

The motion is carried by a majority of the total membership of the House and by a majority of not less than two thirds of the members present and voting.

*The motion was adopted.*

15.50 hrs.

**STATEMENT REPRICE POLICY FOR RABI CEREALS FOR 1969-70 MARKETING SEASON**

**THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAGJIWAN RAM) :** The Government, after considering the recommendations of the Agricultural Prices Commission, the views expressed in this House and by the Chief Ministers in a Conference held on the 3rd April, 1969, have taken the following decisions on price policy for rabi cereals for the 1969-70 marketing season :—

(1) The procurement/purchase price of all varieties of wheat other than indigenous red wheat will be Rs. 76/-per quintal. The Government will purchase at this price all quantities of wheat of fair average quality offered for sale. The procurement price for indigenous red varieties will be fixed by the State Governments in consultation with the Government of India, as was done last year.

(2) The issue price of all varieties of wheat will be Rs. 78/-per quintal with effect from the 1st May, 1969 or thereabouts.

(3) The existing Northern Wheat Zone will be enlarged and will now include the States of Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, West Bengal (excluding the statutorily rationed area of Calcutta) and the Union territories of Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Chandigarh. The necessary orders including the zone will issue shortly.

15.52 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS *Contd—*

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE *Contd—*

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now

take up further discussion and voting of the Demands for Grants under the control of the Department of Social Welfare. Shri Siddayya will continue his speech.

**SHRI SIDDAYYA (Chamaraja Nagar) :** Sir, yesterday I was making a reference to the statement of Sankaracharya of Puri wherein he has stated that untouchability is one of the basic and fundamental tenets of Hinduism and no law can prevent the Hindus from practising untouchability. He is not alone in making that statement. The Sankaracharya of Jyotir Mutt and Karpatraji of Banaras who is said to be the chief priest for selecting Sankaracharya have endorsed this view. Therefore, it is not proper to attack only those who have given their statements openly. My own feeling is that there are hundreds and thousands of people who sincerely believe this but who are not prepared to come out with a statement. Therefore, it is a very serious matter.

Government should take that statement as a challenge not only to the harijans of India but to the entire country. It has caused irreparable damage to the cause of removal of untouchability and put the dock back. It is crystal clear that this Swamiji has committed offence under the Untouchability Offences Act. But so far no action seems to have been taken either by the State Government or the Central Government. Only today morning, while answering a question, the Minister of Social Welfare, Shri Govinda Menon, expressed the view that it is a stray statement and it may not be taken seriously. If this is the attitude of the Minister who is in charge of the welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, I do not know how this community can come up. This has resulted in frustration among the Scheduled Castes. At the same time, it has opened the eyes of the people which is a good thing.

15.55 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Why do Hindus observe untouchability ? It is a very important question. It is not because they are inhuman or wicked.

They observe untouchability because they are deeply religious. Therefore the