

MR. CHAIRMAN: You finish within half a minute. Then you can continue later on. The Private Members business has to be taken up.

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH: No regard is paid to the fact that if the goods are limited, they should reach the poorest section of the society.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can continue later on. Shri T. R. Shamanna.

15.30 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILL AND RESOLUTIONS

FORTY-SECOND REPORT

SHRI T. R. SHAMANNA (Bangalore South): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-second Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 21st April, 1982."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question is:

"That this House do agree with the Forty-second Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 21st April, 1982."

The motion was adopted.

15.31 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: CONTINUOUS RISE IN PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES AND NEED FOR TAKING STEPS TO AMMELIORATE CONDITION OF TOILING MASSES.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up further discus-

sion on the following Resolution moved by Shri K. A. Rajan on 26th March, 1982:

"This House notes with great concern the continuous and unchecked rise in prices of essential commodities and consequent deterioration in living and working conditions of all toiling people and the measures taken against the trade union rights, and the liberties of workers and calls upon the Government to take effective steps to ameliorate the condition of the toiling masses."

Thirty-one minutes are left. Shri Mayathevar to continue his speech.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR (Dindigul): I will take only 5 more minutes, Sir. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Resolution moved by the Hon. Member, Mr. Rajan on the 26th March, before this House. The toiling masses should be provided with food. This is the duty of the Government to provide food to every citizen of this country. He should be provided with housing facility, employment opportunity, clothing facility, medical facility and the transport facility. There should be a right to work also and it should be enshrined in the constitution, as a guarantee to the unemployed youth of this country.

We had a Green Revolution which had been made by the farmers and peasants of this country. We are giving bonus to the industrial workers but those farmers who produced more and more food-grains and made our country self-sufficient, were not rewarded with any bonus, at all. I demand that only the Indira Gandhi Government can be in a position and is competent to look after the interests of toiling masses, especially the farmers from the rural areas. Therefore, I call upon the Government headed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi to give bonus to the far-

[Shri K. Mayathevar]

mers. They made a powerful and appreciable Green Revolution by which they produced food-grains in surplus than the demand of the countrymen.

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, during the last election, promised one rupee payment per head for all Tamilians who have no job. This was not implemented by the Tamil Nadu Government. Nobody has got one rupee although they do not have any job. He promised to pay Rs. 50 to graduates but no graduate has got Rs. 50/- per mensem from the Tamil Nadu Government. He promised one kilo gram of rice as a gift from the Government from fair price shop. if any of the toiling masses purchases 4 kilo grams of rice from a fair price shop. But the Tamil Nadu Government did not give even a single kilo gram of rice to those who have purchased 4 kilo grams of rice from the fair price shops. He promised that a sum of Rs. 150/- would be paid to a lady who gives birth among the toiling masses. There were so many deliveries in Tamil Nadu. In 1980 itself, hundreds and thousands of children were given birth by the toiling masses of women but not even a single paise was given by the MGR Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why are you so particular about the Tamil Nadu Government?

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR: On the other hand, I would request the Government that the family planning should be made compulsory. Without controlling our geometrical progression of the growth of population, no Government on earth can provide all these facilities to human beings which we are demanding. Therefore, if any Government servant has got more than half a dozen or dozen children, his promotions should be cut off and his increments should be cut off.

In the same manner, if any Government servant has got no issue, he should be given double promotions and increments. It should be applicable irrespective of religion, caste or community. In India certain community people are not following family planning, certain religion people are not following family planning although they are all Indians, they are living and eating food produced by our motherland. Therefore, there should be no discrimination whatsoever. I request the Government to make family planning compulsory.

Then, the prices of essential consumer commodities should be fixed at the lowest level. We did it in 1975-76. The prices of medicines should also be fixed by the Government; the prices of cloth purchased by down-trodden people, the toiling masses, should also be fixed. The prices of these commodities were fixed and sealed in 1975-76. At that time, the poor people were able to purchase all these commodities in Tamil Nadu as well as throughout India. That should be done now.

I further request the Government to open fair price shops in every village with a population of not less than 500 people. That is very essential to provide essential commodities and food to all the toiling masses in India.

The prices of agricultural inputs should be controlled, fixed and reduced. The farmers are born in debt; they live in debt and they die in debt. We should redeem them from the perennial indebtedness. The Government must reduce the prices of agricultural inputs.

I recommend to the Government to raise the levvy price of sugarcane in Tamil Nadu. At present it is Rs. 173 per tonne. That is not remunerative. I plead with the Government that it should be raised to Rs. 200 per tonne.

The Government of India has raised the levy price of wheat three times or more than three times. But so far as the levy price for rice is concerned, it has not been raised. The levy price fixed by the Government of India in Tamil Nadu is not remunerative. So far as the farmers in Tamil Nadu and in south India are concerned, they are not getting a remunerative price. The Government should come forward to pay at least Rs. 150 per quintal for paddy.

In conclusion, I would request the Government that radical measures should be taken by the Government to implement all the recommendations made by the hon. mover of the Resolution, Shri K.A. Rajan and supported by me and all other hon. Members who have spoken on this resolution.

With these words, I support the resolution.

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना) : सभापति जी, मैं इस संकल्प का समर्थन करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ। समर्थन करते हुए मैं दो बातों की तरफ आपकी माफ़त सरकार का ध्यान खींचना चाहूँगा।

पहली बात तो यह है कि सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली को मजबूत करने की बात सरकार रोज सुमिरनी माला की तरह से जगती है और अभी बीस सूत्री कार्यक्रम जो इन्होंने चालू किया है, उसका एक मुख्य मूद्दा यह बताया जाता है कि सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली को शहर और देहात सभी जगह ये मजबूत करना चाहते हैं लेकिन स्थिति बहुत ही दयनीय है। जो आंकड़े मुझे मिल सके हैं उनके अनुसार अभी 2 लाख 98 हजार राशन की दुकानें हैं और हमारे देश की आबादी 68 करोड़ से भी ज्यादा हो चुकी है। इन्होंने बीस-सूत्री कार्यक्रम के तहत 1982-83 में 50 हजार राशन की दुकानें खोलने का वायदा किया है और इन का एक वायदा और है कि जहाँ जरूरत होगी वहाँ मोबाइल राशन की

दुकानें जाएंगी और लोगों को राशन दूँगे। मालूम नहीं, अभी तक मोबाइल राशन की दुकानों की संख्या कितनी है। अगर मंत्री जी जवाब में यह बता सकें, तो हम लोगों की जानकारी बढ़ेगी। ये कहते भी हैं कि इस मुल्क में सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली बहुत ठीक ढंग से चल रही है लेकिन जीवन की बहुत सारी चीजें उन दुकानों के जरिए नहीं मिलती। अलग अलग राज्यों में अलग अलग चीजें वहाँ की सरकारें देती हैं और कहीं राज्य गेहूँ देते हैं, कहीं चावल देते हैं, कहीं चीनी देते हैं, आटा देते हैं और कहीं कहीं मूँदा भी देते हैं और सूजी भी देते हैं। इस के अलावा कहीं पर तेल भी देते हैं और बंगाल और कुछ एक-दो और राज्य हैं, जहाँ इस से भी ज्यादा चीजें दी जाती हैं। तो मैं सरकार का ध्यान इस तरफ दिलाता हूँ कि राशन की दुकानों की तादाद और ज्यादा बढ़ाईए और साथ ही उस में और भी आवश्यक वस्तुओं की संख्या बढ़ाईए।

सभापति जी, आप को मालूम होगा कि शहर और देहात की दुकानों में फर्क होता है। शहर में कुछ चीजें जैसे चीनी लोगों को जो देते हैं, वह देहात के लोगों से ज्यादा देते हैं। पता नहीं इस का औचित्य क्या है। आज तो गांवों में भी लोग चाय पीते हैं और ऐसी बात नहीं है कि वहाँ पर उन का चीनी का खर्च कम हो। मैं अपने अनुभव के आधार पर कह रहा हूँ कि जब मैं देहातों में जाता हूँ तो वहाँ के लोग मुझसे यह कहते हैं कि पटना शहर में लोगों को चीनी हम लोगों से ज्यादा क्यों मिलती है। मेरा कहना यह है कि शहर और देहातों में इस मामले में कोई फर्क नहीं होना चाहिए बल्कि देहातों में तो राशन लोगों को ज्यादा मिलना चाहिए क्योंकि वहाँ पर लोग ज्यादा मेहनत करते हैं। इसलिए राशन की दुकानों को आप ज्यादा बढ़ाईए, जिस से लोगों को ठीक से चीजें मिल सकें। यह भी आप देखिए कि बहुत सी जगह ऐसी हैं, जहाँ पर लोगों को ये चीजें नहीं मिलती हैं। दुकानदार उस को हड़प जाते हैं और अधिकारियों का हिस्सा बंधा हुआ है। इस तरफ भी मैं आप का ध्यान खींचना चाहता था। यह स्थिति हमारे मुल्क में है।

[श्री रामावतार शास्त्री]

इसी से संबंधित एक दूसरा पहलू भी है। ये जो 2 लाख 98 हजार दुकानें हैं, इन को दुकानदार चलाते हैं। इन राशन के दुकानदारों की जो स्थिति है, उस को भी आप को देखना चाहिए। मैं दिल्ली का एक उदाहरण देना चाहता हूँ क्योंकि हम लोग यहां रहते हैं और इस की जवाब-देही आप की है, यह आप के अधिकार में है। मेरे स्थान से कई हजार दुकानें यहां पर खुली हुई हैं। (व्यवधान) मैं सब दुकानदारों की पैरवी कर रहा हूँ। जो शहर में दुकानदार हैं और जो देहात में दुकानदार हैं, उन सब के बारे में एक नियम होना चाहिए कमीशन का। अब दिल्ली में जो इन दुकानदारों को कमीशन दिया जाता है, वह आप कितना देते हैं। गेहूँ, आटा और चावल के लिए आप 2.5 प्रतिशत देते हैं और चीनी पर 0.62 प्रतिशत देते हैं। आप ने एक सवाल के जवाब में बताया है और 2-12-81 को आप ने यह जवाब दिया है कि गेहूँ के लिए 3.90 रुपए प्रति क्वींटल आप कमीशन देते हैं, चावल के लिए 3.80 रुपए प्रति क्वींटल देते हैं और शूगर के लिए 2.15 रुपए प्रति क्वींटल कमीशन देते हैं। आटे में चार रुपए पर क्वींटल, सूजी में पांच रुपए पर क्वींटल, रेड पाम आयल में एक रुपया पर टिन, रेपसीड आयल में 1.30 रुपए पर टिन और मूँदा में पांच रुपए पर क्वींटल देते हैं। इस तरह से आप 2.5 प्रतिशत गेहूँ, आटा, चावल वगैरह में कमीशन देते हैं। यहां के राशन के दुकानदारों का संगठन है और उसके लोग आपसे मिले हैं, दिल्ली प्रशासन के अधिकारियों से भी मिले हैं। उनकी मीटिंग होती है और वे हम लोगों से भी मिलते हैं। उनकी मांग है कि उन्हें दस प्रतिशत कमीशन दिया जाए। लेकिन इसका यह अर्थ नहीं है कि आप इन चीजों की कीमत में वृद्धि कर दीजिए।

सभापति महोदय: शास्त्री जी, फिर आपको चीनी मंहगी पड़ जाएगी।

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री: यही मैं कह रहा हूँ कि आप चीजों के दाम वगैर बढ़ाए यह काम करें। क्या आप नहीं जानते हैं कि आपके

राशन विभाग के इंस्पेक्टर और तरह तरह के अफसर घूमते रहते हैं? सब का महीना बंधा हुआ है। अगर आप उनका महीना रुकवा दीजिए तो आपका काम चल जाएगा।

आपके 2 लाख 98 हजार शाप कीपर्स हैं। अगर यह चलता रहा तो उनकी रोजी-रोटी कैसे चलेंगी। वे भूखे तो मरेंगे नहीं। अगर आप कमीशन नहीं बढ़ाईयेगा तो वे चोरी करेंगे। वे कहते हैं कि हमें चोरी करने पर ये अफसर लोग मजबूर करते हैं। वे हमको डराते हैं, फटकारते हैं। कम से कम आप दिल्ली में तो इसका पता लगा लीजिए कि आपके राशन के अधिकारी क्या कर रहे हैं। इसलिए आप इस पर ध्यान दीजिए कि राशन के जो दुकानदार हैं, उनकी जो वाजिब बातें हैं, उनको आप देखें और उन पर ध्यान दें। उनसे आपको बातचीत भी करनी चाहिए ताकि वे लोग यह महसूस करें कि उनके साथ भी न्याय होता है। अधिकारियों के जूलम और लूट से भी उनको बचाइये। ऐसा काम करिए जिससे जनता में साहार्द-पूर्ण वातावरण बन सके। आप राशन की दुकानों से लाखों टन अनाज देते हैं उसका सदुपयोग हो, इसकी तरफ में आपका ध्यान खींचना चाहता हूँ।

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA):
Sir, as many as fourteen hon.
Members have taken part in the
deliberations coming out of the
Resolution moved by my hon.
friend, Mr. K. A. Rajan. For the
sake of convenience, this Resolu-
tion may be divided and may be
considered in three parts:

"The House notes with grave
concern the continuous and
unchecked rise in prices of
essential commodities and con-
sequent deterioration in the
living and working conditions
of all toiling people; and the
measures taken against the
trade union rights and liber-
ties of workers, and calls upon

the Government to take effective steps to ameliorate the condition of the toiling masses."

As far as the spirit of the Resolution is concerned, the Government is also quite concerned and is very well aware of the hardships due to the rise in prices. But the discussion has gone beyond the scope of this Resolution and has covered the whole economic situation of the country, the law and order situation and the working of the different State Governments of our country; not only these, some other subjects have also been discussed. The hon. Members are quite aware that, during this very Session, all these points have been discussed during the discussion on the Budget, including the Demands for Grants; and now the discussion is going on the Finance Bill. In the general discussions other important items concerning the people at large have been raised and appropriate replies have been given by the Government. But even then because this resolution is before the House and I have got very little time before me, I will be very brief. It will be very difficult for me to reply to so many points raised by the hon. Members. I am very much thankful to the hon. Members who have given very valuable suggestions. They have raised relevant points and their observations are worthy of consideration. But, Sir, there are many, many points raised by the hon. Members and the important ones which have not been discussed at length during the previous discussions which I have just mentioned, I would like to reply and give the point of view of the Government.

Most of the hon. Members have raised the point and the important portion of this resolution also is regarding the rise in prices and in this connection, they have drawn the attention to the hardships suffered by the common man

on account of rise in prices which has taken place during recent years and have given suggestions to bring them down.

Ever since this Government came into power, it has given high priority to the task of moderating the inflationary pressures. The Government has taken a number of measures within a broad strategy which consists of strengthening of the public distribution system, restraining undue expansion in money supply and bank credit, curbing anti-social activities such as blackmarketing, profiteering and hoarding and increasing domestic supplies through higher production and imports wherever necessary. As a result of these measures, prices have been brought under reasonable control. The latest Wholesale Price Index which is available for the week ended April 3, 1982, stands at 275.8. At this level, it is 0.9 per cent higher than the Index a year before. The rate of inflation as on 4th April 1981 was as high as 17 per cent. The declaration in the wholesale prices is beginning to be reflected in consumer prices also though with a time lag. The All India Consumer Price Index for industrial workers is available for the month of February, 1982. At 458, it is four points lower than the index for November. The annual rate of inflation in terms of consumer prices has now come down to 9.6 per cent compared to 12.4 per cent in November 1981 and 14.4 per cent in August 1981. The prospects on the price front as of now are quite encouraging.

The production of foodgrains in 1981-82 is expected to be of the order of 134 million tonnes. Sugar production in the sugar season 1981-82 is likely to reach 67 to 68 lakhs tonnes as against 51.4 lakhs tonnes in the previous season. Regarding industrial production—this point was also raised by many hon. Members and I want to put the

[Shri Sawai Singh Sisodia]

exact situation before the House—as a result of improvement in infrastructure and better utilisation of existing capacity, industrial production is also picking up and during 1981-82 it is expected to register an increase of around 9 per cent. The general index of industrial production during the 10 months of 1981-82 shows an increase of 9.1 per cent. Substantial increases in industrial production have been recorded during April-February of 1981-82, compared with the same period of 1980-81, in important industries such as crude petroleum (+56.9 per cent), for nitrogenous fertilisers (+48.2 per cent), sugar (+27.0 per cent),

Vanaspati (+14.9%),

Coal (+10.8%),

Cement (+13.9%), and

electricity generation (+10.8%).

All in all, the availability of important commodities is expected to show a marked improvement. The prices are expected to remain within reasonable limits though the threat to price stability from external factors (imported inflation) cannot be ruled out.

However, the Government is not complacent about the price situation and is keeping a careful watch so as to take further measures in the light of the emerging trends.

Regarding Public Distribution System, just now, Mr. Shastri and several hon. Members have given their suggestions and wanted to know what is the number of fair-price shops.

The position is like this that the Public Distribution System, particularly, in the rural areas, has been strengthened.

As the hon. Members are aware, this Government, soon after assumption of office, decided to make the Public Distribution System a permanent feature of the economy as a part of price stabilization pro-

gramme for protecting the interests of the consumers, particularly, the weaker and vulnerable sections of the society. Efforts have been made to strengthen this system both in terms of coverage, commodities and areas. The revised 20-Point Programme, in fact, lays special stress on extending the system to remote and inaccessible areas as well. Nearly 3 lakh fair price shops have already been set up in the country of which 2.37 lakhs are in rural areas. Since January 1980, 61,000 fair price shops have been added, most of which, are in rural areas. In 1982-83, about 50,000 additional fair price shops are expected to be set up. There is a network of retail outlets in the country to meet the consumers' requirements of essential commodities such as wheat, rice, sugar, edible oils, kerosene and controlled cloth. Apart from these items, exercise books, matches, soap etc. are also being distributed at Fair Price Shops. There is, however, scope for improvement and constant endeavour is made to render it more useful and effective. In this connection, the suggestions made by the Hon'ble Members will be kept in view.

Under the 20-Point Programme, in the guidelines issued to the State Governments, recently, the proposal for provision of mobile fair price shops has been communicated. Information on the progress made by the State Governments will be available and it will be placed before the House.

Regarding the nationalisation of textile, drug industry and such other industries this point was also raised by many hon. Members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think this has been mentioned many a time.

SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA: Of course, I would be brief now. I shall be finishing within ten minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have to finish it in another three minutes.

SHRI SAWAI SINGH SISODIA: I shall try it.

Some Members have suggested nationalisation of key industries such as textiles, sugar, edible oils. Within the framework of the Industrial Policy Resolution and other policy statements defining the area of their operation, Government have followed a pragmatic policy regarding nationalisation of essential industries. Since these are important industries, the distribution and prices of most of them is subject to Government control.

In this connection, the system regarding sugar distribution and other items is very well known to the House. In view of the above considerations, Government is of the view that a doctrinaire nationalisation of these industries will not be in the national interest.

Regarding Income, Wages and Price Policy, this point also has been discussed many a time. In

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this connection it is recognised that due to historical and other socio-economic reasons, there are disparities of income as between various sectors of the economy. In so far as the wage sector is concerned, Government policy has been directed to narrowing of differentials, improvements in the earnings of employees at lower levels and restraining growth in higher salaries.

Regarding avenues of employment the Sixth Plan has provided for many programmes such as the Integrated Rural Development Programme and the National Rural Employment Programme which are exclusively meant to ameliorate the economic conditions of the weaker sections of the community.

Sir, constant efforts are being made to improve the performance of the public sector undertakings so that they can sustain their own growth and contribute their share to country's development. In the second half of 1981, the public sector undertakings have recorded a profit of Rs. 134.06 crores as against a loss of Rs. 314.23 crores in the second half of 1980.

In the light of the above observations I hope that Shri Rajan will withdraw his Resolution. In any case, the Government opposes this Resolution.

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank all the hon. Members who have participated in the discussion on this Resolution. I think nearly fourteen hon. Members participated in the debate. Even though they had some differences on certain approaches or on certain fundamental issues regarding economic policy yet I am satisfied that all of them agreed that the price rise in respect of essential commodities has affected the teeming millions of our people and this aspect has been rightly highlighted in this House.

Sir, some hon. Members from the other side observed that this Resolution has been framed in a contradictory way. Well, it is not so. I will be happy if the pious hopes expressed by the hon. Minister that he will be able to limit the prices within reasonable limits get fulfilled. Unfortunately, the performance over the last so many years with all our expectations shows that we could not limit the prices to reasonable level so that our toiling masses do not feel the impact in their day to day life. Sir, the problem being faced in all sectors—whether organised or not organised—is that there is rise in prices of essential commodities which has resulted in so many problems. Even the law and order problem is in a way connected with this.

(Shri A. K. Rajan)

Unfortunately, the present public distribution system is inadequate as compared to the total population of the country to which it has to cater. There is not adequate number of fair price shops. It is not able to meet the situation. On this particular point I would like to again impress upon the hon. Minister that the public distribution system as to be enlarged in a big way especially in the rural areas. Sir, in Kerala even with the present structure we were able to manage in such a way as to provide essential commodities through the public distribution system. I have already dealt with the various aspects and the ills which beset the economic life of the country and I am not going to repeat them over here once again. All the essential goods like textiles, drugs, etc. and other consumer items should be distributed through the network of fair price shops. The poor people should not be at the mercy of these traders. This is what we have been demanding. But still we find that the Government is very allergic to the demand for the nationalisation of the consumer industries in the country. But we feel that within the existing framework itself the Government can do very much. The only way in which this can be done is by streamlining the public distribution system. All the commodities essential to the life of the people should be distributed through these fair price shops and this is the only way by which we can get out from the bad impact of the present crisis. With these words I conclude my speech. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment by Shri Nawal Kishore Sharma, Amendment No. 1. I will put it to the vote of the House.

Amendment No. 1 was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is an amendment by Shri M. C. Daga.

He is not here. I will have to put it to vote.

Amendment No. 2 was put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you withdrawing your Resolution, Mr. K. A. Rajan?

SHRI K. A. RAJAN: Yes, I seek leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member have the leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn

16.08 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: STEPS TO PROMOTE SECULAR OUTLOOK IN THE COUNTRY

SHRIMATI VIDYA CHENNU-PATI (Vijayawada): I beg to move:—

“Keeping in view the secular character of our Constitution and the fact that secularism is one of the basic tenets of our State Policy, this House recommends to the Government to take immediate steps to:—

(a) promote a sense of castelessness through inter-caste and inter-religion marriages;

(b) prepare suitable textbooks to propagate secular ideas by laying emphasis on fundamental duties enshrined in the Constitution;

(c) encourage secular outlook among the employees working in Government and Public Sector Undertakings;

so that a feeling of national brotherhood and of human dignity is promoted among the people.”