

Then I quote from the *Commerce*, which is the mouthpiece of monopoly capital in this country, dated 5th September, 1964, p. 398:

"The fact that the Food Minister, Mr. Subramaniam, himself has recognised this week the need for freezing all land reform measures at a particular level and for removing, as quickly as possible, the uncertainties in the ownership or management of land is yet another significant pointer to his realistic approach to the problems of food and agriculture".

So monopoly capital is feeling that Shri Subramaniam, the Food and Agriculture Minister, is not for any land reform, and the *AICC Economic Review* says that they are tardy about land reform. Will Shri Subramaniam say that the opinion of *Commerce* is wrong and he is also for land reform, and if so, what steps are going to be taken to proceed with land reform. The land reform question is very very germane to the issue. Without it, you are not going to produce the requisite food in this country. The land is limited. Unless it is utilised to the maximum and the actual tiller, actual peasant in the field is encouraged, there is no hope of achieving this objective, however much you may try for centuries. Therefore, Government must have a definite policy with regard to land reform. They should not talk in many voices. I want that the Government represented by the Food and Agriculture Minister should come forward and contradict the statement given by those who are speaking on behalf of the trade.

I must also say a word in regard to the land reform measures in my state of Madras. I shall quote a statement from a statement of a US expert team in this connection. They say that no land reform has been effected which has resulted in increase in production. This is what is said:

"Once the record of rights has been established and the right of resumption is withdrawn, we recommend that the Government

should enact suitable legislation for the transfer of ownership to the tenants in respect of non-re-sumable lands. The ceiling provisions in Tanjore.

Tanjore is one of the biggest rice producing districts in the South, as also Tiruchirappally and other districts in Madras State—

"have provided hardly any excess land for the establishment of farm ownership among tenants. With no other government-supported land purchase programme in existence, the non-resumed land could serve as a beginning of a land purchase programme. We are of the opinion that an announcement by the Government that ownership will be transferred to the tenants as soon as the records of rights have been prepared would remove uncertainty among tenants and create a more conducive atmosphere for the execution of the programme".

So unless something is done towards the implementation of the land reform programme, there is no possibility of making our peasants produce more. Many members of the Opposition, including the Swatantra Party, have stated repeatedly that no land reform is necessary. I find that in one of his statements, one of the members of the Planning Commission has also stated that land reform proposals are to be stopped for the present. If this is the policy of Government, then we are done away with; we have no chance of solving the food crisis. We will eternally depend upon American imports and we will ruin ourselves.

Therefore, I press that these long-term measures should be taken by Government, along with the short-term measures which I have already suggested.

OPINIONS ON BILL

Shri Shree Narayan Das (Darbhangha): I am sorry, Sir, that I was absent when I was called. I had gone out for a short while.

[Shri Shree Narayan Das]

I beg to lay on the Table Paper No. 1 to the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, which was circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the direction of the House on the 22nd November 1963.

**MOTION RE: FOOD SITUATION
IN THE COUNTRY—Contd.**

Mr. Speaker: Shri Himatsingka.

I would request hon. Members to condense their remarks within twelve minutes each. At 3-30 P.M. I shall call the hon. Minister.

Shri Himatsingka (Godda): I have heard the speeches made during the last three days beginning from the speech of Shri H. N. Mukerjee. Most of them have criticised the Government and blamed the traders for alleged hoarding and keeping back grains from the market. But not much of constructive suggestions to improve the situation have been put forward.

As is well known, the production of foodgrains has gone on increasing from 1951 onwards. In 1951, the production was 50 million tons and acreage 97 million hectares; in 1961 the production went upto 79.8 million tons, the acreage being 114 million hectares. Therefore, production has not only increased in quantity of acreage under cultivation, but the production per acre also has gone up. Only, there was some slight setback in two years 1962-63 and 1963-64. But even this increased production has not been found sufficient to meet the requirements of the country, and hence Government had to import large quantities of foodgrains from foreign countries at the cost of very valuable foreign exchange. In the last 10 or 12 years it has been going on; sometimes the imports have been a little less, and in some years it has been more, as in this year, to meet the deficit caused by three successive bad years of production on account of vagaries of rain.

Another factor that has to be taken into consideration is the change in the

taste of the people. Before 1950, a large quantity of coarse grains was being consumed by a large number of people, but after the supply through fair price shops of rice and wheat, most of the people who used to depend on coarse grains are taking rice and wheat because they get them at very convenient prices. This trend was also noticed by the Foodgrains Enquiry Committee, 1957, who reported that producers had begun to consume more; there is also a growing tendency to hold their stocks for longer periods than they used to do before. The result has been that less foodgrains are coming into the market, and therefore supplies are not up to the requirements of the country.

Hon. Shri Mukerjee criticised the Government and said that hoarders were keeping back the stocks, but not one single name could be mentioned as to where the hoarding was. We have noticed in the newspapers that in U.P. 20 godowns were searched and about 600 quintals of foodgrains were found. If you search foodgrain godowns and you get 600 quintals of foodgrains in 20 godowns and if you call it hoarding, I do not know how to describe it.

The remedy suggested was that State trading in foodgrains should be introduced and banks should be nationalised, as if State trading in foodgrains will increase the production in the country and will meet the deficit that is found to exist. Similarly, I do not know how nationalisation of banks will be a remedy. The suggestion was that banks advance money against foodgrains, and that if they are nationalised, these advances cannot be made. I do not know if my hon. friend has forgotten the powers of the Reserve Bank. One simple letter from the Reserve Bank to the banks that they are not to advance money against foodgrains would be quite sufficient to stop all advances against foodgrains. The Reserve Bank has ample powers to give directions as to what advances are to be given against what commodities, and what commodities are not to be advanced against.