

ment is to raise the figure from Rs. 1000 to 2000.

I do not want to traverse the ground covered by the previous speakers. The Industrial Disputes Act covers all those workers whose salary is Rs. 500 or below. Originally, the figure was Rs. 200; then it was changed to Rs. 400 and then it was raised to Rs. 500. Why? It was because during the course of so many years, so many changes have taken place; salaries and wages have also increased. So to provide for a wider coverage, the ceiling was raised to Rs. 500. Let us come to the Payment of Wages Act. Originally, it was applicable only to those workers drawing up to Rs. 200. But in 1957, we amended it and now it is applicable to workers drawing upto Rs. 400. Again, take the Workmen's Compensation Act. This was also amended two years ago. Originally, it was applicable to those drawing only Rs. 300 or less. Now the figure is Rs. 400 and it is in Government's contemplation to further amend it and make it applicable to those drawing upto Rs. 500.

Therefore, when we consider this question of payment of wages or compensation, we should take into account the maximum. Only the other day we found in the Annual Report for 1958-59 of the Employees' Provident Fund Scheme that the Commissioner had said that there are companies which have defaulted to the extent of Rs. 2.5 crores, and he was finding it very difficult to recover it. Of course we have collected under the scheme a huge amount of about Rs. 210 crores, and in comparison with that, Rs. 2.5 crores is not a big amount. But he has recommended to Government to consider whether any contribution to the Employees Provident Fund should not have over-riding priority over all other payments. That was the intention. It shows how our concept is developing.

Therefore, when we want to raise the limit from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 2500,

there is strong reason behind it. I welcome the new amendment which the Joint Committee has put in, that retrenchment compensation should also be considered for preferential payment. If a worker is getting about Rs. 400 a month and the factory or mill goes into liquidation, he is entitled to get retrenchment compensation at the rate of Rs. 200 for every completed year of service....

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is he concluding now or is likely to take some more time?

Shri T. B. Vittal Rao: I will take some more time.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Then he may continue the next day.

17 hrs.

*NALAGARH COMMITTEE

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, we will take up the half-an-hour discussion. Shri Malhotra.

Shri Inder J. Malhotra (Jammu and Kashmir): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, at the very beginning I would like to say that the Agricultural Administration Committee submitted its report in October, 1958. It is a very important one and it has pointed out some of the basic needs of our agricultural reorganisation. This report was submitted in 1958 and about 2½ years have gone by and it is still lying in the pigeon hole. In answer to Unstarred Question No. 14 on 15th November, 1960, it was stated that only the Punjab State had submitted its proposals to implement the recommendations of this Committee and the Centre has approved those proposals; and proposals from other States are being awaited.

I would like to point out the main basic facts which have been emphasised in the report for the reorganisation of the agricultural administration in our country. This report, at the same time, created a stir among the

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agricultural services in this country. The agricultural services, after reading this report, thought that now there was a hope for the betterment of their working conditions as well as their emoluments. But, as I have already stated, in reply to a question it has been stated that, in fact, nothing appreciable has been done to implement the recommendations of this committee.

This committee has pointed out—and it is a very basic thing—that as far as agriculture is concerned, the whole country is concerned in increasing agricultural production. The technical factors involved in increasing agricultural production are no doubt important but I would say that the administrative side of the agricultural organisation is also a very important one. On the administrative side we have the human material. Unless the human material is thoroughly satisfied and unless that human material is provided with some incentive to put all the best in its work, we would not be able to get all the best which that human material can give us.

This committee, in its report, has covered practically all the aspects of agriculture. I would point out the important ones. This committee has pointed out the low scales of pay of the agricultural services in our country. I am quoting from the report. It says:

“It is a well-known fact that the scales of pay of the agricultural services are much less as compared to those of general administrative services, and even of other technical services such as Engineering, Medical, Education etc.”

Again it says:

“It is obvious, therefore, that strong agricultural departments cannot be built up with third class human material. Agricultural workers all over the country feel that only lip sympathy is being paid to agriculture, which has not received sufficient importance.”

Now, this committee was appointed by the Central Government, by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. In its report, the committee brings out the present condition of agricultural services in our country. At this stage, I would also like to say that our present Minister of Food and Agriculture—I know at his heart—wants our agricultural services to have the best. At the same time, I would appeal to him that keeping in view the recommendations of this committee, he should use his formal and informal channels to see that the State Governments are brought round to implement these recommendations.

Now, I would come to another important recommendation made by this Committee regarding the formation of the All India Agricultural Service. As far as this recommendation is concerned, it is entirely up to the Central Government to implement it or not to implement it. The report says:

“Nothing short of forming an All-India Agricultural Service, with scales of pay and prospects at par with the IAS would, in the opinion of this Committee, raise the morale and efficiency of agricultural services and thereby, attract equally suitable material for manning the services, and bring about uniformity of standard.”

I am sure, Sir, you will also be aware of the feeling in our country that among the services, the agricultural services are always looked down upon because even at the Centre, they are not at par with the other Central Services. Recently, we have created another Central Service—Central Information Service cadre. I would feel that it is very necessary that these recommendations which entirely concern the Central Government should be implemented as soon as possible.

Now I would move on to another recommendation of this Committee

regarding the co-ordination of work in all the various aspects of agriculture-research, etc. This Committee has said that there is need for co-ordination between research, and education and extension programmes in agriculture. This word 'co-ordination' has been used very loosely. When we say we want co-ordination, the other person would say: yes, of course. There the matter will stop. So, this recommendation about co-ordination among the research, extension and educational programmes at all levels in agriculture is very important.

It can be said that it is up to the State Departments of Agriculture to implement this recommendation. But the recommendations which do not involve any financial implications cannot be implemented by the State Governments unless the workers are provided with the incentive, unless agricultural workers are provided with the emoluments which are recommended by this committee and unless the Central Agricultural Service is created so that they would also aspire as people do on the administrative side. Today the P.C.S. man aspires to become I.A.S.

Research is as important in agriculture as, say, the provision of fertiliser. Unless we pay enough attention to research and we also get it to the farmer—the result of research—we will not be able to achieve much in agricultural production. Now, in regard to research this report says:

"For increasing agricultural production in our country substantially, we have to rely more and more on improving the efficiency of production by evolving scientific methods and applying them to agriculture. The intensification of agriculture will, in its turn, create additional demands on research as has been seen in other countries. On account of these reasons we agree with the observations made by the Joint Indo American Team on Agricultural Research and Education that, 'the total research program-

me under way is inadequate to meet the needs and demands for improved agricultural materials and practices on Indian farms'. Research is the basis of all agricultural progress."

Now, Sir, these are a few of the main recommendations of this Committee. During the last two years what has been done to implement these recommendations? I will quote the answers given. In the answer given to Starred Question No. 1476 on 13th April, 1960, it was pointed out that the Central Government had agreed to finance the schemes submitted by the State Governments on a 50 : 50 basis. Nothing was said there as to whether any State Government had submitted any proposals and whether the State Governments were anxious to implement these recommendations or not. Then, in answer to Unstarred Question No. 1293 on 23rd August, 1960 it was said that only the Punjab Government had submitted certain proposals and those proposals were under consideration. Now, on 15th November, in answer to Unstarred Question No. 104, as I have already stated, it was said that the proposals submitted by the Punjab Government have been approved and no other State Government has submitted any proposal.

Sir, I quite realise that Agriculture is a State subject. But, at the same time, especially at this time when we are going to formulate and finalise the Third Five Year Plan schemes submitted by the State Governments, definitely, at this juncture when the State Governments come for discussion with the Planning Commission and with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, if the Ministry feels that the recommendations of this Committee are important and they should be implemented, I think the Ministry is definitely in a position to suggest to the State Governments that in their Third Five Year Plan or even before that the important recommendations made by this Committee should be implemented and, accord-

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ingly, they should submit their proposals as early as possible.

Now, when the proposals from the State Governments are received, I would suggest that the Centre should make an attempt to see that there is not too much difference between the way of implementation of these recommendations from one State to another State. I think that while approving the proposals made by the various State Governments the Centre would be in a position to, a sort of, bring about a uniformity in the implementation of these recommendations in the various States.

Sir, reorganisation of the Agriculture Administration is a very important thing, and unless a good deal of consideration is paid to it I feel that we will not be able to achieve it.

In the end, I would like to know what has been done regarding the Union Territories which are directly under the Central Government. May I know what has been done in the Union Territories to implement these recommendations?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: I have received notice only from Shri Mathur under Rule 55(5). He may put a question or two.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur (Pali): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I will take only two or three minutes. Problem No. 1 before this country is food production. When in 1958, as a matter of fact, we got very much worried about the food problem in the country, this Committee was appointed to suggest various measures to the Government how to step up food production and how to reorganise the entire machinery of food production and agricultural departments in the various States. This Committee submitted its report in 1958. How tragic and sad it is to find that after two years not one recommendation of it has been implement-

ed; that nothing has been done; that no State Government has taken any action; that only Punjab has submitted a scheme only recently and it has been accepted. If the urgency and the importance which the entire country attaches to this important problem are to be treated in this way and even if such important and urgent problems are tackled in such a manner, what expectations can we have from the Ministry at the Centre and from the State Governments?

Our Ministry at the Centre has been assuring us that the country would be self-sufficient in food by the end of the first Plan; then it has said that we are going to be self-sufficient in food by the end of the second Plan. The theme of the Minister of Food at present is that the country is going to be self-sufficient in food by the end of the third Plan. We must realise how heavily we have suffered and how we have had to go with the begging bowl before other countries. If the implementation of such an important and urgent matter takes this shape, what assurance or what confidence can we create in the minds of the people?

I would ask only two or three questions against this background.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The rules permit only one question.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: Then I will confine myself to only one question. Is it not a fact that after the submission of this report, the Food Ministers from the States have met in Delhi at least half a dozen times? Has the Central authorities discussed this problem with them? If so, what is their resistance? What is their difficulty? What are the financial implications of this report? What causes all this delay and trouble? Are you going to share the entire expenditure with the States and, if not, what is their resistance? Have the Central Government discus-

ed these things with the State Food Ministers and Agriculture Ministers who have come here at least half a dozen times since the submission of this report? We find that not a single scheme has been submitted and that only Punjab has submitted a scheme and we do not know what is the nature of that scheme which Punjab has submitted. What are the main recommendations of the Committee to which the Government of India themselves subscribe and which they think will go to step up food production, and what is the difficulty in accepting the major recommendations which the Government of India themselves think are important and urgent for stepping up food production?

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi (Ludhiana): One question.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad): One question.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Hon. Members have not given advance notice. Anyway, they may each put one question and not lengthen their points.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Is it a fact that the former Food Minister, Shri A. P. Jain, was in favour of implementing the report but the Planning Commission came in the way and did not sanction the implementation of the report and, if so, may I know whether the Planning Commission is still sticking to its own old view, and if the Minister is in favour of implementing the report, what is he doing to implement it?

Shri Ajit Singh Sarhadi: May I know what scheme does the hon. Minister envisage to extend the existing credit facilities for small cultivators, in implementing the Nalagarh Committee report on the subject and how does he propose to meet the disparity between the requirements of about Rs. 750 crores for credit facilities and the present allocation for expenditure which is just Rs. 147 crores?

The Minister of Food and Agriculture (Shri S. K. Patil): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, so far as the motion is concerned, I am in a position to say that I agree with most of the suggestions that my hon. friend Shri Inder J. Malhotra has made. I really congratulate him on his sincerity of purpose and the care and concern that he has got in regard to agriculture. I also congratulate my hon. friend Shri Harish Chandra Mathur; because, ever since I had taken up this responsibility, for the last one year, I know and I recognise what great interest they have been taking in this subject. Therefore, I can assure them, before I proceed with the explanation that I am going to give, that so far as their suggestions are concerned, I am one with them in seeing how quickly these recommendations could be implemented and what are the difficulties in the matter which I would presently state.

My hon. friend Shri Inder J. Malhotra has raised three or four points: why there was so much delay in the implementation of the report and what steps the Central Government has taken to avoid further delay; whether the proposals submitted by the States are similar and if not what are the differences; and whether the Central Government has implemented the recommendations so far as its part of the work is concerned.

So far as the delay is concerned, as my hon. friend himself suggested, agriculture is a State subject and what the Centre can do is only by way of persuasion. There is nothing like a steam-roller by which we can compel the States to do it. I do not say so merely in any constitutional way. We find it extremely difficult to get the States do something. Unless all the States come to the same conclusion, merely one or two States doing that does not go far indeed. As I shall just narrate, many of these things are stuck up because the States do not make up their minds as to what exactly can be done. I am really thankful to the Punjab Gov-

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ernment; at any rate in this particular instance, they have done something, which the other States have failed to do so far.

This committee was constituted in 1957. It was called the Agricultural Administration Committee or Nalagarh Committee, because he happened to be its Chairman. I am really thankful to this committee for making some very important and practical recommendations. If they are implemented, it would really streamline the administrative machinery, which seems to be the purpose of my hon. friend who has raised this discussion.

Some of the points made by the committee are these. Firstly, the agricultural administration, especially at the State level, was in need of immediate and drastic reforms. So it is even today. Secondly, in its present state, it was incapable of shouldering the responsibility of effectively implementing the agricultural programmes of our national Plans. Thirdly, the prevailing service conditions, morale and discriminatory pay grades reduce the agriculture department to the status of a Cinderella in comparison to others, which also is a fact. My hon. friend made a remark which I shall endorse, that whenever a man does not get a job anywhere else, agriculture is the last thing. So far it used to be the Cinderella. But Cinderella ultimately married a prince. So, I want agriculture to marry a prince when the opportunity comes; the sooner it comes, the better.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Is the hon. Minister going to be that prince?

Shri S. K. Patil: I shall find some younger prince for this.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: We have appointed him as the priest to get it done.

Shri S. K. Patil: The recommendations of the Nalagarh Committee are of two types, those of a reformatory

type and those which have financial implications. So far as the first is concerned, I dare say quite a lot has been done by most of the States, but where it comes to finance, it is a different proposition, because at every State the level is not the same. There is no uniformity not only in regard to agriculture, but in other services also. So, any change involves not only the agricultural department, but the administration as well. That is why some of the States have really lagged behind.

So far as the reformatory part of the recommendations is concerned, a lot of them are being carried out. For instance, delegation of powers has been done by the majority of States. Similarly codification of rules and regulations is also proceeding ahead and so also simplification of budgetary procedures. All these recommendations have been really put into practice. Extension wings in as many as 8 agricultural colleges, involving an expenditure of Rs. 75 lakhs have been started.

It is with regard to recommendations involving expenditure particularly on staff matters that the States are lagging behind, because any change in that direction is a very basic change that will really involve large expenditure so far as the State budgets are concerned. There the States are holding back, because they want that the Government of India should come to their rescue for meeting this expenditure. I am glad to say that the Government of India have promised that so far as the financial consequences of the recommendations are concerned, we shall share to the extent of fifty-fifty. Beyond that the Centre cannot do, because even the Centre has got to find money from somewhere. Agriculture being a subject in the entire jurisdiction of the State, the Government of India could not go or do beyond what it has done. Therefore, that little temptation of 50:50 will really go a long way indeed.

In October 1960, that is, only a couple of months back, I myself wrote letters to all the Chief Ministers, informing them of the latest position regarding the policy on the implementation of the Report and requesting them once again to take personal interest in this matter and get it done. The Prime Minister has also included some of the important recommendations of the Nalagarh Committee Report in his fortnightly letters. That was also done. If the Prime Minister's suggestion is not implemented, what could we do? Of course, we can only make suggestions and persuasion, because no direction could be given in the matter of agriculture. I can assure my friend, Shri Malhotra, that no opportunity has been lost and in the conference where we meet the Ministers this question has always been placed before them. It has become a hardly annual, year after year, and even if we meet of oftener than once a year we used to place it before them. But if the Ministers have not so far chosen to do it, I do not understand what could be done.

There is another thing which might appear very interesting. There was the suggestion of my hon. friend—and it is a suggestion in the report of the Committee also—why not form an All India Agriculture Service as a separate cadre, not a State Service but an All India Service? Here I would tell the House that there was a proposal not only with reference to agriculture but, if I mistake not, also for education, agriculture, engineering and even forestry that they must be all India Services. May I here take this House into confidence and say that there has been stiff opposition from some of the States because they do not want these services to be made all India Services? Now we cannot, the Government of India cannot ride rough shod over the States whether we agree with them or not. In the kind of Government or set up we have got under the Constitution it must be our attempt to get these States come to our view rather than merely passing a law. So, these services should be created and we are at it. Because, we are losing

quite a lot not only in the matter of agriculture but even in the services of engineers and other things like education and forestry. Therefore, we could see what type of resistance these people are offering.

So far as the Government of Punjab are concerned, they have really done quite a lot and if I may enumerate a few points of what they have done, they are: replacement of temporary by permanent posts in the agriculture department, provision of selection grades, establishment of soil conservation cells in the agriculture department, provision of two subject matter specialists in each district, arrangement for systematic training to existing staff and fresh agricultural graduates, provision of training reserve and appointment of steno-typists for Deputy Directors etc. Some of them may seem small, but they have done it. This has cost them something like Rs. 5.72 lakhs per annum and the Government of India have agreed to pay 50 per cent. That means, the expenditure is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 6 lakhs and our share will come to Rs. 3 lakhs. We are prepared to do that. We are really using all our influence, whatever we can, both formal and informal influence, in order to see that they fall in line and I am quite sure they will do that.

Then I come to the question of agricultural credit and co-operative credit, which was raised by my hon. friend, Shri Sarhadi. The cost of co-operative credit has increased from Rs. 20 crores to Rs. 100 crores during the last year and it might reach a figure of Rs. 200 crores by the end of the Second Plan. In the Third Plan the provision is Rs. 537 crores. Surely, even more could have been made. But, as I said, we must look to the finances of our country, and that is why it has been only so much. But even this is not being availed of. Therefore, we must create conditions by which whatever has been made available is taken advantage of, and I am quite sure that would be done.

Then there is the provision of adequate storage facilities. That is also

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keeping pace with our requirements. We have now decided, as the House knows, with the sanction of the House, to create a stock pile or a buffer stock of 5 million tons of foodgrains. Now, apart from other considerations, we cannot acquire all this and permanently keep it unless we have got the right type of storage. Therefore, storage also has been thought of and in the Third Plan we have got a provision of Rs. 951 lakhs for that. I could tell the House that I am not satisfied with this provision and I had told the Planning Commission that the provision has got to be increased. That provision would be increased. Therefore so far as storage is concerned, that has been done.

So far as the all-India agriculture service is concerned, I have just now said that that is really a kind of thing which we want to have in all these matters particularly in the matter of agriculture. We are taking up that subject with the States. The funniest part of it is—I do not understand why it is so—that some of the most important States, that is in population and in other respects, like the U.P. and the old Bombay State which was Maharashtra and Gujarat put together, were the States who stoutly opposed this type of thing for reasons best known to themselves.

Shri Harish Chandra Mathur: It affects their sovereignty.

Shri S. K. Patil: I do not know. The hon. Member says that it affects their sovereignty. Maybe, it is one of the reasons. One can conclude that. But we have not given up the hope that it could be done.

So far as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Central Commodity Committee are concerned, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has requested the States to form supernumerary cadres for the staff engaged on research schemes financed by the Council. That is also a point that was raised. Delegation of powers

has also been done. Regarding setting up of extension sections in agricultural colleges to which I made a reference in the beginning of my speech, extra sections have been sanctioned for eight colleges and necessary provision has been made to the extent of Rs. 20 lakhs for setting up similar extension sections in the remaining agricultural and veterinary colleges during the Third Plan.

Then comes the appointment of special committees once in five years to examine the programmes and the policies of Central Commodity Committees and Central institutions. This is a suggestion of the Committee which, I do not say that it is a bad suggestion, we have not exactly accepted because there are talks of having the Agriculture Commission. If such a commission is coming, we will have a large coverage. Their terms of reference surely will be wider than could be given to any such committee. Therefore that particular thing we are not doing. But in any case this is a matter which repeats itself every five years. Therefore there is no question of having it immediately.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: But the Commission is not coming into being.

Shri S. K. Patil: The question is that we do not want to have this commission tomorrow. Even if I want it, I will not have it tomorrow because we are in the process of doing something. We must get settled also as all these new things are coming. Therefore when many of our schemes are under way and have gone to some extent that is the time when the Agriculture Commission can come because then they can review the progress and what can be done. It is no use suggesting these things as the Nalagarh Committee have themselves suggested these things. We do not want the Agriculture Commission again to suggest these things. But they can take a kind of view of everything that is happening in the country so far as

agriculture is concerned and come to some kind of a conclusion.

I can end by saying one thing. So far as agriculture is concerned, I am feeling myself what my hon. friend, Shri Mathur said, It is not merely for the sake of saying that I say so. Minister after minister has come and said that this country will be self-sufficient in five years or whatever is the time—I do not know what the other Ministers said. I have been saying that it should be our attempt to do so. It should be not only my attempt but the attempt of every hon. Member of this House and, as I say, of every citizen of this country to make it self-sufficient. A purely and predominantly agricultural country like India, which even today produced more grain, if I may say so, should be self-sufficient. There should not be any shortage at all—even at the present level of production I am talking—if we change our habits a little. But I am not going into that subject now. I may say that in comparison to any country in the world, we are not producing less. But we must produce more because our habits are different from others. Possibly we do not get the same quantity of the costly things that are necessary in our diets. Therefore we have got to produce more. Therefore anything that we can do for the promotion of agriculture is the greatest national service that we can do just now. That is why our hon. Prime Minister has been telling again and again and so often during the last two or three years that the Chief Ministers of the States should really take over this portfolio of food and agriculture, so that everybody, the other ministers, feel that it is not a Cinderella but that she has become a princess because the Chief Minister has

married her. That exactly is the attempt but perhaps barring Madhya Pradesh, no Chief Minister has really become the Minister in charge of agriculture. To all Chief Ministers I say that this is the work which has got to be given its proper importance, but when it was referred to them sometimes they hit me back and said, "Why is it that the Prime Minister does not take over food and agriculture at the Centre"? Whatever it is, that factor as to who takes it is a different matter. But the amount of sincerity, the enthusiasm that we have got to create and the kind of dynamism that we have got to create in the country can be created by any Minister who really minds agriculture. He has got a sort of marathon job to do in this country. I am quite sure that would be done. Therefore, the processes of implementing the recommendations of the Committee are really in full swing and I can assure this House that before long, we shall have implemented them. So far as the part of the Government of India is concerned, we are not behind.

A little point and I have finished. A question was asked about Union Territories, because, there, directly the responsibility is ours. I have not got all the details with me. I did not anticipate that question. So far as this is concerned, I can assure the House that, even if it has not been done, before anything could be done in other States, we should set the example ourselves by doing whatever lies in our power to see that these recommendations are implemented.

17.36 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 29th November, 1960/Agrahayana 8, 1882 (Saka).