has been satisfactory . . . (Interruptions) I want to tell you that for the people who are living below the poverty line, we introduced various programmes such as N.R.E.P. and R.L.E.G.P. Only yesterday, our President told us as to how more than 14 million people were lifted above the poverty line during these few years. I want to remind Prof. Madhu Dandavate what the condition of banks was at that time. I agree that difficulties arise when some new schemes are formulated and implemented. The nationalised banks were asked to cooperate in all these progra-

mmes. The pace at which we have advanced these programmes is before the nation. This is the reason why only those people are sitting here today on whom the proverb "Punarmushkobhav" applies. The slogan of "Ham do—Hamare do" (we are two—we should have two) was given by B.J.P. I would like to congratulate the B.J.P. for having translated this slogan into reality for themselves today. The people of India have become enlightened. The people of the country have welcomed all these steps whether it was a question of lifting the people above the poverty line or it related to agricultural production. I congratulate our new Prime Minister for following all those policies which were adopted by our late Prime Minister. I do not want to go into its details. It has been stated here that land has not been distributed properly. Is it not a fact that we have taken progressive steps for making improvements in this regard? It is correct that there are some elements in the society . . . (interruptions). Congress has worked in this direction from the very beginning. Zamindari system and princely states were abolished and we enacted land ceiling Act. If necessary, some more stringent steps shall be taken. The B.J.P. has been against the steps for bringing about socialism from the beginning, whether it was the question of nationalisation of banks, abolition of princely states or imposition of land ceiling. I agree that family planning is the need of the hour and this is a major problem confronting the entire country. The nut-shell of this problem is that owing to growing population we are not achieving the progress to the desired extent. Is it not a fact that in 1977 people sitting on the other side misguided the entire nation by raising the slogan of bringing about total revolution under the leadership of Shri Jai Prakash Narayan and by opposing the family planning programme they came here in majority. Later on, the people were disillusioned and that was why they could not complete even two and a half years whereas they were supposed to run the Government for a full term of five years. The basic reason for their failure was their internal differences. At that time they had no programme.

Prof. Dandavate spoke about Antyoday Programme. But I would like to say that it was not a programme as such. That programme was intended to give benefit to their own workers only. If you look at the programmes of their time, such as Food for Work Programme for which they claim to have paid rupees five lakhs, you will find that the people were not benefited much by it. In this connection, the figures can be seen to ascertain as to how many persons were benefited by those programmes. how much development work was done at that time, to what extent drinking water was provided and other achievements were made and what was the number of roads constructed in the villages. Here the expenditure of rupees five lakhs is not of much importance. The main question is that after spending rupees five lakhs, to what extent construction work was taken up and how much assets were created for the country. Nothing was achieved in this respect. On the other hand, please have a look at our programmes. Under our programmes we have been working for the removal of poverty from the villages and taking steps for other developmental works also.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would Therefore, like to remind that now there is awakening in the country. Now, the people of the country, cannot be misguided. We have all respect for Prof. Madhu Dandavate, but all those things should be mentioned here which they had done during a period of 2½ or 3 years when they were in power and he should also see the achievements we have made in comparison with their time. In 1980, we gave a Government that worked and you had seen the results of the work done by our Government. I would like to draw your attention to the year 1982-83 when 21 crore people of our country had to face natural calamities owing to droughts, floods, cyclones, etc. of which there is no example in the entire history. But at that time we saw to it that no person die of hunger. In spite of all these difficulties, there was a considerable improvement in our economy which became stronger day by day. Is it not a fact that due to this remarkable improve-

ment in the economy, we had not taken loan of 1.4 billion S.D.R. from I.M.F. ? Does it not reflect that there was improvement in our economy and that we are working for the removal of poverty ? It is also true that unless we make available infrastructure for industries in the country, neither industries can be increased nor any progress can be made in the field of agriculture. Can anybody deny that in all these matters we are progressing continuously and achieving success ? We are fully confident that under the leadership of our new young Prime Minister, we will progressively increase our programmes. We expect that Prof. Dandavate should make some constructive suggestions before the House as he is a senior member of the House. Therefore, while expressing my thanks to Prof. Dandavate for bringing this Resolution, I am thankful to you Sir, for giving me this opportunity to take part in the debate. With this discussion, one thing has become clear to the general public as to who is right and who is wrong and with whose policies the country could make agricultural and Industrial progress and increase production.

As I have said, in spite of all the natural calamities and other set-backs, we have crossed the target of national production fixed by us during the Sixth Five Year Plan and by the end of the year we will be able to achieve more. Besides that, our foreign exchange reserves have also gone up to Rs. 6.5 thousand crores. This shows that our policies have proved effective. We are progressing continuously as a result of which the people of the country will be benefited.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO (Vijayawada) : Madam Chairman, while supporting the Resolution moved by my distinguished colleague, I would like to say a few words.

It is an irony that, after 37 years of Independence and self-rule, more than 32 crores of people i.e. 44 per cent of the population, are still living below the

[Shri Vadde Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

poverty line in our country, out of whom 26 crores of people are from the rural areas and about 6 crores of people from the urban areas, who do not have two meals a day, It is really shameful to find poor people fighting with the dogs for the left-over in the leaves thrown out at dinner parties in the cities and towns.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Are you reading it?

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : I am speaking for the first time.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He is a new-comer, who is making his maiden speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I would request him not to read the speech. He can refer to his notes.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : I am only taking the help of the notes. My mother tongue is Telugu. For the first time I am speaking in English.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It will create a new precedent in this House.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : So far as going by precedents is concerned, the Chair has given ruling a number of times that in the maiden speech more latitude will be given to the Member. But it should not be followed every time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : So far as possible, we should try to avoid it.

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : It is really shameful to find poor people fighting with the dogs for the left-over in the leaves thrown out at dinner parties in the cities and towns.

Though this country accounts for as

much as a quarter of the world's cattle, in spite of the functioning of several Dairy Development Corporations, we are producing only 5 per cent of the world's milk supply, According to official figures, the *per-capita* availability of milk has come down from 132 grammes in 1951 to 110 grammes in 1974, as against the planning Commission's target of 210 grammes.

The *per capita* availability of protein in the country has gone down from 2.15 ounces per day in 1951 to 1.4 ounce in 1974. Lakhs of pregnant women and children below the age of five die every year in our country for lack of sufficient nutrition. I am told that the previous Health Minister told the House on 27th February, 1975 that about 15,000 children go blind every year for want of vitamin A

It is a paradox that while the national *per capita* availability of food per day is only 450 grammes, the jail ration for A and B Class prisoners stands at 505 grammes and for C class labour prisoners 587 grammes. A prisoner who committed a great crime and is being punished is getting better staple food in jail than a free citizen in this country. While a prisoner is getting 50 grammes of edible oil and 50 grammes of sugar per day, his counterpart outside the jail is not sure of getting even 9 grammes of oil and 18 grammes of sugar per day.

Madam, I need not remind you that 70 per cent of our population are residing in the 5,75,000 villages and they consist of cultivators, tenants, agricultural labourers and village artisans, who indirectly depend upon the cultivators, for their livelihood. Even after 37 years of governance by great leaders, who spoke so much about the socialistic pattern of society and *garibi hatao*, nearly 60 per cent of the people are still illiterate and nearly 2,50,000 villages are still to be connected with any type of road. Nearly 55 per cent of the villages are still to be provided electricity. Lakhs of villages are yet to be provided with safe drinking

water. Tense of lakhs of poor people are sleeping on the pavments of metropolitan cities like Bombay and Calcutta. It will be sickening to find thousands of families residing in the RCC ring pipes in the cities.

Madam, while the poor have become poorer, the rich have become richer, the very fact that a few families are now having assets worth nearly 1,800 crores of rupees each, makes clear whom the policies of the Government have helped. No doubt while the economic disparities reached astronomical heights, Madam, it is unthinkable how with the present unemployment position with more than one crore, 80 lakh unemployed on the live register, this Government is going to provide them employment.

Madam, are not the wrong polices and priorities of the Congress (I) responsible for this sorry state of affairs? Should not the ruling party critically analyse, take stock of the situation and make changes in the policies and restructure the priorities? Madam, let us hope, at least the young Prime Minister boldly will accept the reality and lead the new path for eradication of poverty, reduction in economic disparities and social justice to all.

Madam, you will agree that it is poor people who are paying more revenues to the exchequer in the form of indirect taxes than the crorepatis. Then is it not the bounden duty of the Government of India to see that every family at least get a square meal a day? Madam, in this connection I want to bring to the notice of this House through you that our Andhra Pradesh Government headed by Shri N.T. Rama Rao is making available to poor people rice at the rate of Rs. 2/- per kilogram. Our Government feels it is our first and foremost duty to help the poorest of the poor and there should not be any single starvation death. Madam, our Government is spending 160 crores on this scheme and helping 1.4 crore poor families. I request the Government of India to take up this scheme and

implement it throughout the country and help the poorest of the poor.

Madam, if Food Corporation of India losses can be minimised and the subsidy hitherto borne in supply of rice to the urban or rural middle and upper middle class people is removed, this programme can definitely be taken up to help the poor.

Madam, I request the Government through you to remember that the Father of the Nation has told that "agriculture provides the only unfailing and perennial support to the people of this country." It is agriculture, which provides food, several raw materials for industries and also it is that sector which provides maximum employment opportunities for a fixed capital. Unfortunately, because the Government is giving only step-motherly treatment to this sector and its failure to give remunerative prices to the agricultural produce, our productivity remained much lower when compared to several countries. Added to this because the Government of India allowed the prices of industrial goods like tractors, steel, cement etc. etc, to increase day-by-day, the farmer is robbed of his meagre income and his economic position is remaining the same. But permit me to site one example, Madam. You know how the farmer puts his hard labour day-in and day out braving the vagaries of Monsoon and national calamities. Madam, let the Government tell what is the justification in permitting the price of cement per bag to be increased by about Rs 35/- in the past five years and giving only Rs. 10/- increase per tonne of sugar-cane in the past five years.

Madam, the second priority should be given to cottage and small industry. For a country with seventy crore population, comparatively less land, and scarce capital, cottage and small industry can provide maximum employment opportunities for needy persons. In this connection, Madam, I may be permitted to quote Mahatama Gandhi who said :

"I am not against machinery. But I

[Shri V. Sobhanadreeswara Rao]

am against its indiscriminate multiplication. What I object is craze of machinery, not machinery as such. Men go on 'saving labour' till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. This I fight with all my might. The supreme consideration is Man. The machine should not tend to make atrophied limbs of Man."

He also said :

"With crores of human-beings going idle, India cannot afford to have large machinery which will displace the labour. It would spell their unemployment and their ruin. Our problem is how to find employment for all the crores of the people, not how to save their labour. Continuous unemployment has already induced in them a kind of laziness which is most depressing."

I request the hon. Prime Minister to keep in mind the words of Gandhi and take concrete steps to encourage cottage, small and medium industries to reduce the unemployment and provide gainful employment to millions of youth in this year of 1985. I also request him to protect this sector from the competition of heavy industry or big industry, if necessary by legislation also.

Madam, I also request our young Prime Minister to take necessary steps for making available handloom Dhotis and Sarees at cheap prices to the poorest of the poor people as *per capita* availability of cloth has come down.

Madam, still many people in Harijans and many more people in backward communities are yet to get house-sites. I request, on behalf of myself and my party, that the Government of India should allocate more funds in this regard and fulfil the dream of Shri Jawaharlal

Nehru and the historic message he gave at the midnight of August 14, 1947.

Madam, I thank you for the opportunity provided to me to speak.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubaneswer) : Madam Chairman, I am happy that in the Eight Lok Sabha when we have started well, this Resolution has been moved by Prof. Dandavate and it is one of the important programmes which we have highlighted in the Sixth Plan; and also in the President's Address this programme has been highlighted.

Madam, this eradication of poverty has become one of the major and important programmes in the 20-point programme of our late Prime Minister and also the Government has taken it seriously, to implement this programme.

In the Sixth Plan it was assumed that in the Plan period there would be reduction in the percentage of people below the poverty line from 47 per cent to 30 per cent. And the figures of population below the poverty line in 1979-80 were revised and worked out to nearly 339 million people, and it was estimated that the percentage of poverty came down to 41.5 per cent and the total number of persons below the poverty line to 282 million in 1981-82. Thus it is estimated that between 1980 and 1982, 34 per cent of the total plan target of people to be taken above the poverty line were so taken. But here it has been further estimated by the mid-term appraisal of the Planning Commission that roughly about 57 million people can be assumed to have crossed the poverty line in the first two years of the Sixth Plan and the total target in the Sixth Five Year Plan envisaged raising nearly 102 million people above poverty line and I hope during the two years from 1982 to 1984 we must have made a little more progress so that we must have nearly achieved the target that was set in the Sixth Plan. But here because we go to the villages and we see how these programmes are being implemented, I was going through a document by some economists,

They have calculated that during all this Plan period about Rs. 20,000 crores have been invested in these programmes for eradication of poverty. I was also looking to the investment which has been made in the IRDP. In 1980-84 the investment in the IRDP was Rs. 1352.97 crores and in the National Rural Employment Programme it was Rs. 1453.22 crores and in the RLEGP it was Rs. 100 crores. And there was again another programme, Training of Rural Youth for self-employment under the 20-point programme, and various other programmes which were included in the Sixth Plan between 1980 and 1984. A vast amount of money has been invested to see that the people living below the poverty line are raised and their living standards are improved. Again the minimum needs programme was there and the special component plan for Scheduled Castes and tribal sub-plan are there. There is also a plan for the rehabilitation of bonded labourers. Again various State Governments have their own plan for eradication of poverty. In Orissa, we have the plan for the rehabilitation of the rural poor and improving the living standard of the weaker sections. But madam, if we go through all these programmes, what do we find today? The latest figure that we have indicates the percentage of people living below the poverty line :

Andhra Pradesh	—	42.18%
Assam	—	51.10%
Bihar	—	57.49%
Madhya Pradesh	—	57.73%

And so far as my State, Orissa, is concerned, it is the highest. The people living below the poverty line in Orissa come to 66.40%, I think, this is 1983 figure.

Sir, I was going through the report of the FAO Study Team which also went into the question of the condition of rural people in all these developing countries. A study made by the Food and agricultural Organisation of the U.N. indicates that in 1980 almost 700 million people in the rural areas of developing countries lived in absolute poverty. Amongst

these, 31 countries including India come under the first category where the percentage of the poor, according to the U.N. study, is above 50%.

Now, an attempt is being made in some quarters that we have a plan to eradicate poverty, say by 2,000 A.D. And we have invested so much amount in these programmes. There are two points of view which are being highly debated. One is whatever figures the Planning Commission in its mid-term appraisal is putting before the country, namely that 57 million people have been lifted above the poverty line. Another point of view is that the number is less than 57 million. So, it seems there is a controversy about this figure. I hope Prof. Madhu Dandavate had referred to figures given in Rajya Sabha last year. I think this question came up there and perhaps the then Planning Minister, Shri Chavan had to admit that there was perhaps a little discrepancy with what the Planning Commission has submitted and the actual fact that prevails in the country. But I am not going into that problem presently.

Madam, there are various points of view expressed by various economists. What happens is, sometimes it goes to the head of some economists that if they devise some method or work in such a manner, after 10 or 15 years, poverty will be eradicated. I think there are lot of economists who are thinking on this line. I hope they are not very pragmatic because poverty in India has a history thousand years old. But we are finding out this strategy. In the whole of India, more than 90% of the people, we see, are suffering from poverty, which is visible to us. Another attempt is being made in the Seventh Plan for the eradication of poverty. Again, some economists are thinking on this line that if poverty is not eradicated in this process, then what we should do is, we should evolve some kind of method by which we reduce the calorie intake of the people so that 70% are lifted above the poverty line.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE :
That is re-defining the poverty line.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI :
The Massive mandate that we got from the people is one of the biggest historic transitions in this country. It was the bitterest moment, the saddest moment, that our country was facing. The people have taken a decision that they must have a united and strong India, to see that India prospers, the people living below the poverty line get more and more benefits and that their living standard goes up.

The poverty itself has not been defined yet in many countries. Once I had the privilege of attending one Seminar where about 200 Economists of the third world countries used to discuss and define what is poverty. The more the poverty was defined, they found that it was very difficult to define poverty because there are people in those countries who think that such kind of living standards are considered to be more affluent in those countries. But in our country as minimum living standards, we think that we should have food, we have a shelter, a home, and our children get education. In that way, we are trying to define it. Let us find out and evolve a kind of scientific formula and method by which we can proceed to eradicate poverty.

I am quite sure that with whatever amount of industrialisation we are having, we cannot eradicate poverty within 10 year. Supposing we make it 20 years, let us plan it in such a manner that gradually we achieve that target. So much of money we are investing in all these programmes. We have to see that all these programmes percolate to the people, reach the masses, and that these are implemented properly.

Other day, I was reading an article on poverty, planning and bureaucracy. It was a very interesting article. I find that some people have made some research and they have gone into this field. There is subsidy part in these programmes, namely, IRDP, NREP and RIEGP. I can tell you what happens there, I have gone and met many of the beneficiaries

personally. The subsidy that we are giving, the subsidy part, is taken away, is shared by the officers involved in this process. I am not voicing any kind of a view which would not be tolerated when I say that the subsidy part in these various programmes is being shared by officers involved in the implementation of the programmes. What happens is that the subsidy part is not available to the beneficiaries. The subsidy itself is taken away by the officers involved in the process and only the loan part is received by the beneficiaries and they pay interest on that. Supposing we have invested about Rs. 3000 crores during 1980-84, what I was calculating was, if 30 per cent of it goes to the middleman, really, it does not reach the beneficiary and all our programmes with all the efforts of the Planning Commission, the Ministries concerned and the Government do not really reach the people who want to take benefit from them. All our programmes are very good. But these programmes have to be implemented properly.

I would like to read out a portion of the statement which the Planning Commission had made. The Planning Commission has said that land reforms programme is one of the very important programmes to alleviate the poverty. What we have done is that only 21.96 lakh landless households which constitute hardly 10 per cent of such households have been allotted land totalling 14.70 lakh hectares. We have taken so much of land. The surplus land is still there. But yet we have not been able to distribute the entire surplus land that we have taken over under the various ceiling laws. What I would suggest here is, let us have a political will to implement the land reforms. Besides, the poverty of the allottees does not permit them to have access to supplementary input. According to the Sixth Plan :

“If the progress of land reforms has been less than satisfactory, it has not been due to flaws in policy but to indifferent implementation.”

16.45 hrs.

[MR SPEAKER *in the Chair*].

That is main point. Let us implement whatever programme is there, whether it is the 20-Point programme, whether it is land reforms, programmes of IRDP or all our programmes which are meant for eradication of poverty. The basic point is that we shall see that all our programmes are implemented faithfully cent per cent and if that is done, I am quite sure, that within a period of one decade, we will be able to see that poverty is eradicated from this country.

16.46 hrs.

STATEMENT RE ARRESTS IN
CONNECTION WITH ACTIVITIES
DETRIMENTAL TO NATIONAL
INTERESTS

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Prime Minister to make a statement.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to take the House into confidence on an important development. As you know, every Government has to exercise the highest vigilance in regard to the protection of confidential information and intelligence. I reviewed and strengthened security procedures. It came to Government's notice that certain employees in sensitive positions were suspected to be indulging in activities detrimental to national interests. Some arrests have been made in the course of these investigations which are still proceeding. I am confident that hon. Members would not press me to say anything more at this stage as it might hamper these investigations.

RESOLUTION RE : MEASURES TO
ERADICATE POVERTY — *Contd.*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI (Howrah) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not support the text of the resolution of the hon. Member from the Opposition Prof. Madhu Dandavate but, I share its spirit. Prof Madhu Dandavate is one of the learned Members present in the House and he is one of the knowledgeable persons in economic science and the economy of our country. While he speaks on such issues and subjects inside or outside the House, as students of politics and economics, we learn and try to learn more. But, unfortunately today in the House, I would say with great regret that while I share the views and I am impressed by the knowledge and wisdom of Prof. Madhu Dandavate, I do not share his conviction. He intelligently avoided certain basic issues which are responsible for poverty and made it very acute.

16.47 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*.]

Prof. Madhu Dandavate, in the last part of his speech, dealing with the resolution, tried to bring back again Mahatma Gandhi in a modest manner, highlighting and apprehending certain things about our Prime Ministers and the present Prime Minister who is functioning and has stated that the sophisticated computerised technology should not be a regular fashion in elitist view to curb the poverty line in the villages. Thus he questioned the motive of Prime Minister. With great humility and respect, I try to remind Prof. Madhu Dandavate that Mahatma Gandhi was not opposed to science and technology and, possibly Prof. Madhu Dandavate shares the view that even Gurudev Tagore had serious differences with Mahatma Gandhi during the time of Rashtriya Charka. Though many Congressmen did not like the views expressed by Tagore, ultimately it was found

[Shri priya Ranjan Das Munshi]

that Tagore was also not untrue in his convictions and it does not mean there was a confrontation between Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. We tried to accept both in the real perspective, in their appropriate places. When we think of the present Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi's views on more sophisticated technology in science and other matters, I feel it is really a great fortune of the country that he holds such views because poverty really cannot be eliminated by mere figures of the Planning Commission or by the speeches and wordy battles here and there by political parties.

The essential ingredient in the economy of the whole world today is the use of the more advanced science and technology to fight poverty from grass-roots. Therefore, if Prof. Madhu Dandavate comes down a little from his unfounded elitist viewpoint, I hope he would agree with the viewpoint of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, our Prime Minister, that today's economic growth in the villages also, whether it was in the Janata regime or Congress regime, cannot just be accelerated without the use of modern science and technology. And, therefore, we do not come to oppose Mahatma Gandhi.

Well, Prof. Madhu Dandavate was quoting some phrase from a tourist who visited five-star hotel and big mills and said that he had not seen Mahatma Gandhi. I do not know who accompanied him. He should have told him at that time that Mahatma Gandhi did not live in hotels and mills. He lived and still lives in Indian civilisation which is now the richest and the strongest in the whole world. And Mahatma Gandhi will continue to live in the civilisation of this great country of ours. And Mahatma Gandhi will continue to live in that civilization.

The problem of poverty is not a matter which can be explained in the House within an hour or two. But the Mover of the Resolution avoided certain points

which I want to highlight and bring to the notice of the hon. Minister dealing with this Resolution for his consideration. Which are the agencies today for development? The Planning Commission is the authority to guide the nation and decide the allocation. The ultimate executing authority is the State Government through its various agencies. Now let us look at these agencies. Though we have separated the judiciary from the executive, yet, the executive cannot devote his entire time for the development and growth of the country. We have an institution called Parliament and we have a text called the Constitution which gives power to State Legislatures and various other bodies. Now, in the whole country you engage officers from the Planning Commission to the district level for the development of the country. You try to find out from his calendar how much time a particular officer get to employ his entire knowledge which he obtained in his student career and in his equipment for the IAS examination, for the development programme? He has to conduct the Parliamentary elections and by-elections. He has to conduct the Assembly elections and by-elections. He has to look after the day-to-day administrative work. He has to look after the Panchayat elections and the Zila Parishad elections. I have seen that an officer at the grass-root level devotes for the development programmes hardly seven days in a year. I sat with the officers in my district and I found that he actually get only seven days in a year for the development programme at other times he is busy passing and disposing of papers. Since our young Prime Minister in his wisdom has introduced a new Ministry for personnel administration and administrative reforms, I request the hon. Minister dealing with this Resolution to look into it and see that the development authority in the district is not burdened with any other responsibility for years and years to come so that growth and development take place in every district and block without interruption. I will cite one example. This happened in the last elections. There was drinking water problem in a particular area of my constituency. The people were not getting drinking water for the

last two and a half years in spite of the fact that there is Zila Parishad, there is Panchayat Samiti. It so happened that three months before the elections the officers were asked by the Election Commission to engage themselves fully for the election work and, therefore, they could not look into the file with the result that the people of that area could not get drinking water till today. This is the basic problem which neither the Planning Commission appreciates nor do we try to investigate. The basic problem lies in the overall administrative set-up of the development programmes.

Secondly, I thank from my own heart and on behalf of my Party Prof Madhu Dandavate. He has brought out a very important point. It is a fact that during the Janata regime Food-for-Work Programme was introduced which ultimately became NREP. He has said in his speech that corruption vitiated the entire development programme. During their own regime, to less a leader than Shri P.C. Sen of West Bengal drew the attention of the then Prime Minister, Shri Morarji Desai, that crores of rupees were looted in West Bengal in the name of Food-for-Work Programme. The Food-for-Work Programme became literally food for a particular Party and work for them and not for the people as such. Not only that, proceedings were instituted in court of law and people have been punished I am not mentioning the name of any Party. Shri P.C. Sen himself brought it to the notice of Shri Morarji Desai, not once but five times, but he failed to get any relief. Prof. Madhu Dandavate will appreciate that from time to time for political convenience we try to absorb everything and when time comes we choose to pick up the appropriate line, incorporate it in the next and bring forward in a Resolution. We should once again take an oath that in future we should not do these things.

About NREP. I want to draw your attention to one thing. I was trying to raise a point of order today, but I restrained myself. I thought of writing a letter to the Speaker. In the Bulletin

issued on 5th January, I have seen, the Lok Sabha Secretariat has cautioned all the Members of the House not to put any question on NREP or IRDP seeking district-level information.

This, I feel, is fantastic. How can an MP function in his constituency without knowing what is happening in regard to NREP and IRDP programmes? The IRDP programme is cent per cent financed programme of the Government of India and NREP is financed fifty-fifty. We cannot know any information about the development? This is the instruction of the Lok Sabha Secretariat. I hope the entire House will share this matter for our information in future . . .

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA : It should be withdrawn.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : About poverty, some percentage and figures were quoted. According to the mid-term appraisal it is 42% and according to Mr. Reddy of the Telugu Desam it is more and according to some journals it is 50%. I am not going into that, about the controversy of figures. But the fact remains that poverty is there and it is acute. In regard to the other point which Prof. Madhu Dandavate raised, can he cite any example in any part of the world where without concentrating on checking the population growth, real development can take place? . . .

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : I have said that.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : He cited the example of China. The method that China adopted, if our Prime Minister adopts and tries to implement it here, then, I think the Opposition will every day walk out of the House. And Congress Members also will react and reject it. Sir, I do not like to bring Soviet Union and China into the picture. I would like to forget the Soviet Siberian camp history and also the history in China. I have travelled recently

[Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munshi]

in China I have seen what that they are turning over their national units into private hands. China out of its own wisdom is now coming to the reality and President Mao's philosophy is no more in vogue same is Marx. Whether I share it or not that is not important. Had Mahatma Gandhi been alive on that day when computers were introduced, we could have easily got his reactions. Had Lenin been alive on that day when atomic energy and solar energy was introduced, we would have got his reaction. On the supposed reactions of persons who are not alive, if you want to stop the pace of growth of science and technology under the pretext that Mahatma Gandhi said this and Lenin has said this we are no more modern and we will no more be civilised. But while preserving our heritage we will keep pace with the progress of modern science and technology so that we are modern and civilised.

The development programme in the rural areas actually aims at fighting poverty and that is the aim of NREP—it is said. But I do not share this view. What is NREP programme? I have seen in the village. What do they do? They bring a thousand people to the village and tell them 'construct this road' and they give them food for three months. After 3 months, whether the road is pucca or *kachha* is not important. Mostly it is *kachha* and at the next rain it is washed away and it is absolutely devastated and the people remain unemployed. We want regular schemes and programmes by which people feel that they can get their bread. That is the most important programme and the Planning Commission out of its wisdom thought that we have bumper production, we will have bumper crops and a good buffer stock and will distribute grains to poor people. But we do not like to treat our people as beggars. We do not like to treat them as mercenaries. We want them to become partner of our civilisation in terms of bread and food. May be, the pace is slow but we want them to be speeded up. To-day I can cite an example of my State. You will be surprised—I am not

casting any aspersion on any individual—I am inviting all members of the Opposition to visit any district they like and if I am not proved right, I will withdraw from Parliament. Sir, in the name of poverty, relief is being distributed and grant is being distributed not in terms of poverty but in terms of political motivation programme of C.P.I. (M) (*Interruptions*).

DR. SARADISH ROY : This is not true. We challenge it. . . .

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : I have invited the Opposition and I can tell you that I will withdraw from Lok Sabha if I am proved incorrect. . . .

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar) : I am taking up the challenge. . . .

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Order please. . . . Let him speak,

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : Sir, their own Minister—the Minister for Jails and Prisons was Minister for Panchayatraj and Development in the last Government has said. . . . (*Interruptions*) He publicly stated and I have got the press reports that due to corruption justice is not being done at the grassroots of this programme. The name of this Minister is Shri Debarata Bannerjee. He belongs to RSP. (*Interruption*) Sir, proceedings are in the court. I am not joking. I am not telling lies. Because of these reasons they are losing the grip. (*Interruptions*).

Sir, Mr. Choubey is trying to say that a Leftist State can indulge in corruption if his opponents also do so. I share his profound Leftist wisdom.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI : I am concluding. About this Resolution, as I said, I share the spirit and not the text. I oppose the text. I would humbly submit through you to the mover of the Resolution and the Minister that now that we have come to the House—whether from this side or that side—with the mandate of the people and that our young Prime Minister not only on account of the mandate of the people but out of his own vision has given the highest emphasis against poverty and that the Planning Commission is on way for the next Plan appraisal programme, the development aspect should not be linked up with the day-to-day administrative activities of the executive heads. People in the zila parishads and panchayat samities whether belonging to my party or other party who are indulging in corruption should be dealt with under the severest laws enacted by Parliament, because they are trying to earn their bread out of the blood of the poor people. This is my submission. Then only we can fight the poverty effectively

SHRI D.B. PATIL (Kolaba) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Resolution moved by Prof. Dandavate which is very important in so far as the poor sections of people of our country are concerned. At the outset I would like to challenge the very definition of 'poverty line'. In the Sixth Plan document it has been defined as follows :

“The concept of poverty adopted in the Sixth Plan is related primarily to a level of per capita expenditure needed to satisfy a calorie requirement per day calculated for a given year (1973-74). For the rural sector it has been placed at Rs. 49.9 per capita, per month corresponding to a requirement of 2400 calories per person per day and Rs. 56.64 per month for the urban sector corresponding to a requirement of 2100 calories per day.”

I do not want to go into the details

here but at the outset I challenge the very definition of 'poverty line' because it has been assumed that in the villages one has to work hard. 2400 calories are not sufficient for a hard-working person. The minimum calories that are required for a hard-working person are 3500. So, I say, the very definition is defective.

Now, so far as urban areas are concerned it has been put at 2100 calories per person per day. In the urban areas also there are hard-working persons and so far as hard-working persons are concerned the calories requirement is 3500. Therefore, I say, the very definition of 'poverty line' is not correct. It has to be revised.

Another aspect is that so far as poverty line is concerned only food requirements is taken into consideration to define poverty. If we take into consideration other problems such as housing, clothing, education facilities and medical facilities then the persons living below the poverty line in our country will be more than 80 per cent. All these factors should be taken into consideration if poverty is to be eradicated.

Not only should the poor man be enabled to get two square meals a day, but we have to cater to his needs regarding housing, clothing, education, medical facilities etc. These requirements should also be taken into account.

Sir, it has been argued that the measures taken by the Government to eradicate poverty have lifted them above the poverty line, such as IRDP, NREP, RLEGP and other programmes. There are so many such programmes where thousands of crores of rupees are spent till now in the name of the poor. But how have these programmes helped the poor people really? I will give you only one glaring example. So far as IRDP is concerned, Much has been said about corruption under various schemes. I will give you one example. This is from my own constituency and this happened

[Shri D.B. Patil]

when I was campaigning for the election. Nine advasi families were given one she buffalo each. When actually they milked the animal there, it was three litres at a time. When they brought the animal home, the milk was hardly half a litre or one litre at a time. When I asked them what subsidy they are getting, they told me that they did not know anything about it. They only said that the animal was given to them and the milk that they are supposed to get would be six litres per day. But in actual fact, they were getting hardly two litres milk per day. The problem before them was how to maintain these animals and to feed them and how to maintain their families. This was their problem. This sort of deception was practised upon them. It was a real burden for them to maintain these animals. This was the case. It is very glaring example of corruption.

Sir, it has been argued that along with these schemes, Food for Work scheme is also being implemented. So far as Maharashtra is concerned, our experience is that this Food-for-work scheme is not being implemented in Maharashtra. Mr. Chairman, you might remember that, because you come from Maharashtra. We, in the opposition, all the while were demanding the implementation of the Food-for-work programme but the Government of Maharashtra was adamant about it and rejected our proposal that this Food-for-work programme should be started in Maharashtra, for lifting up of persons living below poverty line in Maharashtra. This Food-for-work programme was not taken up at all in Maharashtra. This is the position.

In the name of various schemes, crores of rupees have been spent. But what is the actual achievement? I will quote only one example. I am quoting from the Economic and Political Weekly dated April 14, 1984. This is from page 635 there. Table II shows 'Monthly Per Capita Household Expenditure'. This is at the 1960-61 price level. In 1960-61 the figure was 21.53 in rural area. In 1981-82 it was 23.22. The annual rise

was only 0.36%. This is the position about the rural area. Now I will tell you the position about the urban area. In 1960-61, the household per capita expenditure was Rs. 29.61 and in 1981-82 it was Rs. 31.81. It hardly works out to 0.32% increase per annum. If this is the position, it is very difficult to expect that the poor and the downtrodden living under the poverty-line will be lifted above the poverty-line. Unless and until drastic steps are taken to eradicate poverty, we cannot solve this problem. Necessary immediate steps should be taken to see that there is increase in their income.

In regard to the guarantee of employment to these poor people—so far as the illiterates and other downtrodden are concerned—the Government should take urgent steps to provide employment to everyone of them. In Maharashtra, as you know, there is a scheme called employment guarantee scheme. It has been accepted in principle by the Government of India. But it has not been actually implemented in India. It is the legal obligation on the part of the Government of Maharashtra to provide work to every illiterate and those who seek employment in the villages. As a matter of right, they can demand job for themselves. Until and unless these schemes are implemented throughout the country, the problem will remain and the poverty among the people cannot be removed.

Then, Sir, there is the question of redistribution of the benefits arising out of the growth in the country in various fields. So far as this is concerned, the experience is that the rich are becoming richer and the poor becoming poorer. It is because of that the distribution of the benefits arising out of growth has not been properly done.

Sir, in this connection, I would like to suggest that so far as upliftment of poor and downtrodden are concerned, there should be proper public distribution system of essential commodities. It has been much advertised by the

government that through the public distribution system, all essential commodities would be supplied to the poor, But according to my knowledge, even the small quota of 10 kg. of rice fixed by the Government per person per month is not given to the poor in the villages. They can hardly get 1 kg. of rice or bajra per month through the public distribution system. I would, therefore, suggest that one of the means for upliftment of the poor and bring them above the poverty line is that the public distribution system should be strengthened in the sense that many more items of essential commodities should be distributed through this system in a large-scale and in sufficient quantity at subsidised rate. If the Government implements all these schemes and puts them into practice, a great deal of corruption will be removed so that the benefits can be reaped by the poor who are really in need of such help.

Lastly, I would suggest that until and unless employment is guaranteed to the poor, down-trodden and all these seeking employment, we cannot wipe out poverty completely. The only solution for this is that necessary amendment to the existing law to this effect should be brought forward before this House so that employment is guaranteed to the poor and down-trodden and we are able to find a permanent solution to this great problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri M.C. Daga.

DR SARADISH ROY : You have to call from this side.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am following the order in which the names are given here.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore) : That is not the procedure. You have to call a Member from this side.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let Shri Daga speak ; I will call a Member from side thereafter.

SHRI K D. SULTANPURI (Simla) : In fact, it should be four from this side and one from their side.

DR. SARADISH ROY : It is not proper. Kindly call a Member from this side.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Daga.

[Translation]

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Resolution has been brought here at a verry opportune time and there should be a thorough discussion on it.

The question is whether the figures in respect of removal of poverty from the country given by the Government are genuine or those given by the economists. How to verify this fact ? I want to know whether the figures about poverty given by the experts in planning are correct or those mentioned by the stalwarts in the economic field.

I want to know from the hon. Minister the number of people who are living below the poverty line in India today and what is the basis of the figures given by him ? What is the criteria for judging a man to be poor ?

It appears from the figures given by the Planning Commission, pertaining to the 12 year period from 1960-61 to 1972-73, that the number of people living below the poverty line had remained the same. It means that the figures given by the Government indicate that the poverty line remained unchanged during 12 years period from 1961-62 to 1972-73.

He had ordered a survey in eight districts of Tamil Nadu and stated that 40 per cent of the people living below the poverty line had come above it. According to the Survey conducted by National Sample Survey, only one per cent of the people living in all the 194 Blocks in

[Shri Mool Chand Daga]

Gujarat were above the poverty line. We want to know the scientific formula on the basis of which you consider people above the poverty line.

(Interruptions)

We want poverty to be removed. Poverty is a curse for the country and so is the lack of thinking in this regard. We must give thought to the problem of poverty. Poverty is a curse which we must fight against.

The survey conducted in Tamil Nadu indicates that 40 per cent of the people living below the poverty line have come above it, but in Gujarat only one per cent could come above it.

Sir, I would like to know the number of people who have come above the poverty line during the years 1982-83 and 1983-84. You said that you were able to lift 5 to 10 crores of people above the poverty line during 1981-82, whereas your economists say that only 7.7 million people crossed the poverty line.

[English]

There is an article entitled 'Reduction in Poverty' by Prof. Raj Krishna, and he said that for the first two years, 7.7 million and not 57 million crossed the poverty line.

[Translation]

The assistance that you give to the poor people living in villages does not reach them. The Bank officers and block officers say that such and such assistance was given, but actually it does not reach them.

Today, my question No. 9 was on this subject that your loan liability is increasing. The amount of this loan is now very high. When I wanted to know the amount of that loan, you informed that

you had to pay Rs. 418.4 crores as interest on a loan of Rs. 23,268 crores. I want to know what has been the return from the items for which you have taken loan. If you take all these things into account, you will find the extent of loss you have incurred. I would request you to judge this loss from your own figures. We have made enough investment and borrowed continuously but our return has not been in conformity with our borrowings.

[English]

What is the return on each item whether it be coal, electricity, aluminium or steel?

[Translation]

Block Development officers, Bank Officers and Police Officers eat up all this money. The poor do not get the benefits of the efforts made to remove poverty. It is the middlemen who derive benefits from these efforts and swallow all the money. The amount intended to be spent for the betterment of the poor is not spent on them. The Government should conduct a national sample survey or ascertain by some other scientific method as to whether the poor have actually crossed the poverty line.

Recently, there was an article in the anniversary issue of "The wheels" about the officials working in the Planning Commission. In that Article, they have given an appraisal, which I would like to place before you as to how they work and how they function. I want to draw your attention to that Article and tell you about their thinking and how they cover up their mistakes. It says :

[English]

"The planning process itself has become more or less routine, stale and a prisoner of its own premises and wishful thinking, unable to cope with the changing realities. There is no specific

unit in the Planning Commission or elsewhere in the Government having the responsibility for the objective of price stability, though this features quite prominently in every five-year plan."

[Translation]

I would request you to kindly note as to what the Planning Commission is doing. I want to know from you whether the Planning Commission has ever achieved its target in any plan they have formulated so far. Fourth Plan Take any plan First Plan, Second Plan, Third Plan, Fifth Plan and Sixth Plan, the Planning Commission could not achieve its targets. Today, in villages, there is no drinking water even after 37 years of independence and even today the number of people living below the poverty line is increasing. So, on what basis you say that you are lifting the people above the poverty line ?

The decision of the Government regarding prices, hoarding etc. is appreciable in that the Government have decided to provide clean administration. The Government have decided to encourage the honest and the dedicated and to punish the dishonest and the corrupt. This decision is also welcome. People will get benefits of the plans only when such an action is taken. Otherwise, you have not been able to achieve even 30 per cent target in the scheduled areas programmes which you have chalked out under NREP, NRDP, and other such programmes. If you want, I can give figures. The Government should, therefore, ensure that the implementation of the programmes is according to the schedule.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Before I call the next speaker, I want to point out that the time allotted to the Resolution is over. Is it the pleasure of the House that it should be extended ?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara) : It should be extended by three hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We shall extend it by one hour. Today, we shall sit upto 6 O'clock. We shall give the rest of the time on the next occasion.

SHRI GADADHAR SAHA (Birbhum): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the resolution moved by Prof. Madhu Dandavate. In this connection, I hope that all hon. members agree that we have accepted rather a low level of living to define the poverty line and the poor. The norm used to define the poverty line does not indicate that it is not a minimum standard of living ; it is rather a means of bare living.

There are instances and evidence to show that there is an uneven distribution of income, uneven distribution of land, industrial assets and there exists inequality in our society. I would like to quote from the government reports and the report of the Reserve Bank. In this connection, I would like to mention that in 1977-78, the bottom 50 per cent consumed 29 per cent of all goods and services in the country while the top 30 per cent consumed 52 per cent. The bottom 10 per cent consumed 3.5 per cent while the top 10 per cent consumed 26 per cent of goods and services in the country. According to the report of the Reserve Bank, the bottom 10 per cent rural society owned 0.1 per cent of rural asset as in 1961 and the same in 1971. The top 30 per cent increased their already large share from 79 per cent of rural assets in 1961 to 82 per cent in 1971. It is also reported that small and marginal farmers who constitute 73 per cent of the farmers cultivate only 23 per cent of land while large farmers who constitute 3 per cent of farmers cultivate 26 per cent of all land. This inequality in property and land ownership leads to some being richer and others having nothing else to depend on for their income except the sale of their la-

[Shri Gadadhar Saha]

bour which is at low level regardless of enacted laws. This inequality feeds and enlarges the area of poverty.

Now I would like to quote from report with regard to the share of national income. The share of national income that comes to workers who belong to lower 40-60 per cent of society has stagnated over three decades and has recently declined. It is demonstrated in consumption expenditure. The facts behind it are serious social, personal inequality—inequality in income, inequality in ownership of land, industrial assets and housing which leads to some being rich and others poor. The cases of poverty are, uneven distribution of land, uneven distribution of income, uneven distribution of consumption goods and services, of ownership of land, industrial assets and the accumulation of growing black money, illegal sector of economy etc.

According to a British economist, in 1953-54 black money was estimated at Rs. 600 crores. According to the Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee, the Wanchoo Committee, it rose to Rs. 1,400 crores in 1968-69. In 1978-79 it was Rs. 46,867 crores. It means that the illegal economy has risen from 6 per cent in 1953-54 to 50 per cent of our national income today. Illegal economy is generating new income, new wealth at a higher and higher rate for the privileged few and increasing poverty for the majority of the people. The few who have it conceal wealth by investing it in illegal, semi-illegal ways, in shares, properties, gold, silver, spending it on travel, high fees for schooling, five-star culture, charity, donations, and election financing. All this involves transferring money from the poor to the rich and thus widening—the circle of poor people in our country.

The fight against poverty has two dimensions. The first dimension is relief programme for the poor, and the second dimension is elimination of the root causes of poverty. The first task is to relieve the poor from the consequences of

inadequate food, under-nourishment, mal-nutrition, lack of housing, unprotected drinking water, inadequate clothing, ill health, illiteracy, lack of educational facilities and economic imbalances. This relief programme includes the Minimum Needs Programme and IRDP, NREP and NRLEGP, etc.

For the Sixth Five Year Plan during 1980-85 Rs. 5,000 crores have been provided for implementation of some important schemes for relieving the poor from the consequences of these things and I think it is too inadequate to achieve the targets that are fixed for the relief programme. In this connection, I would like to point out the weaknesses that are there in the programme and its implementation.

A review at the official level in November, 1981 established that the programme of dispersal of institutional credit in support of this programme was not satisfactory and the operational agencies at all levels ought to strengthen the machinery for the achievement of the targets

A study by a Bangalore team of investigators shows that in terms of total credit, advances by banks to rural areas declined from 8 per cent in 1970 to 4.88 per cent in 1980. Out of this reduced level, a big portion of the credit has gone to the rich farmer to purchase tractors, pump sets, motors and other capital equipment. It is the denial of institutional credit that perpetuates the level of rural poverty. And this is the weakness in eradicating this problem.

The root cause of rural poverty is that there is no proper distribution of land and there is concentration of wealth and land assets in a few hands. This is the problem that we are facing in our countryside. In areas of land distribution there are political and administrative impediments and legal hurdles. Because of these impediments and hurdles, the State Governments which are responsible

for the implementation of these schemes, are facing difficulties in their proper implementation. On behalf of the West Bengal Government we would like to mention that the lacunae that there are in the existing ceiling laws, have been removed in the Second Land Amendment Bill, 1981. This has been sent to the Central Government for Presidential assent. There is legitimate ground and new scope for finding and vesting more surplus land. We request that presidential assent be given immediately to this amending Bill.

I would like to mention that to be effective any anti-poverty programme with land reforms as the major component has to be multi-dimensional in its design and impact, for increase in GNP was accompanied in our country with increase in both relative and absolute levels of poverty and destitution for growing number of people. Benefits of economic growth did not trickle down as predicted. They were siphoned off somewhere up in the line leaving more people hungry, shelterless, illiterate, ill-fed, diseased and destitute than 30 years ago. So, the main features of the land reform programme as formulated and implemented in West Bengal, include quick recording of names of *Bargadars* or sharecroppers through 'Operation Barga', distribution of already available ceiling surplus and vest land among landless labourers, drive to detect more ceiling surplus land, giving substantial institutional credit to the poor peasants and artisans, assigning permanent title for homestead purpose to all landless workers, artisans, fishermen, etc., providing source of irrigation, financial assistance in the form of subsidy and abrogation of old revenue system. In this connection, I want to draw the attention of this hon. House to the Directive Principles of State Policy :

"The State shall direct its policy towards securing that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."

We all know that this concentration of more wealth and more assets is in violation of this Principle of State Policy and the policy announced by the late Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

The nation today is in the grip of crisis. The cherished democratic values of our freedom struggle are under assault and the assertive trend of concentration of wealth and power in a few hands and the assertive trend of centralisation of power have resulted in the disturbing signs of alienation in some parts of the country. This trend has to be halted. We are all aware of the external threats and dangers to national security. So, what we want now is a strong Centre and, at the same time, strong States, for, without strong States, no programme, whatever the target may be, for lifting the poor above the poverty line can materialise at all, for there are some poor backward states, some zero growth States, problem States in India. In this connection, I want to give some suggestions.

Seventy per cent of the total resources raised in the public domain are retained by the Union Government and only thirty per cent is available to the twenty-two States. This kind of distribution of financial resources is without parallel for a federal polity. This should be basically changed.

The more elastic sources of tax revenue are reserved for the Centre. The States are not allowed any share of the proceeds of the corporation tax which these days exceeds those from the income-tax. The Centre refuses to share with the States the yield from the surcharge on income-tax. These are the sources of erosion of the resources of the State Governments. This should be changed and more power should be given to the States for implementation of the developmental schemes and for reconstruction of society.

One more suggestion I want to make.

One suggestion for lifting the poor above the poverty line is to give more

[Shri Gadadhar Saha]

money to the States for implementation of the anti-poverty programme. Now while raising resources to finance the scheme, the Central Government raises resources mainly from the poor by way of indirect taxation. Both this policy and the price policy, which is the source of creation of income and distribution of income, should be changed. Our suggestion is that, till as the price policy is basically changed the Union Government should assume the responsibility of supplying 15 to 20 of the major foodgrains, industrial raw materials and essential commodities all over the country at reasonable prices. The concept of national unity loses much of its lustre if the essential articles are not equally accessible in all the States, or if some of them are available at uniform prices in some places but not in others. The Centre should see to it that all these deficiencies and imbalances are corrected.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Sir, there is no doubt that a large number of our people are still living below the poverty line. A major part of our rural and urban areas is devoid of basic amenities of life, which must be provided there.

But the way in which a crisis has been projected and it has been tried to show that the steps taken by the Government to remove poverty have failed, that, I think, is not proper.

The removal of poverty is our national resolve and without its fulfilment, we would not be able to streamline our administration and meet our national requirements. I think the Government is determined to take action in this regard. Keeping all these things in view, the Government have adopted various measures in this direction since the First Five Year Plan.

It can be said that we have not been able to achieve the targets fixed for deve-

lopment through Plans to the full extent. But it does not mean that there has been no development through the Plans. If it were so, the situation in India would not have been such as is prevalent today and the changes taken place in India since 1947 would not have been there. Previously, we were not able to produce even a single industrial item of our daily necessity in our country, but now our country occupies seventh place among the advanced industrial countries. Today we have got enormous technical personnel. We are increasing our national income and we can change the living standards of the people all over the country.

In his message to the nation also, our Prime Minister has referred to our national resolve. I think if we get cooperation from all sides, we can achieve this gigantic task. Besides implementing big programmes, I am happy to say that on the one side we are planning to undertake manned space flight, on the other side we are making efforts to uplift the standard of living of the people living in *Jhuggi jhompries*. It is being ascertained from them as to what type of help they want from the Government for their upliftment.

IRDP is a very good programme. During the Sixth Five Year Plan period a substantial amount has been spent on this Programme and I think efforts are being made to benefit about three thousand families in each Block through this Programme. But here I would like to point out that our machinery lacks enthusiasm and commitment required for the implementation of the Programme. Due to lack of this enthusiasm in the implementing machinery, the required results are not achieved. Those who are in a position to take advantage and meet their personal ends have certainly taken advantage of this Programme, but the common man who is not in a position to take advantage of the situation and who is not being helped properly by anyone has not been benefited. The banks have given loans to the people whether they are harijans living in the

villages, farmers, artisans, but a large amount of this loan has gone in the hands of other people also. Mr. Daga has rightly complained and we, all the elected representatives, also feel that a large portion of the money spent under IRDP is going in the hands of officers and we have no agency to ensure its proper monitoring. There is no machinery to ascertain whether the intended beneficiaries of the scheme are really getting the benefits therefrom or not. To ensure this, we have associated the *Gram Preadhans* also with this scheme and established agencies at the district level, but the *Gram Pradhan* and the agency at the district level entrusted with monitoring work have not been vested with enough powers so as to contribute in the successful implementation of the schemes. It is requested that if Government want the desired results to be achieved during the Seventh Plan, they should set up such monitoring committees at district and block levels as could take decisions about defaulters and make those officials work efficiently who are not performing their duties properly, so that the intended beneficiaries may get the benefits

Our NREP Programme in itself is a very practical one. It has helped a lot in providing employment in rural areas and a number of new works have been

undertaken in the villages through RLEGP programme, giving employment to many people, but the amount given as wages is so meagre and insufficient that they find it difficult to make their both ends meet. So, the State Governments may be asked to revise the Minimum Wages Act. A worker must be given at least Rs. 11 to 12 per day and if he does not get this much then, I think, he is not earning sufficiently to make his both ends meet. A large number of youths are working under this scheme. If we cannot provide jobs to them and if even here we do not give them adequate wages, they would not work earnestly and we would also not be able to harness our manpower for rural development.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Rawat, you can continue on the next occasion.

The House stands adjourned to re-assemble on 21st instant at 11 a.m.

18.00 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, January 21, 1985/Magha, 1, 1906 (Saka).