

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

in addition to what has been said by the Home Minister, that he has served the railways and the country with honesty, integrity and efficiency.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Let us take him into Hindustan Steel.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: At no stage had he to deal with this contract at any time. It will be unfair or uncharitable to connect him in any way with this contract. This contract was decided purely on merits and was given to the lowest tenderer.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The discussion is over.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: My question has not been answered.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: It has been answered as far as it was possible to answer.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: It has not been answered.

*TUNGABHADRA HIGH LEVEL CANAL

Shri Nagi Reddy (Anantapur): I rise to discuss a problem which is a life and death problem to millions of people in Andhra Pradesh. It is the problem of the Tungabhadra High Level Canal which has been included in the Second Five Year Plan, but which even after three years has not yet been sanctioned. It mainly covers the most famine-affected areas of Rayalaseema—Bellary, Anantapur and Cuddapah districts—and it is for that reason that the Project has been undertaken, even though it does not come up to the standards of general irrigation projects.

After three years of the Second Five Year Plan, we were told by the Central Government that the project was not being taken up in full for two reasons. One, of course, is the reason given to me in October when I was told the Project was not being taken

up in full because it did not come up to the standards of productivity generally accepted by the Irrigation Ministry. Last month, we were told that the project was not being taken up for immediate construction for the reason that there are not enough funds. They say that it is for this reason that they have planned a self-contained Project which is smaller and which will naturally irrigate not even half the acreage originally planned. I hope within the ten minutes I hope to have, I will be able to convince Government of the necessity of this Project in the interests of the Government themselves and the people.

To say that the Project is not productive enough, and, therefore, it is not being taken up in full, is an argument which reminds me of one thing. If the Government go through the history of Rayalaseema, especially of these three districts, they will find that this is a tract which is subject to famines very often. As a matter of fact, the monograph of rural problems in Madras published in 1947 by the Government of Madras says of this tract

"One good year is being followed by two or three bad ones. The principal famine area of this province is this area. Nowhere is it more true that agriculture is a gamble".

It was for this reason that the people of that area have been fighting for this Project for the past 50 years, and it is unfortunate that even after independence—ten years of independence—we have not yet got this High Level Canal. The Project itself was started in 1945. The dam is constructed, the Low Level Canal is there. But the High Level Canal which is necessary for this particular famine area, which is characterised as an area where agriculture is a gamble, is being refused sanction. It is said that in 16 out of 23 years, rainfall in

*Half-an-hour discussion.

Anantapur district has been below 20 inches, and in 10 years out of these 16 years, the rainfall has been below 16 inches, and that too not in time. Therefore it was that this particular project was first of all included in the Second Five Year Plan. Now to say that it is not productive enough and, therefore, we cannot take the project is not proper.

The second reason that has been given is the paucity of funds. Is not the Government aware that every year the peasants are being given revenue remissions which go to lakhs? Is it not a loss to the Government? Is not the Government aware that in 1952-53, they had to spend crores of rupees—if I remember aright, it was about Rs 4 crores—just for the sake of providing people with gruel through gruel centre and just for the sake of providing people with enough work through famine relief works and give them wages at the rate of 8 annas for a hard day's labour—that is, for breaking the stones for road construction? If the Government thinks that it is not productive enough and if the Government thinks that there is paucity of funds, probably Government is waiting for another serious famine of the type for them to spend much more as more waste than on this most important project which would give not only relief to the people but also give a certain amount of relief to the Government so that they may not spend as they had been spending in the past.

I have been told by a good number of friends that that there was a time in 1952-53 when this House itself reverberated with Ravalaseema. It was a time when great men came to Rayalaseema and tried to just to soften the misery of the people of those areas by kind words. Even our Prime Minister came over to that area when all of us met him and I myself told him in person that all the great men have come there and every one of them had been requested that this project should be taken up so that this

most miserable scene need not be seen in future.

We were promised at that time by the Prime Minister himself that it is a project which has to be taken into consideration and constructed very fast. I had told him at that time that 'if you too come and go without giving the most needed relief which our people want naturally, you will also be forgotten even though you are the greatest leader of the present day'. But unfortunately to this day we are seeing that this has not been done.

I must remind the Government that according to the report of the Enquiry into the Rural Indebtedness in Madras State in 1946, this area has the "lowest rainfall in the Madras State" and this area got "the lowest per capita income". According to that report it is "more heavily indebted than any other area in the whole State".

If the Government is incapable of giving relief to that particular area I cannot understand how Government is going to function to increase the per capita income of the people in general. Therefore it is that the Famine Code Revision Committee constituted in 1939 speaking about the Tungabhadra project gave this opinion:

"State intervention has till now been largely confined to measures designed to save life and mitigate suffering. A bolder policy is now wanted which we trust will not only be of incalculable benefit to the people by creating the much-needed power of resistance but, in the long run, save the resources of the State from the existing drain."

Therefore, we appeal to the Government to take immediate steps to see that the whole project is constructed. But the Government says that they will construct it in stages. That, I find, is the most dangerous thing that Government is trying to do.

[Shri Negi Reddy]

Government says that new estimates will have to be prepared for this new stage, that is the first stage. For that, the *Times of India* in its editorial has given a review of what would happen. It says:

"The Union Government has asked the Mysore and Andhra Governments to submit a joint report and detailed estimates for the first phase which will presumably be followed, as is usual in such cases, by a scrutiny by the Planning Commission and the Union Ministry for Irrigation. These processes can very well drag on till the very end of the Plan period."

It is quite natural because to prepare the whole scheme, the Andhra and Karnataka Governments had to come together and had to have very prolonged negotiations for many years and they came to a particular agreement. Now that agreement will have to be scrapped and a new agreement arrived at, for which estimates will have to be prepared. Naturally, this will drag on for many years. At the rate at which Government is now proceeding I have no hopes that they are going to make a beginning at least to construct this in the very near future.

Shri Narayanankutty Menon: They rely on a possible disagreement

Shri Nagi Reddy: Therefore it is that they ended by saying:

"The whole affair makes nonsense of the repeated official calls for stepping up agricultural production"

I hope Government will take note of this particular thing.

Secondly, Sir, we have been told that 1,83,000 acres will be irrigated. But the important point is, where is it going to be done and how is it going to be done. If it is according to the

original plan, this 116 mile canal—then the Andhra area will not get more than 80,000 acres. If we have to divide the waters that are now going to be given by what is called, "self-contained project," as per the ratio of 35—65, then the trouble will be that Mysore will not get more than 80,000 acres and Andhra area will not get more than 1,20,000 acres, not even half of what these areas should get. Therefore, it is going to create greater problems between the two States, it will create bitterness between the two States as far as these calculations are concerned. The Government instead of solving the problem is going to create a new problem, for which it will be responsible, not only between the people of two States but between the Governments of these two States.

In the end, Sir, I would only like to appeal to the Government in one respect. The Government does not probably remember the sentiments of the people of the south. I am glad that for once at least one of the papers in the south, *The Mail of Madras*, writing about Tungabhadra waters in its editorial said:

"Not to carry out that project in its entirety will be tantamount to wasting precious water, and involving unnecessary expenditure."

It ends up by saying:

"It almost seems another case of discrimination against the south."

—Andhra, in particular. Therefore, Sir, I would request Government to give final approval to the whole scheme at once, and I request them to begin work simultaneously for the Mid-Pennar and Gandikottah projects which are parts of the whole scheme of the High Level Canal. I also expect, Sir, the Government to give me, the people of Rayalaseema and the Government of Andhra a guarantee that this project will be finished by the end of the Third Five Year Plan.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: Otherwise, they will be defeated in the election

Some Hon. Members rose—

Shri Nagi Reddy: Sir, I finished early so that Shri Rami Reddy, who has also given his name for initiating this discussion, will also have ten minutes

Shri Rami Reddy (Cuddapan): My name is also there along with the name of Shri Nagi Reddy

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is true, but he cannot be given ten minutes now. He may say a few things in five minutes

Shri Rami Reddy: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the previous speaker, Shri Nagi Reddy, said that the Deputy Minister last time stated that because this does not come up to the level fixed in regard to standards of productivity for an irrigation scheme it need not be taken up. I submit that this point has been already answered by the Deputy Minister himself on 18th November, 1958. He said then

"The advisory committee thought that it did not come within the standard fixed for the productivity of irrigation schemes. But, taking into account the fact that this scheme will benefit the famine areas of Rayalaseema, they have now accepted this scheme"

Again, while answering a similar question in the Rajya Sabha yesterday the Deputy Minister stated

"The joint project report of T.B.H.L. Canal submitted by the Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Mysore have been technically approved."

Therefore, in regard to the standard of productivity of the scheme there is no question. The Technical Committee has now approved the scheme. The scheme has, therefore, been found to be one which would yield sufficient results.

The only question now appears to be about finding sufficient resources. Even in November while answering a question in this House the Deputy Minister stated:

"It is not a question of the Central Government being adamant. It is a question of finding sufficient resources. Perhaps the hon. Member knows that the spillover in respect of Andhra Pradesh from the Second Plan to the Third on irrigation is going to be Rs 70 crores. So we have also to look to the financial resources available"

Again, yesterday in the Rajya Sabha he stated

"However, in view of the limitations of funds and possibilities of achieving benefits earlier, the State Governments were advised to develop the project in two stages"

Therefore, the only point now is about the resources. The State Government has been pressing on the Central Government to take up the whole scheme costing about Rs 20 crores, but the Ministry has been saying that the State Government may not be able to find Rs 20 crores or Rs 22 crores for executing this scheme. If the State Government could find sufficient resources, it has been stated that they may not have any objection to take up this scheme.

In respect of this matter, I want to submit one point of importance. The Deputy Minister stated that the spillover in respect of Andhra Pradesh on irrigation is Rs 70 crores. Nagarjunakonda project is one of the schemes that is included in the Second Plan and it is being executed. The Tungabhadra project was thought of even before the Nagarjunakonda project was included in the Second Plan and before it was sanctioned. Even at the time when the Nagarjunakonda project was sanctioned and this project was being considered, the people of Rayalaseema expressed the fear that if

[Shri Ram Reddy]

the Nagarjunakonda project was taken up before the Tungabhadra high level canal was sanctioned, later it might be said that sufficient funds may not be available to take up this scheme. Therefore, it was said that on that account the Tungabhadra high level canal might be postponed. Then, both the representatives, of the State Government and of the Central Government, gave an assurance that such a thing would not happen and that the Tungabhadra high level canal would not be postponed on that account.

Now, the Deputy Minister has said that the spillover in respect of irrigation would be Rs 70 crores. This spillover of Rs 70 crores is mainly on account of the Nagarjunakonda project, because the Nagarjunakonda project's first stage is sanctioned, and it costs about Rs 87 crores. Only Rs 32 crores is provided in the second Plan. Therefore, the spillover in respect of the Nagarjunakonda project alone is going to be Rs 55 crores. Hence, the spillover in respect of other projects would be only Rs 15 crores. The taking up of the Nagarjunakonda project cannot be considered as if that project is a State project. It is not a State project at all because in the case of Hirakud, Bhakra Nangal and similar major projects they were all included in the Central sector and not in the State sector. Unfortunately, when the question of Nagarjunakonda came up it was included in the State sector, and now to avoid this high level canal being taken up, it is said that the spillover is going to be Rs 70 crores and therefore the resources may not be available.

In regard to this matter one more point may be submitted. My learned friend on the other side has pointed out the famine conditions and the fear expressed in Rayalaseema about this matter. In that connection, I want to add only one thing. As originally contemplated, this high level canal project was estimated to cost Rs 26 crores and it was expected to irrigate an ayacut of over 4½-lakh acres.

Then it was reduced to a Rs 22-crore scheme. Correspondingly, the ayacut was also reduced. Now, the Central Government is advising the State Government to take up the first stage that costs about Rs 12 crores and irrigate about 1,80,000 acres. The result is that the Cuddapah district is totally being neglected now. Now, if the first stage alone is taken up, apart from the Gandikota Weir, the only two canals that are going to benefit the Cuddapah District, namely, the Cuddapah north canal and the Cuddapah south canal would be omitted. If the first stage alone is taken up the Cuddapah district would be totally neglected and this is the most backward area in Rayalaseema.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon Member should conclude now. He should leave some time for the Minister.

Shri Ram Reddy: Only one minute more Sir. The allotment was reduced from Rs 26 crores to Rs 22 crores. The ayacut also was totally cut out correspondingly from the Cuddapah district alone. Now when the scheme is reduced from Rs 20 crores to Rs 10 crores and when the first stage is being taken up it is the Cuddapah district again that is being totally neglected. In view of this the matter was taken up by me and after my question was answered on the floor of the House on the 18th November I have been receiving a number of representations and according to the leading papers in Andhra and elsewhere they have been very much distressed over this problem.

An Hon Member: The House is also distressed.

Shri Ram Reddy: The House is also very anxious. All the proposals for execution of the whole scheme are ready and they just need a helping hand from the Minister. So, I request that the hon Minister would be kind enough to extend a helping hand.

Shri T. Subramanyam (Bellary): Is it a fact that the area of Mysore State and the adjoining Andhra State through which the high-level canal flows has been subject for a long time to acute and frequent famine conditions? We are now in the third year of the second Five Year Plan and although this was included in the Second Five Year Plan, there has been no progress, although the development of the low-level canal has been going on much more satisfactorily in similarly situated projects in other States. So, may I ask Government to take up this project urgently and see that it is completed expeditiously, so that the benefits of this project may be utilised to the maximum extent.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: That is a speech, not a question.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: As one intimately connected with the progress of the Tungabhadra project belonging to the former Hyderabad State, I know that the project envisaged an irrigation potential of 50 lakh acres and this high-level canal is only a part of it. If at this stage when we are at the end of the third year of the Second Five Year Plan, if you are asked to submit a fresh scheme, then that scheme has to go to the CWPC. They will examine it for six months and finally it will come to the Hathi Technical Committee. So we do not know when the project will be executed. There are so many irrigation projects for which amounts have been sanctioned, but which have been neglected. For instance, the Vamsadhara project has been neglected and so many other projects also have been neglected.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: This is not a question. Then I may have to ask the hon. Minister to lay a statement on the Table.

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: So, why could not they take up at least this high-level canal immediately? They

have Devnour project for which Rs 2 crores have been earmarked. So, at least that amount should be utilised. So, I request the hon. Minister to take up this high-level canal immediately.

Shri Venkatasubbalah (Adoni): Is it not a fact that the Tungabhadra reservoir is designed to serve both the low-level canal and the high-level canal schemes and the full benefits of that reservoir cannot be achieved if this entire scheme is not sanctioned? Otherwise, the water in the reservoir will go to waste.

The Deputy Minister of Irrigation and Power (Shri Hathi): Hon. Members have shown anxiety about a project which is going to irrigate the famine-stricken areas and which need irrigation. In the reply that I gave the other day in this House, I said that although the project did not come within the prescribed standard of productivity taking into consideration the fact that this project is going to benefit this area, the Technical Committee has approved it. It is not only this particular project but there are a number of such projects which are not coming within the prescribed standard. But even then, having regard to the needs of the particular area where irrigation facilities are needed most, that standard is waived in many cases. So, there is no question of this project being not finally approved on the ground that it does not come within the productivity stage. The real apprehension which has been voiced here, I could appreciate is that in case now this project is not wholly approved as it is, it may perhaps be that later on when the second stage is to be taken up fresh project report might have to be prepared, fresh estimates might have to be prepared and also the agreement between the two States might have to be entered into and that might take a long time. I fully appreciate that point of view. Therefore I want to make it very clear that there is no

[Shri Hathi]

question of any agreement to be made between the two States. The proportion that has been prescribed, namely 65 and 35, will remain the shares of the two State Governments and the distribution of water will also be in that proportion.

I may say that the project as a whole has been technically approved. Therefore, there now remains no question of having any correspondence between the States with regard to the sharing of water. As the whole project has been technically approved, I think there should be no apprehension on that ground. It is not a part of the project but the whole project that has been approved by the Government. So, there need be no dismay or apprehension on that score.

With regard to the areas that are to be irrigated there are two stages of development, and Mysore in the first stage will get 68,000 acres and Andhra 120,000 acres that means in all 188,000 acres. During the second stage Mysore will get 136,000 acres and Andhra 252,000 acres.

Then it is better to go on constructing canals and getting the benefits and developing the area. Instead of doing that after the whole project is over it would be better if we stick to a particular portion, get the benefits and then go on adding to the benefits. But that does not mean that there is any intention—and there need be no apprehension on that score—to shelve the second stage and so the question of any agreement between the two States will not arise. The project as a whole has been technically approved and so it will not be necessary now to go to the technical committee for the scrutiny of these details.

Shri Nagi Reddy: On a point of information. Will the canal that is going to be constructed in the first stage have the capacity to carry 4,000 cusecs of water or will it be reduced?

Shri Hathi: That we shall see when the whole project is approved. So far

as the canal is concerned, it forms part of the whole project.

Shri Ram Reddy: May I ask one question?

Shri Hathi: Let me first finish. Then if there is any question, I will reply.

A point was made that the waters that will be required in the first stage and second stage may not be in the same proportion and there might be some dispute again. But I may tell you that the water distribution will be in the ratio of 35 and 65, as agreed upon by both the States. So, there should not be any apprehension on that score.

The only other point is about finding financial resources. When I said that the Planning Commission has technically approved the whole project it does not include the financial resources for the project. We are giving money as and when it is necessary. For instance for Nagarjuna sagai project we provided Rs 55 crore. They wanted more. So we gave them Rs 15 crores more. That is only a question of financial resources. There should be no apprehension on the part of the Members that the project report as a whole is not approved. Much of the misunderstanding that arose is with regard to the delay in coming to the agreement by both the States and so perhaps Members thought that a new project report will have to be prepared again which I should like to clarify.

19 hrs

Shri Ram Reddy: What is the harm in sanctioning the whole scheme though the execution might be done in stages?

Shri Hathi: I said so. The whole project has been approved. Only the execution will be done in two stages.

Shri Dasappa (Bangalore): May I know when the whole project will be completed?

An Hon Member: Nobody knows

Shri Dasappa: Is it in the womb of the future or is there some target fixed or is there any schedule of execution?

Shri Hathi: It would not be possible to give any target date as to when the whole project will be completed

Shri T B Vittal Rao: Why not?

Shri Nagi Reddy: At least by the end of the Third Plan?

Shri Hathi: But I can say that we have provided money even for this year, i.e., 1958-59

Shri T B. Vittal Rao: How much?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The House stands adjourned till Eleven of the clock tomorrow

19 01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 18th December, 1958