

[Shri Sarfaraj Ahmad]

of Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana of Bihar.

- (vii) Need for early completion of railway projects in the North-Eastern parts of India.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOO-WALIA (Sangrur) : Mr. Deputy, Speaker Sir, the sanctioned projects for expansion of railways for the development of north eastern States and Union territories are lying incomplete due to lack of funds and inefficiency of the construction authorities. Even after the partition of the country, Tripura was not there in the map of Indian Railways. In 1964, the first attempt was made to connect this region with railway lines. There was a plan to lay a 33 kilometre long railway line from Kalighat to Dharam Nagar and the State Government had proposed to extend the same up to Kumraghat. There was a provision for spending Rs. 30 crores on this project, but till now a sum of Rs. 16 crores has been spent. An amount of Rs. 1.63 crores has been spent on the project of railway-line from Nilpara (Assam) to Malikyog (Arunachal) which is about 31.46 kilometre long. On Lala Bazar—Lalaghat-Merawal railway line, which is 49 kms. long and which will cost Rs. 26 crores, only Rs. 10 crores have been spent so far. Another project of Eklahi to Maldah which is to be completed with an expenditure of Rs. 42 crores is still incomplete and only Rs. 50 lakhs have been spent on it so far. All the railway line projects of this area are lying incomplete. Due to lack of transport facilities, many undersirable incidents are taking place in this area which are creating suspicion and fear in the society. If timely action is not taken for the development of this region, these problems, which appear to be minor, will assume huge proportion and will affect the entire country. So, I request the Government to pay special attention to this problem and clear the obstacles which come in the way of developmental activities there.

[English]

- (viii) Need to provide diesel oil at subsidised rates to smaller fishermen of Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI GOPAL KRISHNA THOTA (Kakinada) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is a pity that Government is discriminating between fishermen operating big trawlers and the others using smaller ones in the matter of allowing subsidy on HSD oil the price of which has risen steeply.

I may mention that the present nearly 900 or so small fishermen are using mechanised boats catching fish and other marine products. As Government is no doubt aware that the price of H.S.D. oil has been rising consistently since 1975 and the smaller fishermen using mechanised boats are now feeling the pinch of the steep rise in the price of the H.S.D. oil and have been requesting them to give them H.S.D. oil at subsidised rates. In fact, fishermen using big trawlers are already getting H.S.D. oil at subsidised rates. The small fishermen have more deserving case because their only source of livelihood is to catch from the sea and they are finding it difficult to compete with big trawlers, who besides having other advantages over the smaller fishermen get H.S.D. at subsidised rate. The fishermen have already sent number of representations. Moreover if these fishermen are helped they can increase their output and help in increasing exports to earn foreign exchange.

I, therefore, request the Government to come to the rescue of the smaller fishermen of Kakinada and to give them diesel oil at subsidised rates.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (General)
1986-87—Contd.

(1) Ministry of Home Affairs—Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, the House will take up further discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of

Home Affairs. The Home Minister will speak.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, fifty-two hon. Members have participated in this debate and it took more than double the time which was allotted. So I conclude that the debate has been exhaustive. Equally exhaustive have been the interventions of my two colleagues. Almost all the points raised which needed a reply have been replied to.

So, Sir, I would be very brief because I would not like to repeat the replies given by my colleagues. I would only make a few points of information which perhaps would be found useful by the hon. Members, particularly those who have raised these points.

Sir, a point was raised about the modernisation of the Police administration in the States. We all realise how important it is. The sophistication that is getting imported in the methods used by the offenders in the commission of crimes requires that equally sophisticated, equally effective methods and modern equipment is available with the Police also. For this purpose the Central Government is assisting the States to the extent of Rs. 10 crores annually.

Sir, we all come from the States and from the villages and we know how difficult are the conditions in regard to housing for the Police personnel there. For police housing which again is a matter on which much needs to be done Rs. 204 crores have been given. For new police stations Rs. 21.5 crores and for buildings for police stations Rs. 27 crores have been given. Whatever is being done will be found useful. I know that this is not adequate considering the fact that police force is being augmented. For obvious reasons, these needs have to be met on an increasing scale, but all that I would like to submit to the House is that the Central Government is doing its best. What is happening is that all these items fall under the non-Plan sector and naturally there is a tendency not to

treat non-Plan sector as a priority sector. We consider all the time that plan sector should find priority over the non-Plan sector and whenever there is a cut in expenditure and need for economy, the non-Plan sector is singled out for economy. But, in this case, we are quite clear that although this is a non-Plan sector, this has to be treated at par with the Plan sector. Because without this sector being taken care of, without the law and order side being taken care of adequately, nothing else will work; all the development programmes will come to a grinding halt and we will find that the plan sector will also get affected eventually. So, we attach great importance to this sector although we cannot technically transfer it to the plan sector. My colleague, the Minister of State for Internal Security, I believe, has informed the House that there is a Plan—we are almost treating it as a Plan, a Five Year Plan—within which certain things need to be done and we are trying to find money for it. What we would like to appeal to the State Governments is to do the same. It is possible that at the State Governments level certain plans, certain schemes of housing and other things concerned with the Police personnel get cut, get reduced, because they are technically non-Plan and may be their Finance Departments would say that they should not get a priority but I would like to say on this that there has to be a consensus at the Central Government level and at the State Governments level. It will have to be a joint consensus that on this we will not take a technical stand and say that because it is a non-Plan, we will not really give it the money it requires. So, whether we technically call it a non-Plan or a Plan the point is that in point of fact, we have to give the funds required for the modernisation, Police housing, building up police stations and whatever police amenities are to be given. Now, this is one point of information which I wanted to share with the House.

Then the other question which has been raised is about the implementation of the recommendations of the National Police Commission. Now, there are about 500 recommendations, most of them are concerned with the States. Out of 500, 85, pertain to the Central Government. Out

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of these 85, 82 have been disposed of and final decisions have been taken. Only three remain to be decided. These three matters are under examination in consultation with the States again, because one of them, I am told, is about the service conditions. Now, service conditions naturally would need financial outlays and a deeper examination of the matter from all points of view would be needed. Therefore, this may take a little time. But even so, I would like to assure the Members who have raised it and the House in general that we are not really delaying matters and we are taking expeditious decisions and action.

Now, Sir, about the Arms Act, some Members have expressed some apprehension that at the State Governments levels, there is some kind of undue leniency shown in giving licence to arms. Now, the Arms Act has been amended and now Police verification has been made compulsory. Now, If this is so, it only needs to be implemented, in the sense that the leniency, the alleged leniency would have to be reviewed & we would have to make rules which are a little more stringent than before and only after the police clearance is received, the request for arms should be considered. We have informed the State Governments that semi-automatic weapons and carbines, etc. should not be licensed, should not be allowed to be licensed. There is a ban on the issue of licences for these weapons. So, I think with these measures, the apprehensions expressed by the hon. Members would be met to a large extent.

About the North-East also some Members have raised certain questions. We know that the North-Eastern region has special problems, problems of distance, problems of development, problems of most of the States having come into the planning network later and, therefore, some accumulated development problems being faced by them. All these things are known and I would like to assure the House that special steps are being taken; special attention is being bestowed on that region and a Committee of Union Ministers headed by the Home Minister with

Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission also as a Member, to which Chief Minister of the North-Eastern States are invited, has been formed. That Committee has been formed for monitoring the implementation of the major Central Projects and also removing difficulties, if any, in the implementation of the State projects, if they are pending with the Centre like forest clearance etc. There are many matters in which the Central Government needs to take decisions expeditiously in order to clear State projects. All these matters will be looked into by this Committee. I understand that the Committee is going to meet very soon and perhaps at the very first meeting, we will have a much clearer picture of what questions are involved, what matters are involved, what decisions are involved and I am sure, that this Committee will do everything to expedite all these matters. Recently, a team of Secretaries for the first time has been sent to Arunachal Pradesh. It was a revelation to them to see the problems on the ground and they have told us that this has been a very useful experience and they would like more teams of this kind to go to all the North-Eastern areas so that they acquaint themselves with the problems and do their best to expedite decisions connected with these problems. I would like to again say that this method would be continued, they would be asked to visit other States according to a phased programme. The point to be stressed here is that we are in close touch with the problems arising in the North-Eastern Region and are taking all steps to see that these problems are not allowed to simmer and result in undesirable consequences. We would be dealing with these problems in time and effectively.

One Member raised a point about prison administration. This is a vast subject. It will not be possible to deal with it in the course of this reply, but I would certainly like to say that the prison administration has itself become a very important part of the State administration. Personally, I know a little more about it because I was incharge of prisons for five years in my State and I knew what the real difficulties are. The security in the

prisons, the guarding of the prisons has become the main question. Although I would say that there are many other questions deeper than this, we do not go into those deeper questions, questions of motivation of how we have to deal with the prisoners, the questions how the reactions of the prisoners have to be taken into account. There are many other things which at the level of the State Government, the Minister concerned would be dealing with, but naturally at this level the matter comes up when there is a jail break. It is bad enough; it should not happen. I understand that a Committee has been appointed. The Minister of State for Internal Security must have told the House already. We have formed a Committee to look into the security aspect of prisons, which aspect has become very important. Airports are also included. All the points from where escapes take place are being clubbed into one and the Committee will be looking into this.

Then, there is the question of dacoity infested areas. This is a very valid genuine question. This matter has been going on. We are facing it for more than three decades. In the ravine areas where even at a distance of a few yards, one man cannot see the other, security or arresting a person or catching a person becomes almost an impossibility in those areas. Anybody can hide and be undetected. These areas have now been taken up for development. An outlay of Rs. 641 crores has been made; Centre Rs. 240 crores and the States concerned, namely UP, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan account for Rs. 399 crores. With this amount, the schemes to be implemented are improvement of communication and ravine reclamation. Now, not much seems to have been done. It is only the beginning stage. But ravine reclamation, as hon. Member can appreciate, is a new programme, a programme which needs a lot of expertise. It is not easy to reclaim an area which has been so badly eroded that it has become a ravine. How one can really make that area useful for any other purpose, other than hiding is a matter which involves some expertise and we would watch the progress of this programme and we would be, if the members so desire, informing the House from time to time. What I

would like to say is this. This is an important programme and unless it is undertaken, the question which has been troubling us for quite a long time cannot really be dealt with effectively.

Then, a question was raised about the Andaman Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. And hon. Members made a statement, which is not quite charitable to say, that only unwanted officers are sent there. Now I would like to assure the House that we have no earmarked areas for unwanted officers. They are all over.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Unwanted places or unwanted officers ?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : The effort, on the other hand, has been to make it more attractive for officers to go to these places when they are posted. You see, the places are distant. That is all ! It is not the Kala Pani of the old days. Probably, there is at the back of our minds, a kind of impression that the Andaman and Nicobar islands are just an extension or just a continuation of the old Kala Pani. It is not so. Those who have gone there will testify that it is not so. It is just the opposite.

AN HON. MEMBER : It has now become a tourist spot.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : That is right. But we are not really very much in favour of making it a tourist part all over. Now the question is whether we can have two or three islands out of all those islands and develop them, because again tourism cannot really override considerations of security. So this matter has been gone into. When I was in the defence Ministry, we went into it in great detail. There may be some development on one or two islands for tourism, but nothing beyond that as far as I can see. But even otherwise these islands are beautiful. These islands are no longer the forbidding areas that they used to be thought of.

AN. HON. MEMBER : They have become a heaven on earth.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Thank you very much for the kind com-

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pliment. But at the same time, help us also.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI : Officers are so reluctant to go firstly because there are no educational facilities.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : This I can understand. But do not call them rejected officers. These officers are perhaps picked and chosen.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI : Secondly, they feel that city life is not there.

SHRI P. M. SAYEED : Sir, 15 to 20 per cent of the funds allocated are not being utilised and they are being surrendered. You please look into it.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : That is happening in places which are closer to Delhi or Hyderabad or Nagpur. Lapsing of funds is a malady which afflicts almost every State, and not just Andaman & Nicobar or Lakshadweep. May be the reasons in this case are different. We can go into the question of lapse. May be we will have to monitor the whole thing more effectively. We will have to see that there is some follow up action.

SHRI P. M. SAYEED : Sir the lapsing of funds is more than 50 per cent.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : I understand that. I can appreciate that this lapse of funds is a matter that needs to be gone into in greater detail. But it is not because the person sent there is not good. That is what precisely I am trying to say.

SHRI P. M. SAYEED : I have concrete reasons to believe that. Earlier in 1982-83 and 1983-84, for three years, not even a single pie was surrendered. But why is it happening now ?

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : He has himself said that two years ago, there was no lapse and this year there is a lapse. Next year there will not be any lapse again. So, this goes on up and

down. Why do we make an issue out of a matter like this ?

These are some of the points which were raised. But I would like to raise one or two general points which, in the context of the Home Ministry, are important and certain steps are being contemplated.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Law and order administration is an important issue. Police should not interfere in peaceful lock-outs and strikes.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : We are not interfering in any of the lock-outs or strikes. Are we interfering ?

DR. DATTA SAMANT : (Bombay-South Centre) The employers are using police against workers. Because of your National Security Act, I myself was arrested two or three times. How do we know as to how this Act is going to be used ? 40 of my activists were arrested under this National Security Act during the textile strike. I raised this important point earlier also. This House was assured that this Act would not be used against the workers.....

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : Now I have heard the complaint. But I do not see how I come into it and where I come into it, because this is a local matter. What the police are expected to do in a particular area on a particular issue in a particular situation is a matter on which we cannot really make any final judgment here.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : Government is not just looking into all these things... (Interruptions)

In Akbar Hotel, people are losing their jobs and police had made lathi charges on them. Government should give some directives on this matter.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : He is referring to the class character of the police.

SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO : Police is no class.

Before I conclude, I would like to flag one or two very important questions on which I would invite the members to apply their minds so that at some appropriate time we could discuss this matter inside the House and outside the House. These are very important matters.

40 years ago, a person who was a citizen of India is perhaps not a citizen of India today. He is a citizen of Pakistan or he is a citizen of Bangla Desh. This is the result of Partition. We are not in a position to say who is an Indian, and who is not an Indian because we have not so far taken adequate steps to improve our vital statistics programme, improve citizens' registration programme and the infiltration that has been taken place, and the scale on which it has taken place, has led to problems which are well-known. Now, for that generation, the generation which happened to be Indians in 1940 or 1946 or 1945, but do not happen to be Indians today, they are of a different nationality. Their problems were different. Their emotions were different. And their attitudes were different. Now, there is no need to continue those attitudes, because after forty years, we have to firm up our citizenship arrangements. I use the generic word 'arrangement' because many other things are involved in that. In a village of India, who keeps the vital statistics—either the Patwari, if there is one or some one at that level, who is not interested in writing in a register if a baby is born or a person dies, he gets nothing out of the birth of a baby or death of a person. So, he is not interested. Today, our vital statistics are not at all reliable and based on these statistics, we are making many of our Plans. Therefore, I would like to submit to hon. Members that we must, as Members of Parliament, as Leaders of public opinion, as public workers, take this up as a very important national programme. The Central Government, the Home Ministry are doing an exercise. We would like to firm up the provisions, not only the legal provisions. You can pass all the laws. Let us say that the Citizenship Act is going to be renovated, but then that is not the end of the story because that is the beginning of the story. How to

implement it and, if you do not implement it very firmly and correctly right from the grassroot level, nothing is going to happen.

The Assam problem. I do not have to refer to all the problems that have come up already and are likely to come up. Therefore, the vital statistics programme needs to be firmed up, needs to be given a face lift and this is what we are considering. This is one important aspect. The other is the investigation and the prosecution stages under the Criminal Procedure Code. Now, we find that there are certain gaps, according to the Indian Evidence Act, what is taken as a probative force is different, may be if you apply a different criminal law, the probative force will be different. So, we are conforming to the standard norms laid down in the Indian Criminal Procedure Code and Evidence Act. Now, the difficulty is that the work and the numbers have increased so much that the quality of investigation has tended to suffer in the last few decades.

In our young days, we used to hear of very famous investigators, even sub-Inspectors, Deputy Superintendents, who did some very difficult things, difficult investigations successfully. Now, even today, this might be happening, but generally there is an impression that the level of efficiency in investigation has gone down. We are looking into those matters. We will have to look into those matters even more closely than we have been doing, because unless the investigation level is proper and efficient, nothing else may happen. We know that a man has committed a murder in a village. You ask any villager, he will tell you, but the man goes scot free. Because according to the Indian Evidence Act, we are not able to produce evidence before the court and the court, which is guided by the Indian Evidence Act has to say that it has not been proved. Not that the murder has not taken place. The murder has taken place. It is not proved. Therefore, this gentleman or the opposite of it who has committed the murder comes back to the village. That is happening in our villages every day. There are multiple murders. A person

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who is undergoing a sentence, goes on parole, commits a couple of murders more and goes back—because all these gaps, all these lacunae in investigation, in prosecution are really creating a situation like this. We do not intend that situation to be created. We do not want any innocent person to be punished; but at the same time, we have to take a stand, that we also equally do not want an offender to be released, to go scot-free so easily, as is being seen today. Therefore...

SHRI ATA-UR-RAHMAN (Borpeta): I am sorry to interrupt. Is there any step taken to separate investigation from law and order? That is a very vital problem.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : That is one of the matters which we will have to look into, very carefully. There are pros and cons. Let me tell you: in that, there are pros and cons; but we will have to take a view on that.

Now, the first thing to do is to make a case study. It is not just a matter of raising a point, or making an answer or putting a question. It is not like that. It is something which has to be behind the scenes. Some people have to be put on this. A case study: how did a particular case collapse, at what level did it collapse; due to what reasons did it collapse, and whether you can generalize it, and you can draw a conclusion out of it, to be useful to the investigators, to be useful to the prosecutors, and to be useful to the Police administration, all these things will have to be gone into.

Again, about modern investigation methods, and the prosecution depending on the Case Law which has been accumulating for decades and decades. We will have to think of new instructions to be given to the personnel who are dealing with these matters at the field level. All these matters will have to be taken into account. It is not just a question of dealing with the matter as it arises, of dealing with an issue as it arises, i.e. the fire engine aspect. That is there; that is very important. But behind this, there is a lot of work that needs to be done, and

I would like to tell the House that the Home Ministry has seriously taken up all these matters; and in course of time, we will be firming up all these important aspects of Police administration, and we would be bringing about a real, substantial improvement in the whole administration, in all aspects of the administration. This is what I wanted to inform the House.

DR. DATTA SAMANT : At what stage is it?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : The point is : it is not one project. It cannot be one project. It is a continuous process, but it cannot be eternal. When we call it a continuous process, we cannot say that we will go on doing it for ever. No, it will have to be taken by stages. It will have to be taken up...*(Interruptions)* in a particular, manageable form, you see. If you are talking of investigations, you cannot mix up other things with investigation. That is a different level where a different person, a different efficiency is needed.

SHRI M. RAGHUMA REDDY (Nalgonda) : What about strengthening of the Intelligence departments?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : I think the Minister of State must have dealt with it. In any case, there is not much spoken about it; is it not so?*(Interruptions)* So, these are the positive and perhaps the lasting aspects which we have to go into; and I would like to inform the House that we are taking up these matters.

I am not saying that it is a project which is going to be completed in so much of time, but the point is : as we go along, this has to be given careful attention. I hope I have...*(Interruptions)*

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Jadavpur) : Sir, I have an important question...*(Interruptions)***

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : No. I won't allow others. *(Interruptions)***

This is not a debate. *(Interruptions)***
Take your seats.

All of you take your seats. Madam, take your seat.

*(Interruptions)***

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I do not allow it to go on record.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : I thought Mirdha Ji had already dealt with it. *(Interruptions)***

13.00 hrs.

SHRI DINESH GOSWAMI : We made a point that those persons who were victimised during the Assam movement on central and semi-central sector—about 75 employees—for them no relief has been granted and the Assam Accord has not been implemented, which is creating a lot of discontentment in the State. Will you kindly say something on that ?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : On the Floor of this House you have raised this point. We will look into it and if there is anything to be done, it will be done.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID KABULI : I have raised a point regarding election in Jammu & Kashmir because the Governor's rule has been imposed there. The people's will warrant that there should be election at the earliest; people want to restore democracy in the Jammu & Kashmir State.

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : We are aware of your views.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Should we not aware of your views ?

SHRI P.V. NARASIMHA RAO : Our views are made known by action.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID KABULI : You should support our case. We want to restore democracy there and want that elections should be held at the earliest.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I shall now put all the cut motions moved to the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs to vote together, unless any hon. Member desires that any of his cut motions may be put separately.

All the cut motions were put and negatived

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I shall now put the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs to vote. The question is :

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st day of March, 1987 in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 47 to 56 and 56A relating to the Ministry of Home Affairs.”

The motion was adopted

Demands for Grants (General) for 1986-87 in respect of the Ministry of Home Affairs voted by the House

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grant on account voted by the House on 13th March, 1986		Amount of Demand for Grant voted by in Lok Sabha	
		Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.	Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.
1	2	3	4		
Ministry of Home Affairs					
47.	Ministry of Home Affairs	1,31,79,000		6,58,92,000	
48.	Cabinet	1,49,91,000		7,49,52,000	
49.	Police	1,10,60,16,000	7,01,50,000	5,53,00,81,000	35,07,50,000
50.	Other Administrative and General Services	53,20,90,000	8,77,37,000	2,66,04,48,000	43,86,87,000
51.	Rehabilitation	9,85,37,000	1,80,60,000	49,26,83,000	9,02,98,000
52.	Other Expenditure of the Ministry of Home Affairs	45,97,14,000	35,72,32,000	2,29,85,70,000	1,78,61,60,000
53.	Delhi	78,91,60,000	67,14,36,000	3,94,58,02,000	3,35,71,82,000
54.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	11,76,34,000	12,35,82,000	58,81,68,000	61,79,08,000
55.	Dadra and Nagar Haveli	1,67,22,000	93,83,000	8,36,12,000	4,69,15,000
56.	Lakshadweep	3,47,26,000	60,35,000	17,36,32,000	3,01,76,000
56-A.	Chandigarh	12,69,77,000	5,45,44,000	25,39,55,000	10,90,87,000

(ii) Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House will now take up discussion and voting on Demand Nos. 42 and 43 relating to the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies for which 6 hours have been allotted.

Hon. Members present in the House whose cut motions to the Demands for Grants have been circulated, may if they desire to move their cut motions, send slips to the Table within 15 minutes indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions they would like to move. Those cut motions only will be treated as moved.

A list showing the serial numbers of cut motions treated as moved will be put up on the Notice Board shortly. In case any Member finds any discrepancy in the list he may kindly bring it to the

notice of the Officer at the Table without delay.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That the respective sums not exceeding the amount on Revenue Account and Capital Account shown in the Fourth column of the Order Paper be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to complete the sums necessary to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st day of March, 1987 in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 42 and 43 relating to the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies.”

Demands for Grants (General) for 1986-87 in respect of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies submitted to the vote of the House

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grant on account voted by the House on 13th March, 1986	Amount of Demand for Grant submitted to the vote of the Lok Sabha
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1	2	3	4
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	Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.	Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.
Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies				
42. Department of Food	3,07,78,33,000	18,96,29,000	15,39,01,69,000	94,81,44,000
43. Department of Civil Supplies	3,91,08,000	1,75,84,000	19,55,42,000	8,79,17,000

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI (Adilabad) : I rise to make a few comments on the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies which is before us. When I think of this Ministry the first thing that comes to the mind of anybody in this House is the Food Corporation of India which has become a white elephant. I am reminded of the discussion we had on the Floor of this House earlier and various questions were raised and the replies were given by the Minister about that Ministry. Very recently, when a number of allegations were made, the Minister is on record stating that he himself is not happy about the functioning of this Corporation. It is a pity that, in spite of the support extended to this Corporation and the Government on the Floor of the House, it has not come up to our expectations. Very recently, we have increased the authorised capital from Rs. 550 crores to Rs. 1000 crores. We have converted Rs. 3,350 crores of loan into equity. We have given a lot of concessions to this Corporation by way of cash credit facilities from consortium of banks and by the Reserve Bank of India so that the Corporation may get loan at a very concessional rate of interest, of 14 per cent as against commercial rate of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Recently we have reduced the burden of the buffer stocks to ten million tonnes, as the Corporation was burdened with lot of stocks. In spite of all those facilities which are being given to this Corporation, it is really surprising that the Corporation has not been functioning in a way it should function, as an efficient organisation, in charge of the management of foodstuffs in this country.

The hon. Minister, while giving reply to a question, he said that the transit and storage losses of the Corporation during the last five years had been of the order of about Rs. 600 crores.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER) : Six hundred crores ?

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDY : In five years.

In 1980-81 the loss was to the tune of Rs. 100 crores, in 1981-82 it was Rs. 116 crores, in 1982-83 it was Rs. 143 crores, in 1983-84 it was Rs. 140 crores and in 1984-85 it was Rs. 122 crores.

Similarly, the wastage of foodgrains and loss on that account was in 1980-81 of the order of 6.43 tonnes, in 1981-82 it was 6.53 lakh tonnes, in 1982-83 it was 7.40 lakh tonnes, in 1983-84 it was 6.74 lakh tonnes and in 1984-85 it was of the order of 5.72 lakh tonnes.

This is the performance of this Corporation which is expected to serve the public of this country, as an important organisation which is charged with the responsibility of procuring and distributing foodstuffs in this country.

Now, the major function of this Corporation, as we all know, is to procure foodstuffs and supply these commodities to the State Governments at the issues price. Since the issue price of some commodities was lower than the procurement price, the Government of India has been subsidising the finances of the Corporation. This year, the subsidy has been to the extent of Rs. 1,650 crores, and for next year, we have made an allocation of Rs. 1,750 crores. The subsidies had been increasing year after year and with the inefficiency of the Corporation, I am afraid, we may have to continue the subsidies not only because we want the foodstuffs to be supplied at cheaper rates, but also because of the inefficiency of the Corporation and more and more subsidies will be given to this Corporation.

Sir, another main function of this Corporation—of this Ministry—and a very prestigious function at that—is the public distribution system. Now, what is the performance of the public distribution system in our country today ? The public distribution system which is in existence for the last thirty to thirty-five years has just remained a distribution system. It was intended that this system would be a very effective instrument of poverty alleviation. To what extent has this intention been fulfilled ? To what extent has a new dimension been given to this system of

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procuring and distributing foodstuff in this country? What has been done to this public distribution system? It is a very interesting study.

Sir, I had checked up certain figures from other countries, as to what is the cost of public distribution in these countries, when compared to our country? In reply to a question, the hon. Minister was very much on record saying that he had no figures of other countries, and that it was difficult to the Government to compare figures as to what is the cost of public distribution in our own country and what it is in other countries. I checked the figures and found surprisingly that the cost of public distribution system in this country is very high, as a matter of fact highest, in the whole world. The Managing Director of the FCI himself has explained these figures to us and they are very much revealing. He said that the administrative costs were 6%, freight 25%, cost of gunnies 10%, statutory charges 9% and storage losses 2%. Even if we believe these figures to be correct—I know some of these figures are misleading particularly the storage losses—the total comes to 71%. 71% is a very high figure. With this, the commodities which the FCI is going to distribute, certainly they are going to be costly and we are going to subsidise at a high cost. The statement he made was on 15.2.86. The cost has been increasing during the last three years much more as compared to earlier years. More figures which he gave on that day are—handling cost which was Rs. 9.54 per quintal in 1981 rose to Rs. 17.57 crores in 1984-85—an increase of 76%. Distribution costs rose from Rs. 37.87 per quintal in 1981-82 to Rs. 48.34 per quintal in 1984-85—an increase of 28%. Other administrative expenses rose from Rs. 11.33 crores to Rs. 15.31 crores in 1984-85—an increase of 36%. Salary bill rose from Rs. 92.58 crores to Rs. 150.75 crores—an increase of 63%. Rail demurrage from Rs. 6 crores to Rs. 7.5 crores—an increase of 26%. I do not understand why there should be such a high demurrage in spite of the fact the both FCI and Railways are controlled by the Government. With such a high cost of public distribution, no wonder that we have to

continue to subsidise everything which the FCI is going to supply to the States, very heavily.

In spite of this subsidy, what is the performance of the public distribution system? Where are we today? Apart from certain commodities such as sugar and imported edible oils, because it has become necessary for the Government to take up these functions recently, there is not much change in the system. It was said that they had increased the shops from 2.75 lakhs some years ago to 3.45 lakhs. Certainly you have increased the number of shops.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : That is the job of the States.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : I know. I am generally talking of the distribution system. But merely increasing the number of shops has no meaning because you can go on increasing the shops but what is it that you are giving to the States? What is it that you are distributing through those shops? It is claimed that the distribution also has increased, the sales turn over also has increased during the last three years. But what is the turn over? Why it has increased? On what account? The turn over increase is mainly because of the new commodities which had been supplied—the imported edible oils and sugar for one or two years—and also because of the fact that the Andhra Pradesh Government has introduced the Rs. two per kg. rice scheme. This has come into the total turn-over which has increased by about one-third. The total rice that we are distributing in the whole country today is roughly of the order of about 60 lakh tonnes.

SHRI K. S. RAO : In Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Total rice which is distributed all over the country in all the States is about 60 lakh tonnes, out of which 20 lakh tonnes is distributed in Andhra Pradesh alone.

SHRI K. S. RAO : How could it constitute one-third of the total turn over? It is not only rice, several other things are also there.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : I will tell you. It is because of the fact that Andhra Pradesh is the only State where full requirements of 60 per cent of the population are being met by supply of rice. Elsewhere it is not so. You are only tinkering with the problem. How much rice is being given in Karnataka, or in Kerala, the rice consuming States? The public distribution system failed to give a new direction to the distribution of food stuffs, particularly those required by the weaker sections of the people. That being the case, what is the position in Andhra Pradesh? I really deplore the controversy which has been started, which appeared in the Press. I do not want to go into this because it is not becoming of this House, it is not becoming of the State Government or the Central Government to indulge in any such controversy. After all, whatever we do, we do for the good of the people, for helping the weaker section. So, why should there be any controversy? We never said that the Central Government is not subsidising the food stuffs, the rice.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : I am glad with this statement.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Certainly. This is a statement of fact. Everybody knows.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : The Leader has at least said this now.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Yes. I want to be on record that the Central Government is spending huge amount to the extent of Rs. 1,650 crores this year for subsidising various commodities and it is going to all the States including Andhra Pradesh. But please understand that we too are subsidising.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : But nobody said no.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : May be you say you are subsidising to the extent of 67 paise per kg., we say we are subsidising to the extent of another 79 paise per kg. I do not want to dispute the figures. You may be correct. It is a question of your calculation. But the

point is that both the State Government and the Central Government are subsidising. This is the only commodity where there is a massive subsidisation by the Centre and the State together, and because of this it has become possible for the State Government to introduce the scheme on a massive scale and supply rice to the extent of full requirements of the poor people..... (Interruptions)

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : I am sorry to interrupt for a minute. This is precisely, Mr. Leader of the Telugu Desham Party, what I have explained to the people and I shall continue to do so. What had been done is that when it was said that the Centre is giving a step-motherly treatment even on this issue, necessarily somebody had to explain these facts. He is very much right, I have said this more than once that the State and the Centre both are giving the money. Where the State has been committing the mistake is not telling the real truth that the Centre is also giving the money. This is the point which I have been trying to explain.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : I do not know whether it is a fact that the State had been telling or hiding the fact that the Centre is also giving the subsidy. As a matter of fact, it is well-known that the Centre is subsidising the rice and it is giving to all the States. What the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh said was : "You are not giving this subsidy alone to our State. You are giving to all the States." That is all that he said. I may remind my dear friend, the hon. Minister, that the controversy was started by his party. Not by the C.M. What the C M said was in reply to what you said. Anyway, you want to remind the people : "We are also giving." Sir, I am very happy to note that you felt that it is a very good scheme—that is why you also wanted to take the credit for it. The credit must come to you and to us—both. There is no denying that fact. I am very happy about it. I feel that when anybody wants to take the credit, that means, the scheme is very good. Sir, it is for the first time that it is accepted that this scheme is very good. But during

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the last 2 years there has been lot of talk, saying, why should there be this subsidy? Why are you squandering away money, instead of taking up development projects, and all that. Why should you spend Rs. 170 crores every year? Where is the money? The State is not having money to finance the 7th Five Year Plan and all that. All that type of talk was going on. Such criticism went on. I am really very happy that the Government of India has realised that it is a very great revolutionary scheme and that it should be extended to other States. I am very happy to note that recently the Govt. of India has decided to extend this scheme to tribal areas. I am very happy about that indeed.

Now, Sir, when we say that we are giving this subsidy—this subsidised rice—to the poor man and we are really spending Rs. 170 crores, whose money is it that we are really spending? That is the question. Today in this country the incidence of tax is the highest on the poorest of the country. I am prepared to prove this. It is the poorest person who is paying the highest tax to the Exchequer. He pays the highest to the exchequer—whether it goes to the Consolidated Fund of India or to the Consolidated Fund of the State—whatever it is. It does not make much of a difference. Sir, a labourer goes out and drinks after his day's work. He spends 50% of his wages on drinking alone. That takes away Rs. 5 out of Rs. 10 which he earns as his wage per day. Is he not paying the tax to us? What is wrong if we spend some of the amount which we are getting by robbing him, by giving food subsidy? What is wrong?

SHRI K. S. RAO : Who said it? We did not say that it should not be given.

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Coming to the question of the State's request, the Minister knows about it. We had been requesting the Central Govt. for the last 3 years saying—'Look, we are implementing such a nice scheme, because you yourself said...'

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : If you

raise the issue here, then, I will have to answer it. I am prepared to answer. But we have been discussing it in different forums. Would you like to utilise the Parliamentary forum for this purpose?

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : The issue is there.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Whatever it is, I leave it to your judgment.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : But what is the other forum?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : This is a matter which has got to be sorted out administratively. But if you raise it, I will answer it.

(Interruptions)

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : I am using my judgement.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : You proceed. I am sorry to have interrupted you.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : You are a very able lawyer. You can twist facts.

(Interruptions)

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : I am sorry to say this. This is an insinuation on the lawyers—that the lawyers twist the facts. It is an insinuation. I am sorry that my friend has made such a very irresponsible statement.

13.24 hrs.

SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI—
in the Chair

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : You are an able lawyer. You can argue out a case very well.

SHRI K. S. RAO : Not twisting.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : When there is no case...

SHRI K. S. RAO : Don't insult the profession of lawyers.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : You can argue out a case when there is no case.

And at the same time you can mar a case when there is a very strong case. In any case, that is your privilege.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : It is a lefthanded compliment.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : Yes, you deserve that compliment.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Madhav Reddi, please come to the point.

SHRI C. MADHAV REDDI : So, my point is, the State Government has been requesting the Centre stating that 'we are implementing such a nice scheme and the scheme has been appreciated because it has got three main objectives which had been projected all these years—the objectives of having a target group if you want to benefit, then also the effective delivery system, then the differential pricing.' All these three principles we have accepted and we are implementing and we wanted you only to see that we are permitted to procure 12 lakhs tonnes of rice at the same price at which the Government of India is procuring from Andhra Pradesh. We do not want rice from Punjab or any other place. We are surplus, we have enough rice in our State. What we want only is : Please allow us to procure to the extent of another 12 lakh tonnes. Out of 15 lakh tonnes the Food Corporation of India is procuring, you are giving us 10 lakh tonnes, you are taking 5 lakh tonnes for the Central Pool. And since that is not enough for our public distribution system, as we require 22 lakh tonnes, we have to procure additional 12 lakh tonnes at a negotiated price.

Now, in spite of purchasing at a negotiated price, it is certainly going to be a little higher than the procurement price of the Food Corporation of India. If we are permitted to procure on behalf of the Government of India, it would be a saving of about Rs. 20 crores. After all, whose money are we saving? Whether we save our money or the Government of India's money, it does not make any difference.

There would have been a clear saving of about Rs. 20 crores out of Rs. 170 crores which we are spending as subsidy and this request is very genuine and there is nothing objectionable—there were three objections which were raised by the Government of India. I very carefully studied all these objections as to why Government of India is not permitting this. One objection is that if you procure this, you have to give us additional subsidy. We never asked any subsidy, we do not want any subsidy on that. You are subsidising to the extent of 10 lakh tonnes which you are giving to us. We are satisfied. On the additional quantity which we are going to procure we do not want any subsidy. We are prepared to bear all the carrying costs. Please understand this. There will be no expenditure for the Government of India on this account. The only thing is, you have to permit us to procure and we should be armed with a law or regulation. In the same connection, what we wanted was that the Reserve Bank of India or the Consortium of Banks should give us the cash credit facilities so that we may purchase—we are receiving the credit, all right, but our rate of interest is 17½ per cent. We are paying to the Reserve Bank of India 17½ per cent for Rs. 150 crores which they are giving to us for procuring the rice from the millers. Now, the Food Corporation of India is having a facility of getting it at 14 percent. We wanted only that to be given to us. That is all.

The second objection of the Government of India was that if the procurement is done at such a massive scale in Andhra Pradesh, then there won't be enough stocks to go to the southern States. Now, Madam, the procurement is already being done. There is no additional quantity to be procured by us. Already we are procuring 12 lakh tonnes extra and already stocks are moving to the southern States; it is not as though there will be any shortage in the southern States; and the figures show that the southern States are getting much more from our Andhra Pradesh in the recent period, after the introduction of Rs. 2/- per kg. system.

The third objection is that if the procurement is done at such a massive scale,

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then it will be difficult for the deficit districts in our own State to get sufficient quantities of rice. Again the same argument—again we are procuring the rice, there is no question of procuring any additional or extra rice and already the rice which is being procured, after that we found that the prices have gone up. So, these arguments are today outmoded, because you have got lot of stocks in the country; lot of stocks in your godowns. Today the problem of Government of India and the Food Corporation is how to procure stocks and where to keep them. You do not have godown facilities and today if the State Governments are prepared to procure the stocks, if you are thinking of allowing them, please allow us. That is all we want. I would request you to consider this not as a politician but as a very good administrator that you are because, you come from our State and your services to the State are no less than the services rendered by any leader. Certainly you consider this and see that justice is done. There is a lot of justice in this particular scheme which is beneficial for the weaker sections of the community.

SHRI CHINGWANG KONYAK (Nagaland): Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the demands for grants for the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. The Food and Civil Supplies Ministry is a very important Ministry. The poor people who are living in the rural areas or living in the urban areas, are most concerned whether they get the necessary essential commodities at a cheaper price. If the essential commodities are available at a reasonable price, then the people are very happy and they say that the Government is doing good. But if they do not get the essential commodities at a reasonable price, then they revolt against the Government, organise agitations and blame the ruling party. I am happy that the Government of India had announced, specially, subsidised rates for wheat and rice for the tribal people and the weaker sections of the people. But I am very sorry that my State, Nagaland, which consists of 90 to 99 per cent of tribal people, there this programme is not being implemented till today. Recently I visited my District Headquarters Mon, where I found that the common varieties

of rice is being sold at the rate of Rs. 2.50 per kg. and fine variety rice is being sold at Rs. 2.85 per kg. Nowhere in Nagaland this programme is being implemented. So, I would request the hon. Minister of Food and Civil Supplies to look into this matter. I would like to say that this programme is mainly meant for the tribal people and the weaker sections of the people.

Another point I would like to state is that my State is a deficit State. Mostly, it depends on rice supply from the FCI. You know, we are mostly rice-eaters. When the rainy season comes, sometimes people living in the hill areas and tribal areas, face some problems because of dislocation of communications and the people living in the interior areas do not get rice. So, I would suggest that before the monsoon commences; the FCI should have a proper stock in the State.

I am happy to say that compared to the State population, the Central Government is giving 50,000 quintals of rice per month to my State. But only about 50 per cent of rice is allotted to the Fair Price Shops or the public distribution system or what we called CPO Centres, and the balance of 40 to 50 percent of rice is allotted in the name of a few individuals—500 quintals, 1,000 quintals, 5,000 quintals, and so on; and this rice goes away from Dimapur railhead to other States. You can find out from the Directorate of Supplies even the names. The people in the villages are buying rice from market paying Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 or Rs. 6 per kilo, whereas the rice supplied by the Government of India is being used by a few individuals for advancing their own selfish interests. I would request that, from now on, no rice allotted to Nagaland should be allotted to any individuals. Allotting to Fair Price Shops is a different thing, but allotting 500 quintals or 1,000 quintals or 5,000 quintals to individuals who are not Fair Price Shop owners should be stopped forthwith.

We have a railhead at Dimapur. But some quantities of rice are asked to be lifted from Gauhati, if my information is correct. I want to point out that from Gauhati the rice will never reach Nagaland, it will go away to Bangladesh or somewhere else. This has to be checked.

The entire quantity allotted to Nagaland should be delivered at Dimapur.

Another point is this : unless and until we have FCI godowns at all the district headquarters, I still have the apprehension that the rice may not reach the people and they will continue to suffer.

These are very important points. This is what is actually happening in my State. I urge upon the hon. Minister for Food & Civil Supplies to take immediate action in this regard.

Under the 20-point Programme, the policy of the Government of India is to open more Fair Price Shops all over India. We have not only the District Headquarters but—those who have gone to Nagaland might have seen we have also big villages, villages having a population of 3,000, 5,000 and so on. Opening of Fair Price Shops should be encouraged not only in District Headquarters but also in big villages. Today we are having only a few Fair Price Shops and there also people are not getting essential commodities. To open a Fair Price Shop in a small town, I think, one has to deposit about Rs. 2,500, and in a big town, I think, about Rs. 5,000. If, after depositing that money, he is not supplied by the Government or the CPO Centre rice or wheat or edible oil or other essential commodities, then he loses his interest in running a Fair Price Shop. The whole deposit money is blocked. Even though it may be Rs. 2,500 or Rs. 5,000, for small businessmen it is a big amount, and they would not like to run Fair Price Shops if they do not get the supply of essential commodities from the Government. That is why in Nagaland you will find that many people are not coming forward to open Fair Price Shops.

So, the Government of Nagaland, Department of Supplies should be instructed that the required rice or wheat should be supplied to the fair price shops for public sale regularly.

Sir, as I said earlier, our people are mostly rice eaters. Even though we are getting all these quotas our people are less concerned for wheat or edible oils,

Except in the towns many people are not using edible oils. So, I don't want to take time on these points.

I have made certain points which are very important which I have seen with my eyes and which are actually happening in my State. I am bringing them to your notice and I hope that you will definitely take action on these matters. With these few words, I support the Demands for Grants.

SHRI D. N. REDDY : I beg to move—

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to tone up the administration of F.C.I. Food and Nutrition Board and Miltone and National Sugar Institute.] (2)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need for effective administration of Fruit Products Control Order.] (3)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Failure of various storage programmes.](4)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need for modernisation of rice-mills especially edible bran oil mills.] (5)

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to take steps for the protection of consumers and to maintain supply of goods to them.](10)

[Shri D. N. Reddy]

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need for a pragmatic concessionaire approach for pushing forward Consumer Co-operatives, Super Bazars etc.] (11)

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Poor administration of the Directorate of Weights and Measures.] (12)

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to develop low cost packaging of vegetable oils, continued recourse to hydrogenation and failure of I.S.I. to protect consumers and national interest.] (13)

SHRI GOPALA KRISHNA THOTA : I beg to move—

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to improve the storage facilities in godowns.] (6)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to scrap the Food Corporation of India.] (7)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to scrap the subsidy given to Food Corporation of India.] (8)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to purchase the produce of the farmers during harvest time.] (9)

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to improve the quality of consumer goods supplied to the dealers for distribution to consumers.] (14)

“That the demand under the head Department of Civil Supplies be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to allot the dealership agencies to the educated unemployed only.] (15)

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : I beg to move—

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced to Rs. 1.”

[Need to review the policy of operation of buffer stocks of food-grains.] (16)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced to Rs. 1.”

[Wastage of foodgrains and good grains getting rotten in FCI godowns due to storage in open space.] (17)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced to Rs. 1.”

[Failure to appoint a Technical Committee to go into the working of FCI and decide about buffer stock.] (18)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced to Rs. 1.”

[Failure to devise ways and means to reduce the allocation of Rupees 1960 crores for FCI by 50 per cent.] (19)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to reduce the huge overhead charges by FCI.] (20)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to reduce the wide gap between procurement prices and issue prices of foodgrains by the FCI.] (21)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to check mal-practices in FCI particularly at the time of procurement with regard to quality grading and handling etc.](22)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take action against the employees of FCI responsible for huge losses in foodgrains](23)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to take steps to save huge quantity of foodgrains from getting rotten due to negligence of FCI.] (24)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to revise the norms of procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains by FCI.](25)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need for allocation of less wheat and more rice to Andhra Pradesh.](26)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to reduce considerably the cost of handling charges of foodgrains by FCI.](27)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100"

[Need to procure and distribute large quantity of coarse grains to the poor.](28)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need for an upward revision of procurement price of foodgrains, sugar and groundnut.](29)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to check improper distribution of foodgrains under N.R.E.P.] (30)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to prevent distress sale of foodgrains by farmers in Andhra Pradesh.](31)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to increase production of coarse grains.](32)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need to construct more godowns at Guntekal in Andhra Pradesh for storage of foodgrains by FCI.](33)

"That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100."

[Need the allot more rice and edible oils to Andhra Pradesh.](34)

[Shri K. Ramachandra Reddy]

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to lift ban imposed on the procurement of rice by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.](35)

“That the Demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to stop completely the import of foodgrains, edible oils and sugar.](36)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to remove restriction on inter-state movement of foodgrains and groundnut.](37)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to construct more godowns by FCI to avoid storage of foodgrains in open resulting in huge wastages.](38)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to reduce the huge buffer stocks maintained by Food Corporation of India.](39)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to check adulteration of foodgrains in FCI.](40)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to take steps to prevent FCI from paying heavy demurrage to Railways.](41)

“That the demand under the head Department of food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to check losses of foodgrains in storage and in transit in FCI.](42)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need [to reduce the enormous amount of subsidy of Rs. 1900 crores being allocated to FCI to cover up the losses.](43)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need for inquiry into the supply of sub-standard foodgrains by FCI to States](44)

“That the demand under the head Department of Food be reduced by Rs. 100.”

[Need to check malpractices in the public distribution system.](45)

[Translation]

*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat) : Sir, I rise to support the demands in respect of the Ministry of Food & Civil Supplies. This Ministry is vested with the responsibility to supplying foodgrains to be distributed to public distribution system all over the country. This Ministry has done commendable work in this respect. I congratulate the hon. Minister Shri Shiv Shankar and Shri Ajit Panja for this. It is the accepted policy of the Govt. to strengthen the public distribution system. The late lamented Smt. Indira Gandhi had included this as one of the important items in her 20-Point Programme. Steps were taken to see that foodgrains are supplied at reasonable prices to lakhs and lakhs of poor people, particularly the Scheduled

* The speech was originally delivered in Malayalam.

Castes & Scheduled Tribes. Steps were also taken to open large number of fair price shops in those areas where these people live. As a result of these steps the people living below poverty line started getting foodgrains at fair prices. Thus the public distribution system has been developed as a part of the programme for eradication of poverty. I compliment the Govt. for this. However, there are complaints about the functioning of public distribution system. Complaints are often heard that foodgrains are not available in many fair price shops. There are also complaints that all the items which are distributed through fair price shops are not available at a time. Lack of efficiency of the employees of the Food Corporation of India is a major cause for this state of affairs. Similarly, the retailers often complain that unless the officials of the FCI are bribed rice or wheat of good quality won't be supplied. All this points to the fact that there are some serious lapses in the functioning of the public distribution system. This system was introduced with the twin objective of price control and easy availability of foodgrains. Therefore, I would request the Minister to rectify these lapses and streamline the functioning of this system.

Having said this I come to some of the problems of my State, Kerala. There is statutory rationing in Kerala. There are fair price shops in every nook and corner of the State. There are also what is known as Maveli stores in different parts of the State. A Central Minister had said in the House some time ago that the public distribution system in Kerala was the best in India. Sir, it is no exaggeration to say that the public distribution system in Kerala depends entirely on the rice supplied by the Centre. Kerala is a chronically deficit State in food and it is the responsibility of the Centre to provide us adequate quantity of rice. But the fact is that we don't always get the required quantity of rice from the Central Govt. At the rate of 320 grams of rice per adult per day Kerala requires 2.10 lakh tons of rice per month. But it is getting only 1.25 lakh tons. This will not suffice to supply rice at the rate of even 220 grams per adult per day. Moreover, the total number of ration cards in Kerala has grown up from

43 lakhs to 48 lakhs. But the quantity of rice supplied by the Centre has remained static. Therefore, more rice should be supplied to Kerala. Representations have been made by the Govt. of Kerala in this regard on a number of occasions. The Govt. of Kerala has demanded that 1.50 lakh tons of rice should be supplied per month. I request the Centre to adopt a more sympathetic attitude towards the requirements of Kerala. I would reiterate the demand that 1.50 lakh tons of rice should be supplied to Kerala.

Another point is about the quality of rice supplied to Kerala by the FCI. There are many complaints on this score. The officials of Govt. of Kerala have taken up this matter with the FCI authorities but no improvement has taken place. The FCI officials have to be bribed in order to get good quality of rice. This situation should change. The people of Kerala are accustomed to using good quality of rice. Therefore, good quality rice preferably, boiled rice from Andhra Pradesh should be supplied to Kerala. Now I come to the supply of sugar to Kerala. The State requires 15 lakhs metric tons of sugar at the rate of 450 grams per adult. The Centre supplies us only 11 lakh metric tons. Thus there is a shortage of 4 lakh metric tons. This has to be made up. Therefore, I request the Govt. to supply the full quantity of 15 lakhs of sugar. Similarly, I would also request that the transport charges for transporting the sugar should also be raised.

The quantity of kerosene supplied to Kerala has been reduced which has created shortage in the market. Kerala was getting 17250 metric tons of kerosene which has been reduced to 14250 metric tons. Apart from the Household sector the fishing sector too experiences the shortage of kerosene. Therefore, the Govt. should raise the quantity supplied to Kerala.

Now I want to refer to a problem with regard to the Kerala Civil Supply Corporation. This Corporation is playing the crucial role in making the public distribution system in Kerala a success. It has offices in all the taluqs in the State. A few years ago, the Corporation had submitted a scheme for constructing godowns and sent it to the Centre for financial assistance. But the Central Govt. has not given approval to the scheme. It

[Shri V. S. Vijayaraghavan]

is very important to construct godowns for storing the foodgrains. The Corporation is vested with the responsibility for supplying foodgrains in every nook and corner of the State. The scheme for constructing godowns in every taluq head-quarter is quite welcome. Therefore I request the Govt. to take a favourable decision in this respect.

Sir, there is a plant in Delhi under the Modern Food Industries Ltd. which manufactures the fruit juice called 'Rasika'. This fruit juice has become very popular over the years but due to the inefficient management the sale of this popular drink has not increased very much. First of all the publicity wing is very weak. This company use to put out advertisement in radio and TV. But it has been stopped now. I don't understand the the reason for this. Similarly, the rate of commission paid and other facilities provided to the distributors are very low. There should be a proper marketing policy in order to enable this company to compete with the soft drinks manufacturers. The reason for the present state of affairs is that this company does not have such a marketing policy at present. I would suggest that the Govt. to give proper direction to this company in this respect. Then Sir, more such plants should be set up in different parts of the country. Particularly, I would suggest that such a plant be set up in Kerala. Different varieties of fruits are available in plenty in Kerala. If such a plant is set up we will be able to manufacture fruit juice which can be even be exported to foreign countries. I hope the Govt. will give some thought to this proposal.

Sir, I have placed some of the problems of my State before the hon. Minister and I hope that the Govt. will adopt a sympathetic attitude towards them. The Central Government has a responsibility to help Kerala in the matter of food. I hope that the Govt. will discharge that responsibility. I once again support the demands and conclude.

SHRI ANOOPCHAND SHAH
(Bombay North) : Madam Chairman, I

rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the farmers and the cultivators who are responsible for making our country self-sufficient in the matter of food production. It is due to the policy of our Government that the farmers and cultivators were offered the remunerative prices & as a consequence, the food production increased and our country became self-sufficient in this field.

Before speaking further on the Demands, I would like to say a few words regarding the Food Corporation of India. I have observed in the Cut Motions that have been moved that the Food Corporation of India has been criticised the most.

The Food Corporation of India was established in our country in 1960 so that our policy regarding procurement, distribution and storage of foodgrains and also its import and export could be implemented properly. The FCI has been following the Government's policy ever since.

Perhaps it is true that the functions of the Food Corporation of India have increased manifold today and hence its work-load has considerably increased. After looking at the relevant figures, it appears that the total turnover of the Food Corporation of India is more than Rs. 8,000 crores and perhaps they handle more than 400 million tonnes of foodgrains. While handling such a huge volume of work it faces many difficulties and has several complaints and the Government should take proper steps to remove them.

At present, the Public Distribution system is there in the country. Under this system, the Central Government allocates foodgrains. However, our hon. Minister had declared a couple of days back that two systems were practised in this country; Kerala and West Bengal followed a separate policy, because the goods were supplied to them directly from the Centre, whereas in rest of the

States, it was handled by the State Governments through the Public Distribution System. When a uniform policy cannot be adhered to in this country, there will be grounds for complaints and such complaints have started arriving. A uniform policy with regard to food supply and distribution should be followed by all the States. Every State must follow the same procedure and that is that the Food Corporation should supply all the commodities to the State Governments and these commodities should be handled and distributed by the Public Distribution System.

It has also been our policy to create a Food Corporation in each State. If this had been implemented, then many of our difficulties could have been removed. Although such Food Corporations have been established in some States, yet the same has not been done in all the States. Hence, we have to think about them also.

Another problem of the Food Corporation is that the storage facilities are inadequate in comparison with the amount of foodgrains procured. A new policy has been adopted by us in this connection which provides encouragement to the Private Sector in the form of five years guarantee and some rent so that they may construct some godowns with the help of bank loans which would be advanced for the purpose. But I think that a mere guarantee for five years and some rent would not be a sufficient motive for the Private Sector to take initiative in this direction.

In addition, the new system that has come up in the world, which has been accepted by all the countries, is the Steel Silo System. Through this system godowns can be constructed within a much shorter duration of time. It is true that it is quite an expensive system in the initial stages, but foodgrains remain very well preserved in such a storage system. Therefore, the Government must consider this fact.

So far as the Public Distribution System is concerned, it has received the highest priority under the 20-Point

Programme. It helps in controlling the prices and ensures regular supply. I would request that some more essential commodities should be included in the list of essential items which are distributed through the Fair Price Shops or the retail outlets under the Public Distribution System. My suggestion in this connection would be to distribute the ration according on the basis of income as it would then benefit all the people belonging to the ordinary as well as the poor sections of our society. I think such a system has been enforced in Gujarat and in West Bengal. If this system is followed throughout the country, then it would be beneficial to all.

With a view to ensure proper functioning of the Public Distribution System, a vigilance committee has been set up in each area. The people representing various interests have been appointed on such committees, but they are not working effectively and their existence seems only to be on paper. The reason behind the failure of this scheme is that the vigilance committees are appointed by the States, and these committees are not provided with much authority or adequate facilities. I would suggest that the vigilance committees should function properly and such committees should be provided with all the facilities.

I am not aware of the system of sugar distribution in all the States at present, but so far as Maharashtra is concerned, the profit margin for the retailers was fixed at Rs. 5 per bag in the year 1970. At that time each bag used to cost Rs. 150. But now when the price has increased to Rs. 440 per bag, the profit margin for retailers has remained the same. This matter has been raised several times before the Department of Civil Supplies and the Margin Committee, but they have constantly replied that Maharashtra has been receiving the highest margin of profit. Though I do not want to go into the dispute regarding the inclusion of cost of the empty bag in this margin, yet I would say that this cost is not proper. If you decide that the sugar suppliers, who fix the cost of gunny bags, should charge the price of those bags from the retailers, then

[Shri Anoop Chand Shah]

we would have no objection. You have fixed the price at Rs. 12 per gunny bag, when the actual cost is not more than Rs. 6 or Rs. 7 per bag. The gross profit is still Rs. 12, although the total turnover from each bag is Rs. 440. When 100 kilogrammes of sugar is sold to 30 or 40 customers, each getting 2 kilogrammes or one kg., then a shortage is also created. After taking into account these shortages, the average margin of profit does not come to more than 2 per cent.

Again, you will say that the sugar is sold by the Fair Price Shops, but I want to contend that the retail outlets of the Public Distribution System do not want to sell any sugar. During the last 15 or 16 years, the wholesale profit margin has increased three times, because they have a strong lobby whereas the margin of profit of the retailers has remained the same as it was in the year 1970. This matter should also be considered carefully.

Today N.C.C.F. is an apex body. It was established in order to benefit all the cooperative societies, but now-a-days, new societies are being formed and new systems are being developed. N.C.C.F. had closed its membership in December 1985 on the ground that it did not have the capacity to cater to any more members. I wish to say that if membership is closed, then what is the justification of granting permission for the formation of new societies? N.C.C.F. has a huge monopoly today. You are giving all the confiscated goods to this society at present, but the N.C.C.F. is not releasing these commodities to its members societies and the names of the societies only exist on paper. The Chairman of N.C.C.F. and the officers together sell all the items in the black market.

With regard to the sugar policy, I would like to say that you are trying to formulate a new policy and I think it would be proper if it is operated well. In whichever State or area there is excess sugarcane production, licences should be issued for the establishment of sugar factories there. This alone would solve the problem of the availability of sugar in this country. Sugar mills should not be allowed to be set up in the areas where

there is hardly any sugarcane production. This matter should also be considered carefully.

Then, we can observe today that non-official directors have not been appointed since many years in those corporations which function under the Department of Food and Civil Supplies. Many M.Ps. and M.L.As. are nominated on these positions. However, I would say that only those who have some knowledge about the concerned department should be appointed as non-official directors. Today, we observe that the bureaucrats are mostly controlling the Board of Directors. You must also look into this matter.

With these words, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : I oppose the demands of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. You have mentioned very good points in your report, but in actual practice it is not so. You have stated in chapter 5—

[English]

You have stated at Page 16 of your Annual Report that "the responsibility for procuring and supplying the seven key essential commodities, namely, wheat, rice, sugar, imported edible oil, kerosene oil, soft coke and controlled cloth, is with the Central Government."

[Translation]

You have stated in chapter 1—

[English]

Again you have stated at Page 1, "the major thrust of Government policy has continued to be increased production & improvement in the management of supplies of various essential commodities. Accordingly, several measures were taken to increase production, improved availability, strengthen supply management

and keep in check the price of essential commodities.”

[Translation]

But what is happening in actual practice? So far as production of foodgrains is concerned, there was a record production of 152.87 million tonnes in 1982-83, but it declined by 4 per cent in 1984-85. Whenever there is an increase in the production of foodgrains the Members of the ruling party attribute that to their leader and when there is any decline in the production of foodgrains, the Members of the ruling party say that it has declined due to the failure of monsoon.... (Interruptions). The production of cereals was 139.47 million tonnes in 1983-84 and it went down to 134 million tonnes in 1984-85. The production of pulses too had gone down. The production of sugar was 84.83 lakh tonnes in 1981-82, but it went down to 59.16 lakh tonnes in 1983-84. The production of sugar was 61.44 lakh tonnes in 1984-85.

Similarly, what is the position of edible oil? You have said nothing about it in your report. You have said only this much that there has been some decline in the import of edible oil which means that there had been some improvement in the position. But you have said nothing in your report as to what has been the indigenous production of edible oil.

You have said in your 20-Point Programme that Fair Price Shops would be opened in each and every village. I agree that you have increased the number of Fair Price Shops a little, but the foodgrains supplied through them is not cheap. It is not cheap as you have raised the issue price three times and you have increased the procurement price by only Rs. 5. In 1984-85, the procurement price of common variety of rice, fine variety of rice and sugar was raised from Rs. 137, Rs. 141 and Rs. 145 to Rs. 142, Rs. 146 and Rs. 150 respectively. The procurement price of wheat was raised by Rs. 5 only. But now you have a look at the figures of issue price. The issue price of common variety of rice was Rs. 208 on 16th January, 1984; it was raised to Rs. 217 on 10-10-85 and again to Rs. 231 on

1-2-86. Similarly, the issue prices of fine and super fine varieties of rice have also been raised. The issue price is raised by Rs. 18 to 20, but the minimum support price to farmers is raised by Rs. 5/- only. On the one hand you are exploiting the farmers and on the other the consumers. The issue price of sugar was Rs. 4 on 1-4-85 and it is Rs. 4.80 now.

You have also raised the price of kerosene oil. You had sought to raise its price by 11 per cent and an announcement was also made to this effect, but when there was much hue and cry all around, the Government reduced the increase a little and there was then only an increase of 15 paise per litre. As a result of increase in the prices, the price index is going up day by day.

You had taken up the responsibility of supplying seven essential commodities. I do not know about other States, but I would definitely like to tell you about my State. The monthly requirement of rice and wheat in West Bengal is 1.5 lakh tonnes and 2 lakh tonnes respectively, but their supply is far below the requirement. You would say that the demand of West Bengal is more than that of other States. This is a fact that the demand of West Bengal is more in comparison with other States, but you might be aware that after partition of the country, the jute-growing area went to East Pakistan (new Bangladesh) and all the jute mills remained in the West Bengal. With a view to meeting the requirement of those jute mills the paddy land of West Bengal had to be converted into jute-growing land. At that time, Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru had given the assurance that West Bengal would be supplied paddy double the quantity of jute produced by that State. Jute and tea produced in West Bengal earn the maximum foreign exchange for the country. Due to this reason, you have to give thought to meeting the shortage of rice and wheat in that State.

Similarly, you are not meeting the demand of sugar which is 4.80 lakh tonnes per year. Even the allocated quota of sugar is not reaching there in full. The allocation of sugar in 1983 was 2.88 lakh

[Shri Syed Masudal Hossian]

tonnes, but actual supply was 2.85 lakh tonnes only. However, there was full supply of entire allocation of 2.95 lakh tonnes in the year 1984. The allocation in 1985 was 3.14 lakh tonnes, but the actual supply was only 3.03 lakh tonnes.

Similarly our demand for edible oil is 1.80 lakh tonne per year, but the actual supply is even less than the allocation made by the Centre. Your supply position is not satisfactory. The demand for kerosene oil is increasing day by day. Your allocation in 1983 was 6 lakh tonnes, but the actual supply was 4.76 lakh tonnes. In 1984 the allocation was 8.40 lakh tonnes, but the actual supply was 5.27 lakh tonnes. In 1985 the allocation was 9.60 lakh tonnes, but the supply by the Centre was only 5.60 lakh tonnes. Similar is the position about other commodities as well and if you want, I can furnish figures about them also.

Your 20-Point Programme is being implemented in each and every village. The work regarding rural development is not being handled by you but your report shows that your supply under NREP and EGS, RLEGP etc. is far less than the requirement. There is unemployment in every village. The prices are going up. You should give thought to it.

F.C.I. is working on behalf of the Government. Their style of functioning is very strange. The officers of F.C.I. do not prefer to store the procured commodities in Government godowns. They prefer to store them under cover and plinth scheme and more than that in private godowns. It had appeared in the newspapers sometime back that fifty officers had been suspended. This process will go on. If an officer is caught accepting bribe, he manages his release by giving bribe. This is not going to serve any purpose. They allow the commodities to get rot, and damaged in the godowns and reap benefits thereby. A few days back, a report had appeared in the Press that foodgrains worth Rs. 623 crores had got damaged. Another type of bungling is taking place due to handling shortages. It is an open secret. If foodgrains are procured in West Bengal, they would be

sent to Punjab and the foodgrains procured in Punjab would be sent to Andhra Pradesh and the foodgrains of Andhra Pradesh would be sent to Assam. The number of times, they change the godowns, the officers concerned would be allowed the benefit of handling-shortage. This is beneficial to them as well as to the contractors. You have to look into this aspect. Besides, the allocated quantities of essential commodities do not reach the destination in full. When it is pointed out, it is said that the railway wagons are not being made available and the Railway department says that they are not getting coal. The commodities are not reaching the proper place at proper time. You would have to look into this aspect also. The foodgrains are transported in uncovered coaches, which results in a huge loss.

You have tried to lay the maximum emphasis on consumer co-operative system. There should be consumer co-operative system to protect the interests of the consumers. I have some information about my State of West Bengal in this respect. There is NCCF at the top, thereafter there is State Federation, then there is wholesale consumer co-operative society and then Primary co-operative store. Thus there is four-tier system, each having its administrative cost. To meet this cost, they have to keep some margin of profit. There is much pressure on NCCF. Large quantities of confiscated goods are sent by the NCCF to such places where there is not sufficient demand for them. You may visit Super Bazar in Delhi. Many years back electronic goods were supplied by NCCF to them, but these goods are still lying there unsold. I would also like to submit that you have to think about the employees working there. The people have a general impression that the employees of co-operative societies are dishonest. I do not say that all of them are honest, but unless their service conditions are improved, the co-operative system would go away. The employees of the co-operatives are neither provided any protection by the Central Government, nor by the State Governments and they have to make both ends meet with whatever money they get from the co-operative societies. They do not get any retirement

benefits and the pay scales are also very low. In district Malda in my State, the employees in the co-operatives are paid only Rs. 200 or Rs. 250 and they have to work from 10 A.M. to 7 P.M. You would have to think about improving their condition. I would also like to submit that the employees' representatives should be allowed to participate in the management of the co-operatives. As there is no representation of the employees in the management, they do not have a chance to explain their plight. If the present situation is allowed to continue, the co-operative system would fail. You would have to look into the Four-Tier system.

I would also like to touch one more point. If a packet supplied by the S.T.C. in Delhi is found torn, it is not replaced by the S.T.C. whereas if a packet supplied by a shopkeeper is found torn, it is replaced by him. But S.T.C. does not replace such torn packets and the entire responsibility and the entire liability is put on the employee working there. You have to think about it. You should also consider some ways and means to improve the service conditions of the employees of the cooperatives. Also, you should check the corruption prevalent in F.C.I. If corruption is not eradicated, your Civil Supplies Deptt. would become useless and will not serve the purpose for which it has been created.

With these words, I oppose the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Civil Supplies.

SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ (Moradabad) : Madam, Chairman, I am thankful to you for the opportunity given to me to speak on the Demands for Grants of this Department. As my colleague has stated just before me, this Department controls food and civil supplies and works for the supply of the same. There is no doubt that this Department has done a commendable job. The farmers of our country have made us self-sufficient by producing enough foodgrains, but I would like to say that some improvements are still required to be made in this Department. At present, we notice the sad plight of the poor people of our-country in

obtaining food products from distant shops in remote villages. They face difficulties in obtaining the items of civil supplies. For example, they do not get kerosene according to their requirement. In the same way, poor people do not receive the supply of wheat in time. The reason for all this is that the Fair Price Shops are situated at a distance of three to four kilometres and the poor labourers have to leave the day's work to go to these shops. They find the shops closed in the morning and came back disappointed. I will request the hon. Minister to adopt such measures in respect of these shops whereby the poor people may get the commodities of their need in time.

The FCI stores the foodgrains. We have observed that the FCI has not enough godowns, as a result of which a large quantity of foodgrains get destroyed. The resultant loss has to be borne by the poor also. I will request the hon. Minister to remove the shortage of warehouses and godowns as soon as possible.

We have dual system for the distribution of cement. Under one system, the cement is available in the free sale market and the second system is for the sale of controlled variety of cement. But the controlled variety of cement is not easily available to those for whom this scheme had been introduced. The poor people do not get the controlled cement in requisite quantity. The poor should get the maximum of controlled cement, because this arrangement has been made for them. You should kindly look into this matter.

The commission for the owners of the Fair Price Shops distributing foodgrains is about Rs. 3 to Rs. 3.50 per bag and this amount is very low in today's conditions. That is why these shopkeepers indulge in black marketing and bungling of foodgrains. There is need to increase this commission so as to achieve the objectives for which these Fair Price Shops have been opened. The sole objective of opening these shops is to provide commodities of necessity at a low price to the poor and low income group people. These days the owners of these shops sell their stocks at the godown itself and this situation could

[Shri Hafiz Mohd. Siddiq]

be averted by raising the rate of commission.

At the same time, the poor farmers are also harassed at the time of procuring wheat. As the time for procurement of wheat is to begin very soon, I would request the hon. Minister to do something about it. The procurement of wheat has been undertaken by the FCI to save the farmers from the clutches of middlemen as also to ensure that the farmers get a fair price of their produce. The hon. Minister should inquire into the bungling in the FCI and its subordinate agencies and the way farmers are harassed. The Government should issue instructions to the concerned officers to remove all such shortcomings. In this way our farmers will get some facilities.

The fixation of rates of foodgrains, whether of wheat or of rice, should be done before the start of procurement programme so as the benefit could reach the cultivators. This will provide an incentive to the farmers, because if they know in advance that they will get a good price, then they will work harder and produce more. For example, some days back, the sugarcane crisis came to our notice. Despite shortage of sugarcane, the price was less and this led to the closure of our mills. The rate was increased later on and the crusher owners derived the benefit by purchasing sugarcane at a price of Rs. 40 per quintal and the Government suffered losses. I want that the farmers should know the price to be fixed in advance. That will result in good production by the farmers. So far as sugar is concerned, we import it. I want that there should be no imports, and the farmers should be given good price and subsidies in the shape of fertilizers, etc. This will benefit the farmers and they would be able to produce more sugarcane which will lead to more production of sugar.

At the same time, I would like to inform the hon. Minister that the people do not get rationed items in time from these Fair Price Shops and they face difficulties. At the time of marriages, sugar and oils are not available, so the Department of Food and

Civil Supplies should be directed to supply all these commodities in time to avoid any difficulties to the people. With these words, I express my gratitude to you and support the Demands for Grants of this Department.

[English]

PROF. K. V. THOMAS (Ernakulam) : Mr. Chairman, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. It is the legitimate right of every citizen to get the essential commodities at a reasonable price. When we attained independence; our public distribution system was very poor. It was the middleman who gained the profit. Now our public distribution system has very much improved. But there are several States where we do not have effective public distribution system. We are making use of the fair price shops for distributing the essential commodities like rice, wheat, vegetable oils and other commodities. But what is the system by which the working of these fair price shops are watched? What is the part played by the consumers in controlling the functioning of these fair price shops? In the Pamphlet distributed here it is stated that Advisory and Vigilance Committees are set up in various States. But when I look into my own State of Kerala, it is said that Vigilance Committees have been set up at State, District, Taluk, and Panchayat levels. But I know that at least in the district level or taluk level and panchayat level, there is no such effective vigilance committee. It is not at all effectively functioning. If this is the situation in Kerala where we have got a very good and effective public distribution system, I do not know what is the position in other States.

Similarly, when you look at the commodities which are distributed, this varies from State to State. In West Bengal, there are 18 items. In Kerala, there are 6 items. In Himachal Pradesh, there are 50 items. So, my request is this. All the essential commodities that are needed by the common man should be distributed through these Fair Price Shops.

Similarly it is said that in 1979 2.39 lakhs of fair price shops have been there. Now it has been increased to 3.2 lakhs. Where has all this increase in fair price

shops really gone? I feel that more fair price shops have gone to the urban areas and not to the rural areas. My request to the Government is that fair price shops should be established in fishermen's villages, in harijan and girijan areas.

Another important factor which should be looked into is the part played by the consumers cooperative societies. Only very few percentage of the fair price shops are controlled by the consumers cooperative societies. Unless 50% at least of the fair price shops are controlled by the consumers cooperative societies the people will be cheated by the middlemen. There should be effective coordination between the various agencies who purchase, store and distribute the essential commodities.

Another thing is this. We have got the Civil Supplies Corporation, in different States and Union territories. But I am very sorry to say that only 12 States in the entire country, and only Delhi among the Union territories, have got effective Civil Supplies Corporation. We should make use of the mobile vans for supplying the essential commodities to the villagers.

We find that almost all the advertisements are misleading. Look at the advertisements for baby food for instance. These advertisements are one of the reasons for denying mother's milk to the child. You should make some regulation to control these misleading advertisements.

Ensuring proper Weights and Measures is one of the areas where we should give more attention. It is stated that one per cent error in weights and measures will cause a loss of Rs. 1,500 for farmers and consumers in 5 years. If we are going to check these weights and measures, we will be getting a very fantastic data! The weight of many things is being cut down by grinding the bottom or by putting holes under the weights. Similarly, some of the scrap dealers who buy old paper and other things, increase the weight by welding lead into the weights and cheat the consumer. There is no effective way to check our weights and measures. There are certain inspectors, but their actions are not effective. (*Interruptions*)

Regarding adulteration, it has become one of the finest arts and advance science in our country....If you purchase one kg. of rice, it will definitely contain 100 g of

pebbles: if you purchase sugar, it will contain rawa; if you purchase pepper, it will contain wooden shavings; if you purchase turmeric, it will contain one of the worst poisonous substances called chromat. So, it has become an art. And what effective measures are taken? An Inspector who is going to make a checking of the food materials, he should tell the shopkeeper, 'I am coming to inspect your shop and your materials, I will come at such and such time.' Is there any shopkeeper who will wait for the Inspector like this? In Delhi I am told that the shopkeepers know the vehicles in which the Inspectors are coming. The job of analysing all these materials should be given to the voluntary organisations. Of course, I am not telling that their words should be final, but the voluntary organisations should be asked to play an important role. Now who is the casualty now? It is the consumer. A law should be enacted to the effect that compensation should be paid to the consumer either by the manufacturer or by the trader. Now, the consumer is the man who suffers. But what is the compensation he gets? Nothing. So, any consumer who suffers due to the adulteration of food materials or the adulteration of essential commodities, should be compensated.

Another important thing is the necessary education and publicity. The common man is unaware of where he has to go. In villages when the essential commodities are measured and given, there may be complaints. But where the common man will go, where the farmer will go? And who is this man collecting huge amounts? Look at the trader who is selling sweets. What we find is, these sweets are put in some card-board boxes and along with the box it is being measured and the box will weight at least 100 grams. That means, if the sweets have got a value of Rs. 10/- this man is getting at least Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. So, the sweetmeat seller who is selling about 50 to 100 kg. of sweets is making a net profit of at least Rs. 100 to Rs. 150. It is a huge amount. What is the punishment you would give? You will give a maximum punishment of Rs. 5000 fine if he is caught for the first time. And if he is caught for the second time, he will be given a punishment of Rs. 5000 fine and imprisonment for 5 years. I am not talking

[Prof. K. V. Thomas]

about imprisonment. Very seldom this punishment is awarded. The judicial procedures take years and years. Look at the convictions that have taken place. So, it is easy for the people who want to escape from the eye of the law. There are many ways to escape. So, my request is that the legal procedure should be tightened, special courts should be set up so that those people who do adulteration are caught immediately and dealt with very seriously and the common man and our social organisations should be allowed to have a better say to deal with adulteration cases.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS (Bhilwara) : Madam Chairman, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies and would like to draw the attention of the Government towards some important issues connected with it. Just now a Member from Marxist Communist Party was saying that whenever the production of foodgrains was more, the Government took the credit for increase in production but when there was decline in the production of foodgrains, the same was attributed to unfavourable climate. In fact, this statement is not true. It is due to the system of working devised by our Agriculture Department that the production in our country has increased. If you look at the increase in the production of foodgrains since independence, you will find that the production has increased three fold. This green revolution has been achieved not with the help of the statements of the Marxist Communist Party, but it has all been possible due to the efforts of the Agriculture Department.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : What has happened in case of Rajasthan ?

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : The production has increased in Rajasthan also. If the work on Rajasthan Canal is completed, then Rajasthan will certainly

achieve green revolution. Not only the production of one single variety of foodgrains has increased in the country, but all other foodgrains like wheat or rice etc. have registered higher production level. It is a fact that the production of rice has not increased as much as the production of wheat. Efforts are required to be made to increase the production of rice in the same way. Some of our leaders are sitting here who along with some other Members have stated that we have increased the production of jute and tea & because we are earning foreign exchange, so we need not increase the production of foodgrains. But it is a wrong statement. What is the total population of the entire West Bengal ? If they grow only jute and tea, with what will they feed the people ? It is the duty of all the people of the country to see that the production of all the crops increases and, in this matter the people of West Bengal are as much responsible as those of the other States, say Haryana or Punjab. They should also put in the same efforts as others have put in. It is not like this that after giving bad name to the Government of India, they may feel absolved of this responsibility. And then they demand much whereas they contribute nothing. They produce neither rice nor wheat and ask for larger quantities of wheat, rice and sugar. If they do not get that much, they curse the Government. Some time back the former Agriculture Minister Rao Birendra Singh had explained as to what the real position of the West Bengal Government was. They do not lift even what they are allocated. The foodgrains remain lying. If this is the position of their Government, then why do they find fault with the Central Government ? This should not be done.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : He said incorrect things. That was why he was removed.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : Ministers come and go; there is nothing wrong about it. It is not a permanent office. Rather whosoever looks suitable to the Prime Minister, he is taken and one who does not seem fit, is removed. It is better that the Ministers should remain

changing. There is nothing wrong about it.

I would like to submit that broadly speaking, FCI is losing. I would emphasise here one point. I do not have much time and I also know that you will ring the bell very soon. It is a very big issue where in thousands of crores of rupees are given as subsidy. You should also keep in your mind as to how much money you charge from the consumers and in what way. You have this time increased the rate of the wheat by Rs. 5. The price of rice too has been increased a little. But how much issue price has been raised? Have they to bear all the losses of the FCI? And even after this you provide subsidy worth Rs. 2,000 crores. What is urgently required is that attention should be paid towards scandles that are going on in the FCI.

See the difference between the departmental and contract workers and labourers. There is one Kalyani Depot in West Bengal. The workers employed there are departmental. See the losses there in transit, storage and weighment and the profit and compare that with the losses occurring in storage, transit & weighment where contract labour has been engaged. On comparison you will find that the losses are quite less where departmental workers are working in comparison with the losses, due to these factors, where contractors have been engaged. In those places the number of fraudulent cases too are more and bungling is also more. I, therefore, request you to first of all abolish the contract system and arrange for departmental workers everywhere, because the contractor, wherever he finds a chance, will resort to dishonesty and lure the officers also to dishonesty. He will give them percentage commission and in this way resort to pilferage and bungling which naturally will result in losses. Therefore, you should streamline this system. At present, the Government has to provide subsidy worth Rs. 2000 crores. If the system is streamlined not only you will not have to give any subsidy, the people will also get employment and they will bless you. The workers talking are sitting idle will also get employment. In this way you will be contributing towards solving the problem of

unemployment, because today the contractors are not paying full wages to the labour, they swallow his money & labourers have to indulge in dishonest practices. So, you should liberate them from the clutches of the contractors. The poor workers will bless you. You must provide for this system so that the country as well as you may benefit the most.

[English]

“It has been observed that FCI is showing a heavy financial loss every year due to storage and transit loss and this has been accepted to be a normal loss. But, unfortunately, in reality, it is not so. And that the terms, ‘transit loss’ and ‘storage loss’ are camouflaged terms. In reality, under the garb of a transit and storage loss, huge quantity of foodgrains are being sold out in the open market from different depots of FCI in different States by the corrupt FCI officials and staff.”

[Translation]

This is the condition. The FCI employees and officers by selling indifferent ways the foodgrains shown as lost in transit, storage etc. are earning lakhs of rupees. Some are selling them through the contractors by loading lesser quantity. In this way you will see how much bungling these people are doing in the FCI. You have not been able to curb it till today. The former Minister also, about whom an hon. Member was saying that he had been removed after our request, had said that there was no bungling at all in the FCI.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER) : We are taking action. If there is any specific case, then kindly bring it to my notice.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : There are several specific cases.

[English]

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Specific case.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Pass on the paper.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Ten pages.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : He consulted you !

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : My other submission is about weighment. There is need to pay particular attention to the aspect of weighment of the truck.

[English]

“...incurring loss of foodgrains to the above extent in transit and storage by the FCI officials and staff and thereafter within the stand and practice of 10% weighment foodgrains bags while receiving the same was completely ignored.”

[Translation]

Which means that there is provision that 10 percent of the bags are to be weighed to know whether the weight is correct or not. At present where contract labour is engaged, weighment is not done at all, they too are made party in this and things are left to their mercy. The bags are sent without weighment. No one bothers whether these are 100 or 200 or 500 bags because the foodgrains worth billions of rupees is lying there and if a little out of that is taken away, who cares? This thing should be kept in mind.

You have provided for 2 per cent of losses. It is a very routine thing, but if you get it investigated, you will find that there has been 3 per cent loss i.e., there has been one per cent more loss. You should enquire as to why there has been 3 per cent loss and who is responsible for that. This needs to be looked into specially.

Hon. Minister, Sir, you had asked for specific instances. I am referring to a specific case. In Bihar...

[English]

“The Asstt. Supdt. of FCI, Balui, Gulbagh, Bihar has been selling out foodgrains.....”

[Translation]

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Mr. Vyas, my request is that you may send these instances to me. I will investigate them and I will reply to you after the enquiry.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : It is all right. But can I not quote them here ?

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : That man is not there.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please pass on those papers to him. He will look into it.

[Translation]

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : Buggling is going on in the depot of Bihar. About 70 trucks were got loaded with foodgrains through the contractor without any authority.

[English]

“It is learnt that the Asstt. Depot Supdt. of the said depot has sold 130 bags of FCI sugar from the depot to outside parties on 25.2.86 for his personal gain.”

[Translation]

Foodgrains were sold inside the F.C.I. depot at Gopalganj.

[English]

“It may be mentioned here that in spite of release orders issued by the Asstt. Depot Supdt., F.C.I. Gopalganj...”

[Translation]

This officer was transferred four times, but in spite of this he manages to come

back by fair means or foul. This man has accumulated landed property, bungalows, etc., worth lakhs of rupees there which are disproportionate to his income. Will you get the matter looked in to as to from which source he has earned such a huge income? Unless action is taken against this officer, nothing will happen. However, the Government of India has taken some action and premises of many officers were raided, but no raid has been conducted on the premises of the F.C.I. officials.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : You might have read about it recently.

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : If raids have been conducted there it is a good thing. But I would like to say that action should be taken against all these officials so that the bungling in the matter of distribution of foodgrains is checked.

The officers and the employees who are working at the same place for the last 10 to 15 years, should be transferred, because they mix up with the traders, receive commission from them as well as from the contractors and thus earn huge illegal income. If a probe is made into the properties of those officers and employees who are working at the same place continuously for the last 12 years, one will know that they have amassed vast property. You will also come to know in what way the employees of the F.C.I. are cheating the F.C.I. There is need to take stringent action against them.

Our colleagues have pointed out that the income of these employees has increased more than the production of the foodgrains. The production has increased only threefold, but the income of these people has increased 100 times.

SHRI RANAVIR SINGH (Kaiserganj) : Hon. Minister, Sir, a large number of specific cases have been sent to you. What will be the use of sending more cases?

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : There is one Hira-kud depot. What happens there is that sub-standard rice is mixed up with the quality rice. That gets spoilt

after some days. Its weight also increases. The traders take undue advantage by mixing it up with quality rice. Such rice gets spoilt later on.

In the Hira-kud depot, such kind of mixing in foodgrains takes place and in this way the contractors & the officers are making money illegally to the tune of lakhs of rupees. If you institute an inquiry against them, you will come to know precisely to how these people are indulging in bungling in F. C. I.

Similarly, there are a number of cases which should be looked into. I shall cite an example. In West Bengal, a godown had outlived its utility. So, it was proposed to demolish that. The goods worth about Rs.14 lakhs, which were kept in it, had been sold for only Rs. 4 lakhs.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY : Who sold those foodgrains?

SHRI GIRDHARI LAL VYAS : The F. C. I. employees sold it, otherwise also, this matter pertains to West Bengal. So, you might be knowing better about that. Madam Chairman, this sort of bungling is taking place. So, it must be looked into.

[English]

“In Kha ligat F.C.I. railways siding (West Bengal) the contractor manages to take out 50 quintals of foodgrains from every truck load of foodgrains against its receipt of full quantity of foodgrains of the trucks concerned. This matter has been brought to the notice of the senior Regional Manager, F.C.I., Calcutta but it did not yield any results so far”.....

[Translation]

From it you can know as to how much quantity of foodgrains is taken out. You must look into it seriously. I would like to give you one more example.

[English]

“It is reported that in F.C.I., F.S. D. Dicom (Assam), one truck of foodgrains was sold out to the outsider

[Shri Girdhari Lal Vyas]

on 28-2-86. The workers of the Depot caught hold of this truck and handed it over to police".....

[Translation]

The police, the Government officers and the employees of the F. C. I. in connivance with one another committed this bungling, but even then no action has been taken against them. Such a state of affairs must be looked into seriously.

[English]

"It is known that recently a team of F. C. I. local officials/staff came to Khurda F. C. I., F. S. D. (Orissa) for verification of the stocks of the said depot. But the said team is reported to have accepted undue favour from some staff and officials of the Depot who are indulging in misappropriation of foodgrains in the said Depot and have completed the physical verification as an eye-wash without doing the actual physical verification of the stock"....

[Translation]

In this way, verification is not done properly. The officers who are deputed to verify the stock, do not verify the foodgrains. They send fabricated report. Employees from top to bottom are in league with them and all are taking undue advantage of the situation.

Whenever foodgrains are despatched to Punjab, Assam, Bengal and other places, its weight is increased due to humidity in the weather. The officials of your department say that loss has occurred. But this is not so. The weight of the foodgrains is increased. Then the employees sell the excess foodgrains separately and pocket the money. This thing should also be looked into. You cannot have all such information yourself, but the members of the trade unions have given us this information.

You might be knowing what benefit is there in giving work to the contract labour and to the departmental employees.

The officers might be telling the Government that its taking over by the Government will cause great loss and as a matter of fact, the Government will not be benefited by engaging contract labour.

[English]

"The F.C.I. Administration have been falsely propagating that departmentalisation of food handling work would be more costly and expensive than the work of food handling done by contract labour. But according to us, the position is just the reverse. I am forwarding herewith a statement in respect of F.S.D. Depots in West Bengal which will show the position: the storage and transit loss in depot under contract labour is Rs. 74.24 per metric tonne while such loss in departmental depot is Rs. 29.63 per metric tonne; and handling cost of foodgrains in departmental depots is Rs. 50 per 100 bags while such handling cost in respect of depots under contract labour is Rs. 70.80 per 100 bags. It would thus be seen that in departmental depots there is a net saving of Rs. 34.11 and Rs. 20.80 per metric tonne and per 100 bags of foodgrains towards transit and storage and handling loss respectively."

[Translation]

If the departmentalisation of foodgrains handling work is done in the above-mentioned manner, the F. C. I. will function smoothly and all sorts of misappropriations would be avoided, thereby saving the department crores of rupees which are presently being misappropriated by the officials of the F. C. I. The hon. Minister has assured that he would look into it and, therefore, I am submitting these papers for his perusal so that matter could be examined properly.

With these words, I support the Demands for Grants.

[English]

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South); Madam Chairperson, I wish

to make a few remarks on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. In the Report that has been given to us, it is stated that our stock position of foodgrains is very, very comfortable.

15.08 hrs.

[SHRI VAKKOM PURUSHOTHAMAN
in the Chair]

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what is the demand of foodgrains. One of the Starred Questions was answered in the House on 7th March, 1978. This is about total annual production of foodgrains in India and total annual requirement of foodgrains in India. The answer given is :

“As the demand for foodgrains in the country depends on various factors such as population growth, extent of urbanisation, levels of income, prices of substitute foodgrains etc. precise estimates of total consumption requirements of foodgrains in the country are not available.”

You do not know our demand, but you say at the same time that we are self-sufficient, we are very comfortably placed so far as foodgrains are concerned, we are in a position even to export. That is a fact. I admit, that all your godowns are full. But what is the reality? That is important. It is known to every one that people living below the poverty line in our country are nearly 40 per cent; the figure given by the Government is 40 per cent. How many people get two square meals a day in our country, let the Minister answer that. Do you think that what we are growing is sufficient for the entire population if every one has to take food like me or Mr. Shiv Shanker or Mr. Panja. We, Members of Parliament, do take two square meals a day. But how many people do not get that? More than myself, Mr. Shiv Shanker knows very well. When that is the position, what is it that you have done? Why have you got food stocks? That is because people do not have the purchasing capacity. If you give them purchasing capacity, you

will not have even a single grain of stock left.

The population is 80 crores of people and it is increasing inspite of the family planning propaganda. So, it is a misnomer to say that the Food Corporation of India is increasingly having the stock. Of course, statistics are there to show that food production is growing. For the past ten to fifteen years there has been 200% increase; but at the same time the population is also increasing and the purchasing capacity of people had gone down. Even according to the official figures, it has gone down.

Further you are adding fuel to the fire. What is it that you have done? On the eve of the budget what is that you have done? It is a shameful act on the part of the Government to increase the administrative prices of the foodgrains. You say, in the garb of giving procurement prices you have increased the issue prices of rice by Rs. 14/- per quintal and Rs. 18/- per quintal of wheat. What is it that you are giving to the grower? You are giving a mere Rs. 5/-. So, I should say, you have actually cheated the people.

Even with the prices at the pre-revision level, they were not able to purchase the foodgrains. Then, how do you expect them to buy these things after the enhancement in the issue prices? It is even more difficult for those poor people who have got limited income. I have said on a number of occasions on the floor of this House—and many Members are aware—that after this budget, particularly after the increase in the prices of petroleum products and foodgrains, the family budget of a middle-class family particularly—in a place like Bangalore, the minimum expenditure, has increased by one hundred rupees per month. That too at a moderate level! In Delhi it is much more because the DTC fare itself has gone up by 100% to 150%.

So, I don't understand how the Government is saying and tom-tomming all over the world that our food position is very comfortable and all our people are happy. It will be deceiving ourselves if we say that. So, I would like to tell the

[Shri V. S. Krishna Iyer].

Hon. Food Minister to take a bold step. I am only sorry to know that he is holding the additional charge; I wish he had the permanent charge of it because it is a very important department. Of course, he has got a good deputy also. Please see that under no circumstances the increase in the prices of foodgrains will be there in future. Of course, you are paying Rs. 1800/- as subsidy for all the 80 crores of people. But what about the poor people? That is why I earnestly request Shri Shiv Shanker to look into the matter and see that what you have done in the case of tribal people—you are giving them at a very very specially subsidised rate—should be extended to all those who are below the poverty line.

In this connection I would like to inform this House—of course, the House is aware—that the Government of Karnataka has been supplying rice at a rate of Rs. 2/- per kg. for nearly 60% of the people, especially those who are economically weak. So, Govt. of India must take a bold step and give foodgrains at a specially subsidised rate to all those who are below the poverty line.

About the enhancement of issue prices, what is the effect on the States like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu? We are, in addition to the subsidy that the Government of India is paying over rice and wheat, also supplying foodgrains at a further subsidised rate to the 60% of population. In view of the revision and the enhancement of the issue prices, the effect on the finance of the State, particularly of Karnataka is nearly Rs. 30 to Rs. 35 crores per year.

You have not consulted the State Governments when you enhanced the administrative prices. You have not taken them into confidence. Similarly Tamil Nadu has suffered and Andhra Pradesh also suffered. So, I strongly protest against this. I am sure, Shri Shiv Shanker will take some positive action to see that the specially subsidised rates which are given to tribal people are extended to all those who are economically weak.

Sir, as regards public distribution

system I know PDS has been recognised as a permanent feature of the economy for distribution of essential commodities at a reasonable rate. In the whole of the country there are nearly 3.20 lakh fair price shops. If you want to help the people to get good quality food-stuff and also at reasonable prices you must strengthen PDS. We have got a number of laws to control not only the prices but also the quality. Unfortunately the State Governments have not been implementing those laws. There is Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Blackmarketing Act but still we see there are a number of instances where there is blackmarketing and hoarding. I would like to know against how many blackmarketeers and hoarders action has been taken by the State Governments during all these years. You must convene a meeting of the Food Ministers of the State and tell them to take stringent action against blackmarketeers and hoarders.

I would like to give an instance. There is a law that when food articles are sold in packages the prices should be printed on the package. You know what they do. They print the price and also say local taxes extra. These local taxes can be 5 per cent or 6 per cent but the traders collect more and exploit the consumers. So I suggest that there should be an amendment so that even local taxes must be printed and if there is change then it can be written in hand.

Further, Sir, like public distribution system consumer protection movement is also important. Government has been paying lip sympathy for this movement. You must tell the State Government that in every district and tehsil they must have a consumer protection organisations. It must become peoples' movement. That must be strengthened. It is very important otherwise people will be cheated, particularly those who are illiterate and innocent.

Lastly I would like to say a word about kerosene. Kerosene is a very essential commodity the sale of which is nationalised. You can get kerosene only at a Fair Price Shop. You cannot get it anywhere else. At least in other articles

there is dual system but in kerosene which is available only at Fair Price Shops if there is no supply even for a short time there will be hardship. In my constituency we have experienced that there is frequent shortage of kerosene. I would like the Minister to see that kerosene is given to the States well in advance so that even for a minute there should not be any inconvenience to the consumers.

With these words I hope when we read the next Report we will get the real picture of food position in our country.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Raj Kumar Rai... Mr. Rai you have to take full responsibility of the allegations that you wish to make.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI (Ghosi) : Sir, some objections have been raised on behalf of the Secretariat...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You should not refer to the communication.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : When somebody wants to quote some papers in the House he owns the responsibility.

MR. CHAIRMAN : As per rules you cannot.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Simply the question of hours, that is, how much before should have given to the House he has not explained in the communication.

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. I support these Demands for Grants.

This department is solely responsible for procurement, storage and distribution of foodgrains. Therefore, it is a very important department for the people of the country. The Green Revolution has been brought about by the untiring hardwork of our farmers and good policies of our Government. Today, we feel proud of our record agricultural production. Now,

we are self-sufficient in every respect, but our population is growing rapidly at the rate of about 1.75 per cent. Our Hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi has shown courage and determination to take forward our country rapidly into the 21st century. But if we fail to set right our procurement and distribution system, we shall definitely face certain other problems in the 21st century. Sir, I have met Shri Panja many a time and he is an efficient and courageous Minister to deal with the problems of the department and to provide various facilities to the people.

Sir, whenever we talk about this department, the F.C.I. automatically comes to our mind. It is a very vast organisation with various complicated problems and have various types of people. We may have discussion about it any number of times in this august House and make suggestions or we may have efficient Minister like Shri Panja, but it seems that the people working in it will remain totally unaffected and unchanged.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA (Pali) : You are challenging the Minister.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : I am not challenging the Minister, but making some suggestions. Previously also, I had made suggestions to the hon. Minister Shri P. Shiv Shanker, but I am sorry to state that my suggestions did not have much impact and the conditions remain unchanged.

I would like to tell you that recently a case of corruption has come to light. One Shri T.L. Basi of Food Corporation of India Employees Association has shown enough courage to send a report to the Government regarding mis-management and corruption of some officers of the F.C.I. The report was sent through me, through papers and some other M.Ps., but no action has yet been taken. The charges were like this. It was said that wine was banned in the FCI, because the Government provided subsidies from Rs. 200 crores to Rs. 300 crores to provide cheap foodgrains to the consumers through Fair Price Shops and other means. Therefore, the Government pay heavy amount from the public exchequer in the form of

[Shri Raj Kumar Rai]

subsidy to the FCI with the hope that extravagance like undue expenses on wine and transportation will be avoided. The Government impose prohibition on wine to reduce the corruption and extravagance, because it affects the consumer. Due to such extravagance, the Government have to increase the price which directly affects the consumers.

Sir, I have submitted some Bills of Kani-shka hotel, Ashoka hotel and some other hotels in the House which show as to how these officers of the F.C.I. have lavishly spent lakhs of rupees on wine and hotel charges. The report was sent by an employee to the Government and as a result of it he was harassed and punished. And the officers involved in the case are still enjoying. They used to say that there was no use having discussion on any matter in the House and they would continue to work in the manner they liked. They say that the people may come and the people may go, but they have not changed their methods at all. This is the real condition of the department.

Sir, I also want to submit these papers in this august House, but permission is not being granted to me. I take full responsibility for these papers and assure in writing that I shall be accountable if any information is found to be false. Fictitious payments of lakhs of rupees have been shown as freight and transit charges, whereas no transportation has taken place at all.

Sir, a news item has appeared in 'The Hindustan Times' a 19th March, 1986 which says.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : Submit all the information boldly.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Mr. Dandavate, I gave in writing very boldly, but permission could not be granted on technical grounds. As I am not well versed with the rules, I could not submit in writing within the specified time. Hence permission was not granted to me.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Copies of your documents have been given to the Minister and I am quite sure the Minister will take action.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : On a point of order. As far as the procedure is concerned, any Member, who wants to make specific allegations, if he gives a copy of that in writing and takes full responsibility, whether the Minister likes it or not, whether he has enquired into that or not, he has the full right to reveal those documents to this House. There is no bar. Please tell him that he has the freedom. He is under the impression that he has no freedom.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Without reading he is saying all that. He has said that also. He said that in Hindi. I cannot follow Hindi, I am listening to the interpretation.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He said just now that because he gave that document late, therefore, he cannot reveal that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He can say that.

[Translation]

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Mr. Chairman is saying that you are free to speak about it.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Whenever there is a corruption, it is the responsibility of the hon. Members to raise that. I do agree. You may continue please.

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : I would like to quote from the 'Hindustan Times' of 19th March, 1986.

"The Central Bureau of Investigation today raided the residences of Delhi Doordarshan controller of programmes (Commercial) Satish Chandra Garg and a local Food Corporation of India zonal manager A.K. Sinha. The raids

were part of the CBI's recent anti-corruption drive.

Highly placed CBI sources said a case had been registered against Mr. Garg for having disproportionate assets. Mr. Garg had reportedly bought a self-financing DDA flat in Vasant Enclave making a cash-down payment of Rs. 2.5 lakhs for which he did not take any loan from anywhere. He did not, also, intimate competent authorities as a government servant is required to if making payments above Rs. 2000.

Dr. Sinha, a Haryana-cadre IAS officer was reported to own a fleet of cars, a farm house, orchards, fire arms, industrial land and an electronic factory in the name of his wife. He is one of the 18 senior, middle and junior level FCI officers against whom the CBI has registered cases.

Simultaneous country-wide raids and searches on FCI personnel which were initiated in the morning, continued till late this evening, CBI sources said.

Residences of public servants and private persons in connection with these cases were raised in 45 places. Searches were also conducted in 10 other cases registered in different parts of the country, four of which were in Bombay, two in Jaipur and one each in Cochin, Hyderabad, Madras and Delhi."

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : It may be property of their ancestors !

SHRI RAJ KUMAR RAI : Such type of lame excuses are also given. Naturally, they may be concocting such cases and they may even be accepted also.

[Translation]

I was submitting that so much had

happened, but it had yielded no positive result. The cases of those people who are having huge assets in the name of their kith and kin and other *benami* property, are handed over to the CBI. It is a mockery that inquiry is conducted by their own people. What type of inquiry can we expect from a person who is conducting inquiry in his own case? There cannot be a greater mistake and irregularity than this in our country. Therefore, I request Mr. Panja to look into it and such thing should not be allowed to happen.

Sir, the discussion on the corruption in the FCI can be held up to any length of time. I would request the hon. Minister to listen to the complaints of all the hon. Members one by one regarding this Corporation and proper inquiry should be conducted in each case. It will improve the conditions in the FCI it will also bring about improvements in the entire Corporation and have positive effect on the economy of our country.

Sir, I have taken a lot of time, but still I have to raise many points. I fully agree with my friend who had called it a white-elephant.

At some places much work has yet to be done. Modern Food Industry has done a commendable job during 1985-86. Therefore, they deserve our appreciation. The prices of every article has been increased all over the country, but the Modern Food Industry has not increased the prices of modern bread, Rasika, Tinned-Food etc. They did not increase their rates whereas circumstances have compelled us to increase the prices of every article. It is a sign of its good functioning and good service to the people. The company has earned good profit during the current financial year and has also not increased the prices of its products. (*Interruptions*)

When an organisation has done a commendable job, we must at least appreciate it, if we cannot reward it. We should not criticise only.

Sir, in our country, a lot of foodgrains are being wasted. Therefore, at least a

[Shri Raj Kumar Rai]

sum of Rs. 50 lakhs should be allocated to the Modern Food Bakeries to set up tinned food plants in the tribal and rural areas. They have sought permission for many things. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to look into their demands so that work could be done properly. Sir, Rasika juice is a good drink. Everybody has tasted it. Government should encourage this Public Sector Unit to expand its business in all the zones. Government should render all possible help to it to expand its business so that private sector may not indulge in profiteering by manufacturing this product. I would request the Government to accord sanction for setting up Rasika plants in all the zones. It is a very profitable industry. Therefore, the Government should encourage it. The Fair Price Shops in Uttar Pradesh are in very bad condition. In most of the districts, these Shops have been given to the cooperatives. Shri Pandeyji is our leader. In his constituency, these Shops have again been allotted to the private dealers, who feel their responsibility and fear the prosecution, but it is not the case with the cooperatives. So I would request Shri Panjaji to find out some way for bringing about improvements in the Fair Price Shops so that consumers may get foodgrains from there. I would also like to request that the private godowns of FCI should be provided in eastern Uttar Pradesh. I once again express my thanks to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : (Akbarpur) Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food & Civil Supplies. There is no doubt that our Government want to do a lot of work and a number of circulars have also been issued for the same purpose. Government are vigilant about it. Government are also vigilant about the subjects under this Ministry. There are some points which have already been mentioned by my colleague Mr. Raj Kumar Rai and I do not want to repeat them. I fully support his views. He has spoken the truth. He has given very little information about F.C.I. If we go on discussing F.C.I., I am afraid it may take even the whole day, but even then you

will not be able to reveal the details of their misdeeds. (*Interruptions*) This white elephant is indulging in such acts on such a large scale that it is consuming crores of rupees daily. Whatever we may say here, whatever directives the Government may issue, but they never bother about them at all. I would like to cite an example. The time has come now for the procurement of wheat. F.C.I. does this work of procurement on a very large scale. Now I want to tell you about the large scale bungling, particularly in U.P. right from procurement of wheat to keeping it in the godowns. You will be surprised to know that when the truck reaches the godown, then the fellow will have to pay at least Rs. 150 to 175 per truck in order to get in cleared up to the room. If a person does not pay at least Rs. 150 per truck, he will have to wait in the queue for the whole day and his wheat will not be off loaded. He will have to pay another Rs. 5 to 10 to the gate-keeper, only then he would allow the entry of the truck inside. The man who checks the quality of the wheat, also demands money, otherwise he does not approve the quality of wheat. I would like to submit most humbly that I have seen such fellows who keep sub-standard wheat in their pockets and if they do not get illegal money, they put such wheat in it and tell that the wheat is not of good quality and they cannot keep it in the godown. This way they are harassing and exploiting the people. So far as I remember, a number of time raids were carried out and the employees of this Corporation went on strike against this. They went on strike, because their misdeeds were being exposed. If the Government allow them to have their way, only then they procure wheat and keep it there.

If the hon. Minister issues any directive against their illegal functioning, it will remain on the paper only and they will continue to indulge in the misdeeds uninterruptedly. I want to say that the Government should immediately and honestly take stern action to put a check on the malfunctioning of such a corrupt organisation. Such an action may be taken through the CBI or any other agency. Raids should

be carried out to check the incidents of thefts and pilferages.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA :
Vigilance Department is there.

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : I have raised a point in brief, because my colleagues have already said a lot about it.

So far as the purchase of wheat is concerned, there is a great bungling in it. The farmers are being exploited. The farmers are compelled to wait there with their harvest for so many days and nobody cares for them. Unless they are ready to pay Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per bag, their foodgrains are not bought. When the farmer is helpless, he sells it to the trader and the trader sells it out then and there.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : Why are you giving the bad name to the traders ?

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : Whosoever purchases the foodgrains, is a trader. I do not mean to say any particular caste. I mean the person who indulges in bungling.

So far as the functioning of the Public Distribution System is concerned, it also comes under it. It may require a long discussion to reveal its drawbacks. My colleagues have briefly spoken about its present condition. The Public Distribution System is not capable of providing food items in the rural areas. The shopkeepers are doing this job in the villages, and cooperative societies are also doing the work of distribution of foodgrains in Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA :
Their number is 3,20,000.

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : Previously the shopkeepers were local men and out of fear they were distributing sugar. Since this job has been entrusted to the cooperative societies, the sugar remains stored in the godowns. They do not even bother to bring and distribute it to the people. Similarly, kerosene oil is also not being supplied in the villages. You have shown in the figures that you are supplying tyres, tubes, soap and oil; but actually these

items are not available at any of the shops in the rural areas.

I request the Government to take strict action in this regard. You should see whether the items which you are supplying for the villages are actually reaching there or not. If you find that these are not reaching the villages, than strict action should be taken against the guilty persons and these commodities should be supplied there properly.

This system has recently been started in some districts of Uttar Pradesh that besides cooperative societies in every village panchayat, they are also allowing a private shopkeepers to run the Fair Price shops so that there may be a competition between both types of shops and work could go on smoothly. (*Interruptions*)

Foodgrains were being distributed earlier and they could be distributed even now. I want to tell the hon. Minister, through you, that if a shopkeeper honestly sells sugar, which is given to him for distribution, then he only gets a profit of Rs. 2 with the empty gunny bag. He does not get anything else except it.

SHRI MOOL CHAND DAGA : He does not get even the gunny bag, he gets only Rs. 2 as profit.

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : This is a case of corruption.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You will have to finish in 2 or 3 minutes.

[*Translation*]

SHRI R. P. SUMAN : It is a matter to be looked into that the commodities which are supplied for the rural areas, do not reach there. You should get detailed information about it and formulate a policy so that they could work honestly, because their problems can also not be ignored. We have also to see to this that the required documents are submitted in the proper office so that individual does not have to go to each and every counter. Otherwise, they will have to pay Rs. 10 to Rs. 100 at every counter, as a result of

[Shri R. P. Suman]

which they are compelled to sell the sugar in black market. Therefore, there is need to improve the entire distribution system, otherwise the conditions will worsen.

Sir, it is a very big Department which has a very large number of employees and officers, but I want to bring this fact to the notice of the hon. Minister that the quota for the people belonging to the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes has not been filled up. There is always backlog in posts in the class I, class II and class III posts and only the posts in the category of class IV, the formality of filling up the quota of reservation is completed, because cleaners of foodgrains are also included in this category. This in all, 18 or 19 per cent quota of reservation is fulfilled, but reservation quota for other three classes has not been fulfilled. I want that when we have made a provision for the reservation of posts for the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, this must also be implemented. I want that the hon. Minister should pay attention towards this and should make necessary arrangements to complete the backlog.

I also want to make a request regarding promotions. The promotions which are made in this Department are discriminatory towards the poor and those belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Whenever their promotion falls due, their names are withheld on one pretext or the other or by making entry in their service books and several other employees, who are junior to them, are promoted. They lodge protests, but they go unheeded. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that wherever such discrimination takes place, the Government should ensure that their quota of reservation is fulfilled.

Sir, this is a very important Department and it has great responsibility too. This Department deals with the problems of the people and the question of providing relief to the people is linked with this Department. So, taking all these things in view, steps should be taken to root out corruption which is prevalent there so that our efforts to provide relief to the people succeed. We have to work hard and

efficiently so that people may get relief promptly. With these words, I support the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK (Sonepat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies. First of all, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for Food and Civil Supplies for the increase in production of foodgrains progressively and satisfactorily in the country. The figures given at page 8 in the report for 1985-86 pertaining to this Ministry show that whereas in 1980-81, the total production of foodgrains in the country was 129.59 million tonnes, it has gone up to 146.22 million tonnes in 1984-85. We hope, this year, the prospects of the crops are very good and the production of foodgrains will increase even more. Also, I would like to give some constructive suggestions.

When we refer to this Department, we come to know that whereas previously the task of determining the prices of different commodities was done by the Agriculture Prices Commission, now that name has been changed and the word 'cost' has been included in it. Its scope has now been widened and it will henceforth also take into consideration the cost that is incurred in producing any commodity in a particular region. The intention behind changing the name is to keep in view the cost that is incurred by the farmer and also while determining the cost of any commodity, all these aspects are to be kept in mind. But, in reality, only the name has been changed and the real intention behind it has not been fulfilled so far. You can take any commodity. The price of almost every commodity has increased tremendously. Also the cost of agricultural implements and other inputs has increased manyfold, but the prices of agricultural commodities have not increased much. If you compare the price situation of 1947 and 1986, you will find that the price of a tractor which was Rs. 8000 in 1947 has gone up to Rs. 100,000 in 1986. The salary of an employee has since gone up by fourteen, fifteen and even sixteen times, but the prices of foodgrain-

produced by the farmer have gone up by seven to eight times at the most. I would, therefore, like to submit that only changing the name will not benefit the farmer. Along with the change in name, some follow up action should also follow. The farmer has to work very hard to produce agricultural products. His whole life is spent on doing this work, but he does not get remunerative prices for his crops. He has to face various natural calamities while producing crops. He faces every kind of natural calamity such as, hailstorm, cyclone, floods and drought. And when he does not get remunerative price for his product, it is most unfortunate and painful for him. I would, therefore, like to submit that the farmer should get remunerative prices of his produce.

Sir, I would like to submit one point regarding the Fair Price Shops. The hon. Members who spoke earlier to me, have already said a lot of things about it. I have seen myself in Haryana that generally only sugar, wheat and rice are brought to the Fair Price Shops for sale and remaining essential commodities are not brought there. In this connection, I would like to submit that the commodities of daily use in the families in the villages and cities should also be sold there. Such a provision should be made. Fair Price Shops have been set up with the aim of providing commodities to the consumers at fair prices. If commodities are not available at these Shops, the existence of these shops becomes redundant. The main reason for this situation is that the commission which is given to the shop owners is very meagre. If you see the figures regarding sugar which is sent to the Fair Price Shops, you will find that the commission given for it to the owners of the Fair Price Shops and the shops run by the cooperative societies is very meagre and only empty gunny bag is left with them as profit, which is worth Rs. 4 only. When he earns only Rs. 4 from it, how can we expect honesty from him in his dealings? Sir, he has to pay Rs. 10 to 15 for a bag of sugar to the officer of the Department. Then he has to pay transportation charges for carrying it to the village. What I mean to say is that if he gets permit for ten bags, he has to spend about Rs. 200 for transportation to his

village and he earns only Rs. 40 as commission for it. Now you can imagine which shopkeeper would like to bear loss of Rs. 160 and run the Fair Price Shops. How can you expect him to have honest dealings?

16.54 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the chair*]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that the Fair Price Shop owners should be given sufficient commission so that they may be able to maintain their families and also they may be able to sell commodities at reasonable rates. This is a practical thing that if a Fair Price Shop owner is not able to earn sufficient profit, we cannot expect him to invest his money in it and sell quality goods to the people. This applies to a.I, whether he is a *bania* or a farmer or any body else.....

MR. SPEAKER : You have taken double the time requested for by you. Please conclude now.

AN HON. MEMBER : The allotted time will start after your arrival.

MR. SPEAKER : From which point of time this counting of time has started?

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : One thing I would like to say about the farmers. Earlier a starred question was also admitted on this subject in my name. It was regarding the rejection of wheat and rice last year at the time of procurement. The F. C. I. and HAFED reject the produce of the farmers. The same produce is purchased by the middlemen the following day at any cost. This matter was raised earlier also by me.

MR. SPEAKER : That was a matter of the past. Talk of the coming crops. There should be no bungling in it.

SHRI DHARAMPAL SINGH MALIK : I have referred to it as an example that while speaking last year, I had said that the then Food and Civil Supplies

[Shri Dharam Pal Singh Malik]

Minister, Rao Birendra Singh had said that he had not come across any such instance. But I can give instances of this type and such things take place in every *mandi* every day that the middlemen purchase wheat after getting it rejected by the F. C. I. and the following day they sell that wheat in the market in collusion with the F. C. I. employees. In this way, the profit which should have accrued to the farmer in the real sense, is taken away by the middlemen. The farmer is greatly disappointed and he loses faith in the Government. Government say that they have fixed the prices for procurement of wheat and rice. But the real benefit thereof does not reach the farmers. My submission is that proper arrangements should be made for procurement from the farmers all his commodities meant for marketing and inspectors and other honest officials should be deputed for checking so that the farmers are not exploited and they get full price of their produce.

Then, I would also like to submit that the prices of the agricultural implements should be reduced.

MR. SPEAKER : Now you may conclude.

SHRI DHARAM PAL SINGH MALIK : With these words, I support the Demands for Grants and conclude.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : It is my misfortune that my turn always comes in the last.

MR. SPEAKER : If you roll the order paper, then first and last would be joined.

DR. G.S. RAJHANS : I wanted to say many things, but what to say now ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : If you remain on your legs today, you will be on your legs till tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER : Hear what the Members sitting near the door are saying.

DR. G. S RAJHANS : What I mean

is that you have written in the first paragraph of this Report that :

[English]

“The major thrust of the Government policy has continued to be on increased production and improvement in the management of supplies of various essential commodities. Accordingly several measures were taken to increase production, improve availability, strengthen supply management and keep in check the prices of essential commodities.”

[Translation]

I want to say that all this is incorrect. It is an irony that the prices given to the agriculturists in our country are not equal to the prices of even their inputs. When the consumer purchases those commodities he is badly affected by high prices.

Whatever you may say in your Report, the fact is that on the one hand the farmers are suffering because they are not getting cost price of their produce and on the other hand, consumers are being crushed due to spiralling prices. You have stated in this Report that it is a matter of great happiness that wholesale prices are coming down. May be wholesale prices are coming down, but are the prices paid by the consumers in the market are guided by the wholesale prices ? You say that the prices of the commodities have fallen, but when I go to the market I have to make purchases on higher prices. How can I say that the prices have come down? One should paint a realistic picture and should try to go deep in the matter.

16.00 hrs.

DISCUSSION RE : RECENT BOMBING OF TRIPOLI AND BENGAZI BY US AIRCRAFT

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now we take up discussion under Rule 193.