

Suez Canal, on our economy and foreign trade has been made so far by the Government; and

(b) if so, the broad outlines, thereof?

The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (Shri Morarji Desai): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Following the closure of the Suez Canal, shipments of imported commodities take a somewhat longer time to arrive in India and the freight rates have also gone up. Because of the longer haulage, there is a general shortage of available shipping space. These factors affect all imports, including imports of foodgrains, which normally pass through this route.

Rural Housing Problem

*1129. **Shri K. Lakkappa:**
Shri M. H. Gowda:

Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state:

(a) the nature of present planning schemes envisaged to complete the Rural Housing Problem in the country;

(b) whether any proposal has been sent by the Government of India to the various States to implement the schemes; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

The Minister of Works, Housing and Supply (Shri Jaganath Rao): (a) to (c). It has been estimated that there was a shortage of 627 lakhs of houses (including 527 lakhs of kacha houses) in the rural areas of the country, at the commencement of the Fourth Five Year Plan. The problem is, therefore, too vast to be resolved entirely on a Governmental basis. However, to improve housing conditions in rural areas, a "Village Housing Projects Scheme" formulated by this Ministry in 1957, is being implemented through the various State Governments. The

scheme *inter alia* provides for the following:—

- (i) loans to villagers for construction of new houses or improvement of existing houses, to the extent of 80 per cent of the cost, subject to a maximum of Rs. 3,000/- per house;
- (ii) 100 per cent Grants to State Governments for provision of—(I) house sites for landless agricultural workers; and (II) streets and drains in selected villages;
- (iii) technical assistance and guidance to villagers and local authorities (including provision of lay-out|plans, designs, specifications etc.) through State Rural Housing Cells, 50 per cent of the cost of pay and allowances of the staff being met from Central Grants.

This is a continuing Scheme. For the present, the scheme is expected to cover the development of about 5000 villages, spread all over the country, progressively. Owing to financial and various other limitations, it has not been possible to enlarge the scope of the Scheme.

बाढ़ नियंत्रण.

- *1131. **श्री प्रकाशवीर शास्त्री :**
श्री रघुवीर सिंह शास्त्री :
श्री यशवन्त सिंह कुडावाह :
श्री धारम दस :
श्री दिनेश कुमर शास्त्री :

क्या सिंचाई और बिद्युत् मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि देश के विभिन्न भागों से बाढ़ तथा उसके फलस्वरूप हुई हानि के समाचार आने आरंभ हो गये हैं ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो पिछले अनुभव तथा बाढ़ से हुई हानि को देखते हुए क्या सरकार