

[Shri Chengalraya Naidu] drought-affected areas. The only thing the Government can do is to sanction some funds for the extension of electricity in rural areas. In Andhra for every district, they have got estimates sanctioned worth Rs. 2 crores but for want of funds, they are not able to execute them. In my own district from which I come, that is, Chittoor, there is drought for the last three years and, every year, the people are going out for their livelihood. They are not able to get employment and they have to go out to Mysore State or to Madras State. If the Government can give, instead of starting some relief work or giving some other assistance, some funds for a permanent type of relief, that is, giving them electricity and giving them deep bore drills. If the water is tapped from underground and the electricity is given, that will be a permanent relief.

I would appeal to the hon. Prime Minister and the Finance Minister to allot funds for the extension of electricity in Andhra Pradesh, in every district, not only in Andhra Pradesh but in the whole of south. There are so many States in the south which are dependent on lift irrigation. Only the electricity can help them to produce more foodgrains. Unless the agricultural economy is improved, unless we produce more foodgrains, the country's economy as a whole cannot be improved. So, I request the Government to sanction enough funds for minor irrigation, and specially for electricity extension, as a permanent measure to give relief to the drought-affected areas.

12.40 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. MR. HAROLD  
HOLT

THE PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY, MINISTER OF PLANNING AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI): The hon. members are aware of the tragic circumstances in which the Prime Minister of Australia, Right Hon. Harold Holt,

disappeared off Port Sea. It appears that the vigorous efforts for a search have been of no avail. We share the anxiety of the Government and the people of Australia and more specially of Mrs. Holt and her family.

Mr. Harold Holt was the Prime Minister of Australia for two years. Even in this short period, he has left an impress of his personality, his dedication and vision on the policies of his country.

We in India have particular reason to remember him, for, we had in him a sincere friend who had understanding of our problems. Last year, when we were passing through an extremely difficult phase, he came forward to help us, and encouraged by his gesture, various organisations and institutions in Australia also came to our assistance. We shall remember him with gratitude. We have always believed that the future of Australia is linked with the future of Asia. Today this is also realised in Australia. It will be recalled that, on our part, we had invited Australia to participate in the Asian Relations Conference and the Conference on Indonesia. Since then, our relations have grown closer and the area of our mutual co-operation has been expanding. I was looking forward to meeting this distinguished leader next month.

It is tragic for any country to lose its leader in such circumstances. The loss is not only to Australia but to the entire Commonwealth. We are deeply distressed and we wish to convey our deep sympathy to the people of Australia and particularly to Mrs. Holt and her family. It is for this purpose that the Minister in the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri B. R. Bhagat, has left for Australia this morning. Tomorrow he will participate on our behalf in the Memorial Service being held in Melbourne.

SHRI NATH PAI (Rajapur): We associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed by the Prime Minister...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House fully shares the sentiments.

12.43 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (GENERAL), 1967-68, AND DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS, 1964-65—Contd.

SHRI DHANDAPANI (Dharapuram): As my hon. friend said, after the submission of the General Budget six months ago, the Finance Minister has come forward to ask for a Supplementary Demand to the tune of Rs. 31,07,00,000. The additional expenditure incurred is to the tune of about Rs. 31 crores. Out of the items shown on the debit side is an item on the expenditure incurred on account of gross negligence of Government. For instance, I would say this. An official of the Government of India Mint at Alipore was charge-sheeted on certain grounds, I think, for gross negligence of duty, insubordination, indiscipline and misconduct. These words are commonly used by the officialdom against the employees even when they discharge their duties very faithfully and loyally. This case went to the level of High Court and then the Government lost the case and the employee won the case. Now the Government has to pay not only his salary but also the cost of the suit.

Another point is: a major portion of this Supplementary Demand amounting to Rs. 20 crores has been allotted to public undertakings as loans and advances. In a recent study the Economic Research Foundation have found that the public sector returns are not good. This is what they say:

"Public sector undertakings are expanding in size more rapidly than the private companies in the country. However, their performance in terms of returns is still relatively unsatisfactory."

Instead of investing this amount as loans and advances, it will be better if you divert it to some other purposes. They may be given for agricultural purposes to boost food production.

Always we raise slogans like 'Grow More Food'. Sir, as far as Tamilnad is concerned we were able to produce 5 lakhs tonnes of paddy whereas the previous Government would have produced only 2 lakh tonnes.

In regard to development of irrigation also, our State is very backward compared with northern States. We propose to spend about Rs. 100 crores for development of irrigation in Tamilnad. We appealed to the Finance Ministry here for more financial assistance which they have turned down. As far as Tamilnad is concerned, the hon. Finance Minister has no soft corner though he has got every respect. If we can complete all the minor irrigation works, we would be in a position to produce 80 lakhs tonnes of foodgrains in a year. For example, in my constituency, in Palani taluk, a scheme by name, Palaru Porundalaru scheme, estimated to cost Rs. 2½ crores was not taken for consideration. In the same Taluk other minor irrigation works like Varadamanadhi scheme and another in Ottanchatram Ayakkudi area are yet to be taken up for consideration. If these schemes are taken up and completed, then our Palani taluk will become one of the Tanjores in Tamilnad. So, these things must be considered in detail.

At the same time, as far as Central Government employees are concerned, the Central Government have announced a rise in Dearness Allowance. At the same, in our place in Coimbatore District most of the employees working in the textile industry are rendered jobless on account of financial difficulties in the textile industry. Our Chief Minister, Arignar Anna, has been generous enough to give a compensation of Rs. 2 lakhs to the employees affected in that industry. Now the Central Government should come forward to give some compensation to the affected employees also. Our State Government asked the Finance Ministry as well as the Industries Ministry for a loan of Rs. 2 crores to re-open the closed mills in our place. That is not considered by the Ministry.