

ed?" I will tell them that the climate has changed! But what kind of climate? The hon. Minister told us that he has issued a new directive. Now, I can find that kind of directive in any book on public administration which is used by the college students.

I submitted then and I submit again that Dandakaranya is a great scheme. It is to be executed by men of imagination and goodwill; it is to be done in a proper spirit. The conception is great, execution is poor, goodwill is lacking and faith is absolutely absent. Therefore, I do not know how the scheme will come up.

The hon. Minister was pleased to say that he wants to make the best use of the men, material and resources. I am at one with him in that, but seeing the way the Authority is going, the way this Authority lacks team-spirit and the way things are being managed, our men, material and resources are not going to be put to the best use. I, therefore, plead with him in all earnestness and in all humility of a Member *vis-a-vis* a Minister that he should kindly see to it that this scheme materialises. Sir, this scheme can be the crowning glory of the Rehabilitation Ministry; but, it also can be the crowning futility of the Rehabilitation Ministry. I would request him to see that it is made the crowning glory of the Rehabilitation Ministry.

Shri Mehr Chand Khanna: You shall not be disappointed.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

"That this House takes note of the Statement on the Dandakaranya Development Authority laid on the Table of the House on the 27th November, 1959, by the Minister of Rehabilitation and Minority Affairs."

The motion was adopted.

*Half-an-hour discussion.

18.07 hrs.

*COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN INDIA

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up the half-an-hour discussion.

Shri Raghbir Sahai (Budaun): Sir, a very important report on community development was issued by the U. N. Mission, who visited our country last year. Among many suggestions that they made, one important suggestion they gave us was that the programme of community development should be further staggered. As that suggestion was a very important one, naturally Members of this House were anxious to know what were the reactions of the Community Development Ministry to that report.

A question was tabled in this House, which was replied by the hon. Minister on the 10th February. He gave a categorical reply that this particular suggestion about the staggering of the programme has not been accepted. In regard to that categorical statement, a further elucidation on the part of the Minister, which he had made on 23rd December, 1959, was brought to his notice. He had remarked in his speech at an informal consultative committee meeting on 23rd December, 1959:

"The Minister agreed with the suggestion for extension of the period of Pre-extension Blocks where necessary and observed that a decision had been taken not to allow conversion of these blocks into regular Stage I Blocks unless some definite proof of the spirit of self-help and self-sacrifice by the village people was forthcoming. The new blocks in certain cases went without the full complement of the staff which adversely affected the progress of work. A decision had been taken not to allot more blocks to a State unless the basic staff was available."

Now, in view of this elucidation and the very categorical reply that he had

[Shri Raghbir Sahai]

given previously, a doubt arose in the minds of members, and I put to him the elucidation that he made on the 23rd of December, to which the hon. Deputy Minister was pleased to reply:

"The two points raised by the hon. Member are not identical. One is a suggestion made by the UN Mission to stagger the programme, and another ascertainment of the willingness of the people and also knowing whether they are ready to take up the block."

He further goes on to say:

"One is indigenous and the other is foreign."

The least that I can say about this reply is that it is not only evasive but it refuses to appreciate the import of the supplementary put to him.

After these replies the question for consideration is whether after having made that statement, which the hon. Minister was pleased to make in the informal consultative committee about the conversion of pre-extension blocks into regular stage I blocks, on the definite proof of the spirit of self-help and self-sacrifice by the village people; this would not virtually amount to staggering of the programme. So, I put it to him: what is the measure of self-help and self-sacrifice on the part of the people and has that measure been applied so far and if so, with what result? Now, everybody knows that our present achievements in the Community Development Programme are certainly spectacular; that is, if our physical targets are properly analysed, they would mean the Government money allotted for this purpose plus the work done by the Block staff plus the co-operation given or extended by the village people. I submit that if things had been left only to the self-help and self-sacrifice on the part of the village people the results would not have been so spectacular as they now are.

In this connection, the U.N. Mission's arguments should have been given more serious consideration. On what basis did they come to the conclusion that the programme should be further staggered? They said:

"(1) Due to the fast rate of expansion, approximately 25 per cent of posts in the existing blocks are vacant.

(2) It seems advisable... to weed out inefficient and undesirable personnel, which in some States is estimated at as much as 25 per cent of the total, and also to strengthen supervision and to provide better service training."

The U.N. Mission has estimated that this kind of undesirable personnel should be only to the extent of 25 per cent. I may state here that only very recently Punjab Government set up a non-official evaluation committee. Although that committee's report is not available to us, still copious extracts from that report have been quoted in some of the important papers of Delhi with their comments thereon. One of the most important extracts from that report is:

"The selection of BDOs and village-level workers," says the Evaluation Committee, "has not been done with meticulous care and the result is that at least 50 per cent of the present lot have not proved equal to the task assigned to them. Unfortunately, some undesirable persons have also found their way to become BDOs."

The estimate of this Evaluation Committee is that inefficient staff goes up to 50 per cent. The third reason that was assigned by the U.N. Mission was that in addition greater attention should be paid to the increase in agricultural production.

Now, these are the three main reasons on which they base their suggestion and their argument that the pro-

gramme of extension of the community development blocks should be further staggered:

It stands to reason why, when the hon. Minister had himself admitted that for the conversion of the pre-extension blocks the condition precedent would be the determination of self-sacrifice and self-reliance on the part of the village people, which amounts to staggering, he is taking up this position now. In regard to the determination of self-reliance and self-sacrifice on the part of the village people, a very important decision had been made on the 15th December, 1958 at a meeting which was presided over.....

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's time is up.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: I will take about five minutes more.

Mr. Speaker: He cannot go on taking more time. There is only half an hour on the whole.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: I will be still more brief.

Mr. Speaker: He must be quick. It may be something like asking a few questions. There is no question of developing an argument here.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: I will try to be brief.

In that circular it was stated that the following tests would be applied for determining self-reliance and self-sacrifice on the part of the village people:—

fair evidence of village cleanliness and sanitation; number of compost pits dug and used, extent of coverage by Panchayats and Co-operatives; extent to which responsibility for development programme is shouldered by Panchayats; extent to which credit and supplies are channelised through co-operatives; and any other criterion.

Now, they are all very difficult tests. I would like to know from the hon.

Minister if he has given a good try to these tests. If they are made a condition precedent for the conversion of the pre-extension blocks, how these tests were applied? I feel that if they are being honestly applied, the conversion would be delayed and thereby staggering would take place as a matter of course.

My last point would be that according to the UN Mission report the new phasing of the programme would be that in 1960 some 400 new blocks are going to be started, in 1961 about 500, in 1962 about 600 and in 1963 about 800. Now, how this task is going to be achieved, when we are short of personnel, when inefficiency is there, when training has not come up to the level and when there is a lot of dissatisfaction about the working of the programme from all directions? There is the Punjab report and Bihar criticism. Is it prudent on our part to stick rigidly to the programme that we have laid down some time ago? Is the hon. Minister standing on prestige or is he interested in building up the reputation of the Community Development Department? I dare say, he is more interested, and he should be more interested, in building up the reputation of the department and will not rigidly follow the programme which was evolved some two or three years ago, for the modification of which there is a lot of material at our disposal.

Mr. Speaker: I find that Shri Bhakt Darshan has written to me that this is a question which had been tabled by him.

Shri Bhakt Darshan: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Instead of his getting the opportunity to raise a half an-hour discussion, another hon. Member gets it. Of course, any hon. Member can give notice, but I shall take care to see that in all such cases, preference is given to the hon. Member who tables the question and gives notice of half-an-hour discussion within

[Mr. Speaker]

three days of the date on which the question had been answered in the House. If within three days, more than one Member gives notice, I would give preference to the hon. Member who tabled the question.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: With your permission, Sir, I may point out that my name was also added to that question.

Mr. Speaker: That is all right. It makes it easier.

श्री भक्त बर्षान (गढ़वास) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं केवल तीन प्रश्न, जो कि एक दूसरे से सम्बन्धित हैं, माननीय मंत्री जी के सम्मुख रखना चाहता हूँ।

यह जो संयुक्त राष्ट्रीय अध्ययन मंडल भारत में भ्रमा या क्या उसको विशेष तौर पर हिदायत दी गई थी—क्या उस के "टर्म्स ऑफ रेफरेंस" में यह था कि वह इस बात की सिफारिश करे कि हमारे देश में विकास-खंडों के खोलने का जो क्रम चल रहा है, जो रफ्तार चल रही है, उस को धीमा किया जाये? क्या उन में स्वाम तौर में यह पूछा गया था?

जब कि उन्होंने अपनी रिपोर्ट में साफ कहा है कि उन्होंने समय समय पर केन्द्रीय सरकार के मंत्रियों और अधिकारियों से परामर्श किया, विचार विनिमय किया, बात-चीत की और उस के बाद जेनेवा में जा कर अपनी रिपोर्ट लिखी, तो क्या उस समय केन्द्रीय सरकार के अधिकारियों ने कोई दृष्ट रख अपनाया था कि हम किसी भी सूरत में इस की चाल को धीमा नहीं करना चाहते हैं?

क्या राज्य सरकारों से इस सम्बन्ध में कोई परामर्श किया जा रहा है और अन्तिम निर्णय करने में पहिले क्या राज्य

सरकारों के प्रतिनिधियों से बात-चीत को जायेगी और संसद् के सदस्यों को भी इस बारे में मौका दिया जायेगा।

Mr. Speaker: Shri Braj Raj Singh.

Shri Tangamani

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member has not sent any notice.

Shri Tangamani (Madurai): I have sent by about 4 o'clock. If it has not reached you....

Mr. Speaker: I do not want to rule him out.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad): I want to know what percentage of the money allotted to each block is spent on the emoluments of staff of all kinds and buildings, and what percentage is actually spent on the welfare of the people. Is it 60 and 40 per cent. respectively? If so, may I know whether Government propose to reduce the expenditure on the staff and their conveyance?

Is it known to the Minister that the community development staff has not been able to assimilate the feelings of the villagers, and the villagers do not feel friendly towards the staff? May I know whether the Government would decide that only village folk would be recruited to community development staff?

Shri Tangamani: Which part of the country did this U.N. Commission tour, and how long did it take? Did the U.N. Commission discuss the matters with non-officials including Members of Parliament? What are the reasons for not accepting the two important suggestions of the U.N. Commission, namely that the programme should be staggered, and that consolidation of what we have done should take place before launching on further schemes? May I know whether the report on this U.N.

Commission has been sent to the various Governments and their opinions sought?

Shri Panigrahi (Puri): May I put one question?

Mr. Speaker: He has not given even that notice. I am not going to allow.

Shri M. C. Jain (Kaithal): I have also given my name.

Mr. Speaker: Originally, yes.

Shri M. C. Jain: I want to put only two questions. Has the report of the non-official evaluation committee on community projects appointed by the Punjab Government come to his notice?

In answer to a supplementary question on the 10th February, as to whether the U.N. Commission had observed in their report that the disparity in income had increased in the villages as a result of the community development working, the Minister was pleased to remark that the situation would be remedied by the cottage industries programme and the decentralisation of political power to the villagers. May I know if the Minister is satisfied that the money allocated for the cottage industries has been adequate to remove or reduce the disparity that has increased despite the previous allocation?

Shri Panigrahi rose—

Mr. Speaker: Hereafter I will not allow this kind of indulgence.

Shri Panigrahi: Next time I will give it in writing.

May I know whether there is any proposal with the Ministry to appoint non-officials as Block Development Officers in some blocks so that the enthusiasm of the people will be revived in this movement?

Mr. Speaker: He wants that it may be harnessed. I think that is what he means.

The Minister of Community Development and Co-operation (Shri S. K. Dey): I was under the impression that I was to reply to questions on the decision that the Ministry had taken for the staggering of the programme. But I find quite a number of other questions have been raised, which are not quite related to the main question to which this discussion was intended to be confined.

Mr. Speaker: He could confine himself to that, if he so likes.

Shri S. K. Dey: As regards the question of staggering, the United Nations evaluation team had mentioned seven or eight factors, because of which they wanted the Government of India to further stagger the programme. Their observation was that the rate of growth from 1959 to 1963 was too fast, jumping from 300 in 1959 to 800 in 1963, that the blocks were 25 per cent. larger than the norms prescribed, that there was shortage of staff, that there was need for weeding out inefficient staff, that there was need for the consolidation of existing blocks rather than expanding the programme, that during the pre-extension period, we could try to concentrate more on the agricultural programme, and if needs be, expand the pre-extension period further beyond the one year prescribed, and that the extension staff could be more usefully deployed in more favourably placed areas in order to achieve quicker food production, as against expansion of the programme. It was suggested that instead of expansion, we could have a 'task force' as they called it. They also mentioned that too fast an expansion affected the success of the programme.

As you are aware Sir, we had intended to cover the country as a whole by the end of the Second Five Year Plan. In fact, there have been times, three to four years ago, when we had in one single allotted year about five hundred to six hundred blocks. It was only about a year and a half ago that on the recommendation of a very high-powered team headed by Shri

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B. G. Mehta that the Government of India accepted a staggering of the programme from 1960 to 1963.

It is true that quite a substantial number of blocks in the country happen to be about 25 per cent larger in size than the norms prescribed. One of the reasons why it is so is that there is a very heavy pressure on the State Governments for the maximum coverage possible under a block. There is therefore uneconomic and unpractical delimitation of blocks, including a population for more than what is desirable.

We felt that if we could give a larger number of blocks, we could rationalise the area of the existing blocks. Besides, there is no guarantee that concentration of the existing technical staff in a certain number of favourable areas would produce quicker results in food production. If I may mention in all humility, the maximum difficulty we are experiencing today in food production is in the inadequacy of experienced and trained technical staff in the field of agriculture, supplies of fertilisers, iron and steel, cement and many other things which are of urgent need for agricultural production. We also felt that it is not possible for one-third of the country to be left alone in order to improve the functioning in the rest of the two-thirds of the country which had already the benefit of this programme, effective or otherwise.

I may mention that in the unequal competition between the urban and rural sectors, community development programme can be considered as the only programme which has offered what may be considered till now a sop to the village people against the glaring gaps that have grown in the rural areas. To deprive one-third of the country, as the U.N. Mission recommended, of the very modicum of amenities and token facilities which

the community development provides, just because the other two-thirds of the country could be manned better or, perhaps, the functioning of the two-thirds of the country could be improved, does not seem to be practicable. Nor would it be acceptable to the remaining one-third of the country. There is one other matter. Because the entire focus of public attention is on the Community Development programme, it is possible to charge this programme or the functionaries in it for all the gaps that arise between our expectations and realisations. In the rest of the country, which is not covered by the Community Development programme, the Government administration still continues to function in isolation from different units, without any proper coordination. Therefore, there has been a continual pull away from the Community Development organisation on workers who are being heckled in many places for no fault of theirs.

There is a tendency on the part of workers to prefer non-Block areas where they would not be exposed to such exacting criticism and public observation. Coordination, a problem which, normally, should have been used as a means for the fuller effectiveness of governmental programme, has acted more as a primary preoccupation of the Block organisation because a substantial section of the country remains outside the Community Development areas and the normal departments of Government can function in those areas as they please without being called so severely to account, where the resources of Government can be distributed, as and when they required, with a certain amount of arbitrariness which is not easy in the Community Development areas because funds are clearly earmarked and are subjected to scrutiny by a number of organisations, both people's as well as Government's.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: Should we understand that you are not attaching

any importance to the test of self-help and self-reliance.

Shri S. K. Dey: I am coming to that. I have not yet come to that. What I wanted to drive at is the fact that there are two Indias still, one India where there is coordinated administration and another India where there is no coordinated administration. And the India which has no coordinated administration is exercising a very heavy pull on the area which is under Community Development programme and is functioning on a coordinated pattern. The sooner we can cover this gap and transform the whole country into this coordinated system of administration, the more easy will it be for the Organisation to function in a coordinated way without making coordination to become its main pre-occupation.

Then, we have the *Panchayati Raj* programme which is under the process of implementation in all States. Some States have already implemented, like Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. Round first April, Madras, Mysore, Assam and Orissa are coming forward. Some other States are introducing legislation in the State legislature. Now, this *panchayat raj* system covers community block areas as well as non-block areas. Where there is a community block, it is possible for the newly created block *panchayat samitis* or *zila parishads* to function through proper organisation, with a certain fund and a certain technical assistance given from above. In non-covered areas the *panchayati raj* system is under a very great disability. When the Government creates a people's institution and is not in a position to provide wherewithal to that institution to function, it becomes a liability, instead of an asset. Therefore, we had to do something to expedite progress even if it meant a certain amount of compromise with results.

There may be a certain amount of dilution of administrative guidance, I agree, if there is over-fact expansion.
 394 (Ai) LS—9.

But we expect that, if there is a little dilution, it is likely to be more than compensated by the additional guidance and support, both vertically and horizontally, which we expect from these new institutions which are in the process of growth and which in the course of the next three or four years....

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): What is this vertical and horizontal support?

Shri S. K. Dey: By vertical guidance, I mean the *zila parishad* president and the *panchayat samiti* president trying to give guidance vertically to the organisations below. Then, there will be some organisations functioning alongside the Government apparatus and they will try to support the Government organisation alongside as they function. We expect that there will be some dilution in administrative guidance but then, as we see, this must be more than made up if the *panchayat raj* system on which we are placing such great emphasis and reliance can help a natural and healthy growth.

Shri Sahai has mentioned about self-reliance. We have not yet been able to evaluate how successful the tests are. These tests have been carried out in the States and we have had an assurance from the State Governments that all the pre-extension blocks so far converted into the first stage blocks have been on the basis of tested self-reliance.

Shri Raghubir Sahai: It is illusory.

Shri S. K. Dey: Even if these statements by the State Governments happen to be illusory, we are not leaving the matters where they are. We propose to review the whole question and we shall be able, as a result of the evaluation that we carry out, to evolve a procedure by which the criteria for self-reliance can be better established. Now, we have heard about the evaluation report in the Punjab and we have written to the

[Shri S. K. Dey]

Punjab Government—we have been trying to follow that up—to let us have a copy of their evaluation report. We have read about the evaluation report in the Press. I hope to get that report. In any case the hon. Member from Punjab would be interested to know that Punjab was the only State to which we did not make the normal allocation of blocks in the month of October because of the shortage of staff. Because of that the Punjab Government speeded up the recruitment of staff to meet the shortages which were reported to us and we subsequently gave them the allotment in the month of January . . .

Shri D. C. Sharma: Be more kind to Punjab.

Shri S. K. Dey: If after our evaluation of the procedure followed in the States regarding self-reliance we find that different criteria have to be established and if after the establishment of these different criteria it happens that some blocs in the States have to be staggered further beyond a year, it certainly will mean that some blocks will be deferred beyond the year 1963. But we have, so far as the Central Ministry is concerned, planned for the coverage of the whole country by 1963. It is now for the States to take advantage of it. We do not wish, naturally, to penalise, plan for penalising any particular area in the country, because of the failure of the State Government or other institu-

tions. We are hoping that all areas would be assisted to come up with enthusiasm, fervour, competence and institutional framework, to take advantage of whatever resources the Central Government can place at the disposal of the State Government both in terms of money and technical and administrative assistance.

I am grateful to you, Sir, having allowed this discussion, because there were certain doubts in the minds of certain hon. Members. I am, particularly, sorry that Shri Raghbir Sahai had this impression that my colleague tried to evade questions. There was no intention on the part of anyone of us to evade any question, there is no question either of any prestige. I consider it a very high privilege to be charged by this House to put my hand in the difficult task of building democracy from the grass roots and building up democratic institutions which can effectively implement the policies and plans approved by this House. I left my prestige completely behind in the sea at Bombay when I came and took up this work. I know one cannot make too much of a capital hope of prestige when one deals with human beings and institutions of human beings.

18.43 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, March 4, 1960/Phalguna 14, 1881 (Saka).