

leave to introduce a Bill to repeal the Special Courts Act, 1979.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to repeal the Special Courts Act, 1979."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K. T. KOSALRAM: I introduce the Bill.

15.36 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT)
BILL*

(Amendment of article 326)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India".

The motion was adopted.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I introduce the Bill.

15.37 hrs.

CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT)
BILL*

(Insertion of new article 46A)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I introduce the Bill.

15.37 hrs.

ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
(AMENDMENT) BILL*

(Amendment of Section 2)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Muzaffarpur): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I introduce the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

15.38 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: TAKING OVER OF
WHOLESALE TRADE IN CERTAIN
ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES—contd.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we resume further discussion on the Resolution moved by Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri on the 25th January, 1980. Mr. Chintamani Panigrahi was on his feet.

SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI (Bhubneswar): While I was speaking on the Resolution I had said that during the last two and a half years we have seen how prices have gone up by more than 22 per cent. This is a steep rise in prices, as a result of which we find that the entire economy of this country is in a bad shape—rather, in shambles. In spite of what we had built up, because of bad management of economy during the last two and

a half years, we have now inherited a price rise which is galloping.

Before we think of how to deal with this problem, the major constraint before us is that there is an unprecedented drought which will result in a sharp decline in production of food-grains. It is estimated that perhaps the food-grain production will be less by 12 million tonnes this year.

There is a sharp decline in industrial growth also. It is because of shortage of power, coal, steel, cement and diesel. All these are bottlenecks now. Industrial growth has been reduced and strained labour-management relations also had added to the decline in industrial growth.

Now, another constraint is the shortage of wagons. It has come to such a position that some wagons which were carrying diesel to Orissa were hijacked by the Railways themselves because the Railways were short of diesel and they took it for their own consumption. That is the position we have come to.

Another constraint is the budget deficit. After Chaudhuri Charan Singh presented his budget, the prices have gone up to such an extent that the deficit in the budget will be to the extent of Rs. 3,000 crores. Along with that, there will be a trade deficit of Rs. 2,000 crores. Even if we revise the draft Sixth Plan, that may also become outdated in view of the rising prices and other bottlenecks. These are the formidable challenges before us. How are we to tackle these? This morning there was an answer to a question in which the hon. Minister has said how the prices have gone up.

In this Resolution the hon. Member has asked for the public distribution system. We also wanted that there should be a good public distribution system. You will find that this public distribution system was working nicely upto 1976. But after that, in almost all the States, this public distribution system has completely broken. It is not that the public distribution system

did not work, but there was a different outlook during the last two and a half years; they wanted to have a free economy and that free economy has resulted in the present difficulties that we are finding. Take the case of kerosene; we have got the Indian Oil Corporation, a public sector corporation. Take the case of grains or sugar; we have got the Food Corporation of India; we have also got the State Trading Corporation. They are expected to manage these. But what do we find today? The hon. Minister for Commerce, in the morning, has given some hints. Suppose the Central Government manages to send grains, manages to send kerosene oil, manages to send sugar, what guarantee is there that the State Governments, many of which are of a different complexion from that at the Centre, and which are now in the stage of confrontation with the Centre, will act in such manners that the essential Commodities reach the Common people. The way the non-Congress State Governments are preparing for confrontations with the Centre are most surprising, when there is a tension on our borders. Nine non-Congress State Chief Ministers gathered in Delhi and gave a threat and warning to the Centre that they would fight against the Centre. At this point when prices are rising in a galloping speed, by 22 per cent, when every effort has to be made by all to check the rise in price, when all sections of the people who are suffering from price-rise want that the rise should be arrested, there should be a decline in prices, the nine State Chief Ministers gathered in Delhi and thought it proper to hold out a threat to the Centre. Then who is there to control the prices in the States? Therefore, I would like to humbly submit before the House that we should decide to have a good public distribution system which should be monitored at one place—at the Centre.

Now, take the case of kerosene. You send kerosene, say, to Orissa. Unless you have a village Committee to

[Shri Chintamani Panigrahi]

whom the retailers are held responsible, you cannot control the price and distribution. If it is not monitored well, if it is not looked after well, you cannot bring about the result. Now the kerosene oil is selling at Rs. 6 per litre. It is something unheard of, unimaginable.

Similarly take the case of sugar. I have suggested day before yesterday that 65 per cent of the sugar stock with the mills should go by way of levy sugar to the market, and this 65 per cent of sugar should be sold at Rs. 2.85 per kilo. There should be rationing, there should be a card; every consumer, the common man, the poor people, should get sugar at Rs. 2.85 per kilo. But now I find that the levy sugar is not being released and I was told that there is sufficient sugar available in the open market and, therefore, the question of levy sugar does not arise. This is something surprising. Therefore, we shall request the government to immediately release this 65 per cent of the sugar stock as levy sugar to the States and there should be an efficient public distribution system which has lapsed and which should be revived and every consumer should have at least a card and on his card he should get whatever quota is allotted. Therefore, I think a time limit should be fixed, say, within 7-8 days this 65 per cent levy sugar should be despatched to all the States.

With regard to the wagon shortage, the Food Corporation of India was entrusted to lift this levy sugar and send it to the States. But I have gathered the information that the Food Corporation of India has not lifted it. I am told they say that there are no wagons. Then who is to co-ordinate between shortage of wagons and the despatch and lifting of the levy sugar? I hope some kind of a high-power co-ordinating committee should immediately take up this issue.

Take the case of coal. I am glad that the hon. Railway Minister has

to-day said that the 500-600 trains which were cancelled due to shortage of coal are being re-introduced because the availability of coal has perhaps improved. It is a good thing and we are happy and the passengers will be happy to know about this thing. But so far as coal to the consumers is concerned, immediately a certain percentage of this coal which is now with the coal mines which should work well, should reach the consumer because in Orissa coal is selling at Rs. 40 per maund. It is surprising that coal which was selling at Rs. 20 is now selling at Rs. 40. Similarly in regard to edible oil, we are told that edible oil is being imported. To what extent it is being imported—I do not know. Immediate measures are to be taken to see that these items reach the consumers.

Similarly, in steel there is a great shortage. There is also an acute shortage of cement. Though the controlled rate is Rs. 26, a cement bag is selling at Rs. 50. Everything is in a mess and I would plead before the hon. Minister that immediate steps should be taken at the Central level to see that all these essential commodities reach the consumer within the next 15-20 days. Slowly the movement should start and there is a stage, as I told you earlier, the stage of confrontation between the State and the Centre. Unless the State Governments agree at least on this point that everybody should co-operate to bring down the prices and if there is any kind of political manoeuvring at the State level to give a bad name to the Centre immediately after the election, a heavy responsibility rests on the Centre, to see that if the States do not co-operate and if they try to give a bad name to the Centre, some immediate steps should be taken at the Central level so that the vast millions of the common people, the poor people and the consumers shall not suffer. They have high expectations from the government here and if they are disillusioned with the State Governments, I am sure in the coming elec-

tions they will discard the State Governments. I hope the Central Government should be careful about all these things and see that as declared by the hon. Minister all essential commodities reach the consumer through fair price shops in the States so that everybody gets it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rajan. He is not present. Mr. Parulekar.

SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR (Ratnagiri): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand to support this Resolution.

At the outset, I thank Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri for having brought before this august House this important subject for debate. This concerns every common-man. I hope and trust that the Government would give a serious thought to this problem and take immediate steps to curb the price-rise by ensuring supply of all the essential commodities at reduced prices through the fair price shops. I want to make one more request to the hon. Minister and to the Government. That is this. Let us also look to the problems above the party level. Let not the Minister say that it has shot up when the Janata Government was in power. This is a problem as I said, which concerns all. Before going into the question of remedies to be found out for reducing the price-rise, it would be necessary to see as to how the prices shoot up. On all the commodities there was a rise in the price. Some of my esteemed colleagues through their speeches on this Resolution, said that there was a rise in price throughout the year 1977 and onwards in respect of all the commodities. I find that the statements made by the esteemed colleagues are not correct because we have before us the index numbers of the wholesale prices published by the Ministry of Industry. As far as the item of sugar is concerned, I find from this table that its price came down consistently from June 1976 to June, 1978. The figures are:—

In June 1976	171
In June 1977	161.8
In June 1978	153.6

So also is the case with respect to edible oil.

The figures are:—

June 1976	108.8
June 1977	186
June 1978	161

At least, as far as these two commodities are concerned, namely, sugar and edible oil, we find that within a year from June 1977 to June 1978, the prices did considerably come down. With reference to pulses, foodgrains, coal, kerosene, cotton; drugs and medicines, there is a very little rise. The disturbing factor is that from June 1978 to the end of December 1979, there is a very big and very alarming rise, especially in respect of coal where we find that it is from 202.00 to 235.86. That is the rise. I again submit respectfully that I may not be in a position to agree with my hon. friend who said that throughout the period there was a price-rise in all the commodities. But no sooner than from June to September when this rise was seen, the Government called a meeting of the Chief Secretaries of all the States. I find from the reports and the records that at that meeting the Union Cabinet Secretary Shri N. K. Mukherjee and also the Economic Affairs Secretary Shri Man Mohan Singh attended. I would like to ask the Government to tell us as to what happened to the suggestions made by them. It is reported that various important suggestions were made to the States at that meeting of the Committee. The first suggestion that was made was that the State Governments should strengthen the public distribution system. Even in the reply given to the Starred Question No. 83 to-day, this position had been admitted. To quote some portions from the reply:

“The distribution of certain selective items of essential commodities

[Shri Bapusaheb Parulekar]

through the public distribution system has become an important function of administration to-day".

If this Government also accepts that the distribution system should be strengthened, I would like to know from the Government whether any effort was made to implement the suggestion from September to December and if it was implemented, why the price rise was not checked.

The second suggestion that was made and considered in that meeting was that Essential Commodities Act should be vigorously implemented. If I remember correctly, with reference to this, our great Leader and Prime Minister at that time, Shri Jawahar Lal Nehru had said that if we were to check this blackmarketing, the maximum punishment should be enhanced to death and the blackmarketeers should be hanged publicly in this country....

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): By the nearest post.

SHRI BAPUSAHEB PARULEKAR: Yes, I would like to know whether the Government is going to implement the suggestion made by this great leader so that this would be a deterrent punishment. Instead of introducing legislation like the preventive detention, this would be an effective measure. With reference to this suggestion of that body, I would request the Government to tell this House as to how many cases were filed in the various States, especially in Delhi.

The other suggestions made in that meeting were that the Government should strengthen arrangements for maintaining the prices of essential commodities. The State Governments were told that stock holding limits imposed on sugar dealers with effect from 6th September should be enforced. Sugar dealers licensing order should be amended to ensure that licensing limits are brought down. Sugar Price Control (Order) should be enforced strictly to ensure early availability of sugar at fixed prices. The State Gov-

ernments were told to buy sugar from factories and supply it through the public distribution system. Prosecutions under the Sugar Prices (Control) Orders should also be launched against defaulting sugar factories. Action should also be taken against the factories whose sugar quota lapses. As regards important edible oils, the State Governments were told that all their requirements would be met by the State Trading Corporation.

All these suggestions were made in a committee of high officials. I would like to know whether these particular suggestions were implemented or not. If the suggestions were implemented, why the prices did not come down. Is the Government going to implement these suggestions as the prices during the last four-five months did not come down?

In fact, I wanted to make a few more suggestions, but as there is no time, I conclude my speech here.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Resolution moved by my distinguished friend, Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri. The Resolution is not only timely but appropriate also, particularly in view of the fact that the prices of essential commodities are soaring very high with every passing day without being checked.

There are certain economic constraints which the hon. House and the Government should take note of. We are passing through constraints of economic crisis which is marked by extraordinary price rise. You will understand the exact extent of the price rise today if we were merely to look at the official figures of the Government itself. The wholesale price index for all commodities (base year 1970-71-100) rose to 224.2 during the week ended January 12 from 223.2 in the previous week. This price rise was higher by 1 per cent from the previous year and 20.5 per cent as compared with previous week and that of a year ago. It means there has been a constant price rise in our country. You

16.00 hrs.

would also agree with me that one of the major factors of price rise in the increase in money supply. The money supply position in our country has been constantly on the increase. There has been deficit financing also. The uncovered deficit was Rs. 1356 crores. It is expected to touch the staggering figure of Rs. 2500 crores. There is runaway inflation. Some say that to-day the inflation is in the region of more than 25 per cent. There has been the incidence of tax burden in immense proportions. Under these circumstances, price rises are bound to take place. Not only that. There has been a certain decline in production of certain consumer items. For example I want to mention sugar and edible oils. During the crushing season of 1979-80, the total production of sugar was 295,000 tonnes, as against 395,000 tonnes during the corresponding period of last year. Vanaspati production has also gone down to a very great extent. During the first 7 months of 1979-80, the total vanaspati production came down to 358,000 tonnes as against 392,500 tonnes during the corresponding period of last year.

I mentioned these two items only to highlight the fact that while the production of the consumer goods is declining, production of durable consumer goods which is used generally by high-income people is increasing. So, unless Government has a programme of its own to step up consumer food products, there will be a further increase in prices. All these things prove that unless there is some kind of a curb, this price rise cannot be halted or arrested.

Even to-day, much has been discussed about the public distribution system. Let us also see what has been the actual result of the public distribution system. According to the reply given by the hon. Minister just to-day in the morning, 232,000 fair price shops are claimed to have been established, and they cover 5,828.6 lakhs of people. There have been a good number of fair price shops and the coverage also is

not very bad. In spite of the fact that this programme was there, prices continued to rise. Therefore, a free market operation is not going to bring down the price rise.

While we are speaking about the price rise, there is also the problem of price fall. Particularly, the prices of essential commodities are rising at an alarming rate, but the prices of the agricultural products are falling. For example, jute price is falling, while the jute goods prices are rising. Raw cotton price is falling, while the cloth price is rising. Sugar price is rising, but the price of sugarcane is falling. This is the paradox, and this paradox cannot but happen in a mixed and capitalist economy. So, some kind of a restraint and a new orientation of policy has to be adopted.

And therefore the hon. Member has rightly pointed out that if free market operation is allowed to continue, the prices cannot be brought down. Therefore, he has suggested that the government should take over the wholesale trade and curb the price rise by ensuring supply of essential commodities at reduced prices. Unless the textile industries are nationalised, unless the cotton industries—there is a monopoly purchase of cotton—are nationalised, unless the jute industries are nationalised, unless the jute purchase is done through a nationalised, agency, there is no possibility of the prices coming down. If there is no State take over of these very vital sinews of our economy, there is no possibility of the prices coming down. This is one part of the resolution, that is, the government should take over the wholesale trade and thereby curb the price rise. The other part of the resolution is that after taking over the wholesale trade, the government should also try to see that those essential commodities are distributed through a public distribution system. It is not only a question of distribution through a public distribution system, but a question of subsidy also comes. Unless the government takes over the physical control of it,

[Shri Chitta Basu]

unless they give subsidy, unless essential commodities are available to the people at considerably cheaper rates, the question of price rise cannot be solved.

The resolution has two parts. One is the take over of the wholesale trade. This is a very important part of the resolution which the government must study. The second part of the resolution is the public distribution system. The public distribution system which has been adopted so far and pursued so far has failed. I want to know what steps the government propose to take to improve that system so that prices come down. I again support the motion moved by my friend Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balsore): 'Mr. Charman, I am thankful to you for kindly allowing me to speak on this resolution. When we consider about the price rise in the country, we should definitely look to the public distribution system which is there at present in the country. There are only two lakh six thousand fair price shops which are dealing with the public distribution system. But as per government's report, the requirement is about six lakh fair price shops. It means the rest four lakh fair price shops are to be opened. But you will be astonished to know that in some states like Orissa, these fair price shops are dealt with by some political workers who are running the government in a State like Orissa. The dealers are appointed by a committee consisting of concerned MLAs, BDOs and ACSO. You must be knowing that the government which is running in Orissa does not look to the interest of the local people. They are appointing these dealers from their own party workers who do not look to the interest of the people. So, I request the government through you that while appointing these dealers, they should revise the procedure of appointing the dealers so that they may not be selected by the political workers; they should be appointed by the officials. Similarly, supply of con-

sumer goods edible oil, cloth, etc, are to be taken over by the Union Government. Unless these are dealt with by the Union Government, private dealers and private wholesalers do not look to the interest of the poor people of this country. So automatically there is price rise in essential commodities. Similarly, I should like to point out some other disadvantages which are faced by the adivasi Harijan and other poor people in the backward areas. They do not know whether the Government cares for their interest since all the consumer goods and essential commodities dealt with by the government are not reaching them and they are not benefited at all. In 1976-77 when there was Congress Government there was enough foodgrains in the country and there was surpluses in foodgrains. But when the Janata Government came to power due to their mishandling of foodgrains and essential commodities, there was a rise in prices. In the data given by the government in reply to a starred question, you will see that every month the price was rising. I think it is due to the mishandling by the previous government.

Similarly, I want to bring to your kind notice about kerosene. You will be astonished to know. Kerosene is most essential in the rural areas. It is not available. Production and supply is not adequate. If it were dealt with through proper dealers then to some extent people would have been benefited. But now the dealers who are selling kerosene are appointed by political workers, political parties. Those who are now running the Government of Orissa especially do not care for the benefit of the people; they are appointing kerosene dealers from among their party workers. The procedure of appointing kerosene dealers from political party workers should be changed. With these words, I thank you.

श्री विजय कुमार यादव (नालंदा) : सभापति महोदय, जो प्रस्ताव इस समय सदन के सामने प्रस्तुत है, मैं उस का समर्थन करता हूँ। इस सिलसिले में मैं आप के माध्यम से यह कहना

चाहूँगा कि जहाँ तक चीजों के बढ़ते हुए दामों को रोकने का सवाल है, यह मामला सरकार की नीतियों से गहरा सरोकार रखता है। वैसे इस प्रस्ताव में एक पक्ष की चर्चा की गई है, लेकिन बढ़ते हुए दामों को रोकने के लिये केवल यही कदम काफी नहीं समझा जा सकता। आज पूरे देश में जो चीजों के दाम बढ़ रहे हैं—यह हमारे लिये कोई नई बात नहीं है। जहाँ कहीं भी सरकारें पूँजीवादी सरकारें होती हैं, तो वे इसी तरह से करती हैं क्योंकि उन की नीतियों में जो खामियाँ हैं, उन की तरफ ज्यादा ध्यान न दे कर ऐसे ही कुछ कदम उठाना चाहती हैं जिन की वजह से मंहगाई पर जो रोक होनी चाहिए, वह नहीं लगती।

अभी हमारे देश के अन्दर, हमारे लायक दोस्त ने कहा कि डेफीसिट फाइनेन्सिंग की व्यवस्था है और पिछले साल ही लगभग 2 हजार करोड़ रुपये का डेफीसिट फाइनेन्सिंग किया गया। जो रिपोर्ट है, उन से पता चलता है कि हमारे मुल्क में ब्लैक मनी बड़े पैमाने पर चल रही है और ऐसा अनुमान है कि लगभग 16 हजार करोड़ रुपये की ब्लैक मनी बड़े बड़े उद्योगपतियों के पास मौजूद है। हमारे यहाँ डी-कंट्रॉल की पालिसी है, हमारे यहाँ इनडाइरेक्ट टकरैज की पालिसी है बैंकों के जरिये जो कर्ज इस तरह का व्यापार करने वाले लोगों को दिये जाते हैं और सरकार की तरफ से जो सुविधाएँ बड़े व्यापारियों को दी जाती हैं, उन सब कारणों से यह ब्लैक मनी बनाने का मौका मिलता है। ऐसे जो कारण हैं, उन पर बगैर पाबन्दी लगाएँ और सख्ती से रोक लगाएँ और आमूल परिवर्तन किये बगैर, हम चीजों के दामों को बढ़ने से नहीं रोक सकते। चीजों के दामों को अगर रोकना चाहते हैं, तो जाहिर बात है कि सख्त कदम उठाने होंगे। बगैर उनके उठाएँ, दाम बढ़ने से नहीं रोक सकते लेकिन फिर भी इस प्रस्ताव में जिस कदम की चर्चा की गई है, अगर यह कदम उठाया गया, तो कुछ हद तक चीजों के दाम बढ़ने से रोक सकते हैं। पिछले साल जनता पार्टी की सरकार ने जो मुक्त व्यापार की पालिसी चलाई थी, वहीं इन्होंने चलाई है और अभी इस सरकार के आन के बाद इस पालिसी में कोई परिवर्तन नजर नहीं आता।

मैं एक बात यह जरूर कहना चाहता हूँ कि जब तक देश के बड़े बड़े व्यापारियों पर, उन एकाधिकार व्यापारियों पर, जिन के हाथ में थोक व्यापार है, कोई अंकुश नहीं लगाया जाता, थोक व्यापार नहीं रोका जाता, थोक व्यापारियों पर पाबन्दी नहीं लगाई जाती और तमाम आवश्यक वस्तुओं के थोक व्यापार को सरकार अपने हाथ में नहीं लेती, पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन सिस्टम को सर्व-दलीय कमेटी को निगरानी में मजबूत नहीं करती और वाजिब दामों पर चीजों की लोगों को उपलब्ध नहीं कराती है, तब तक इन चीजों के दामों को कंट्रोल करना मुश्किल होगा। अभी हमारा देश बहुत नाजुक दौर से गुजर रहा है और हमारी बिहार स्टेट में और हमारे जिन्ने नालन्दा में, जहाँ से मैं

चुन कर आया हूँ वहाँ की हालत खराब है सरकारी दुकानों में आवश्यक वस्तुओं की आपूर्ति नहीं की जाती। सरकार ने अपने जवाब में कहा है कि पब्लिक डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन सिस्टम के जरिए दुकानें चल रही हैं और ये दुकानें पूरे देश में चल रही हैं लेकिन मैं यह बताना चाहता हूँ कि ये जो दुकानें चल रही हैं उन में आवश्यक वस्तुओं का नितान्त अभाव रहता है। उन से आवश्यक चीजें सप्लाई नहीं की जाती हैं, जनता को नहीं दी जाती है और इस का नतीजा यह होता है कि जब इन दुकानों से लोगों को चीजें नहीं मिलती हैं तो ओपिन मार्केट से लोगों को मंहगी चीजें खरीदनी पड़ती हैं। सरकारी दुकानों पर जब आवश्यक चीजों का अभाव रहता है, तो व्यापारी लोगों को दाम बढ़ाने का प्रोत्साहन मिलता है और आम जनता का शोषण करने का व्यापारियों का मौका रहता है। इस में जो सुझाव दिये गये हैं, वे बहुत अच्छे सुझाव हैं और मैं यह समझता हूँ कि इन को अमल में लाया जाना चाहिये। कई रोज से इस मामले पर डिबेट चल रही है और जब भी इस के लिये सवाल उठाया जाता है, तो मंत्री महोदर की ओर से यह कह दिया जाता है कि केन्द्रीय सरकार की ओर से सभी कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं लेकिन इन चीजों की सप्लाई करने की जिम्मेदारी राज्य सरकारों पर आती है। इस तरह से राज्य सरकारों पर जिम्मेदारी डाल कर जाहिर बात है कि जनता जो आज बढ़ते हुए दामों से परेशान है, उस को आप राहत नहीं दे सकते। जहाँ तक दामों का सवाल है, यह स्टेट का मामला नहीं है, मंहगाई का सवाल स्टेट का मामला नहीं है। यह तो पूरे देश का मामला है और मैं उम्मीद करता हूँ कि मौजूदा सरकार इस को गहराई से लगी और इस में जो सुझाव रखे गये हैं, उन के सिलसिले में वाजिब और अखिलम्ब कदम उठा कर देश की आम जनता को राहत पहुंचाएगी।

इन शब्दों के साथ मैं इसका समर्थन करता हूँ।

SHRI N. G. RANGA (Guntur): Sir, I am glad to associate myself with the spirit behind this resolution. Everyone knows that private trade has been holding to ransom both the producers of primary commodities on the one side and the consumers on the other. All of us belonging to all political parties have been repeatedly saying that this has got to be remedied. Therefore, most of us have also been supporting the idea of the State taking it over. But unfortunately whichever political party comes to power, they fight shy of taking the necessary action in this regard.

[Shri N. G. Ranga]

Take, for instance, sugar industry. A number of committees and commissions were appointed in UP by the UP Government and every one of them suggested taking over the sugar industry. But none of the Governments manned by various political parties at various times has taken up this matter seriously because of the political and economic interests behind the sugar industry, on which most of the political parties come to depend at the time of the elections. This is an open secret. I do not wish to go into this vexed question of nationalisation. But so far as wholesale trade is concerned, should not the Government try to make experiments with one or two commodities, then next extend it to other commodities, by entering into the wholesale trade and gain some commanding heights so that there would be competition between State-trading on the one side and private trade on the other, in the hope that as a result of this competition the producers would be benefited and the consumers also may be protected? Some effort has got to be made in this direction at some time or the other and I sincerely hope that our Government, the Congress Government, would try to make experiments in this regard.

It is high time that the Government should begin to study the possibility of adopting what is known as the dual price system for most of the essential commodities which go into the family budget of the workers and peasants in rural areas as well as urban areas. What is happening is that the peasants are not being paid remunerative prices, although all parties are agreed that the peasants should be assured of remunerative prices and all of them have been supporting the idea of support price. Different Governments have not only accepted the principle but they also tried to fix the support prices. But the support prices that have been fixed so far have not been adequate.

They do not cover all the costs of production, not to speak of assuring the farmers a remunerative price.

Secondly, how are the support prices and remunerative prices to be fixed? Are they to be looked at only from the farmer's point of view or from the point of view of agricultural workers also? According to me, primarily the point of view of agricultural workers, self-employed peasants who invest their family labour in the production of these agricultural commodities, their basic needs for human survival and human decency, should be given priority to start with. Based upon that, you should begin to work up to the cost of production and from that you should go to a remunerative price. If you fix the remunerative prices on that basis, you may find that such prices would be much higher than the prices being paid to the agricultural workers and peasants, but nevertheless, they must be paid. How can they be paid? They must be paid by the consumers. Who are they? Is it not a fact that more and more of our people who have come to be employed in government services as well as private services and industries are earning very much more than what is being earned by the farmers, agricultural workers in the rural areas and self-employed people? They are earning many times more. Should not these be people made to pay remunerative prices for all the essential commodities that they depend upon, which they consume? Till now this principle has not been adopted and it is not on this basis that these prices are being fixed. I want serious consideration to be given to this particular principle. Once it is done, there is the other question also. There are consumers and consumers, the poorer consumers, the not-so-poor consumers and richer consumers. I want some distinction to be made between the rich consumers and the poor consumers. So far as the poorer consumers are concerned, these essential commodities should be made available at subsidised prices

through State-owned shops, cooperative shops and various other shops also that would be licensed by the Government, over which Government would have some control. How are we to meet the subsidy? It is going to be a very high figure. It may come to easily Rs. 500 crores or even Rs. 1000 crores for the whole of India. Where from is this money to come? Just as all these friends now claiming to speak for industrial labour and belonging to different political parties, have been asking for dearness allowance and all kinds of allowances in order to enable their industrial workers to meet these rising prices, so also all these Government employees and other people who are getting more than Rs. 1,000 a month—I would even like to go down Rs. 500 a month—must be made to pay so much more in order to yield the necessary sums which would be needed to subsidise the consumption of these essential commodities by the poorer classes of people. Sir, it is a social challenge as well as a political challenge. I hope that all those friends who have been standing for industrial labour, even for the Central Secretariat's so-called labour, and all these Government officers and other officers employed in private enterprises, would be willing to accept this principle and then persuade all these increasing numbers of so-called intelligentsia, who are employed in various Services to be willing to pay higher prices than what they are paying today. It is only a part contribution that they would be making towards the social well-being. Do they not have any kind of duty at all towards the rest of the society? Is it the duty only of the agricultural workers and the self-employed artisans and of the peasants themselves to go on suffering at the cost of their own health, hygiene and happiness to be content with ever low prices for their agricultural commodities for their services in order to pamper all these rising classes, upper middle classes, richer classes of educated people, and urban people? So, I

would like the Government to make a study and go into this matter in depth and try and see how far they can possibly extend the present practice that they have been having in regard to sugar consumption, sugar marketing, where they have got two prices. Let them extend it to other commodities also and in doing so, let them make sure that the producers of primary commodities get their just remunerative price, a living wage. A living wage not only for the industrial workers for whom all our friends have been clamouring from all sides of the House all the time, not only now, but for decades and decades, a living wage for agricultural worker, and also for the farmers especially the smaller farmers, the poorer farmers should be ensured. Based upon that, you fix the price, on that price put something more in order to finance the subsidised commodities which have got to be placed at the disposal of the poorer people.

I would like these points to be carefully examined by my hon. friend, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. I know Indiraji is all for the poorer people. It is for that that the poorer people have stood by her and it is because of that that we have come here to the House in such large numbers. Those poorer people demand justice, and Indiraji is keen on doing the maximum possible justice, but she needs the co-operation of the Cabinet, of Members of Parliament, of the State Governments and of the State legislatures. It is a kind of national mission that she is charged with. Let us not look at it in a partisan manner. It is all right that we go on fighting each other like cocks at the time of the elections, but once the election is over, the masses are watching us. We must fulfil their basic demands. If we are to satisfy those basic demands we must be sincere and see that we live up to our professions and help them to get two things.

Firstly, they should get their basic needs at subsidised prices

[Shri N. G. Ranga]

which would assure them a living wage, a life which is humanly possible to live. At present more than 50 per cent of our people are living below that level. Secondly, we must assure a basic wage to the agriculturists and producers of primary products. I hope all our friends would be willing to support and strengthen this approach to this problem and offer their co-operation to the Central Government here through their local governments and assemblies.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House has agreed to two hours for this Resolution. Only 23 minutes are left, and the Minister has to intervene and the Mover has to reply. There are two or three more Members who wish to speak. If the House agrees, we can extend the time by half an hour.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

SHRI A. KALANIDHI (Madras Central): I would like to express my views on behalf of the DMK Party on the Resolution moved by Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri.

There has been an abnormal price rise in essential commodities which nobody can deny. Particularly prices went up to a very great extent, unimaginable extent, during the two and half years rule of the Janata Party. Their attention was mainly focussed on retaining their seats seeking positions and power and on solving infight of their party. They had totally forgotten the poorer, downtrodden and weaker sections of the Society. The new Government has been formed with a massive mandate under the able and dynamic leadership of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, and people are expecting that this Government would solve the problem by checking the price rise effectively. The distribution of essential commodities, particularly foodgrains, pulses, edible oils, coal and kerosene should be streamlined so that they reach the poorer and middle class families at fair and reasonable prices.

With regard to coal supply, the distribution was mishandled by the previous Government resulting in the cancellation of many trains as a result of that the foodgrains and other commodities could not reach the people in proper time, leading to a big rise in prices. It has also affected directly and indirectly the small scale as well as the large scale industry, again contributing to a price rise.

There is an inefficient and useless Government in Tamil Nadu run by Mr. M. G. Ramachandran who does not bother about the poor and middle class people but bothers about retaining his Chief Ministership, and also at the sametime wants to act in films to retain his lost popularity. He had promised to open about 20,000 fair price shops in the rural areas, but nothing has been done so far in our State and the result is that the poor people have to fare a lot of problems. They have to stand in queues for hours together to get kerosene and other essential commodities. Regarding diesel supply, I may say that lorries are standing in queues on the roads for hours together to obtain five litres of diesel oil. This causes a lot of hardships to the people in various ways. It affects the coolies and the workers and the day to day activities of the people. Therefore, I would request the Minister to take effective and strict measures to solve the problems of the people by controlling the price rise and streamlining the distribution.

Sir, I thank you very much for having given me an opportunity to express my views on this resolution.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL KOC-HACK (Anantnag): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue before the House is of vital public importance and it is a progressive resolution against anti-social elements. It seeks to find a remedy to the disease that is sucking the blood of the common man. No doubt, legislations have been enacted from time to time to prevent hoarding and pro-

fitteering, but it has been found inadequate to meet the requirements of the situation and for solving the problem urgently. No doubt, we have the Essential Commodities Act, but what we have experienced so far is that it has been more in breach than in compliance. So, the necessity has come for meeting the vacuum that has been left, by flagrance of this law against those who indulge in profiteering and hoarding. Some members opposed it on the basis that it would violate the fundamental rights of the people. I do not agree with them because fundamental rights are liberties that one can enjoy with regard to one's properties, but there should be no liberty to suck the blood of the common man. While the Constitution guarantees certain fundamental rights, it has kept certain checks and balances and these checks and balances are in the form of this resolution before the House. It is progressive in nature. On my behalf and on behalf of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, I support this resolution with all the strength at my command. The public in general are awaiting an answer to the various problem facing them. We must give an answer, which would be satisfactory to the electorate, who have supported us and who have reposed their confidence in us to solve their social problems.

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND STEEL AND MINES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I appreciate the viewpoint expressed by hon. members who took part in the debate on this resolution and I share their anxiety and concern on a very vital problem with which we are confronted today. In fact, from the beginning of the session, either in this House or in the other House, the hon. members are drawing the attention of the Government and trying to express their views, if not on any individual item, on the question of soaring prices either in the form

of Calling Attention or in the form of questions or in the form of this resolution. Therefore, the gravity of the situation and the importance of the subject is known and we are fully aware of the problem itself.

At the same time, we shall have to keep in mind that it is not a fact that suddenly we are confronted with a situation where prices are rising by leaps and bounds. If we look at the state of economy for the last three years, we have found and I agree with the hon. Member, Shri Chintamani Panigrahi, when he pointed out, that so far as the health of the economy is concerned, it was not so bad but it was the question of bad management. Perhaps, it would not be wrong if someone comes to a conclusion that the present state of affairs is largely because of the bad management of the happy state of economy which the earlier Government inherited in 1977.

What was the position? I do not say that there was no rise in prices. There was inflation and it was of the order of 12 per cent. But, at the same time, there was a buffer stock of food-grains to the tune of 18 million tonnes; there was an industrial growth rate of the order of 10 per cent for the first time in this country and there was sufficient cushion so far as foreign exchange reserve was concerned. What is the position today? We are confronted with a rate of inflation of the order of 21.3 per cent. You will be surprised to know and the hon. members are well aware of it that when the Budget was presented by Mr. Charan Singh for the year 1979-80 and when his attention was drawn to the very fact that in the state of economy like ours, a huge deficit of the order of Rs. 1300 crores and an additional dose of taxation to the tune of Rs. 650 crores and odd are bound to have an adverse effect on the price front, as usual, it was pointed that there will be no effect on the prices.

[Shri Pranab Mukherjee]

would just like to draw the attention of the hon. members to certain very salient points on that score. In January, an increase in price was 0.6 per cent; in February, it was 1.8 per cent (pre Budget) and, immediately after the Budget, in March, it was 3.4 per cent; in April, it was 7.1 per cent and today it is 21.3 per cent. Somebody may simply say that we are importing inflation. No doubt, there is an element of truth in it. With a rise in oil prices, certain percentage of inflation is imported. There is no doubt about it. But it is equally true that when you have stagnation in growth, when in the last three years the gross national product is of the order of 4 per cent and 4.1 per cent, if the money supply persists to continue in the order of 17.1 per cent and 17.2 per cent, in spite of resorting to various selective credit policies by the Reserve Bank and that was initiated by the previous Government, not by the Janata Government but by the Government headed by the Congress party, in spite of these selective credit policies, in spite of the dear money policy pursued by the Reserve Bank continuously over a period of years, when the expansion of money supply is 17.1 per cent and growth is in the order of 4.1 per cent to 4.4 per cent, it is bound to have its effect on the economy and on the price front. Added to that, the budget which was presented had a huge deficit and there were taxes over almost all items, which was supplemented by the hike in the Railway freight by 5 per cent to 10 per cent. Therefore, if somebody comes to the conclusion that there was lack of adequate will to tackle the problem, what is wrong? Capacities were allowed to remain unutilised in essential sectors like cement and steel, in aluminium and coal. Whatever capacity we had developed over a period of years by investing national resources and whatever we had reached in the earlier years— I am not talking of expansion. I am not taking of in-

creasing—but even the level of production (you were in charge of the Steel Ministry) which we had in 1976-77 was not maintained in 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80. Therefore, we are placed in a situation where we find there is stagnation in economic growth, there is stagnation in GNP, there is high rate of monetary expansion, there is international crisis. Over and above that, the erroneous fiscal policies contributed simultaneously to the rise in prices.

At the same time, I would not like to simply pass on the responsibility to the previous regime. When a Government takes on responsibility, it is the responsibility of the Government to rectify and take corrective measures wherever they are needed. For that, one such area is the improvement of the public distribution system. But it takes time. The infrastructure which was built up was unfortunately not allowed to function properly. It is not merely arithmetic whether we can open fair-price shops in a large number of villages and whether we can extend the coverage commodity-wise, area-wise or population-wise. According to statistics and arithmetically, these things are all right. But the moot question is whether we are in a position to take essential goods to various points of consumption so that people can take the opportunity of getting them. That is the moot question; that has to be built up. But unfortunately, here also there is a difference in the approach. Nobody in this country would deny that speculators and hoarders play a role in exploiting the situation, particularly when there is a shortage. When State Governments are provided with an instrument, they take a lukewarm attitude. It is not the Congress Government which is running the states in this country. In only one state the Congress is entrusted with the responsibility of managing the administration of the State.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the position of prices there?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I am coming to that. Why I am saying this is because when there is a shortage speculators and hoarders are taking the opportunity, how are you going to deal with them? When the question comes up I will deal with it in details. But now I can tell you one simple fact. So far as the Essential Commodities Act is concerned you will be surprised to know that in one State alone, in West Bengal, more than 13000 cases are pending—and pending over a period of years, under the Essential Commodities Act, of which so much is talked about. Instruments are there; Acts are there but you don't want to utilise them. There is no denying the fact that all sorts of economic offences were indulged in during the last three years. In not a single case was COFEPOSA applied. Raids were conducted, but the raids were conducted not on economic offenders but on political opponents. All the smugglers became honest, all the hoarders became honest. There was no need for the application of COFEPOSA; there was no need for the application of tax raids and customs raids. On the one hand you allow smugglers to continue, hoarders to continue and black-marketeers to continue, you take wrong fiscal policies, even to create a situation in which there is stagnation in industrial growth there is stagnation in GNP, and at the same time you expect there should be no rise in prices? It may be our pious desire, but unfortunately it is not possible. Therefore, the moot question is, how we are going to sort out this problem. The hon. Member was suggesting: 'Why don't you take over the entire wholesale trade in all essential commodities?'. It may be a very desirable wish. But do we have the infrastructure, do we have the apparatus, do we have mechanism to that we can take over the wholesale trade? It is not a new thing to us. At one particular time, we took over trade in one commodity. Mr. Chairman, you will remember, at that time you yourself had taken the initiative. So far as the wholesale trade in wheat was con-

cerned, it was taken over. But when you have the deficiency in your mechanism, in your apparatus, it is no use trying to achieve a certain objective which is very ideal but which you cannot implement. India is not a very small country. The commodities which you are dealing with are not few in number. We have the problem of difficult terrain also. Mr. Sangma, when he was making his observations on this particular Resolution, very correctly pointed out the difficult terrain and the transport bottlenecks in various tiers of distribution with which we are faced today. If we completely ignore these facts and simply say that we are going to nationalise the wholesale trade in all essential commodities and all the problems will be solved, Mr. Chairman, Sir in my opinion, we are expecting too much. Therefore, whatever is available to us we can take the opportunity and improve the system. Certain commodities have been identified. I have spelt out those commodities while answering to questions in the morning, for instance, standard cloth, cereals, sugar, kerosene; match box. If we can build up a network through fair price shops, through co-operative societies, and ensure that these commodities will be made available to the people at reasonable prices, then it would have some effect so far as ameliorating the conditions of the common people and weaker sections of the community are concerned. But so far as controlling the price is concerned, you will have to take sound fiscal policies. There is no easy alternative. You must augment your production, you must utilise your capacities to the fullest extent possible, you must identify the areas where there are constraints on production and try to remove them. You cannot perpetuate an economy of shortages for all time to come. Unless we can produce, unless the difference between demand and supply is made up by more production, we cannot have a long-term solution, a permanent solution. In a developing economy like ours, this should be a constant exercise and we shall have to

[Shri Pranab Mukherjee]

keep our mind alert to this problem. So far as short-term measures are concerned, one good suggestion has come from Prof. Ranga. Often it is not possible for us to say 'yes' or 'no' immediately. It requires some in depth studies—the dual price policy in certain commodities. We are having this so far as sugar is concerned. Whether we can extent this policy to certain other essential commodities, we have to examine, and I can assure him that we will examine this, we will study this suggestion in its totality; and it should be possible for us to arrive at a solution.

Sir, what I can say for the consideration of the hon. Members now is that the solution suggested by the hon. Mover of the Resolution is not the real solution. Whatever we can do within the means which is in our possession, we are trying to do, we are trying to improve it, and we shall have to continue to do so. But I do not feel that merely by nationalising the wholesale trade in essential commodities we are going to solve the problem.

Because of these, I am opposing the resolution.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: Don't we need the co-operation of all Parties in this task?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Of course, and I am grateful to Prof Ranga for reminding me that in this area also we require the co-operation not merely to get the legislation passed which is before the hon. Members but in certain other areas also.

SHRI SUDHIR KUMAR GIRI (Contai): I express my deep gratitude to the hon. Members who have supported my resolution.

I not surprised to expect that the hon. Minister would bypass the problem this way. I have already pointed out in my earlier speech that there are several causes for the price rise. The

capitalist system of the economy is bound to lead to price-rise and the poor people would have to be deprived of their basic necessities of life. So I suggested some measures and I expected very eagerly that the hon. Minister and his government would give due attention to the poorest of the people. But it is regretted that they have not.

Here the Ministers are roaming in cars. Here they are rolling in carpets. They have forgotten the hungry people who have sent them to this august place. Professor Ranga who has supported my resolution and requested the government to take suitable measures—I thank him though he belongs to the ruling party—most probably has not forgotten the hungry faces of the people. People who live here and the people who live in the villages are two different sets of people having two different sets of mind. People living in abundance and people elected to the House on their support can hardly be expected to take into consideration the sufferings of the poor people.

It was made quite clear to us that the government is wedded to the principles of democracy and socialism. The Prime Minister, the other day, told the House that she is also wedded to the principle of democracy and socialism. Then if the 70 per cent of the total population live below the poverty line, how can democracy be made workable? If 70 per cent of the total population remain hungry throughout their life and cannot procure the basic necessities of life, how would they cast their vote free from bondages. If poverty continues this way it is easy for the monied man to purchase their votes. It is easy for the landlords and the capitalists to purchase the votes of these poor people. That is what has been done in many parts of the country. I, therefore, appeal to all the Members of the House and I appeal to their good senses so that this pretext or that pretext should not deprive the hungry people of the countryside. If the government has really good wishes,

it can build up the infra-structure and it can supply the basic necessities of life to the people in the villages at the uniform prices fixed up.

17.00 hrs.

It is told to us on various occasions that the people belonging to the Congress (I) Party follow the ideals of Gandhiji. Therefore, by the name of Gandhiji, I appeal to those people to please change the capitalistic and feudalistic pattern of society and engage their minds to ameliorate the conditions of the villagers most of whom live below poverty line. I appeal to them to bring about a change in our society in consonance with the principles laid down in the Preamble to the Constitution of India. My suggestion to the hon. Minister, to the Government and to the learned hon. Members of this House is, therefore, to give a second thought to it so that the takeover of the wholesale trade in the essential commodities must be resorted to and fair-price shops in a large scale opened in the villages and towns so that these basic commodities be supplied to the people at uniform prices fixed up. What is the harm in fixing up the prices of these essential commodities? If the prices of the essential commodities are fixed up, then the hoarders, and the profiteers would not be able to earn such a huge profit as they can do today. So, my Resolution stands and I again express my deep gratitude for and pay respects to those who have given their thought to the hungry people of the villages and supported my Resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have now got two amendments from two hon. Members—Shri Mool Chand Daga and Shri Kamla Mishra Madhukar. Unless they are willing to withdraw them, I shall have to put the amendments to the vote of the House.

SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR (Motihari): I am pressing my

amendment and I want to speak on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me first put the Amendment of Shri Mool Chand Daga. That in the resolution,—

(i) delete "take over wholesale trade and"

(ii) add at the end—

"as soon as possible" (1)

I think he is not present. I will have to put it to the vote of the House.

The Amendment was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now I shall put amendment No. 2 moved by Shri Kamla Mishra Madhukar.

SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR: I have not spoken on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think at this stage, there is no speech made. I think at that time I did give enough time.

श्री कमला मिश्र मधुकर :—मैं दो-चार शब्द कहना चाहता हूँ, मुझे मौका दीजिये।

सभापति महोदय : सदन ने पहले ही आधा घन्टा समय बढ़ा दिया था, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य से बोलने वाले नहीं थे। इस वक़्त में समझता हूँ कि दूसरा प्रस्ताव आने दिया जाय, इसलिये मैं आप के अमेण्डमेन्ट को पेश करूंगा।

श्री समर मुखर्जी : (हावड़ा) इसे पढ़ दीजिये।

सभापति महोदय : मैं आप के अमेण्डमेन्ट को सदनमें पढ़ देता हूँ।

"That in the resolution—

for 'to take over wholesale trade and curb the price rise by ensuring supply of all the essential commodities at reduced prices through fair price shops.'

substitute 'not only to take over the wholesale trade but the production of essential commodities may also be brought under Govern-

[Mr. Chairman]

ment control and ensure the supply of all the essential commodities to urban and rural population through fair price shops under the supervision of committed persons.' (2)

I shall now put amendment No. 2 moved by Shri Kamla Mishra Madhukar to the vote of the House.

The Amendment was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I put the Resolution moved by Shri Sudhir Kumar Giri to the vote of the House. The question is:

"This House notes with grave concern the abnormal rise in prices of all essential commodities of human life, such as food-grains, pulses; edible oils; cloth; kerosene, coal, etc. in the country ranging between 20 to 40 per cent within a short span of time and calls upon the Government to take over wholesale trade and curb the price rise by ensuring supply of all the essential commodities at reduced prices through fair price shops."

Those in favour may say 'Aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those against may say 'No.'

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Noes have it....

SHRI SUDHIR KUMAR GIRI: No, Ayes have it, I want division.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, let the lobbies be cleared.

The lobbies have been cleared. I will put the Resolution to the vote of the House: The question is:

"This House notes with grave concern the abnormal rise in prices of all essential commodities of human life, such as food-grains;

pulses; edible oils; cloth; kerosene, coal, etc. in the country ranging between 20 to 40 per cent within a short span of time and calls upon the Government to take over wholesale trade and curb the price rise by ensuring supply of all the essential commodities at reduced prices through fair price shops."

The motion was negatived.

17.11 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE. CENTRE-STATE RELATIONSHIP

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up the Resolution on Centre-State Relationship to be moved by Shrimati Suseela Gopalan. Before I ask her to move this Resolution, the House has to allot time for this Resolution. The House agreed to allot two hours for the earlier Resolution. If the House agrees, we may allot two hours for this Resolution also.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE (Howrah): This is an important subject; it will not be over during this session.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Initially, we may agree for two hours. Though time for the earlier Resolution was extended, yet there were no speakers. We may, therefore, agree to two hours initially.

SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, I take it that the House agrees to allot two hours for this Resolution.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. VENKATASUBBAIAH): There is a discussion under Rule 193 to be taken up at 6.00 P.M. to be