

[Mr. Chairman.]

Shri K. Periaswami Gounder, Shri Daljit Singh, Shri Bhakt Darshan, Swami Ramanand Shastri, Chaudhary Pratap Singh Daulta, Shri Mohan Swarup, Shri N. P. Shanmuga Gounder, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri N. G. Ranga; and Shri B. N. Datar

and 10 members from Rajya Sabha;

that in order to constitute a sitting of the Joint Committee the quorum shall be one third of the total number of members of the Joint Committee;

that the Committee shall make a report to this House by the first day of the next session;

that in other respects the Rules of Procedure of this House relating to Parliamentary Committees will apply with such variations and modifications as the Speaker may make; and

that this House recommends to Rajya Sabha that Rajya Sabha do join the said Joint Committee and communicate to this House the names of members to be appointed by Rajya Sabha to the Joint Committee."

*The motion was adopted.*

15.30 hrs.

#### MOTION RE: FOOD SITUATION

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move:

"That the food situation in the country be taken into consideration."

Sir, I shall occupy a little time of the House in the beginning in order to indicate to the House the lines on which the mind of the Ministry and my mind has been working.

It has been a healthy practice during the last several sessions of this Parliament that we discuss the food

situation in the country. Even when the food situation improves, I really des're that this practice should continue because food is a very live and vital subject to the majority of the people and—we cannot say—that time would never come when all that is to be said about it has been done or has been said.

I divide this subject into two parts; one is agricultural production which everybody wants to increase, and the second is distribution. I attach the greatest importance to the first part, namely, agricultural production. Before I come to the distribution aspect, which is sometimes controversial, on which there can be differences of opinion and very legitimate differences of opinion.—I grant that—let me take up agricultural production. So far as the increase in agricultural production is concerned, I do not think there is any Member or any section of this House which has not that particular responsibility at heart. Unfortunately, we have always said that there should be an increase in agricultural production, but hitherto it was not pursued with the real vigour and vitality with which it should have been pursued.

In retrospect, I would make a reference to the point to which I had made a reference elsewhere. That is, when we began our first Five Year Plan, the emphasis was all the time on agricultural production because we rightly realised that unless agricultural production was completed anything that we did would not succeed in that measure in which we want it to succeed. We started after spending several hundreds of crores of rupees the multi-purpose and river valley schemes, etc., so that more land could be brought under perennial irrigation. We began extremely well and got about six million or more acres under irrigation.

In the second Five Year Plan, although that emphasis was not changed, many other things came in. We perhaps lost that perspective, at

any rate, the intense part of it, namely, that agricultural production was of the highest priority and it should always be considered as the highest priority in this predominantly agricultural country. The result was that possibly we did not pursue the Plan as vigorously as we intended to do. You might ask me as to why it is necessary that I should say so. I am not saying so for the pleasure of it, but this kind of retrospection is very necessary because we are on the eve of the third Plan, and we must not commit those mistakes which we might have committed in the second Plan in not having the proper type of emphasis on agricultural production.

Therefore, it ought to be my duty and the duty of my Ministry to see that agricultural production gets the highest priority in the third Plan and that we leave nothing undone so that at the end of the third Five Year Plan it must be said of this country that we are sufficiently self-sufficient in food and that we are not importing or we might have to import one ton from anywhere outside. I am not saying it merely for the national pride of it but it is a necessity, because, unless we do that, our industry and other expansion in other fields will not succeed to that extent to which they ought to. Therefore, I am putting all the emphasis on this. If I may say so, whatever little power I have in me, whatever little thought that I could give to this subject, I will put the emphasis on how to increase agricultural production in this country.

Now, how is it to be done? There is no alternative to higher production in agriculture. The only alternative is hunger, and an increasing dependence on imports from outside, which no country and especially a predominantly agricultural country like ours, as I said, would want to do beyond a particular source of time. Everybody knows that agricultural production in this country could be increased because if

you take several countries that have made progress in agriculture, you will come to the conclusion to which I have come, namely, that we are perhaps the last country in that grade, in the matter of agricultural production per acre. Although we are a highly agricultural country with something like 330 million acres of land for agriculture, although we have got irrigation of the highest magnitude—there is no country in the world which has got as much irrigation as India has got—in spite of this fact, that we should be the last in the world so far as agricultural yield is concerned is not something of which any country could be proud. Our yield, as hon. Members may know, is only one-fourth ton per acre. It is very simple. Out of the 330 million acres under irrigation last year, somewhere about 280 million acres were growing foodgrains like wheat, rice and other coarser types of grain. We were able to produce a crop which we styled as a bumper crop and that crop was 73.5 million tons. Any student of arithmetics, by dividing that irrigable area by 73.5, would come to the conclusion that our yield per acre is just about a quarter of a ton or a little more. That is all.

You will see that this is the lowest in the world but it does not discourage me. On the contrary, it fills me with a sense of hope that because it is one-fourth of a ton per acre, there is a large way you can go up to increase our production. I am not exaggerating when I say that—I am not talking of the second Plan or the third Plan—this country has a possibility, not in the immediate future but in the distant future, even of doubling, trebling, or even more than that, of our production, because we have not gone beyond one fourth of a ton per acre while the average in many countries which are agriculturally progressive countries is somewhere about one ton if not one and a half or even two tons per acre.

The other day I was inaugurating an international seminar which had

[Shri S. K. Patil.]

something to do with agricultural production. In connection with that, farmers and those who have made a success of their farming methods in many countries had come to the capital city of Delhi. I was told that in Australia, apart from the fact that the average is two tons per acre there, there are some lands in which particular strains of wheat have been developed and those lands give as much as six tons per acre. Imagine our yield of a quarter of a ton and contrast it with six tons there. I am not taking of the soil or the land that is culturable in Australia. But by a systematic application of the technological methods, they have improved their agriculture considerably. Their average is two tons which is also somewhere about eight times as much as India has done.

I met a farmer from Canada who gave me from his personal experience something which really should have heartened us. He told me that it took 20 years—it was sometime back—in order to double the production per acre by the application of fertilisers and by technical assistance that could be given to the agriculturists. In 20 years it was doubled, but during the last two years, by these technological methods and improved technology, they came upon a particular kind of strain in wheat by which, within two years, the wheat production was doubled. When people are talking of doubling the wheat production in two years as against 20 years and the average is two tons per acre and six tons per acre in special cases, you could imagine what a tremendous opportunity lies before us to increase our agricultural production.

Recently, I had the occasion to see some of the world's best research stations in agriculture during my tour, I made it a point to go and see with my own eyes those agricultural stations even in countries which were not self-sufficient in food. England by no stretch of imagination is or

would ever be a self-sufficient country in food, and they have not got the land; they do not even attempt to be self-sufficient. But even with the limited land that Great Britain has got, they have improved agriculture with all the technological research that they are doing from time to time. I saw a farm which had produced 75 cwt. per acre, that is, about 3½ tons. The research is of this type. In a single field, they divide the area into 11 plots, and experiment with different plots this way: one without the application of any inorganic fertiliser and the other with nitrogenous phosphates and potash solely. In the remaining seven, it was a permutation and combination of all these three. The result was, in one strain, by one mixture of fertilisers, they could produce 75 cwts. per acre. We can understand from that the tremendous opportunity that we have got. Instead of taking those things first, if we waste our energies in finding out whether this system of distribution or that system is good, it is waste of time. Of course what we produce has to be distributed, but as the Minister of Food and Agriculture it shall be my duty, and a sacred duty, to see that within a reasonable space of time, this country stands on its own legs and becomes self-sufficient by the application of technological methods adopted in most of the agriculturally progressive and developed countries.

**Shri Nath Pai (Rajapur):** You said "reasonable space of time." What is that time?

**Shri S. K. Patil:** The hon. Member need not be anxious. I am merely saying what could be done. What are aiming at, would come at the end of it.

It is also contended and very rightly by some that there are some wastelands in India which also should be brought under the plough. It is true, but to what extent can we go? I do not minimise that, but statistics are sometimes very dangerous, be-

cause we do not know which of them to believe. Anyway, whether it is 110 million acres or 87 million acres, whatever it is, by and large, I have come to the conclusion that the wastelands or *usar* lands or saltish lands that you can bring under cultivation by constant application of these technical methods would not be more than, say, 50 million acres, or maybe a little more. Our culturable land may go up from 330 million acres to 40 million acres at the most. It will be a good thing if you compare how much land in other countries in the world is brought under the plough. The total culturable area in India may come to 400 million acres. If you compare it with other countries, you will see that the land that can be ploughed and on which something could grow is only 50 per cent; more than that no country has gone, because the rest of the land really cannot be brought under cultivation. We must do everything in our power to see that as much of these wastelands are brought under cultivation as possible.

In this connection, I want to make a concrete suggestion. Some States have made laws taking over these lands to the States. Neither the States do anything about it nor is the private man, allowed to do anything, because he does not own it. I am prepared to make a recommendation. If such land exists and if somebody is really prepared to do something in order to bring it under cultivation, I would give him that land almost free, because he is doing a good job to the nation by bringing under cultivation land which does not produce anything. This is very necessary in a country where land does not increase. Geologists tell us that this planet of ours shrinks, but never expands. Thank God, it does not shrink very fast. That is why so much acreage is left to us for ploughing. So, the remedy is, we must have intensive cultivation. There would be no two voices in this House or outside on this matter. Our only

remedy for more agricultural production is intensive and more intensive cultivation, so that per acre we shall produce more than what we are doing today.

This brings me naturally to three or four very important points which really make for agricultural production. The first is irrigation—not only major multi-purpose schemes, but also medium and minor irrigation. Regarding minor irrigation schemes, figures are variously quoted. Sometimes it happens that we do something in a village and we include that land in the minor irrigation. Next time we do the same thing and we include the same land. So, sometimes we get inflated figures. Whatever the figures may be, we should have major, medium and minor irrigation schemes so that there would be a perennial supply. At least, the moisture in the soil should be retained to the extent to which it is possible for us to do. There have been experiments tried elsewhere. It is true you may not have perennial irrigation in the sense that there is water for 12 months, but if you retain water even for a little more time in the soil, that soil responds to cultivation better than the soil which has no water or in which water has not been retained so long. All the methods have to be applied, so that, we may have the maximum benefit out of that irrigation.

At the end of the second Five Year Plan, under minor irrigation alone, we shall have 18½ million acres and at the end of the third Five Year Plan, it will be 33 million acres. In this connection, there is another thing also to which reference has been made in this House time and again, viz., waterlogging. The House must realise that waterlogging is something which is bad. I can quite understand land which has not been brought under the plough, but I cannot understand land, on which millions of rupees have been spent, being waterlogged and going out of cultivation.

[Shri S. K. Patil]

15.46 hrs.

[Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Sometimes rice grows on these waterlogged areas, because rice does not require a depth of more than 2 feet. But when the alkaline table comes up, it will be useless for anything in the world. So, it is more important than even taming the wasteland. It is better that waterlogged areas are reclaimed by proper drainage, etc. If the States are in difficulty in doing that, it shall be the duty of my Ministry to see that we go to the help of those States to do everything possible. Not less than 1 million acres of land is waterlogged today. I was reading the other day the speech of the Chief Minister of Punjab. In Punjab, alone, according to his figures.....

Shri Feroze Gandhi (Rai Bareilly): He should not refer to a State subject; he is referring to the Chief Minister of Punjab.

Shri S. K. Patil: It is just for a change for the House; it is some good reference. He said, an area of 2,37,000 acres was waterlogged. I think it is rather a low estimate.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It is much more than that.

Shri S. K. Patil: We have more irrigation in Punjab and so, the waterlogged area is also more because we have not adequate drainage, etc. I am mentioning this so that in the third Five Year Plan and even now in the unexpired period of the second Five Year Plan, we shall do everything in our power to see that measures are taken so that the agricultural production is increased, because this is a land which has tasted the fertilisers, etc., and it is attuned to agriculture. So that also ought to be done.

After irrigation comes fertilisers, which is a very important thing.

Many Members and many people in this country sometimes believe in orthodox methods. Orthodox method is good; conservatism is good sometimes. So far as agriculture is concerned, I can tell this House, not because I am against orthodox or conservative methods, that there is no alternative to inorganic fertilisers in order to increase the agricultural production in this country in the measure in which you want to increase it. It was all right some-time back, because you did not bring in nitrogenous phosphates and all that; they were not known. But we are talking of a time when the population of India was so small. Hundred years ago the population of India was under 20 crores. Three hundred years ago it was 5 crores. But the land was the same. Therefore, what was good some 300 or 100 years ago is not good when we have a population of 370 million, where per head you do not get even one acre of culturable area. So, what is necessary today is the application of these fertilizers, scientific application of these fertilizers, so that you can double and treble production.

We have seen that in fertilizers we are backward, and indeed we are trying to make some progress, and during the last three or four years we have come to the position that I am quoting. So far as the ammonium sulphate is concerned, a nitrogenous fertilizer, we produced in our country 4,19,000 tons and we imported 7,15,000 tons, making a total of 11,34,000 tons of fertilizers. It is hardly 50 per cent of our requirements. Today when people know how to use it, the requirement will increase. Therefore, we see how necessary is it to increase or multiply the production of fertilizer, and everything must be done to see that more and more fertilizer is produced. I shall even go to the extent of saying it is much better to import fertilizer than to import food. Because, in half the money we shall get the total wheat or rice or anything that we want. Although we can produce it

ourselves, it is not possible to produce it in a year. We can produce but it takes time, because the factories have to be built. We must import fertilizer so that with the application of that fertilizer we shall produce more food so that at the end we shall find that we are better off. Otherwise, we will have to spend more money in order to import the grain that is in short supply in the country.

In this connection I would like to say what was done before. In the last year we did not import fertilizers in the proportion in which we wanted it. If all fertilizer demands had really been met last year we should have produced more than 73·5 million tons. Possibly, if we had produced 80 million tons there would have been no dearth at all, and no import would have become necessary. I am emphasising that fact, because I want the co-operation of this House when this comes. Even for the Third Five Year Plan, so far as the fertilizer needs of this country are concerned, they have got to be fully and adequately met, as that is the only way by which agricultural production can increase.

When I was in the Rothamsted Agricultural station in the United Kingdom they said that they have used it during the last 116 years in experiments, which proves to the hilt that it is not something that they have read out of a novel. A piece of land was subjected to the application of a nitrogenous fertilizer, the sulphate of ammonia, all these 116 years, and even today it is responsive to the application of the nitrogenous fertilizer and produces more and more. Some people who were wedded to orthodoxy in our country were saying some two years ago when I had not to look after this portfolio that if these nitrogenous fertilizers are used in the land, the land becomes an addict to this fertilizer, as man becomes addict to something else, and as that addiction is bad, even this addiction is bad. There is no ques-

tion of addiction and we have seen that land is still responsive to this fertilizer, and that there is nothing like an immunity that land develops that it does not respond to the proper application of the nitrogenous fertilizers. I am telling this because there is no ground just to imagine that really this is not the right way of doing things.

There are people who say: what about the compost, cow-dung and green manure? I am not minimizing their importance. When we do not get the nitrogenous or other fertilizers, surely these are the things which are useful. It may not give you double or treble the quantity, but it will help you to increase the production by 10 per cent, 20 per cent or 25 per cent, and therefore they are important in the scheme of things. So, it has got to be done.

But more and more emphasis has to be laid on having these inorganic fertilizers developed in this country. We should have the factories ourselves. This House knows that we have got Sindri and that gives us quite a substantial quantum of our fertilizers. We are now building one at Nangal, which will go into production in another six or seven months. It is as big as Sindri. Then we have another one, a third one, at Trombay. That will also give us the same quantity of production as Sindri. So, apart from Sindri, Nangal and Trombay will be producing fertilizers very shortly. Nangal will give us heavy water also that is another aspect—which is a bi-product that will be used by the atomic reactor. But I am not content with that. We should not be satisfied with one Sindri, or Nangal or Trombay. We should have fertilizer plants all over the country, a net work of them, because there are difficulties of transportation. All types of difficulties are there and, therefore, if it is possible—and we have seen it is possible—factories not costing Rs. 30 crores to 40 crores, but factories costing round

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about Rs. 5 crores should be had one in every State, or even more than one in every State; along with that the other factories in the private sector, namely, factories producing phosphates and potash should be encouraged so that in total we shall double,—at least double if not more—the production of fertilizers in our own country.

Hitherto, these nitrogenous fertilizer plants are in the public sector. They are in the public sector and they had to be in the public sector, because they cost enormously and, therefore, the private sector is not really prepared to invest this much money. But here is an invitation if really there is anybody in the private sector willing to invest money, because hereafter for 50 years fertilizer is going to be a very very good investment. I can give a tip if anybody wants to start a factory. In regard to nitrogenous fertilizers we shall even go a little beyond the trodden path that we have taken for ourselves for other reasons that I have explained and make it possible to have more factories so that the production of fertilizers in this country, no matter of what type, would increase. All that has got to be done in order that agricultural production does not suffer, because we have not got adequate fertilizers.

That brings me to the seed farms. The third necessity is seed, proper type of seed. As I said, the world today, by the application of these technological methods has gone ahead. They are not merely content with fertilizers they have now gone to the atomic isotopes and in every country, not only in America and Russia but even in Great Britain and other countries—and possibly in our country hereafter—these atomic isotopes are used in order to produce hybrid breed of seeds by which you can treble or quadruple the production of seeds. That is being done. I saw a factory in Great Britain which produces this quite a few tons. Of

course, it cannot be produced in thousands of tons, because you require a small capsule like thing in order to irradiate a large quantity of grain. But when that is done you get results which are really a stounding. That is exactly what is being done in other countries. I am not merely mentioning it. We are trying to do it here, and we have produced some atomic isotopes in our reactors in Bombay which can be used for agricultural purposes.

All these things may appear very good, but our farmers have got to be trained in order that they know how to use these things. There is farming skill in our farmers. If anybody says that our farmers are not well-versed in their work, that is not correct. A farmer may not know the latest techniques. But he knows about irrigation. He knows when rains must come. He knows how to make the utmost use of the water and so on. He knows whatever is good for him. Along with that, the use of inorganic manures irradiating the hybrid seeds have got to be brought to the farmer, because ultimately it is he who has to produce something more.

Then there are different systems prevailing in various parts of the world and everybody is trying to see which system will yield more. There lies our advantage. In those countries I am mentioning agricultural development has gone to the extent where the normal yield has become two tons per acre. They have reached the optimum and there they have the technological spirit to produce more than that of last year or the year before last. All that knowledge is before us, as country after country has been trying to do it.

16 hrs.

I was amazed the other day that instead of talking about any other thing, Marshal Tito, the President of Yugoslavia, began to talk about agriculture. I was amazed by the extent of knowledge he personally had on

the subject of agriculture. He showed me the farm which he had made. There are many farms in Yugoslavia of that type in which double cropping was practised, which is so systematic. In a single farm they take a few furrows of wheat and then in a few feet they have beet and like this they sow wheat, beet, wheat, beet. In the result what they find is that the production of wheat and beet is more than what it would have been if wheat was planted on the entire farm or if beet was planted on the entire farm. I am merely saying that this cannot be done without proper farming skill. It is not merely fertilisers that are necessary, but even the rays of the sun, the direction of the wind, the time when they do it, sow it, transplant it, all these things become necessary. Therefore as early as possible I am sending our own team of farmers to Yugoslavia to see it done actually in the fields by remaining there for some time so that they could do it. It is not that we can imitate what Yugoslavia has done. What Yugoslavia has done is very creditable. A country which was perennially a deficit country in food and used to have all the wheat etc. from other countries, like the United States of America, Russia and other countries have today not only become self-sufficient but can export its wheat. It is exactly what can be done by the application of these technological methods. What Yugoslavia has done, surely India also can do. Therefore farmers have got to be trained.

We have got our training machinery. The Community Development and the Co-operative Departments are trying to do it. They have got their village level workers and so on. I have not yet gone into it very thoroughly, but what I want is this. I want that a village level worker or anybody who goes, whether on behalf of my Ministry or on behalf of the Community Development Ministry, he must be a man who actually farms and who has acquired the farming

skill. I do not want matriculates and other people. They are good people. They can be put in higher jobs. They can be made the Ministry in my place. But surely a man who goes as an extension officer to tell the people as to how to do farming must be a man who knows farming. There is a saying among the farmers that unless you soil your hands with the soil actually and smell it, you cannot understand it or get into the scheme of things of agricultural. That has got to be done. I can tell you that it is not merely a matter of saying that I desire that of everybody employed in this big Food and Agriculture Ministry. We have issued circulars that they themselves should at least for fifteen days in a year, whether they know farming or not, identify themselves with the farmers by going into the farms so that the farmer should feel the oneness about it and that there are white-collared people, better and educated people, who really also feel today that agriculture is a very important thing. The vocation that has been really neglected all these years should come into its own. That has got to be done. It shall really be a great day when many of the hon. Members of Parliament, Lok Sabha and so on, themselves become farmers and come and tell me that they have done this thing and they have done that thing. I can tell you that during the last . . .

**Shri Mohan Swarup (Pilibhit):**  
Very many of them are farmers.

**Shri S. K. Patil:** I am very glad to know that. I compliment them. My congratulations to them. There should be more and more of them. I met quite a number of Congressmen and Senators, who came from Washington. We were having some kind of a discussion about many things to which I will come later on. Everyone of them said, "I have got a farm. I have got a farm. I have got a farm. I have got a farm". President Eisenhower, who came here, in his speech even said that whenever the duties of State could allow him



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to do it he runs to his farm and the very look of it gives him all the inspiration and the vitamins that are necessary to come back to the White House and do his work. I am sure that if many of us ourselves take to this kind of thing, our farmers would feel that his vocation is not a bad vocation. It is really a basic vocation that we must take in hand. This has got to be achieved. Therefore our Ministry, in conjunction and co-operation with the Community Development and other ministries and State ministries, will do everything in our power to see that a large majority of our farmers acquire the new technique that is necessary in order that in a big way we can increase agriculture production.

Then I come to the question of experimental farms. Today we have about 360 experimental farms. We want to have about 200 more and raise the number to about 500 so that they are affiliated to the research centres. Research is meaningless unless there is an experimental farm and we can really experiment on it. We want to have 500 research centres, big and small. All cannot be first-class centres. But there are many things which even in a small way could be done if they can be multiplied. That is also the intention of the Ministry and we have started planning about it.

Research and technology, of which I have just now made a mention, and dissemination of this knowledge must not be confined to where it is produced but it must be disseminated. Thousands and lakhs of our cultivators must get to know that knowledge. When the farmer knows and when really he can do that thing in a particular manner, it is that farmer who will become our teacher. Many things that the scientist does not know, he knows. He knows that he has produced such things. It is that man who applies those things or that science to the land who is a real teacher. Exactly that type of farm-

ing skill is in our farmer. Therefore we want to encourage it in every way possible.

That brings me to a very vital subject. All that has been done and will be done. But what is it really that increased agricultural production wants. I repeat again and again, almost *ad nauseum*, that no progress can be made in agricultural production unless we give that farmer, who is the tiller of the land, the motive as to why he must produce more. Therefore the farmer is the ultimate master so far as this is concerned. Many people may find fault with me and say as to how it is that the farmer must be given this much importance. It is not that it is the importance that is necessary because any scheme that I may devise or the Planning Commission or anybody may devise, any research that I may do, ultimately it is the farmer who has got to put it into operation and really apply it for more agricultural production. Therefore we have got to see that agricultural production and its increase is the responsibility of that farmer. He must be given all the incentive that is necessary so that he should apply it and produce more and more. If we do not give him the proper price what he will do is that he will produce enough for himself and his family. He will not produce for anybody else because he knows that he does not get the money that is necessary for it.

That is exactly the reason as to why I am thinking of having some kind of a statutory advisory committee for price fixation so that constantly, all the twelve months and all the days of a month, agricultural structure will be under review of a competent committee in which there will be a fair representation of the farmers themselves. They will themselves see to it as to what really is good and what should be done. Agricultural pattern has become very complex. All these crops are competitive. It is not very easy. When

some people talk of sugar cane, sometimes I say, not out of a desire of joining issues with them, that sugar cane is always correlated to other crops also, namely, wheat, rice and other crops, the coarser grains and so on and also cotton and other things. Therefore the whole pattern of agricultural structure must be treated as an integrated one. If you touch only one and do not touch the other, you are doing, without meaning it, a great injustice to the people who are engaged in other forms of agriculture. Therefore we want to devise a scheme. It is just beginning. It is not that anything can be grown as soon as the committee is appointed, but that committee, if it is well chosen, may perhaps set the standard as to how this agricultural pattern should be increased. That is exactly the reason why we are doing it. Nobody need be afraid that because we are doing it we are really doing something very revolutionary and are going to spoil anybody's chance. Nothing of this kind.

Suggestions were made to me in the other House that there should be some representation of the political parties in this particular thing. It is not that I am against the political parties. I am one of them. But I would rather not like to have them in an institution like this, which is not run really by any political considerations or any ideology at all except the one politics and the one ideology that the farmer must stand on his legs and must be given sufficient purpose and motive as to why he must produce more although, as I have said, there is no ban on any MP being there if he is really an expert in agriculture. In that case why should he not be there irrespective of the party or the political affiliation that he has got? That is about the statutory committee that is necessary. Possibly in a month or two—we shall try our utmost to see that—that comes into

being so that all these difficulties and problems can be referred to that committee. From time to time they may fix prices not of all commodities but of some commodities wherever it is necessary. They can fix that price for a period of time so that the farmer would know as to what he is going to do next year or the year after, because the land is such that it has got to be patterned at least for three years as to what kind of crop he takes, when the land is going to be fallow and all that. Unless you do it, your difficulties are going to increase. That is exactly the purpose.

**Shri Feroze Gandhi:** Will ex-Ministers be members?

**Shri S. K. Patil:** I do not know.

While this is being done, and our agricultural production has not come to us, there must be something interim and that interim, I have announced that it shall be my plain duty to see that all our present difficulties are solved. They won't be solved unless this additional production comes and unless I create some kind of a strong very impressive buffer stock in this country. Therefore, I said when I became the Minister, that I shall try to raise a buffer stock of at least 5 million tons of wheat and rice. Many people were angry with me. Some of them gave a little advice also. They said, they will go without food, they will leave two meals a week or a fortnight, I do not know. They said, why is it that we have to go with a begging bowl, etc. I do not want to go into the whole argument. I can assure you that India has never gone with a begging bowl to anybody. Even the food that we get under P.L. 400 and which we shall get for the buffer stock from other countries and from ourselves, it is not some country putting anything in the beginning bowl.

[Shri S. K. Patil]

We buy. There are some considerations which are good to us. Immediately, we need not pay foreign exchange. Ultimately, the liability for paying for every ounce of grain that we buy from other countries, whether United States or Canada, Australia or any others is ours. We have honoured our commitments. We shall always honour our national commitments. Therefore, in order to tide over a difficulty which is of a very short duration namely a year or two, until we get the results, if it is necessary to build up a stock, we must build up a stock.

I would even go and tell my hon. friend Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, because he was very particular, in a very friendly manner, this. Even when India is self-sufficient in food, even when the prices come down to such an extent that price support has to be given in order to keep the farmer where he is, even in that stage, I would require a large buffer stock in this country. Because ours is a vast country; it is called a sub-continent. If there is rain in one part, there is drought in another. The very existence like the Himalayas of this stock of 5 million tons of grains is a kind of a damp squib. If somebody wants to play a trick by raising prices or anything like that, like hot air, I can blow all that grain into that particular State when I know that it is necessary in order to hold the prices.

Holding prices also is something which has got to be taken into consideration. When somebody says that the farmer cannot be paid more because we have to hold the prices because the Plan has to succeed, I can understand that. I concede that Hon. Members will be vying with one another to see that the price line is maintained. May I submit in all humility that the price line must be a straight line and not a curved line as we find today. What we intend by price line is a straight line. Do you call it a straight line that exists in the country today? That the price

of rice which is Rs. 16 or Rs. 15 in Orissa or might be Rs. 17 in Cuttack, should be Rs. 40 in Calcutta: is that a straight line? That rice should be Rs. 15 in Chattisgarh and it should be Rs. 40 in Bombay: do you call it a straight line?

Some Hon. Members: No, no.

Shri S. K. Patil: Hon. Members may not have any love particularly for the cities. But, look at the damage that a dissatisfied city can do. All your industrial production comes from the cities. The prices of industrial products are determined by the cities of Bombay and Calcutta. When these prices go high and the cost of living goes high, everything that is produced there, textiles etc., everything goes high. Therefore, the maintenance of the price line, although it is necessary, I maintain, must be a straight line and not a curved line as it is today.

That brings me inevitably—that is the last portion—as to how this distribution has got to be done. Regarding distribution, as I said, there may be differences. Many people sometimes think that we have no policy. So far as I am concerned, I have got a very definite positive policy. I have come to the conclusion that if really the food situation in India has got to improve, surely, this kind of zonal system has got to go. Controls have got to go. Controls, rationing and other things are necessary when emergencies arise. I am not an enemy of controls or an enemy of rationing. They are like the good medicines. I shall always keep them in the mantel-piece, praying to God, Oh God, I should never have an opportunity to gulp them. They should be kept. Do you mean to say that, 13 or 14 years after the war, with no war in the offing for another 15 years—God forbid, it should never come—we should go on with these things, tightening, tightening? It is very impossible indeed. Ultimately if you say that we shall come to that, when we come to monopoly

procurement—good or bad—what will happen is this. Procurement has no meaning unless it is monopoly procurement, which means that Government should get the surplus from every farmer, even if it is one pound, which means that we have got to do everything, and take the corn from the farmer so that it comes to the common granary. If you do that, not only is there too much of pressure on the farmer which acts as a disincentive so far as production is concerned, but it would mean that no political party that advocates that can ever go to the farmer again to demand his vote. So, in the larger interests of the country, you cannot do it.

That procurement would mean that you cannot have a free market. Then you have got to introduce rationing and control and everything. Do you know what it means? Even today the small thing that we are doing—we are doing a big thing—costs the Government of India, and perhaps the States, Rs. 15 to Rs. 16 crores; and if we expand this machinery, possibly Rs. 100 crores will have to be spent, which is money which is unproductive. If necessity dictates such a thing, I am prepared to do that, I am not against it, but surely when necessity does not dictate such a thing, why should it be done. There should be free flow as far as possible?

Therefore, I am positive on one thing, that as far as possible it shall be my attempt to see that I create bigger and natural zones, ultimately having India as the one zone in this country.

All our nationalism is only concerned with our emotionalism; when it comes to personal things, if I have got a little surplus and I have to equally or equitably share it with the one who is in deficit, then nationalism does not come. India's unity has got to be built up, and the greatest test and a very unerring test of it is that all the food that we produce must be equally and equitably dis-

tributed among the 400 million citizens of this country.

It cannot be immediately done. My attempt will be to have larger natural zones. We made a zone in the south. In that south zone what good and progressive States are there, what nice people live there. Of the four States, Andhra and perhaps Madras to a certain extent, have small surpluses, and I must say they have got six or seven districts both in Madras and Andhra which are the best districts in India so far as production goes. They produce paddy in three crops to the tune of three tons per acre in that particular area. To these we have added Mysore, which has a small deficit, perhaps of one or two lakh tons, and Kerala which is really a very fine State, progressive otherwise, but not in food. I have told my friends from Kerala and I would repeat that I shall do everything in my power to help them in respect of anything that is done in their States, no matter what it costs, how many crores, to increase agricultural production. That is being done.

That is because they must not be continually dependent on others, because one does not know; others might regard them as unwanted guests or poor relatives, and surely my Kerala friends do not want to be the poor relatives of anybody.

These four States have been put together. Andhra and Madras have got a surplus of seven or eight lakh tons, and there are Kerala and Mysore which have got a deficit of seven or eight lakh tons. Therefore, I equate them, and I just level what used to be a mountain and a well, and say: here you are, it becomes India. Therefore, this is a very nice thing. Therefore, I am resisting the temptation to break it up, I will not break it up if eventually I find that it leads me to something really very good and helpful indeed.

The Chief Ministers of all the four States have been very helpful to me,

[Shri S. K. Patil]

they have been helping. So far as Madras is concerned, I must say that the Agriculture Minister said that if it was in the larger interests of India and if he could contribute something, he would be willing; he asked me to try my experiment and wished me all success in my experiment.

So also, I am trying to bring Orissa and West Bengal together, and I am happy to announce that today, but for little difficulties about technical things, things have been ironed out, and we have finished 99 per cent of it, and only formal sanction is necessary, and they will be joined together. In such a common venture, I know Orissa will have to make a large sacrifice. Sometimes, the prices slightly rise, but we are protecting it. And we shall see to it, as soon as there is a tendency for a little bit of rise. If there is just a little bit of rise, there is nothing wrong; if, instead of Rs. 16, the price becomes Rs. 18 or Rs. 20 in Orissa, and at the same time, instead of Rs. 40 in Calcutta, it drops down to Rs. 25, then I have achieved my purpose. That is the purpose that must be kept in view, namely that this kind of disparity between the prices must go. And, therefore, they have come together.

My next attempt will be that Madhya Pradesh and Bombay should be joined together. Here, I am telling you something which many of the hon. Members may not be knowing, namely that Chattisgarh which is a part of Madhya Pradesh is the rice bowl of this country. They produce about a million tons of rice. God has given them something. Now, a farmer there naturally wants to make a little more of money, because he has been gifted. Suppose you put a man near water and you ask him not to drink that water; I can quite imagine what his condition will be. Similarly, if that man is told that he cannot get a little more, then, having produced that, the man becomes de-

jected; and surely, the production also to that extent suffers.

Therefore, I am trying, with all my persuasion with my great friend Dr. Katju, who is the Chief Minister of that State. I know his difficulties. He does it in the interests of his people, so that the prices for the non-producing consumers should not rise; therefore, he is protecting it. But, remember, that in that State, and in this country, 85 per cent of the people who produce this grain are not to be protected, because they produce for themselves; it is the 15 per cent or 20 per cent or at the most the 30 per cent in the whole country, of the non-producing consumers who have got to be protected. If the worse comes to the worst, even out of the stock that I have got, I shall give them, in order to maintain fair price shops as long as they want, so that the prices should not rise. But we must attempt, and we must try to do it, in order that there should be a natural distribution of what we have got.

It is a very wonderful phenomenon that God has arranged this country and also our surpluses and deficits in such a manner that by a slight rolling, everything becomes equal. They have been placed in a corner also. Very tactfully, this has been done. Whether that is the purpose of God in doing so, I do not know.

They created Punjab, such a fine granary of wheat; along with it, they put Delhi and some small unit here and there, which is really not so very good, so that Punjab can help them and look after them. They created this Bihar and this U.P.; they themselves are so powerful that they can look after themselves; they do not require anybody's help. Then, they put Orissa there so that it can be joined on to Bengal. And they put also very diplomatically Madhya Pradesh in such a place that it can very naturally join the Bombay State. And you can see that the conditions also

are such. I have studied the figures of the surpluses and deficits of these two States during the last ten years, and it will interest hon. Members to know that during all these ten years, in no single year, has the deficit of the whole State of Bombay been more than a million tons; and possibly, in no single year, has the surplus of Madhya Pradesh been perhaps less than one million tons; it may be perhaps a little more or a little less this way or that way. I am praying to God that Madhya Pradesh should have more and more of rice and wheat, so that they can create for themselves whatever is necessary, and they can sell also to their neighbour, namely the State of Bombay. I am prepared to give them all safeguards which they require, safeguards in the sense that if the prices go up, and fair price shops have got to be maintained, then any amount of grain will be given in order that they may be maintained, so that nobody could really take advantage of a position like this.

I am quite sure; and many Members from Madhya Pradesh have come to me individually, led deputations and so on and they have assured me that their minds also are working on that proposition. If they are also working on that proposition, then let the likeness in their minds and in my mind come together.

Shri Radhelal Vyas (Ujjain): I may state that the majority of the Members from Madhya Pradesh are opposed to this.

Shri S. K. Patil: We do not eat food on the basis of majority and minority. Even the minority requires food. I should really say that the Opposition should have it even more than we have it. What I am saying is this that there is no question of majority and minority here. Do not bring in the question of majority here. It may be true that all those persons do not want it, because they are the surplus State, and, therefore, it is natural that they do not want it.

Shri Chandak (Chhindwara): Most Members from Madhya Pradesh are in favour of creating bigger zones.

Shri S. K. Patil: I am not imputing any motives at all. I shall try to do this by sheer reasonableness, by sheer persuasion, by my appeal to Dr. Katju and all these friends, after giving all the safeguards that they need so that they do not come into a position into which they might come and face any difficulty. I can understand the background of their minds, as to why they oppose it. If they are really afraid of the city of Bombay, if they are afraid that the big people in the city may such all the corn that is created in Madhya Pradesh, then I am prepared to cordon off the city of Bombay so that it does not do so, so that it is incapacitated and it does not such; I shall feed that city in some other way, if it is necessary.

I am doing all these things not because it gives me a pleasure to do so, but I am convinced of one thing, that if in a natural way our circulation in all the veins and arteries and ultimately the capillaries continues smoothly, the whole body politic of India will be one and there will be no 'thorns', and whatever we produce, in fortune or misfortune, we shall equally share among ourselves. That is really the test of nationalism through which we have got to go. Therefore, nobody would say that I have no plan and no programme so far as that is concerned.

One or two things more and I have done.

Shri Mahanty rose—

Shri S. K. Patil: He can ask questions afterwards.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Let the blood flow on.

Shri Mahanty rose—

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order.

Shri S. K. Patil: I do not know whether you called it flood or blood.

[Shri S. K. Patil]

Both are good. This is not a destructive flood; it will not spoil any crop. On the contrary, through it agricultural production will increase.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** I was only referring to blood flowing into arteries, veins and capillaries.

**Shri S. K. Patil:** Yes, that is right.

When I mentioned about the buffer stock, I did not refer to storage. I am trying to build up storage capacity very fast in the next one or two years, if possible within a year. But the difficulties are over acquisition of land in some places, not in all places. I can mention the storage capacity that we have today. The storage capacity and warehousing capacity, both Government and private, today is of the order of 1.5 million tons. We want to make it 5 million tons. We had planned that by the end of the Third Five Year Plan we shall do this. But I am now expediting it so that if I am able to build a buffer stock of 5 million tons, I must immediately have the storage capacity to store that grain. The grain cannot be stored outside somewhere as deterioration would be very great, and those who give us grain would not give it until they see that there is adequate storage facility. Therefore, we are doing our utmost to see that between the private and the public sector, Government and other agencies, we shall build in a year—at the most in two years if there are any difficulties—capacity to store 5 million tons of grain, so that there should be no difficulty at all so far as that is concerned.

The last point is about co-operatives. Talking of these many things, farming skill and technological things and so on, all these things get spoiled today because we have not properly developed co-operatives in this country. Even in countries which are not Communist or leftist, you will find these co-operatives. Even in the United States of America, 60 per cent. of agriculture is done in organised co-

operatives. In Germany, it is 85 per cent.—people in organised co-operatives. We can quite understand that no nation which is a surplus nation in agricultural production—and that is true of Australia and Canada too—no nation which has built up a tremendous level of food surplus has done it without the instrumentality of co-operatives. There are service co-operatives, sometimes for some particular purposes. There are co-operative farms also because there are small patches of land. They do it in a voluntary way without any legislation whatsoever. But that has got to be done. Let us not quarrel about the tools. When there is a possibility of increasing the production of these things without quarrelling, surely we need not waste our energies on quarrel.

This is the method in which my Ministry, Government and myself want to proceed in the near future. I want that hon. Members should help me in this business. Some part of the distribution system may not be acceptable to them. Distribution is really with the States. We do not go into that. The States might have made mistakes. We might have made mistakes. But surely when production increases, all those difficulties will really vanish into nothing.

Therefore, let us concentrate on agricultural production. Let us give the motive that is necessary to the farmer. Let us build him up and his personality so that he can stand four-square and say 'I am also something in the country'.

There are today, both in the House of Representatives and the Senate of the U.S.A., quite a number—dozens of them—of members who have come from the stock of farmers' families. They always claim that they are farmers. The farmers today are the most powerful in the American Congress and they should be powerful in our Parliament too. We have neglected the farmer for a long time. Let us bring him into his own. Let us create that confidence. If that confidence is

not in us, we cannot impart it to somebody else.

These are the lines on which the policy of the Government of India is going to run in the near future.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Motion moved:

"That the food situation in the country be taken into consideration."

There are some substitute motions. Those who desire to move them may do so.

**Shri Mahanty (Dhenkanal):** Sir I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

"This House having considered the food situation in the country is of the opinion that the present zonal arrangement shall not be disturbed or rearranged without the willing consent of the State Governments concerned and that more stringent measures be taken to strengthen the State Trading in foodgrains." (1).

**Shri P. R. Patel (Mehsana):** Sir, I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

"This House having considered the Food situation in the country, is of the opinion that—

(a) the Government's attempts to make the food situation easy by large imports, controls and semi-controls have not contributed to solve the food problem and make the country self-sufficient,

(b) the food problem may be permanently solved and the country be made self-sufficient in food by the agriculturists and it is desirable that the Gov-

ernment should make efforts to obtain co-operation of the farmers' organisations and through them attempts require to be made by the Government to know the difficulties of the farmers coming in the way of more food production,

(c) the Minister of Food and Agriculture may without delay invite representatives of farmers' organisations and discuss with them the ways and means to give impetus to agricultural production,

(d) the Government may, henceforth, look to the farmers and farmers' organisations to solve food problem, rather than rely on imports." (2).

**Shri Surendranath Dwivedy:** Sir, I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

"This House having considered the food situation in the country, recommends that a council of agricultural development be established at the Centre for the purpose of drafting a comprehensive plan for food self-sufficiency and of promoting its execution according to the plan and more rigorous measures be taken to execute State Trading in foodgrains." (3).

**Shri Tangamani:** Sir, I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

"This House having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion, that Government has failed,—

(a) to check the rise in food prices and to bring it within the purchasing power of the people by evolving a proper



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and effective price stabilisation machinery;

- (b) to adopt State Trading in food-grains as decided by the National Development Council and in evolving suitable forms to implement it by building up 'food bank' reliant on internal procurement and to change the dominant dependence on imports;
- (c) to develop co-operative farming preceded by distribution of land to the landless from the excess land procured by imposition of ceiling, effective stopping of eviction, distribution of cultivable waste land;
- (d) to replace usurers credit by adequate and timely institutional, governmental credit to supply fertilizers and good seeds in time." (4).

**Shri Braj Raj Singh** (Firozabad):  
Sir, I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted namely:—

"This House having considered the food situation in the country is of the opinion that Government should take the following steps, permanently to solve the food shortage in the country:—

- (a) a food army of a million people should immediately be recruited to bring under cultivation cultivable waste lands in the country;
- (b) immediate steps be taken to distribute the surplus lands in the country amongst landless peasants after imposing suitable ceilings on land holdings;
- (c) land revenue from uneconomic holdings be remitted or in the alternative no revenue should

be charged from any peasant instead Income Tax Act should be made applicable to agricultural holdings;

- (d) a phased programme should be drawn out for the development of small irrigation works so as to exploit the small irrigation potential in the country within a period of two years;
- (e) irrigation rates should be suitably reduced so as to make fullest use of available irrigation facilities;
- (f) prices of agricultural commodities should be so fixed and regulated that difference of prices between two crops of cereals may not be more than 6 nP. per seer;
- (g) the State Trading in food-grains should be strengthened and so applied that the State will not act as a profiteer;
- (h) more emphasis should be laid for the development of green manure and indigenous methods of manures;
- (i) more incentives should be given for intensive cultivation of cereals." (5).

**Shri Liladhar Kotoki** (Nowgong):  
I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

"This House having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion,—

that in view of growing needs of food requirements with unabatingly increasing population, and prevalence of chronic problems of the agriculturists, despite various measures like, import of foodgrains, State Trading in foodgrains, grow

more food campaign with allied schemes, community development projects and national extension service schemes and various other schemes meant for that purpose, undertaken during the first and the Second Five Year Plans, greater efforts seem to have become indispensable to be made for increasing food production, wherever and by whatever means possible, for sustaining the increasing population and for building up a sure base for industrial development, and as a matter of that, a developing economy of the country;

that adequate provisions be made in the Third Five Year Plan with the determined objective to remove the handicaps of the agriculturists, namely:—

- (a) to effectively control floods, droughts and pestilence and other natural calamities and thereby ensure safe raising of crops;
- (b) to provide for adequate and regulated supply of irrigation water, whether by multi-purpose, large, major, medium or minor irrigation schemes, for the definite objective of increasing agricultural production, main stress being laid on foodgrains, each year, safeguarding from the vagaries of monsoons, providing for drainage of excess water and supply of adequate quantity of water needed for raising various crops in rotation round each year through every crop season suited to various areas and various crops;
- (c) to open out new cultivable lands by reclamation in the plains and by terracing in the hills, providing at the same time for adequate irrigation facilities for utilisation of the newly opened out lands;

(d) to well organise field management committees, village panchayats, village multi-purpose co-operatives, with a view to create necessary incentive amongst the agriculturists all over the country;

(e) to arrange for providing facilities like agricultural credits, improved seeds and implements, marketing, warehousing, subsidiary occupations mainly based on agro-industries suited to various areas and the people inhabiting there, etc., on co-operative lines, and educate the people adequately for the purpose; and

(f) to take all ancillary and incidental steps such as training of requisite personnel, provision for producing and supplying adequate quantity of agricultural credits, improved seeds and implements, etc., on easy terms;

that the above programme be given the first priority in the Third Five Year Plan to compensate the shortfall accrued during the First and Second Five Year Plans, and to meet the twin objectives, namely—

- (a) feeding the increasing population;
- (b) creating a solid base for industrial development in the country;

that an all-out national campaign be launched forthwith to combat the food problem in the country, as a national urgency and emergency, and appropriate steps be taken accordingly." (6).

**Shri D. R. Chavan** (Karad): Sir, I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

“This House having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that,—

as an incentive for increased production and to make the country self-sufficient in food, the cultivators should be assured of:—

- (i) a guaranteed minimum remunerative price publicised much in advance of the sowing season,
- (ii) a market that is ready to accept his crops at the floor price at the time when the cultivators want to sell,
- (iii) a suitable local storage for the portion of crops which the cultivators do not wish to sell at harvest time,
- (iv) a permanent agency, statutory or non-statutory with suitable representatives of the farmers on it should be immediately set up, which may formulate price policy and implement this policy.” (8)

**Shrimati Manjula Devi** (Goalpara): I beg to move:

That for the original motion, the following be substituted, namely:—

“This House having considered the food situation in the country, is of the opinion that the Zonal system for distribution of food-grains be abolished and the country be treated as one unit.” (10)

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** The original motion and all the substitute motions are before the House for discussion. We might fix some time-limit for the speeches.

**Shri Surendranath Dwivedy** (Haimirpur): Sir, before you do that let

us know how much time you are going to give the Minister because he has already taken 1½ hours.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** He has taken one full hour. But, was it the desire that he should not speak and say all these matters on the floor of the House? Unless that was done, there would not have been any basis for discussion; rather he has helped us.

**Dr. Ram Subhag Singh** (Sasaram): The time may be extended.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** We are asking for extension before we start. Let us see how we proceed. It is always in the power of the House. The House can do whatever it likes. But there ought not to be any nervousness or impatience on that account. If the House so desires, it may continue to discuss it as long as it likes. Even in that case, to whatever extent we may extend, a time limit should be placed. Or, is it the desire of the House that one hon. Member should go on as he likes?

**Some Hon. Members:** No. no. The time limit should be there.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Would 10 or 15 minutes be all right?

**Pandit K. C. Sharma** (Hapur): Fifteen minutes would be all right.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** All right; 20 minutes in the case of leaders of groups; otherwise, 15 minutes. (*Inter-ruption*).

**Pandit K. C. Sharma:** There is no leadership in food.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Twenty minutes should be the maximum; it will be the ceiling. Shri Tangamani.

**Shri Tangamani** (Madurai): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, after listening to the speech of the hon. Minister, I am at a loss to understand how the question of agricultural production and the question of distribution can easily be

solved. At least in the other House when the discussion took place on the 10th and the 14th of this month, the Deputy Minister was pleased to give certain hard facts and figures. I would like to refer to some of the figures which were supplied by him and also to the four points which I have raised in my substitute motion and I would request the hon. Minister, in the course of his reply, to give his reasons regarding the points I have raised.

Today the hon. Minister did not mention anything about the rise in prices which has become a phenomenon during the past year. In the other House, the hon. Deputy Minister conceded that the prices of rice in the south this year have been higher than what they were last year. I would like to refer to certain figures which would show that the prices of food articles have considerably risen compared to the corresponding period of last year.

The *Economic Weekly* which is the journal of the current economic and political affairs in Volume XI No. 47, dated the 5th December, 1959, on page 1650 gives the following statistics. The food article prices were 118.0 on 15-11-1958 and the present prices are 122.5 taking 1952-53 as the base year, namely 100. They also give the details as to how these prices are rising. I have given only one instance to show how the prices have been rising during the last year. What is it that they have done to reduce the prices? When there was scarcity, committees were formed and in this House, we were assured that at the State level similar committees were formed. I am referring to the foodgrains scarcity and the food movement in Uttar Pradesh. Many committees have been formed. Now, what has become of them? What has happened to their labours? A similar committee was formed in West Bengal and that committee has now ceased to function. No such committee was formed in Madras.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order. If an hon. Member has to talk to a friend

of his, he can sit by him and talk to him in a low tone.

**Shri Tangamani:** Very recently, there has been a food agitation in West Bengal and reference was made to that in the other House by Shri A. M. Thomas. West Bengal has been hit by floods. Certain areas in the western U.P. have been affected by drought also. So, there was scarcity of foodgrains and the prices had gone up. He has told us that in West Bengal, the price has come down from Rs. 31 to Rs. 26 per maund due to the fact that the main crops have come in. But in the Madras State, when the Governor addressed both the Houses on the 5th, he himself admitted that the price of rice and other food articles had gone up considerably.

**Shrimati Ha Palchoudhuri (Nabawdip):** May I just interrupt the hon. Member?

**Shri Tangamani:** No.

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** He is not yielding.

**Shri Tangamani:** In Madras, there has been a demand from almost all the parties that mattered—the Democratic Congress, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, the Communist Party and others—that the price of rice must be reduced so that it may be within the purchasing power of the ordinary people. They have said that one measure of good quality rice must be sold at 75 nP. They were able to move a large number of people throughout the country on this question and took a demonstration on 22-11-1959. Although the Congress Party did not officially participate in that agitation, in the discussion following the Governor's Address to the Madras Assembly, a number of congressmen also supported the demand of these Parties, inside the Assembly.

We were here told that Madras State is neither deficit nor surplus. According to the figures that were supplied by the Madras Government, the production of rice is 32 lakh tons. That

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would make it more or less self-sufficient. Traditionally, two lakh tons of *kuruvai* rice, a special type of rice grown mostly in Tanjore district, had been going to Kerala. We were told today that the deficit of Kerala was about seven lakh tons and of Mysore, about 2.5 lakh tons. Nearly a million tons will have to be distributed between Kerala and Mysore from the surplus area, Andhra Pradesh. He has also told us today that there was no question of breaking up the Zones. Now, what is the reaction of the Madras Government? Both inside the Assembly and outside also, the Minister of Agriculture has been saying that they are not for the continuance of the zone. They are demanding that the zones must be broken. Here the Government is saying that the zones must be continued and new zones are to come into existence. I would like to know clearly and categorically what exactly is the attitude of the Central Government and the State Governments to this question of zones.

On the question of prices, he has told us that there will be a Price Fixation Committee. We do not know how that committee is going to function, whether that committee will be the same as the committee for State Trading or the method which is going to be adopted will be the same as the one adopted for State trading.

Having said this, I want to go rapidly to the question of State trading. The hon. Prime Minister told us that when the decision has been taken by the National Development Council, the decision must be adhered to. He said:

"When the decision has been taken by the National Development Council, the decision must be adhered to. That is the highest body that we can think of. You cannot have a higher body than the Council. If that body takes a decision, it is responsible for the decision, right or wrong. I do not think that the decision about State trading was wrong."

This is what the hon. Prime Minister said. I would like to know what is the attitude of the Ministry about this question of State trading. I will now come to brass tacks. Last year nearly 13 lakh tons of rice—subject to correction—have been procured both by the Central Government and the various State Governments. The Madras Government promised to procure 2 lakh tons and ultimately 1 lakh tons were procured. Andhra Government also agreed to procure 4 or 5 lakh tons, I do not know how much has been procured. Is this question of procuring rice and wheat from the landlords going to continue by the State Governments and the Central Government? The demand of all parties has been that procurement must be from landlords owning more than ten acres of land. They have also stated a reasonable price to be paid to the agriculturists.

**The Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri A. M. Thomas):** What is that reasonable price?

**Shri Tangamani:** The reasonable price will be Rs. 17 per maund.

**Shri P. R. Patel:** I want to know what is the cost of cultivation. Has he calculated that?

**Mr. Deputy-Speaker:** Order, order. Let us first grow and then count the cost.

**Shri Tangamani:** Rice was procured from traders and millers in Madras State by the Madras Government at Rs. 17 a maund, and when they supplied that rice through fair price shops the Madras Government sold it at 14 annas a measure. We were able to tell them that even at that procurement price they will be in a position to sell at 12 annas per measure.

Then, he has told us about the 'food bank' which is going to be set up.

**Shri A. M. Thomas:** He did not say 'food bank'.

**Shri Tangamani:** Or a buffer stock which can be called a buffer stock of 5 million tons. I would like to know how that 5 million tons is going to be made up. Is that 5 million tons going to be procured by way of imports or by procurement internally. If it is going to be by way of import alone, I will have to say that the House must know how much money we have been spending for the past eight or nine years on imports of foodgrains. In 1951-52, 4.793 million tons were imported and the cost was Rs. 228.12 crores. The year 1955-56 was the year when we imported less, and we imported 0.432 million tons and the price paid was Rs. 29 crores. In 1957-58, 3.692 million tons were imported and the price we paid was Rs. 167 crores. The total quantity imported in 1958-59 is not known, but we have spent Rs. 191 crores. I would like to know how much we are spending for the year 1959-60 on import of foodgrains. Is it going to Rs. 191 crores or more or is it going to be less? It is very interesting to listen to the hon. Minister when he talks of self-sufficiency, but coupled with this, we have to see that year after year, although we have been assured of self-sufficiency, we are paying at least Rs. 200 crores. I would like to mention here that for importing these foodgrains through these various merchantships, we are spending more than Rs. 20 crores.

I would now refer to unstarred question No. 511 which was answered on 25th November, 1959. In the answer, the figures were given. In 1958-59, we said Rs. 1.38 crores to the Indian shipping companies, and Rs. 21.85 crores to the foreign shipping companies. In the previous year, we paid Rs. 32.78 crores to the foreign companies and about Rs. 2.93 crores to the Indian companies.

The hon. Minister was mentioning that fertilizer plants must be set up, that we could spend more money for getting the fertilizer plants instead of spending money on the import of foodgrains and also paying the shipping

companies. It was very interesting to listen to that aspect. In this connection, I would mention only one instance. There has been a repeated demand from Andhra. It is a surplus State. For nearly five years they have been demanding that they must have a proper fertilizer plant. Year after year has passed by. Only now they have decided to set up a fertilizer plant in Puthakulam. Yesterday, we were told that this scheme may go right into the third Plan itself. The Andhra State Government has taken this responsibility. The Andhra State Government is contributing 51 per cent of the capital. When a State Government is willing to do it, a fertilizer plant in a State like Andhra would certainly help the production of foodgrains. But, how is it that there has been delay in this regard? I would like to know whether the Government here and now will tell me the steps that they are going to take to see that this fertilizer plant comes into existence by the end of the second Plan period itself. In the same way, I would like to know whether the fertilizer plant which is to come by the end of the second Plan period in Tamil Nad, particularly in Neiveli, will be completed or not. It is very interesting to hear about the setting up of one fertilizer plant in each State. Here are some concrete instances where fertilizer plants have now started. I would like to know whether enough foreign exchange will be made available to those various State Governments to see that these fertilizer plants do come into existence.

I was happy when the Minister referred to Community Development. I am also happy that the Deputy Minister of Community Development and Co-operation is here now. I would like to refer to one or two news items in Kurukshetra, the 7th anniversary number, dated 2nd October, 1959. Therein, Shri S. K. Dey says that the pilgrimage first began in April, 1951 and that large sums were set apart for the grow more food campaign. He says that the grow more food schemes suffered from inequity in design. This

[Shri Tungamani.]

gravitated towards favoured areas. "If food production is to increase in bulk, the population as a whole should be activated." That is what he says, and he adds that it calls not only for "agricultural work, animal husbandry," etc., etc.

Again, in the issue of Kurukshetra for November 14, 1959, in the news item—the editor's box—the question of money spent has been referred to. The money spent is about Rs. 137 crores. It is said:

"It is also necessary to remember that the Community Development cannot make much progress in the absence of radical land reforms and the provision of subsidiary employment in the form of cottage and small-scale industries".

Now, I would like to make two observations. I have said that nearly Rs. 200 crores have been spent in the Community Development. The amount that has been earmarked for agriculture is only Rs. 55 crores. My submission is more money should be earmarked for agriculture. Secondly, Shri Dey himself has declared that it should be followed by radical land reforms and incentive should be given to the farmer. Incentives will be given to the farmer only through radical land reforms which have been accepted by the land reform panel. The panel suggested certain things and if they are adopted, incentives will be given to the farmer. For example, on the question of ceiling, there was a legislation passed on the 12th June, 1959 by the Kerala Assembly. Following the decisions of the Nagpur Resolution of the Congress, it stated that for double crop the ceiling should be 15 acres and for single crop 22½ acres. But to this day, it has not received the President's assent. When there is legislation which calls for radical land reforms as per the suggestion of the land reform panel, that is not immediately enforced.

Another point I would like to refer—I have mentioned it in the substitute motion also—is to develop co-operative farming preceded by distribution of land to the landless from the excess land procured by imposition of ceiling, effective stopping of eviction, distribution of cultivable wasteland. The hon. Minister has given figures about wastelands. In reply to Starred Question No. 680 on 21-8-1959, we were told that a committee of experts has been set up under Dr. B. N. Uppal, Agricultural Commissioner of the Government of India, to ascertain the wastelands available, how much of it can be cultivated, etc. I would like to know when this committee is going to submit its report and whether they have got figures to show how much wastelands have been given to the agricultural landless labour, especially Harijans in the various States.

The last point which I would like to mention and which I have also mentioned in the substitute motion is the question of replacing usurers credit by adequate and timely institutional, governmental credit to supply fertilisers and good seeds in time. I have mentioned how Rs. 30 crores are being spent on shipping freights alone for importing foodgrains. At least 50 per cent of this should be spent on supplying fertilisers in time. Several complaints have come from the agriculturists in various States that they do not receive the fertilisers in time.

Having said this, I would again request the hon. Minister to tell us what is their target they have for 1959-60 and what steps they are going to take for reducing imports, controlling prices and also procuring foodgrains, as per the decisions taken by the National Development Council in November, 1958.