

**Proceedings of the Fourth Session of the Assam Legislative Assembly
assembled under the Sovereign Democratic Republican Constitution
of India.**

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 10 A.M., on Tuesday, the 28th August 1951.

P R E S E N T

The Hon'ble Srijut Lakshesvar Boroah, Speaker in the Chair, the eight Hon'ble Ministers, the three Deputy Ministers and forty-five Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

Requisitioned grant lands of Tea Estates

Prof. P. M. SARWAN asked: + 40

8. (a) Are Government aware that in portions of requisitioned grant lands of Tea Estates, labourers are already in cultivating occupation ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether cultivating occupants of requisitioned grant lands of Barpatra Tea Estate and Mathurapur Tea Estate are being ejected in Sonari Circle, Sibsagar Subdivision ?

(c) Do Government propose to issue special instruction to the Sub-divisional Officer to see that occupant-raiyats are not disturbed by the Circle Sub-Deputy Collectors ?

Srijut HARESWAR DAS (Deputy Minister) replied :

8. (a)—Government have no information.

(b)—Government have no information. Information is however being obtained from the local officers and will be furnished to the hon. Member when received.

(c)—It is a matter for the local officer who will decide in consultation with the Land Settlement Advisory Committee. The necessity of issuing any special instructions will be examined on receipt of the information called for in (b) above.

Teachers serving under Local Bodies

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

9. Are Government aware— ~ 52

(a) That most of the teachers serving under Local Bodies though physically fit for service are compelled to retire at the age of 55 ?

(b) That they do not enjoy any pension after retirement ?

(c) That in many instances Government servants get re-employed after retirement and sometimes their services are extended ?

(d) That the teachers serving under the Local Bodies do not get any such advantages ?

10. (a) In view of these facts do Government propose to take necessary steps to get the age-limit of the teachers serving under the Local Bodies extended upto 60 years ?

(b) If not, why not?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR replied :

9. (a)—The Local Bodies having adopted Fundamental Rule 56, which applies to State Government employees, retire officers serving under them when they attain the age of 55 years. Government have no information as to whether most of them remain physically fit when retired.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—No. In some cases it has been done for public interest.

(d)—They also get the same advantage when public interest demands.

10. (a)—The matter will be carefully considered.

(b)—Does not arise.

Re refusal of right from drawing water from public well by the Scheduled Castes People of village Majirgaon in the Ramsa Rani Mauza

Srijut BELIRAM DAS asked : * 107

11. (a) Is Government aware that the Caste Hindus of village Majirgaon in the Ramsa Rani Mauza in the Kamrup District have refused the right of drawing water from the public well by the Scheduled Castes people of Majirgaon ?

(b) Is it a fact that the Scheduled Castes people moved the Chairman, Local Board, Gauhati to take steps against the Caste Hindus of Majirgaon for their refusal to draw water from the public well by the Scheduled Castes people ?

(c) If so, what step has been taken against the wrong doers ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR replied :

11. (a), (b) and (c)—Government have no knowledge, but a report has been called urgently from the Chairman, Local Board, Gauhati.

Maulavi Md. MAKSED ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I know from the Hon'ble Minister as to what action will be taken against the Caste Hindu people of that locality who have prevented the Scheduled Caste people from drawing water from the well ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR: Action will be taken according to the facts ascertained from the local authorities, Sir.

Small Town of Palasbari

Srijut BELIRAM DAS asked : * 110

12. (a) Is Government aware that due to the erosion of the river Brahmaputra a few years back, the Small Town of Palasbari had to extend its jurisdiction and shift towards the South ?

(b) Is Government aware that most of the roads of the Small Town of Palasbari have been washed away by the river and that new roads have got to be constructed by the Small Town ?

(c) Is Government aware that with the meagre income of the Small Town these roads cannot be properly constructed ?

(d) Do Government propose to give one special grant for the Small Town for construction of new roads and proper drainage ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR replied :

12. (a)—Yes.

(b)—From an advance copy of a letter submitted to Government by the Town Committee, it is gathered there has been extensive damage. A fuller report from the Deputy Commissioner is awaited and he has been reminded.

(c)—This may be so.

(d)—Government will consider this next year if their financial position permits.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Let us now take up the Resolutions. Resolution No.7 in the name of Mr. J. S. Hardman.

Resolution re: appointment of a Committee with non-official Chairman to examine the present Procurement policy of Government

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do appoint a Committee with a non-official Chairman to examine the present Procurement policy of Government and to advise on the methods to be adopted in future to ensure the maintenance of supplies for the rationed population.

Sir, even when full allowance has been made for the effect of natural calamities, earthquake, flood, of the increased population and of the encroachment of jute cultivation of the paddy areas, we find it extremely difficult to commend anything which Government have done, as far as the procurement is concerned. Admittedly, after the procurement had collapsed, Government have shown considerable energetic action and have made persistent demands to the Central Government for increased supply of foodgrains, which could have been avoided, in our opinion, if there had been a more effective and energetic policy at the outset. Statistics are invariably tiresome and often misleading. I hope, on this occasion in order to avoid any accusation of supplying defective and misleading figures, the figures are taken from Government's own records. The procurement of the year 1948-49 amounted to 1.45 lakh tons of rice. In the year 1949-50, upto the end of August, procurement had reached a figure of 1.60 lakh tons. For the current year, the Government fixed a procurement target of 2.75 lakh tons. Against this, my information is that they have only succeeded in procuring about less than 50 thousand tons in the current year. This represents a figure of less than 20 per cent. From another set of figures produced by Government we can ascertain the production of rice in Assam. According to the final forecast of the autumn and winter rice crops, which incidentally are produced so late in the year that account can be taken of all the essential factors affecting production the total crop in Assam amounted to 13 lakh tons of which 3 lakh tons represent the autumn harvest, and 10 lakh tons the main rice crop. From the

census figures compiled as recently as February this year, we learn that the population of Assam is 91.29 lakhs. From these figures certain conclusions readily emerge—firstly, that the procurement target represented merely 1/5 of the rice produced in Assam.

Secondly Government procurement this year has not succeeded in getting even 1/25th of the production of rice in Assam—a mere 4 per cent. Thirdly whether Assam is deemed to be surplus or deficit, the amount of rice produced is equivalent to 320 lbs. per head per year inclusive of women and children. For a heavy manual worker the All-India ration of 3½ seers is equivalent to 365 lbs. per year. After making allowance for normal percentage of women and children it may be concluded that 247 lbs. represent sufficient to give every person in Assam the All-India ration. We recognise that however that 80 per cent. of the population of Assam is unrationed, and their appetites cannot be restrained, but there are limits to the quantity which a rural population can consume. Again allowance will have to be made for children and infants who form part of the population. It will be seen that a ration of 12 ozs. per day *per capita* would give sufficient to supply the whole of the population of Assam and leave a substantial margin. Allowance of course has to be made for the amounts that have to be kept for seeds, and for a certain amount of loss and wastage. No system of procurement can be expected to obtain all the grain that is available. The inevitable conclusion is however that if Assam is not sufficient in rice it is not very heavily deficit. The deficit is clearly quite small and cannot adequately explain the remarkable failure of the Procurement Department during the current year. If as Government would have us believe, the State of Assam is very heavily deficit, our future in the State is indeed very precarious. A celebrated economist once observed that an agricultural country which cannot feed itself is indeed doomed to destruction. We are left therefore with the conclusion that our present misfortunes are due not so much to physical shortages, but to wrong methods, to an unrealistic procurement policy quite unsuited to the present inflationary conditions prevailing at the present time.

Before examining this further I would like to make a few observations on the administration of the Procurement Department. In a little more than a year this supremely important department has been held by no less than 4 Ministers. First of all we had the Hon'ble Shri Omeo Kumar Das. He was followed by his illustrious Colleague the Hon'ble Shri Motiram Bora. He is then followed by the Hon'ble Shri Ramnath Das and finally by our latest recruit to the Cabinet, Hon'ble Shri Mahendra Mohan Choudhury. I am confident that if the Government decide to have another member in the Cabinet that member would be assigned the unwanted Portfolio of "Food". If continuity is of any value, Government have taken every care to dispense with it in the food administration. It is obvious that the Food Portfolio is the most unwanted Portfolio. It is time that food and food procurement became a priority number one of the Assam Government and it is time that the Portfolio was taken by the Hon'ble Chief Minister, (*Hear hear*), who can by his wide experience and authority make it more dynamic.

However, I will turn to a meeting which occurred almost a year ago on the 22nd of October 1950. In one of the Assembly rooms of this building the Food Procurement Advisory Board met for its annual session. Among those who attended were the Food Minister, Hon'ble Shri Ramnath Das, his immediate predecessor in office, Hon'ble Shri Motiram Bora, who was then Finance Minister. Hon'ble Sri Chetia was also present. Some hon. Members of this House including myself and various officials were also present. The procurement scheme

of 1951 was placed before this meeting. I am proposing to quote only one passage from this somewhat extensive literature. "Mr. Hardman felt that without some such provisions of a direct levy, procurement had no chance to succeed". The Hon'ble Minister, Supply, explained the difficulty in introducing the levy system in Assam but added that the question would be considered by the Government. Could any forecast have ever proved more correct? Could clearer warnings have ever fallen on deafer ears? We have been paying and paying heavily for the pathetic belief that a patched up system which had failed in the previous year would withstand the stress of 1951.

When I told the Procurement Advisory Committee in 1950 that voluntary procurement was doomed to failure, that failure was obvious to a very large section of the population in Assam. The cultivator and the middleman knew full well that Government procurement on a voluntary basis would not succeed and they made their arrangements accordingly and have reaped a very handsome financial profit for their foresight, for which rest of the public of Assam are now being called upon to pay.

Government suggested that if a voluntary system failed they would resort to requisitioning and that they had very great powers to compel the cultivators or hoarders to surrender foodgrains. When it became evident that the voluntary system was not being successful, the Government made a further blunder in raising the selling price of rice. This convinced the cultivators that price control was collapsing and either further price increase or total collapse was imminent. In the early part of the year no systematic attempt was made to requisition stocks. I understand that much later in the year the Cabinet considered on several occasions the question of requisition. There was complete agreement amongst the members of the Cabinet Ministers on the question of principle of requisitioning, but no Cabinet Minister was found to agree to any particular area being marked for requisition.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: It is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: By this time, however, it was much too late in the year for a successful requisitioning policy, and procurement moved on rapidly to its complete collapse in the month of April.

The question of encroachment by jute cultivation on the paddy areas is important as it is being cited as the cause for procurement failure. I have it on good authority that the total increase in the jute area is 1 lakh acres. If this was entirely encroachment on the existing paddy areas, it would result in approximately a loss of 30,000 tons of rice. We have already received from the Central Government over 50,000 tons of rice this year and it is expected that by the end of the year 100,000 tons of rice will be available from the Centre. Again, the quantity of 30,000 tons is relatively a very insignificant figure against a total production of 13 lakh tons, in Assam. This was however a matter which engaged the attention of the Procurement Advisory Committee, which by a Resolution asked the Government to take appropriate steps to stop encroachment in the interest of the production of foodgrains. The members of that Committee are still quite unaware what action, if any, Government have taken in regard to this matter. With the very heavy expenditure which the Government have incurred and are still incurring on the Grow-More-Food Campaign, it is natural to expect that from this heavy expenditure production would to some extent off-set the loss of 30,000 tons which has occurred from the expansion of jute cultivation. We have had little reliable information on the results of the Grow-More-Food Campaign and there is a persistent impression that many of these results are mainly confined to paper and have not augmented the food supplies

of the State as originally estimated. One of the complaints of this Group in the past has been that the Procurement Advisory Committee is studiously neglected the moment the procurement programme appears to go wrong. One would have thought, that when Government are aware that their procurement programme is going wrong they would endeavour to consult those whom they had selected to advise them in the matter of procurement. It is summoned merely to consider the procurement programme for the coming year and no matter what happens during the course of the year, Government take every precaution to avoid summoning this Committee. For this reason we feel that it would be a great advantage for a Committee to be appointed with a Chairman who will dispassionately examine policies of procurement and the working of the Department in the light of methods which have been adopted elsewhere. If we are a deficit province we should begin to take leaves out of the books of other States. West Bengal is a deficit province and has succeeded to some extent in its procurement. There are many other instances which I can quote, but I feel that it is desirable that this Committee should meet and the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Food Department would be given full facilities to state his point of view. It is most desirable that we should have a non-official Chairman, and there should be no objection to that. We have no wish to embarrass Government in any way. We are most anxious that procurement should be made a success. We feel that every effort should be made by members of the Government not to justify the present failure but to see that in the coming year at least procurement is made a success. We do not think that a non-official Committee need embarrass Government. However, I admittedly avoided any attempt to specify the composition of this Committee. Various names of the members of this House spring to my mind as persons who would be well-qualified to hold the post of Chairman of this Committee or to be members. We have many members who have, I know, seriously devoted themselves to studying questions of procurement. Time unfortunately does not permit of my discussing in greater detail the internal workings of the Procurement Department, but I need hardly assure the Members of this House that there is a great deal lacking. I do not wish to criticise any particular officer or staff. We recognise that it is often a difficult and onerous duty, but we have no doubt that the department certainly requires strengthening with the deputation of experienced and permanent officers. This recommendation had been made by the Procurement Advisory Committee, but I have seen no marked influx of experienced officers in the Procurement Department in the past years.

Sir, I do not propose to say anything more, but I commend my Resolution to the acceptance of the House. I would repeat that we wish to assist Government; we do not wish to criticise them for their failures in the past. We prefer that the past should be forgotten, that we should look to the future and that we should ensure that in the years to come there will be no shortage in the rationed areas of Assam and that procurement godowns will be full and overflowing.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Resolution moved:

"This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do appoint a Committee with a non-official Chairman to examine the present Procurement policy of Government and to advise on the methods to be adopted in future to ensure the maintenance of supplies for the rationed population".

The Hon'ble Srijiit MAHENDRAMOHAN CHOUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution that has been moved by my Friend, Mr. Hardman, relates to the appointment of a Committee with a non-official Chairman to examine the present procurement policy of Government and to advise on the

methods to be adopted in future to ensure the maintenance of supplies for the rationed population. But in the course of his half an hour oration I failed to account how with the appointment of a Committee with a non-official Chairman, all the difficulties now we are facing regarding procurement and distribution of foodgrains in our State will be solved. He has stated many things and quoted many figures, but I like to state that as this House will get an opportunity to discuss the entire food position on the Motion tabled by Dr. E. H. Chaudhury which is coming before the House on the 30th, when I propose to make a detailed statement including procurement and import of foodgrains from outside Assam, I do not like to take all of them today. I would only want to reply to Mr. Hardman the relevant points he has raised regarding the failure of the Procurement Department and the loss the tea industry has sustained in buying foodgrains from outside Assam.

Mr. Hardman at the outset complained that the Portfolio of Supply and Food has been changing hands frequently and within the course of a very short period there have been several changes in the Supply Portfolio. (Dr. E. H. Chaudhury: Is there going to be further change?) I think there is no fear of further change because the time is too short for a change now. But I think it is known to the hon. Members that though the Portfolio is changing hands so frequently, yet to maintain the continuity in the policy a Cabinet Sub-Committee is there with the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Hon. Finance Minister, Hon. Food Minister and myself. Whatever policy is to be adopted, first of all it is decided in that Cabinet Sub-Committee and no Minister, whoever he may be, is given a free hand to work in running this Portfolio as we know the difficulties and also we know the responsibilities of running successfully this department. Therefore for the good of the people we have a Cabinet Sub-Committee where we decide the main policies regarding procurement and only details are worked out and carried out by the Minister-in-charge and by the department. Mr. Hardman has said that if the department had worked effectively and energetically much of the difficulties now we are facing in Assam would not have been there. I am surprised from what basis he has made this statement. He has known it very well that this department is doing their best to procure paddy whatever they can from different parts of the province, but in spite of their efforts, as there is no stock of foodgrain left to the cultivators, they have not been able to procure adequate quantity; and on that score if the Government is condemned, I have nothing to say. He has said that the Minister has no definite policy, that the Cabinet has no definite policy as to where mass procurement should be held or successful procurement should be conducted. But for the information of the House as well as for the information of Mr. Hardman I can say that the present procurement policy is that we have cordoned the surplus areas from the deficit ones. From the cordoned areas we are trying our utmost to procure whatever food we can for the deficit areas. We are also trying our best to supply the requirement of the people in the deficit pockets by establishing cheap grain shops. In his long speech Mr. Hardman has altogether forgotten the lot of the agriculturists, the lot of the producers of foodgrains. He has only looked to the interest of the Industry. The Industry, as we all know, has for the last few years earned crores as profit. If the earners of that profit get small fraction of it, I believe Mr. Hardman should not grudge it. He has stated that he has spent about 60 lakhs of rupees to bring food to feed the labourers of his Industry. But he has intelligently evaded to mention about the profit he has earned by feeding the labourers by paying 60 lakhs of rupees as freight for their food. Mr. Hardman has earned a good deal of profit in the Industry, but spent a fraction only of that profit for the amelioration of the condition of the labourers who have earned the profit for him. He has also stated that no attempt on the part of the Government was made to requisition the surplus stocks which are lying

in the hands of the cultivators. But he should know that in many places in the Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Nowgong Districts and also in the Cachar District—which are said to be surplus Districts—we resorted to mass seizure to the great displeasure of the cultivators. Cultivators and producers in many places have complained to us that they have been treated as criminals because they have grown more paddy. But they have done it in the interest of the State and in the interest of the Industry. Even then Mr. Hardman is saying that Government is not taking effective steps to requisition the surplus stocks that are lying in the hands of the producers. We here represent the cultivators and the peasants and our primary duty is to see firstly to their interest, but when we find that the country is deficit of foodgrains, we have, even at the cost of our own interest, taken resort to mass seizure. As I know how painful it is to resort to mass seizure. All the same we are doing our utmost to feed the people who are running short of food. If 90 per cent of the producers of food are not getting food, wherefrom the Procurement Department can procure food for the Industry and for the rationed areas? I only request Mr. Hardman to pause for a while to give me a suitable reply on this issue. Every day we are flooded with telegrams and representations from different quarters including villages and towns stating that people thereof are going without food and they are starving and that the price of food is soaring high. From every quarter comes the demand for food and cheap grain shops. If that be the position in the country how can Mr. Hardman condemn the Procurement Department. If the country was in plenty with foodgrains and if the Procurement Department was not able to procure paddy to feed the Industry or to feed the rationed areas then and there only he should have found fault with the Procurement Department. But at the present moment if the Procurement Department or the Government is accused of not being able to procure paddy, I think it is not fair. Mr. Hardman has declared that there has been complete collapse of the Procurement Department. I do not hold any brief for the Procurement Department. If the country was in surplus of food and the Procurement Department was not able to procure the surplus food Mr. Hardman would have been justified for his remark. As I have already stated the country is not a surplus and is a deficit one, and 90 per cent of the producers of food are going without food and at this moment if Mr. Hardman condemns the Procurement Department or the Government I have nothing to say.

In his Resolution Mr. Hardman recommended that Government of Assam should appoint a Committee with a non-official Chairman. If he could have shown to me that by appointment of such a Committee Assam would have been a land of plenty, due consideration could have been given. But he has failed to prove it in his speech. Practically speaking, there is a Procurement Advisory Committee with one representative from the Provincial Congress Committee and one from the Congress Parliamentary Committee, two representatives of the Indian Tea Association including Mr. Hardman, who represents other industries also, one representative of the Tea Planters Association, one representative of the Assam Rice Association and Mr. Kedarmal Brahmin. These 7 representatives constitute the Procurement Advisory Committee and every year there is a meeting of this Committee wherein the Procurement policy of Assam is determined and on their recommendation Government of Assam with the concurrence of the Government of India fix up their policy. Mr. Hardman says that this Committee meets only once a year and they are not in a position to discuss the situation arising from time to time. I am prepared to have the Committee met more frequently if Mr. Hardman thinks that its frequent meeting will improve the position. He has stated in his Resolution that the Committee should be presided over by a non-official Chairman. At present the Committee is presided over by the Chief Minister and in his absence it is presided over by the Supply Minister. This is helpful for

the Committee because the Chief Minister or a Minister would be able to maintain proper liaison between the Government and the other parties. If the Chief Minister or the Supply Minister is the Chairman of this Committee, I believe the decisions of the Committee become more effective than having a non-official person as the Chairman. For the interest of the Procurement Department and the Industry, I think this Committee should be presided over by the Chief Minister or in his absence by the Supply Minister.

Regarding another point that the Procurement Department is manned by temporary personnel—I like to say that it is not so. Most of the persons at the top are permanent officials. The Department itself is temporary because this system of procurement cannot continue for all time to come. We believe some day or other this procurement business will come to an end. If you appoint all permanent hands where these will go when the Department is abolished? Therefore some men have been drafted from some other Departments. Men of ability, men of intelligence and integrity are drafted from other Departments so that they can carry on this onerous task fairly well.

Sir, I do not like to go into more detailed statement on this subject and with these words I request Mr. Hardman to withdraw his Resolution and also to give Government all facilities and co-operation so that we can pass over the hard days that lie ahead.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : What Mr. Hardman has got to say ?

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN :—I want to speak in reply, Sir, and I do not wish to withdraw my Resolution at this stage.

Dr. E. H. CHAUDHURY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of this Party I take this opportunity to wholeheartedly support the Resolution which has just been brought in by my esteemed Friend, Mr. Hardman. I have listened to the arguments which he has advanced in the course of his speech and also I have listened to the reply that has just been given by another esteemed Friend of mine, Mr. Choudhury, who is holding this onerous but nevertheless very important Portfolio, namely Food Supply in the Province.

Although Mr. Choudhury, did not like to go into greater details as respects the policy which the Government have been pursuing in order to give enough food to the people because of the Motion to be brought out by me on the 30th of August, yet I find some lacuna in his statement. Mr. Hardman in the course of his speech referred to the fact that enough land otherwise fit for cultivation of paddy has been brought under jute crop thereby leading to the decrease in the production of paddy in the Province at the time when the entire country is facing famine conditions so eloquently admitted by Government in the very recent past. Jute crop is a cash crop and you can earn dollars by it, but we do not eat dollars; we want food: we have to depend upon food and an increase in the production of paddy has become all the more urgent in view of the scarcity of foodstuffs throughout the length and breadth of the country. Therefore, Sir, Government will be well advised not to think of experimenting with jute and thereby earning some money which does not give us life but to convert as far as possible all jute lands into paddy growing areas so that more rice and paddy can be grown there and the requirements of the people in the Province better met.

Mr. Choudhury has pleaded helplessness in the matter of procuring food-grains for the people of the Province to which he has the privilege to belong. He said that 90 per cent of the producers are themselves going hungry. He has been receiving reports from every nook and corner of the Province, from

different sources and quarters that the growers are going hungry, that more food should be given to them and yet when we draw the attention of Government to certain activities of smugglers, Government remain silent. The Procurement Department is there not only to procure paddy and rice for people but also to see that there be no smuggling in so far as this important commodity is concerned. In order to procure more foodgrains he has been pleased to cordon off certain areas so that rice and paddy should not be moved from one place to another. Thereby he has given every chance to certain people interested in making profits out of the rise in the price of the essential commodities like foodstuffs. Last time when we requested Government to give up the idea of cordoning off areas because if rice or paddy is bought cheap in certain areas, in some other areas the price is very very high with the result that the people in the Province have to face starvation conditions. That request of ours unfortunately fell on deaf ears.

As late ago as the third week of June one business man was caught smuggling paddy in two lorries from the Sibsagar subdivision to Jorhat. The same man was caught the next day smuggling paddy in two boats. A complaint was brought to my attention and I forwarded the same with my recommendation to the Deputy Commissioner of Sibsagar district. The Deputy Commissioner forwarded the complaint with his own suggestions to the Deputy Director of Procurement, Jorhat. All this is common knowledge, but nothing actually was done so far as the bringing to book of those culprits was concerned. The Deputy Director of Procurement as also the Procurement Inspector went in the jeep car provided by this smuggler to the area in Jaji in Jorhat subdivision (*a Voice*—when was that?) In the third week of June, Sir. Because the Government failed to do their duty in this important regard a meeting was held about the 22nd or 23rd of June last and I myself was requested by the people to preside over that meeting. It passed resolutions condemning the activities of these two officers in failing to do what was expected of them *i.e.* to punish the culprit who was caught smuggling paddy from Sibsagar subdivision. And later on registered letters were sent to the Hon'ble Minister and also the Chief Minister requesting them to do the needful in that regard. But what the Government did was only to transfer these two officers. No action was taken against any of them. Sir, If that be the policy of the Government, if they remain complacent and do not want to take action against people who are actually corrupt of certain bad and undesirable things—undesirable from the point of view of State as well as Society, in that case of course Government cannot run the administration as efficiently as would be expected of them.

Sir, another matter was raised in the course of the speech by Mr. Hardman and that is the change in the Supply Portfolio of the Assam Government. It is said 'too many cooks spoil the broth : too many doctors kill the patient', so also too many changes in the Supply Department would bring about the ruin of the people (*a Voice*—there have been no changes) yes, there are. There have been too many changes in the past. Of course I do not grudge the change. I do not want to be in the Cabinet myself. In any way, if you make changes and make experiments upon poor people like us—not like you who are rich—we will suffer and suffer terribly.

In his speech Mr. Hardman did not confine himself only to the difficulties of the Tea Industry which had to spend a sum of 60 lakhs of rupees in airlifting alone. He also referred to the difficulties experienced by people who do not live in the tea gardens as well. Therefore Government should not think that Mr. Hardman was selfish in this respect. Although he represents the interests of Tea Industry, Assam Commerce, Digboi Oil Industry, etc. Mr. Hardman had occasions to refer to the terrible difficulties which are being felt by other sections of

the people as well. Sir, reference was made by Mr. Hardman as well as by Hon'ble Mr. Choudhury to the existence of the Procurement Advisory Committee and the things they have done hitherto in regard to the procurement of food-grains in the province. But Mr. Hardman has shown that this Advisory Committee could not do much. During the last Session as one of those who had been suffering from high prices of foodstuffs, I drew the attention of the Government to the necessity for the revival of the Assam Food Advisory Council, which should meet as frequently as possible in order to assess the procurement position in the province and to devise ways and means by which we might get increased foodstuffs in the province. That would have been a very great blessing so far as the Congress Government in Assam was concerned. Sir, I am a member of Assam Food Advisory Council and only recently I got a letter from the Secretary, Food Advisory Committee intimating that the next sitting of the Council would be held on the 29th August at 10-30 A.M. I do not know when the earlier sitting was held and therefore cannot understand what he means by "next sitting" (*A voice* :—on the 22nd October 1950). Oh, I see, but I was not informed anything about it. That is how Government are doing things and how we have got to suffer. I therefore want to ask the Hon'ble Minister why things are happening in this undesirable way.

Sir, as I shall move my Motion on this subject in two days' time, I do not want to waste any more time of the House. I want to give chances to other speakers who would give us their views as to how the situation can be improved and what Government should do in order to procure more rice and paddy. With these words I once again commend the Resolution to the acceptance of the House. One thing which I omitted to mention is that in spite of this acute shortage of foodgrains not only in Assam but throughout the length and breadth of the country, Government spokesmen had never hesitated to speak whenever they get any occasion to do so, of self-sufficiency in the matter of food-grains by next year.

Mr. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN: Mr. Speaker Sir, এই Resolution পৰ হাউচমঁ কাফী বাদরিবাদ হৱা হয়। এই Resolution কা পেশ কৰকে Hardman সাহব চাহতে হেঁয় কি সবকাৰ কী Procurement Policy কী দেখৰেখ ওঁব সলাহ দেনেকে লিএ এক Board কায়ম কিয়া যায়, জিসকা Chairman কোঁদি Non-official হো।

Dr. E. H. CHAUDHURY: Non-official Chairman কা মতলব ক্যা হেয়।

Mr. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN: ইসকা মতলব য়হ হেয় কি ইস Board কা Chairman এক বাহৰী আদমী হো।

Dr. E. H. CHAUDHURY: Chairman কা মতলব ক্যা হেয় ?

Mr. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN: য়হ আপকো অতী জন্দ মালুম হো জায়গা য়হ। হমাৰে কঁদি মিত্ৰ সবকাৰী Procurement Policy পৰ বাদরিবাদ কৰ বহে হেঁয়। Procurement Policy কা সৱাল য়হ নহী উঠা হেয়। সৱাল তো য়হ হেয় কি য়হ Board কায়ম কিয়া জায় যা নহী। ইস প্ৰস্তাৱ কো স্বীকাৰ কঁবে যা নহী। জঁহাতক মঁই সমৰতা হঁ ঐসী এক নয়ী Committee কী কোঁদি জৰুৰত নহী। কেঁগা কি ঐসী এক Committee পহলে হী সে নৌজুদ হেয়। ইসকে কঁদি সদস্য তী হেঁয়। ইসী Committee মেঁ ক্যা ক্যা সুধাৰ নায়া জা সকতা হেয় য়হী হমেঁ সোচনা চাহিয়ে, ইসকী বৈঠক বৰ্ষমেঁ কিতনী বাৰ হো, কব হো, য়হী হমেঁ সোচনা চাহিয়ে। Sir Saadullah সাহব কে

সময়সে ভী ঐসী এক Committee থী। উসকী বৈঠক মহীনেমোঁ এক বাব জৰুৰ হৰা কৰতী থী। উসমেঁ Transportation কে সদস্য ভী বুলায়ে জাতে থী। Railway তথা Steamer Transport কে সদস্য ভী য়হা বুলায়ে জাতে খে, ওঁৰ খাদ্য সামগ্রী কী Transportation কে বাবেমেঁ বিচাৰ বিমৰ্শ কিয়া জাতা থা। অব ভী হমাবে মন্ত্রী মহোদয় ইস বাবেমেঁ বিচাৰ কৰ সৰুতে হেঁয়। জো Committee হেয়, উসকী বৈঠক কব বুলাদি জায়, কৈসে বুলাদি জায়, ইস বাবেমে হম বিচাৰ কব সৰুতে হেঁয়। ইসকে লিয়ে এক নয়া প্রস্তাৰ লানেকী কোদি জৰুৰত নহী থী।

য়হ Levy কে বাবেমেঁ ভী বাদাৱিৱাদ হৰা হেয়। মই সমজতা হঁ কি Levy উঠা লেনা মুস্কিল নহী হেয়। আপ জানতে হেঁ কি Jute পৰ কোদি Control নহী হেয় সৰসোঁ। ওঁৰ মাটিকলায় পৰ কোদি Control নহী হেয়। তো লোগোঁকা য়হ খেয়াল হোনা কি হম ধানহী কোঁ পৈদা কঁবে Jute কোঁ ন পৈদা কৰে, হোনা স্বাভাৱিক হেয়। য়হ Control এক কৃত্ৰিম চীজ হেয়। Control উঠা লেনা চাহিয়ে। Control কী ৰজহ মে আউৰ কদি বাতোমেঁ অসফল বহে হেঁয়। সভী আদমী কহতে হেঁয় কি Control কী কোদি জৰুৰত নহী। অৱ আখিৰ মই কহনা চাহতা হঁ কি ইস প্রস্তাৰ কী কোদি জৰুৰত নহী। কোঁ কি হমাবে কিন হী এক Minister মে কিসী বাহবী আদমী কো ইন বাতোকী উতনী অভিপ্ৰক্তা ঐব জানকাৰী জ্যাदा নহী হো সৰুতা ইসলিয়ে Hardman সাহাব কে ইস প্রস্তাৰ কী মই বিবোধ কবতা হঁ।

Srijut BELIRAM DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose the Resolution moved by my hon. Friend, Mr. Hardman.

We have carefully listened to his speech and his speech suffers from two defects. Firstly, by the introduction of non-official Chairman for the proposed Committee he wants to suggest that he has no faith in the Government.

Secondly, he wants to deal about the population living in the industrial and rationed areas. He must remember that the State of Assam belongs to the people of this State. Before looking to the interests of his Industry we must look to the interests of the people of this State as a whole. His Industry, the Tea Industry, is reaping the benefit of the high price of tea and can easily keep a reserve of food grain to meet any exigencies that may occur. Our poor villagers who cannot have two meals a day, nay even one meal a day, can hardly keep any reserve. Usually our village people keep a reserve of food grains for one year at least. Due to the successive failures of crops they have exhausted their food grains. We have ransacked many villages in our attempt to find out any surplus paddy or rice with the help of the great organisation—the Congress. But we found that there is definitely no food-grains to be procured. So, Mr. Hardman has no right to criticise the procurement policy of the Assam Government. Had there been foodgrains at the hand of the people of Assam, they would not have been so unkind to lend it to the starving people of this State. I do not see any reason why Mr. Hardman brings any resolution. He should not in any way think of the interest of the people of the industrial areas alone, but he should think of the condition of the people of the whole of the State of Assam. So I request him to withdraw his Resolution. Sir, it has been seen although it is unpleasant to mention, that the tea industry has been getting very high price, we in the State of Assam are getting adulterated tea in various places of the State, for our consumption. If he cannot give us unadulterated tea, he cannot expect any assistance from the people of Assam in the shape of food grain. Sir, with these words, I oppose the Resolution of Mr. Hardman.

Srijut PURNA CHANRDA SARMA : Mr. speaker, Sir, I want to say a few words not in support of the Motion but in opposition. Mr. Hardman, in his Resolution, suggests to set up a committee with a non-official Chairman and thereby he hopes that there would be no difficulty about rice in the State of Assam. It is admitted by all, and he must also admit that Assam is now a very deficit State in the matter of food-grains. There has been no export of a single maund of rice to any other State of India. This State of Assam which was a surplus State till year before last, has been found to be very deficit even to feed her own people. Then where is the root? It is not the fault of the procurement policy of the Government. The problem will have to be solved from a different angle. What I personally feel about this matter is that there have been growing difficulties about production of food-stuff for two things—one is that last year there were trouble in some places, secondly, there has been some encroachment on paddy lands by jute cultivation. In my own district last year when there was seizure of paddy, people gave up production of rice. They thought that if they were to grow paddy only to sell at controlled price at a much lower price than what is prevalent in the market, it was better for them to grow jute. In the Hojai area a large number of paddy growers have grown jute in their lands and only grown paddy to the extent of meeting their own requirements. So the rigid levy system suggested by Mr. Hardman will not solve the problem. When the cultivators found last year that they would have to sell their paddy at the controlled rate of Rs 7-8 or Rs.8 per maund, while the market price was Rs.20 to Rs 30 per maund, they rather took to cultivation of jute and other money crops. So, Sir, the question of levy cannot be a solution for this problem. Government have taken up a voluntary procurement system and they have succeeded to a great extent, otherwise the people of industrial areas and others living in the State could not live. There might be room for some improvement in the method of procurement, such as in regard to the fixation of price etc. I find that Mr. Hardman has not suggested any other remedy except suggesting the setting up of a Committee with a non-official Chairman. Of course we welcome any suggestion that may come from any quarter, either from Mr. Hardman or from any other gentlemen. The Government have open mind with regard to this matter and it is not a party question. It is the intention of the Government to see that all the people get enough food. Sir, I do not see how Mr. Hardman's Resolution can any way solve the problem, and therefore, I oppose it.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN : মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, মাননীয় সদস্য মিঃ হার্ডমেন ডাঙৰীয়াই অন্য পুস্তাৰটিৰ আলোচনা পুসঙ্গত, মই কিছু কথা নকৈ নোৱাৰো। আজিৰ দিন হৈছে days of confusion and God alone knows where we are drifting to মিঃ হাৰ্ডমেনৰ পুস্তাৰটোত, চৰকাৰৰ বৰ্তমানৰ 'সংগৃহ নীতি' (Procurement Policy) টোক, যিটো আজি সম্পূৰ্ণ অচল বুলি কব পাৰি, এটা কমিটি নিযুক্ত কৰি, তাত বে-চৰকাৰী চেয়াৰমেন পাতি, পৰীক্ষামূলক ভাবে, কাৰ্য্যকৰী আৰু সচল অৱস্থালৈ আনি ration population ৰ অনু কঠ লাঘৱ কৰাৰ কথা কৈছে। পুস্তাৰটো গৃহণ কৰা আজিৰ এই দিনত, চৰকাৰৰ পক্ষে অত্যন্ত জনহিতকৰ হব বুলি মই ভাবো। চাউলৰ অভাৱত দুবেলা দুমুঠাৰটো কথাই নাই, সপ্তাহত, তিনি দিন মানো পেট ভৰাই, মানুহে তাত খাবলৈ পোৱা নাই। তাৰ কাৰণ, আমাৰ ইয়াত উৎপন্ন হোৱা ধান-চাউলৰ পৰিমাণ কম বুলি নহয়; প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে কবলৈ গলে, ব্যাপক ভাবে চৰকাৰী চাকৰীয়াল সকলৰ মাজত সোমাই পৰা দুৰ্নীতিৰ কাৰণেহে। এই দুৰ্নীতিয়ে আজিৰ চৰকাৰৰ শাসন যন্ত্ৰৰ সকলো অঙ্গতে দকৈ শিপাই লৈছে। চৰকাৰৰ কাৰ্য্যকৰী কৰিব নোৱাৰা, 'পলিচি'ৰ পাচত 'পলিচি'ৰ সংখ্যা নোহোৱা হৈছে। অৱশ্যে এইটো ঠিক যে, State Governmentএ কেন্দ্ৰীয় গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ নিৰ্দেশ মানিবলৈ বাধ্য। সেই কাৰণে কব পাৰি যে, বৰ্তমান Food Policy ত ৰাজ্যিক চৰকাৰৰ বিশেষ স্বাধীনতা নাই। আজিৰ দিনবোৰ days of confusion

আৰু এই পুস্তকটো সমৰ্থন কৰিবলৈ যাঁওতে যে মোক চৰকাৰে, crush কৰি দিব, তাত কোনো সন্দেহ নাই। যোৱাবাব মাননীয় চৌধুৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই, এই সম্পৰ্কে যিটো কমিটিৰ কথা কৈছিল, সেইটোৱে এইটোৱে একে নহয়।

আজি যেতিয়া অনু কষ্টৰ সীমা নোহোৱা হৈছে ; সকলোৰেই একে অৱস্থা। কি নগৰ, কি চহৰ, কি গাঁও ভূই, কি শ্ৰমিক পুধান অনুষ্ঠান বোৰত, সকলোতেই এক। বহুতে সিঃ হাৰ্ডমেনৰ পুস্তকত Confuse কৰিছে যে, Rationed population মানে কেৱল Tea Industry বিলাকত কাম কৰা শ্ৰমিক সকলকহে বুজাইছে ; প্ৰকৃততে সি নহয়। বহুতে ভাবিছে, Tea Industry বিলাকৰ যথেষ্ট Reserve Fund আছে, ধৰ পকা, টকাপয়চা পাব ; কিন্তু যদি, চৰকাৰৰ সংগ্ৰহ নীতি (Procurement Policy) অচল হৈ যায়, অথাৎ fail কৰে, তেনেহলে ধান চাউল তেওঁলোকে কৰ পৰা পাব। ধান চাউলেই যদি নোপোৱা হয় ধনে কি কৰিব ? অসমীয়াত এটা বচন আছে—

‘সোণা ৰূপা থাকে অপাব

খুদগাল নহলে মৰণেহে সাৰ’।

কাজেই অনুভাৱ দূৰ কৰিবলৈ উৎপন্ন বৃদ্ধি কৰিব লাগিব। সেই কাৰণে উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি কৰিবলৈ কি কি উপায় অৱলম্বন কৰিব লাগিব, তাৰ কাৰ্য্যকৰী ব্যৱস্থাৰ আচনি লব লাগিব। আপোনা-লোক সকলোৰেই নিশ্চয় জানে যে, যোৱা বছৰৰ ভূমিকম্পই শস্য শ্যামলা আমাৰ অসমৰ এক অংশ নষ্ট কৰি গৈছে, নদ নদী বিলাকৰ গতি পৰিবৰ্ত্তন কৰি, অসমত পুলয়ৰ বান বোৱাই মানুহৰ বসতিস্থান বাসৰ অনুপযোগী কৰিছে ; খেতিৰ মাটি, খেতি কৰাৰ অনুপযোগী কৰিছে, গোহালীৰ গাই, হালৰ গৰু পানীত উটি বুৰি গৈছে, অৱশিষ্ট গৰু মহৰ ঘাহ আৰু প্ৰতি পালনৰ অভাৱত, দিনক দিনে সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি হওক চাৰি, সংখ্যা কমি গৈছে। শতকৰা ৯০ জন আমাৰ মানুহে খেতিৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰি জীৱন নিবৰাহ কৰিব লাগে। তেনেস্বলত যদি খেতিৰ কাৰণে, পুধান আহিলা গৰু আৰু কঠীয়া আদি কিনিবলৈ ধন আমাৰ নোহোৱা হয়, মানুহবিলাক টিকিব কেনেকৈ ?

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : It is irrelevant.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN : Yes, it is relevant.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : আপুনি অচল বিষয়টো এৰি গৈছে।

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN : চৰকাৰৰ নীতিৰ ওপৰত সন্দেহ আছে বুলিহে, মই এইখিনি কথা কৈছো। সেইকাৰণে, চৰকাৰৰ তৰফৰ পৰা এই খেতিয়ক মানুহবিলাকৰ কষ্ট লাঘৱ কৰিবলৈ, শস্যৰ উৎপাদন বৃদ্ধি কৰিবলৈ কোনো চেষ্টাই কৰা হোৱা নাই। পূৰ্ববৰ্ত্তী বক্তা মাননীয় শ্ৰীযুত পূৰ্ণচন্দ্ৰশৰ্মাই কৈ গৈছে যে, এইবাৰ মৰাপাটৰ খেতি কেনেকৈ বন্ধ কৰিব ? তাৰ উত্তৰত মই কওঁ যে যদি গৰ্ব্বমেন্টে antisocial element অথাৎ সমাজ বিৰোধীলোক বিলাকক, ৰাইজৰ বন্ধাথে, অৰ্ডিনেঞ্চ কৰি দমন কৰিব পাৰে তেন্তে তেনে এখন অৰ্ডিনেঞ্চ কৰি মৰাপাটৰ খেতি নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ, আৰু পেলাই থোৱা মাটিত খেতি কৰিবলৈ কিয় বাধা কৰিব নোৱাৰিব তাৰ একো কাৰণ দেখা নাই। অভাৱ অভিযোগলৈ চকু দিব নোলাগে নে কি ?

বৰ্ত্তমান কংগ্ৰেচ গভণমেন্টৰ পলিচি হৈছে—Begging Policy। পৃথিবীৰ সকলো দেশলৈকে আমাৰ আহাৰৰ কাৰণে ভিক্ষা কৰিছে। আগতেই মই কৈ আহিছো যে আমাৰ শতকৰা ৯০ জনেই খেতিয়ক। আমাৰ কংগ্ৰেচ চৰকাৰে ৰায়তৰ দুঃখমোচনৰ সজুলি খেতিৰ কাৰণে টকা খৰচ কৰা নাই। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে নগাঁৱৰ ৫ হাজাৰ মানুহে কৃষি-ঋণ আৰু গৰু-ম'হ কিনা ঋণ বিচাৰি চৰকাৰলৈ আবেদন কৰিছিল ; তাৰ ভিতৰতে ১৩৬ জনে আংশিক সাহায্য পাইছে আৰু

বাকী কোনোৱে পোৱা নাই। অথচ 'পাব্লিক একাউণ্টচ' কমিটিৰ বিপৰ্ট মতে আমি পাও যে চৰকাৰে লাখে লাখে টকা খৰচ কৰিছে। এই বিলাক টকা অথলে গৈছে; অধিক ব্যয় কৰিছে—আনকি, চৰকাৰৰ অনুমতি পোৱাৰ আগতেই খৰচ কৰিছে; অথচ দুখগ্ৰস্ত মানুহে ধনৰ সহায় পোৱা নাই। দুৰ্দশাগ্ৰস্ত ৰাইজ seed loan বিচাৰি কঠিয়াৰ অভাৱত কৃষি কাৰ্য্যত আগ বাঢ়িব নোৱাৰাত পৰিছে। এতিয়া তাদ মাহত কঠিয়া ধানৰ ধাণ দিয়া আবস্ত কৰিছে। কথাতে কয়—

শাওনৰ কঠিয়া নহয় ধান।

আহিনৰ গোছ বিফল জান ॥

কিছু সময়ৰ আগতে মই উল্লেখ কৰি আহিছো যে দুৰ্নীতি পৰায়ণ চৰকাৰী চাকৰীয়ালৰ দ্বাৰাই আমাৰ প্ৰজাসাধাৰণৰ দুখ-কষ্টৰ সীমা নোহোৱা হৈছে। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে চাওক নগাঁও জিলাত যথেষ্ট ধান হয় আৰু তাৰ উৎপন্নই সেই জিলাৰ মানুহক খাদ্য-সম্ভাৰ যোগাৰ পাৰে। কিন্তু সেইটো হৈ উঠা নাই। যেতিয়া মই, যাতে ইয়াৰ ধান চাউল ওলাই নাযায় তাৰ সতৰ্ক হিচাবে জাগিৰদত 'গেট' (gate) কৰিবলৈ suggestion দিছিলো, তেতিয়া চৰকাৰে তাৰ কোনো ব্যৱস্থা নললে—কিন্তু যেতিয়া ইয়াৰ পৰা লাখ লাখ মোণ ধান বাহিৰলৈ ওলাই গল—তেতিয়াহে গেট দিছে।

(Voice—সেই বিলাক ধান কলৈ ওলাই গল ?)

—কলৈ গল চৰকাৰে জানে। It is not upto me to see to it, it is upto you to see where the paddy goes.

Procurement কাৰ্য্যত গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট fail কৰাৰ আৰু এটা কাৰণ হৈছে যে deficit pocket বিলাকত কোনো চৰকাৰী গুদাম নাই বা কোনো cheap grain shop নাই। যেতিয়া Advisory Board বহিছিল, তাত Supply Secretary Mr. Dam আছিল আৰু তেওঁক কোৱা হৈছিল যে যদি এই deficit pocket বিলাকত চৰকাৰী গুদাম বা cheap grain shop ব ব্যৱস্থা কৰা নহয় তেন্তে ক্ৰমান্বয়ে ধান আৰু দুখপ্ৰাপ্য হব। এই deficit pocket বিলাকত গুদামৰ কোনো ব্যৱস্থা নকৰাৰ কাৰণেই কোনো ঠাইত ধানৰ দাম চৰি গৈছে। যেতিয়া হোজাইত ধানৰ দাম মোণে ১০৮ টকা তেতিয়া কামপুৰত ধানৰ দাম মোণে ২৫৮ টকা পৰ্য্যন্ত হৈছিল। এজন ঠিকাদাৰে ১০০% মোণ ধান নিওতে চৰকাৰী বিষয়াক "ঘোচ" আদি দিও লাভ কৰিব পাৰে। কাৰণ অভাৱত পৰি মানুহে বেছি দাম দিও ধান কিনে। গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে cheap grain shop নকৰাৰ কাৰণেই মানুহে বেচি দাম দিবলৈ বাধ্য হৈছে আৰু চোবাং বেপাৰীসকলে চৰকাৰী অফিচাৰ সকলক "ঘোচ" দি তেওঁলোকৰ লাভ আদায় কৰিছে। যেতিয়া Advisory Board বহে তেতিয়া ময়ো গভৰ্ণমেণ্টক উপদেশ দিছিলো cheap grain shop খুলিবৰ কাৰণে আৰু তাকে নকৰাৰ কাৰণেই আজি চোবাং বেপাৰ বেচি হৈছে। চৰকাৰে rationed area ৰ কাৰণেহে ধান গোটোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে, ইফালে গাৱলীয়া খেতিয়ক সকলে কল আদি ফল মূল খাই জীৱন ধাৰণ কৰিব লগা হৈছে। মায়ং অঞ্চলত অভাৱত মানুহৰ হাহাকাৰ অৱস্থা হৈছে কাৰণ তেওঁ বিলাকৰ চাউল দিছে মফলদৈত। এই হৈছে চৰকাৰৰ সববাহ নীতিৰ বেমেজালি। চৰকাৰে যি ব্যৱস্থা লৈছিল তাৰ বাবে দুঃখহে কৰিছে কিন্তু আপচোচ কৰা নাই। তাকে নকৰি তেওঁলোকে তক কৰি বিৰোধিতা কৰিলে কোনো লাভ নাই।

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: আপুনি কোনটো কথাত বিৰোধিতা কৰিছে ?

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: মোৰ কথা হৈছে যে ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ অধীন আৰু এই বিষয়ে ৰাজ্য চৰকাৰৰ একো স্বাভাৱ্য নাই। আপুনি যদি ঘৰৰ মুখৰ পৰা Loud Speaker দিয়ে কয় তথাপি মানুহৰ ভোক নুগুছে। আচলতে এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো গ্ৰহণ কৰি চৰকাৰে যদি সকলোকে পৰামৰ্শ বিচাৰিলেহেতেন তেনেহলে তেওঁলোকৰ কোনো অপকাৰ বা হাৰ মনা নহলহেতেন। এতিয়া চৰকাৰে ধৰি লৈছে যে এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো ললেই তেওঁলোকে হাৰ মনা হব।

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Non-official আপুনিয়েই আছে দেখোন।

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: Non-official এ উপদেশ দিওঁতেও লোৱা নাই। যদি উপদেশ লৈয়ো fail হয় তেতিয়া non-official ক দোষ দিব পাৰে। কিন্তু প্ৰস্তাৱটো গ্ৰহণ কৰাত কি আপত্তি থাকিব পাৰে? I think Government should not be so sensitive when criticism comes against them on such a vital problem of the country. I do not like to speak more in this connection. With these few words, I support the Resolution.

Srijut DALBIR SINGH LOHAR: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মোৰ বন্ধু মিঃ হাৰ্ডমেন চাহাবে যিটো প্ৰস্তাৱ দাঙি ধৰিছে, তাক মই কোনোমতে সমৰ্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰো। বৰঞ্চ মই তাৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰিবলৈহে ওলাইছো। তেখেতে এনে কোনো যুক্তি দৰ্শোৱা নাই যাৰ দ্বাৰা মই তেখেতক সমৰ্থন কৰিব পাৰো। তেখেতে কৈছে যে বেচৰকাৰী সভাপতি এজনৰে সৈতে এখন কমিটি পাতি procurement policy পৰীক্ষা কৰাৰ লাগে। তেখেতৰ লগতে ডাঃ ইমবান হুছেইন চৌধুৰী আৰু শ্ৰীযুত হৰধৰ ভূঞা ডাঙৰীয়াই যোগদান কৰি সমৰ্থন কৰিছে। শ্ৰীযুত ভূঞা ডাঙৰীয়াই স্পষ্টভাৱে কৈ গৈছে যে, দেশত খাদ্য সমস্যাই কি এক ভয়াবহ ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰিছে। এনে অৱস্থাত বেচৰকাৰী সভাপতি এজনৰে সৈতে কমিটি এখন কৰা পৰা ধন সংগ্ৰহ কৰিব কোৱা বৰ টান। দেশত যি অৱস্থা হৈছে, খেতিয়ক সকল যি ভয়াবহ অৱস্থাৰ মাজত পৰিব লাগিছে এনে অৱস্থাত শুকান কাঠ চেপি বস উলিয়াব কেনেকৈ? শ্ৰীযুত ভূঞা ডাঙৰীয়াই কোৱাৰ দৰে অহাবছবত যে কি ভয়ানক অৱস্থা হব কোৱা টান। ভগবানৰ বোধকৰো ভাৰতবাসীৰ প্ৰতি কিবা কৃদৃষ্টি হৈছে। সেই কাৰণে যি সময়ত পানীৰ দৰকাৰ সেই সময়ত হোৱা নাই কিন্তু যিসময়ত পানীৰ দৰকাৰ নাই সেই সময়তহে হৈছে। তাৰোপৰি যোৱা বছৰ ভূমিকম্পই আৰু বাণপানীয়ে বাইজৰ যি নষ্ট কৰিলে তাক সকলোৱে জানে। এনে অৱস্থাত মিঃ হাৰ্ডমেনে যদি কিছুমান মূল্যবান আচনিৰে সৈতে চৰকাৰক সহযোগ কৰিলেহেতেন, তেতিয়া মই সমৰ্থন কৰিলোঁ হেতেন। আপোনলোক সকলোৱে জানে যে—যোৱা জুন মাহৰ পৰাই I. T. A. ক Procurement ৰ সুবিধা দিয়া হৈছে, কিন্তু তেওঁলোকে কিমান Procurement কৰিব পাবিছে তাৰ এটা হিচাব যদি এই সদনত ডাঙি ধৰিলে হয় তেতিয়া হলেও আমি জানিব পাবিলো হয় আৰু সন্মুখত হিচাব বাখি চৰকাৰক দোষাৰোপ দিবলৈ ভাল হলেহেতেন। আজি মিঃ হাৰ্ডমেনে যেনেকৈ এই বিষয়ে চৰকাৰক সমালোচনা কৰিছে যত অকনো যুক্তিনাই, ঠিক সেই দৰেই বাগানৰ মেনেজাৰ সকলে চৰকাৰক দোষ দি বনুৱা সকলৰ ভিতৰত অসত্য কথা কিছুমান প্ৰচাৰ কৰিছে। বনুৱা সকলৰ মাজত এই দৰেই প্ৰচাৰ কৰা প্ৰমান পোৱা যায় যে, চৰকাৰে দিব পৰা নাই নিদিয়ৈ আমি তোমালোকক দিও কৰ পৰা? যেতিয়া মাননীয় মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী শ্ৰী ডাঙৰীয়া ডিব্ৰুগড়লৈ যায় তাত আৰু ডুমডুমা চাৰ্কেলত ইয়াৰ প্ৰমাণ পাই আহিছে।

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: চাৰ, মই মাত্ৰ এটা কথা কব খুজিছো। আমাৰ দলবীৰ সিং ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছে যে মই অষ্ট্ৰেলিয়া, কানাডা, আমেৰিকা আদিৰ ওচৰত Beg কৰা কথাটো কৈছো সেইটো মই ভুল কৈছো। মোৰ কথা সেইটো নহয়, মই কৈছো যে, আগৰ পৰা আমাৰ ৰাজ্যখন self sufficient কৰি গক, মহ আদি ভালকৈ পালন কৰালে, এই বিলাকৰ হাত সাৰিব পাৰিলে হেতেন, তেখেতে মোক ভুল বুজিছে, এই বিলাক Government ৰ Indiscriminate Policy ৰ পৰা হৈছে বুলি বৰ দুখেৰে কব লগা হৈছে।

প্ৰকৃতিৰ দান স্বৰূপ অসমে উৰ্বৰা মাটি পাইছে। সকলো Natural Resources অসমৰ আছে। এতিয়া একো নাই যেন হৈছে, মানুহৰ প্ৰধান খাদ্য মাংস, মাচ পুঠি এটা পাবলৈ নাই। এই বিলাক আগৰ পৰা মন নকৰাত এতিয়া আকাল হল। আমাৰ দলবীৰ সিং ডাঙৰীয়াই চৰকাৰৰ পৰা কিবা পোৱাৰ আশা ৰাখিছে সেই কাৰণে তেখেতে flatter কৰিব পাৰে যাতে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে কিবা এটা সন্নিধা কৰি দিয়ে (Interruption) (হাঁহি)।

Srijut DALBIR SINGH LOHAR: আৰু ভূঞা ডাঙৰীয়াৰ এতিয়া চৰকাৰৰ ওপৰত একো আশা নাই, গতিকে তেখেতে দোষাৰোপ কৰে। কিন্তু মই স্পষ্ট সত্য কথা কৈছো।

বাগানৰ মালিক সকলেই বা কি কৰিছে? তেওঁলোককেইতো সংগ্ৰহৰ কামত নিজক নিয়োগ কৰিবলৈ কৈছে। তেওঁলোক কিমান কৃতকাৰ্য্য হৈছে? তেওঁলোকে নিশ্চয় দুখীয়া খেতিয়কক দয়া কৰি সংগ্ৰহ নকৰা নহয়। কিন্তু কৰে কেনেকৈ? শুকান কাঠ চেপিলে জানো বস উলিয়াব পাৰি? (হাঁহি)

মানুহৰ ভৰাল উদং, খেতিয়ক সকলৰ নিজবেই খাবলৈ নাই। নিজৰ পেটত গাখি দি খেতিয়ক সকলে আনক দিব কৰ পৰা? মই জানো, যেতিয়া বাগানৰ মালিক সকলে চিৰা মুৰি আদি ক্ৰয় কৰিবলৈ বজাৰলৈ গৈ যেতিয়া একো নাই বুলি শুনে, তেতিয়া hopeless আদি কৈ নিমুখ হয়। তেতিয়া বেপাৰী সকলে কয় “ধান চাউল এটি পাবলৈ নাই, ভাত খাবলৈ চাউল নাই, কৰ পৰা চিৰা মুৰি তৈয়াৰ কৰিম।”

তেখেতে এনে ক্ষেত্ৰত এইটো গভীৰ ভাবে ভাবি চাব লগীয়া কথা যে, এতিয়া তেখেতে যিটো পুস্তাৰ উত্থাপন কৰিছে, সেই অনুসাবে চৰকাৰৰ সংগ্ৰহ বিভাগৰ ওপৰতেই দোষাৰোপ নকৰি, বাগানৰ মালিকে এই উদ্দেশ্যে জুন মাহৰ পৰা আজি আগষ্টলৈ এই কেইমাহত কিমান সংগ্ৰহ কৰিলে তাকো দৃষ্টি গোচৰত অনাহলে ভাল হলহেতেন। এই বিলাকলৈ মন কৰিলেই দেখা যাব যে চৰকাৰে এই মন্ত্ৰে যথেষ্ট চেষ্টা কৰিছে। তাক কোনেও নুই কৰিব নোৱাৰে। কিন্তু প্ৰকৃততে নাই, সংগ্ৰহ কৰে কৰ পৰা? উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে মই লক্ষীমপুৰৰ ঘটনা এটা কওঁ। তাত এবাৰ ডেপুটি কমিছনাৰে খবৰ পালে যে এঘৰ খেতিয়কৰ ভৰালত ৫০০ মোণ ধান মজুত আছে, নগৰৰ পৰা পলিচ আৰু সংগ্ৰহ বিভাগৰ ইনস্পেক্টৰ, চাব-ইনস্পেক্টৰ আদি তৎক্ষণাত পঠিয়াই দেখিলে যে, তাত ধান একেবাৰেই নাই। এতিয়া ভাবি চাওক, সেই ৫০০ মোণ ধান তৎক্ষণাত গাঁৱৰ মানুহটোৱে কলৈনো নিলে? পুলিছেনো ধান নাপালে কৰপৰা আনে? অৱশ্যে সকলো চৰকাৰী কৰ্মচাৰীয়ে যে তেওঁলোকৰ কৰ্তব্য নিখুট ভাবে কৰিছে, সেইটো মই নকও। এইটো এটা অসম্ভৱ কথাও নহয়, হয়তো তেখেতে এইটো ভাবিব পাৰে যে, আমি ৰাম ৰাজ্যৰ কথা ভাবোতে কেনেকৈ ৰাম ৰাজ্যত এনে বিশৃঙ্খলাই স্থান পাব পাৰে। আপোনালোকে জানে ৰাম ৰাজ্যতো চুৰি হৈছিল, (হাঁহি) এদিন ৰামচন্দ্ৰই শুনিলে যে, তেওঁৰ গুৰু বশিষ্ঠৰ এপাত খৰম হেৰাল আৰু ৰামৰ ওপৰত বিচাৰ ভাৰ পৰিল। বিচাৰ কৰি থাকোতে দেখিলে শ্ৰীৰামচন্দ্ৰৰো এপাত খৰম নাই, (হাঁহি)।

Dr. E. H. CHAUDHURY: অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ইয়াত সাধুকথা কৰ পাৰে নেকি? (voice—পাৰে, পাৰে)।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: তেখেতৰ উক্তিটোহে উদাহৰণেৰে বুজাই দিছে।

Srijut DALBIR SINGH LOHAR: বিচাৰ কৰি দেখা গল যে দুয়োপাত খৰম ৰামৰ মহাভক্ত হনুমানো নি পৰ্বতৰ ওপৰত বুকুত বান্ধি লৈ শুই আছে, (হাঁহি)

এতিয়া ডক্তৰ শান্তি দিয়ে কেনেকৈ বামভক্ত হনুমানক শান্তি দিয়া অসম্ভৱ। গতিকে বামবাজ্যটো চুৰি হৈছিল, ই কোনো আচৰিত কথা নহয়।

যি হওক, মই তেখেতৰ প্ৰস্তাৱ সমৰ্থন কৰিলোহেতেন, যদি তেখেতৰ প্ৰস্তাৱত কিবা মূল্যবান যুক্তি থাকিলহেতেন, নোৰ মতেৰে যি যুক্তি দিছে সি সমৰ্থন যোগ্য নহয়।

আকৌ আমাৰ ভগ্ন ডাঙৰীয়াই অষ্ট্ৰেলীয়া, কানাডা, U.S.A. আদি দেশৰ ওচৰত যে আমাৰ চৰকাৰে ভিক্ষাৰ জুলি লোৱাৰ কথা কৈছে, সেইটো তেখেতে এতিয়া এই পাৰ্টিৰ পৰা ওলাই গৈ আন পাৰ্টিত সোমোৱাৰ পিচতহে বেচিকৈ উপলব্ধি কৰিছে। আগেয়ে তেখেতে ইয়াতেই ব্ৰতী আছিল। (হাঁহি) তেখেতে এইটো ভাবিছে নেকি যে ভিক্ষা যে কৰিছে সেইটো মহেঞ্জ চৌধুৰী বা মেধীৰ পেট পূৰাবলৈহে কৰা হৈছে? এইটো সমগ্ৰ ৰাইজক বচাবৰ কাৰণে। কাজেই মই এই প্ৰস্তাৱ সমৰ্থন নকৰো। আজি প্ৰজাৰ হাঙ্গাৰ, খেতিয়কে, বায়তে অন্ধাৰে অনাহাৰে কালান্তিপাত কৰিব লগা হৈছে, গভণ মেণ্টে কিমান চেষ্টা কৰি ইয়াত সংগ্ৰহৰ কোনো উপায় নেদেখি বাহিৰৰ পৰা সংগ্ৰহ কৰিব লগা হৈছে কি কাৰণে? যাতে ভৱিষ্যতে আমাৰ ৰাইজক উৎকট দুৰ্ভিক্ষৰ মুখৰ পৰা বচাই ৰাখিব পাৰে।

এতিয়া মই বনুৱাৰ প্ৰতিনিধি হিচাবে বনুৱাৰ ফালৰ পৰা কওঁ আৰু মোৰ নিজা অভিজ্ঞতাৰ পৰা কওঁ, আৰু আমাৰ মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়েও দেখি আহিছে ৰাইজৰ অৱস্থা, এনে অৱস্থাত এনেকুৱা এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ সমৰ্থন কৰাটো নিশ্চয় ভুল হব।

এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ মূলত আৰু এটা কথা লুকাই আছে। বিৰোধী সকলে চৰকাৰৰ সংগ্ৰহনীতি সমৰ্থন নকৰি দোষাৰোপ কৰি বাগানৰ নিচলা বনুৱা সকলক প্ৰত্যয় নিয়াবলৈ যত্ন কৰিছে, আৰু তেতিয়া কিছুমানৰ বিৰোধী Propaganda কৰিবলৈ সুবিধা হৈ পৰে। তেতিয়া তেওলোকে ভাবে, বাগানত আৰু কাৰো সোমাবৰ শক্তি নহব আৰু তেওলোকেই সমৰ্থন পাব। মই কওঁ যে যি প্ৰস্তাৱত দুখীয়া বনুৱা আৰু ৰাইজৰ কোনো উপকাৰ নহয় বৰং অপকাৰহে হয় তেনে প্ৰস্তাৱ মই সমৰ্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰো। আশাকৰো আমাৰ Hardman চাহাবে তেখেতৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটো উঠাই লব।

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am glad to have the opportunity of saying a word or two in regard to the procurement policy of the Government of Assam, and therefore I have to thank Mr. Hardman for tabling this Resolution.

Mr. Beliram Das has made a violent attack on the tea industry for trying to deprive the peasants and the cultivators of Assam of their just right over lands. This has not been the case. The tea industry is one which does business and its aim is to make profit in an honourable way and is doing so. It has been trying to please both the State Government as well as the Centre. The Government of India has been levying quite a large amount of duty on tea export: I think the amount comes to about 7 crores of rupees. So, the Government of India would want the tea industry to flourish and if the labourers of the tea estates were provided with food they would help in producing maximum quantity of tea and that would bring profit to the tea industry and also would bring money to the Government in the shape of export duty. Now, most of the hon. Members of this House are in the Legislature to some extent because of the tea industry (*voice*: 'how'). For either their parents or forefathers had to depend on the tea industry at the beginning (*laughter*). The majority of the hon. Members of this House have been at one time or other connected with the tea industry. What I wanted to say is that the present position of Assam is due to the

development of this portion of India by the tea industry. It is quite possible that the days have passed away. The tea industry took away the waste lands that were not wanted by the cultivators of Assam. They never took away the cultivated lands.

The procurement policy of Government may be good or may be bad, but the taste of the pudding is in the eating. Government may have had wrong policies, but every policy of the Government as I have experienced has failed in its implementation in one regard. As I have said, the taste of the pudding is in the eating. The procurement policy of Government can only be tested from the amount of food that has been procured. I do not know how it was that suddenly paddy was decontrolled after it had been controlled for many months and the tea industry was promised foodgrains by the Government and had been prevented from procuring paddy elsewhere and later on Government failed to carry out the promise? That would mean a very tragic situation if the tea industry were not vitally concerned with the safety of the lives of the labourers.

The procurement policy would also depend on many other factors—for instance in the Grow More Food Campaign. Now, look at the answers given by Government "Are Government aware that in portions of requisitioned grant lands of Tea Estates, labourers are already in cultivating occupation?" The answer is "Government have no information". What sort of Government is this? Is this a Government to form a ring round corrupt blackmarketers and profiteers? I think this is a very bad state of things and this bad state of things is hurting the people terribly. As I have said, once again I say, if the common people are able to live, they live not because of the Government. They are living only by the blessings of God. They might also have lived without the Government and they might have lived happier. They would have been better off if there had been a foreign Government rather than this Government which by its policies is making life impossible for the common people (*a Voice—* "Why don't you go to England?") I am only telling the Government to change. This sort of things will not help them. I don't think the people can stand this too long.

There is one more difficulty. Somehow or other Government is failing to obtain the co-operation of the people. If the policies of Government are good, the people should have come forward and co-operate with the Government in implementing the policy. The Government has failed to do that. More and more people are getting away from the Government. The time will come when Government will be completely isolated. This the Government do not want. I don't think any Government wants it. I am telling the Government that those who are in charge for the implementation of the policies are doing a lot of harm to the State and are bringing terrible suffering to the common people of Assam.

I am glad that we have come to the end of this old Assembly and we shall soon be having an election. I hope that we shall have other men to take our place so that the people of Assam may be happy.

With regard to the Grow More Food Campaign here has been too much of paper campaign. Too much of it. As I have said that also depends on the co-operation of the people. Paper campaign leads one nowhere. Sir, we have drum beating and broadcasts in towns, but very little is being done in the villages. Now, if somehow or other Government had fewer policies for the implementation of which Government obtain the co-operation of the people, the State will benefit and the people of Assam would be happy in every way. I cannot imagine how the once surplus State of Assam can be deficit now in the matter of food.

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak a few words on this Resolution. I find in the Resolution the Mover has proposed that the present Advisory Committee should be reconstituted with a non-official Chairman sitting over it. But it is a Committee of an advisory nature and the Mover suggests this Committee will advise Government regarding the procurement policy. But the very objective for which the people are crying hoarse will not be served by changing the personnel of the present Advisory Committee; however efficient they may be, still they are only an advisory Committee.

But only one redeeming feature might be there. If the Advisory Committee advises Government in a wrong way at least the Chairman who will be one of the Cabinet Ministers will be responsible for advices that are given to the Government to follow. So from that point of view I do not think that acceptance of this Resolution will in any way improve the situation of procurement of foodgrains to every mouth of the hungry people. Had he proposed to have this Committee a non-official Committee for production policy of the Government or the people that would have some points in it. But we are talking in this Resolution of the things which have no basis at the bottom. The procurement policy of Government might be failing in one aspect or other but what it is due to that will have to be first found out. If I am to be true to my conscience and my convictions, I can, without fear of contradiction, say that the present procurement policy or control policy of whatever kind will ultimately depend upon the total economy of the people.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Mr. Phookan will continue after lunch.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned for lunch till 1 P. M.

(After lunch)

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: Sir, the House rose when I left the matter at total economy. I must hold the thread from there and in that background I must discuss the Resolution as it is.

What appears to me in the Resolution is this; the hon. Mover has in his mind specifically the methods to be adopted in future to ensure the maintenance of supplies for the rationed population. This clearly shows that he has got in his mind the question of procurement of foodgrains, how best they could be procured in order to maintain the supplies for the rationed population only. On this point I am constrained to say that in the interest of supplying foodgrains to the rationed areas where only 10 per cent. of the people live, we cannot forget the other 90 per cent. of whom not less than 80 per cent. are cultivators, *i. e.*, producers of foodgrains. That is the reason why I give emphasis on the point of total economy. In our anxiety to supply to the 10 per cent. what was our actual experience recently? Whenever there was a dearth of rice and paddy, whenever the labour population of tea gardens was disturbed due to this foodgrain question, Government had sometimes to relax their control policy. Recently they did so in many cases in order to remove the difficulties of the tea garden labour. But in spite of that and in spite of paying very heavily for the rice even at double the controlled price they themselves have failed to obtain even one-fourth of the requirements of the tea labour population. They have paid Rs.30 or even more for a maund of paddy, but why did the people in the villages could not sell to them at that price? This very fact shows the way in which we calculate the production in the villages by taking averages on the basis of statistics and all these things. We may arithmetically find that there is plenty in the villages, but when in place of the controlled price of Rs.10 they get Rs.25 or Rs.30 in the free market for a few days why do they not rush to sell their paddy to the tea gardens if really they had any excess in their *bhorals*? So I do believe that the economic condition of our peasant class is not as it should have been in the ordinary circumstances, and there are

various factors which have contributed to this plight of the cultivators. After the Second World War the price of agricultural implements have gone up very high. While during pre-war time they could get a pair of plough cattle at Rs.50 to Rs 60 they have to pay not less than Rs.300 or Rs.400 now a days. This is a great deterrent factor. Then there is cattle disease which is an annual affair and in addition to all that the last great earthquake has brought untold miseries on the cultivating class. Then, Sir, recently due to the erratic flood of the Brahmaputra, in one Mouza of Halmora in Majuli some 10 sq. miles of Ahu paddy *kheti* in a compact block had been silted up. The cultivators had the crop, but it has been spoilt by the silt. If we take note of these factors and if we take note of the fact that for a piece of garment for which they used to pay Re 1 they are to pay Rs.10 now, *i. e.*, if we take note of this unavoidable economy of their life.....

The Hon'ble The SPEAKER : The point at issue is the appointment of a Committee with a non-official Chairman.

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN : Yes, Sir, I want to show that even if Mr. Hardman's suggestion is accepted that will not improve the procurement situation unless we take into consideration these factors which are working at the background. So, I want to convince my Friend that his Resolution is superficial in the light of these factors. He should withdraw that. That was my intention to bring in those factors. Therefore my honest conviction is this that along with the procurement policy we have to take note of the production policy of the Government of the people, of any party or of any creed or colour I do not care. But production and procurement should go simultaneously or we must leave the whole to the natural economic law of demand and supply. Either of these things we cannot do. Possibly piece meal control though it has come from the Centre we are unable to go against it. But this is my considered opinion and settled conviction, that control and decontrol of the same thing cannot go together. No economic law will accept it. In that light we must tackle the problem. The levy question which my hon. Friend raises, if it is a question of levy on whom is it going to levy? Cultivator who does not get two morsels of food and who has other necessities of life, *e.g.*, buying a piece of cloth—if we are to levy from him, I must say Government should make it compulsory for every tea garden to utilise every inch of land for production of food for the labour force. There are three things now, at the moment on this economic background. Production is less, demand is great. Unless we take all these factors into consideration, matter will not improve. We must take into consideration how this surplus province in the matter of paddy has become deficit overnight. So these factors are there. Within these few years, we have to accommodate all the evacuees from Pakistan who have been driven here due to oppression of the Pakistan Government. They are unwelcomed guests. But still out of humanity we shall have to feed them. We cannot see them starved. This is one factor. Ten lakhs of people have come in this way. They are not tillers of the soil. They are without any means. We have to accommodate them and we have to supply them with food anyhow. Then there is the labour question. 10 or 12 lakhs of labour population is there. It is actually benefiting the tea industry. If the Industry keep fallow thousands of acres of land under the fee simple system of grant for which they have not paid for 100 years, how can they think of Government's supplying foodgrains to their labour force. If they cannot utilise the land, the land should escheat to Government. I do not think that 10 lakhs of labour force should starve. I think Government have responsibility towards these labourers also. But similarly the tea industry should also think for 90 per cent. of the people who are not labourers. How can these 90 per cent. of people solve the problem of their economic life? All these factors have to be considered.

People are economically hard pressed. They cannot buy their implements. In the face of that there is the scourge of black-marketers. It is the most injurious pest of the country. They should be killed at once.

Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI: Why not communal disturbance ?

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: Communal disturbance is certainly one of the causes. It is one calamity which is like earthquake.

The Hon'ble The SPEAKER: Do you think that there is no necessity for forming a committee as Mr. Hardman presses ?

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: I am only driving at that conclusion. I am putting factors for the conviction of Mr. Hardman, so that he can easily withdraw his Resolution. The present committee has been unable to solve all these problems. Can they do that by a change of the chairman from official to non-official ?

They cannot solve this problem thus.

Dr. Emran Husain Choudhury was mentioning of certain meetings, that he was presiding. He passed certain resolutions.

Dr. E. H. CHOUDHURY: I did not pass a resolution.

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: He was the President, and people passed the resolution.

Mr. Sarwan has already said that from all these points of view, we should not be here in the next Assembly. This is a bolt from the blue. I think these remarks are for himself only.

The Hon'ble The SPEAKER: Hon. Member's time is up.

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: I only ask Mr. Hardman to withdraw his Resolution.

***The Hon'ble Srijut MOTI RAM BORA:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, at first I thought that I should not participate in the debate, but there is an adage in Assamese :

সভাত থাকি নামাতে উচিত,

দোষে পায় কিঞ্চিৎ কিঞ্চিৎ ।

so I rise to say a few words in this connection. Sir, Mr. Hardman has made certain observations which, if goes uncontradicted, will make the Government liable for criticism. Mr. Hardman, in course of his speech, has sought to make the impression that there are some amount of interference on the part of some Member of the Government, while selecting the areas for forcible seizure of paddy. He has unwittingly tried to create this impression. I do not think he was very serious about it. For his enlightenment, I must say, Sir, that it is far from truth. It is unfair on his part to make an allegation like that and thereby do an injustice to Government, at least to the Members of the Treasury Bench, so far as the question of selecting areas for the compulsory seizure of paddy. Sir, so far as the question of selection of areas is concerned, it is made by the District Officers.

These people know which are the areas best suited for the paddy seizure operation. Government is only guided by the advice of the local officers. No Member of the Government interferes in the matter. For his information, I must tell Mr. Hardman that at the initial stage of the operation, the areas selected fell within the constituencies of three Hon'ble Ministers themselves.

The Hon'ble Mr. Brahma's constituency was first selected for the purpose of such operation. Next came the Hon'ble Maulavi Mazumdar's constituency and then the place which I represent. Therefore I can assure this House that there is no interference on the part of any Member of the Government in the matter of selecting the areas for the purpose of forcible paddy seizure. That is my first point. Sir, my Friend, Dr. Choudhury, has made some complaints regarding the constant change of portfolio of Supply in the course of last year. On the part of the Government I deny that there is any other reasons for such change except for reasons over which Government have no control ; I mean the sad demise of the late lamented Lokapriya Bordoloi resulted in the change of portfolio, for which we have no control. But we have taken every steps to guard against any mischief that might result from such change of portfolio. We have set up an Emergency Sub-Committee of the Cabinet on this matter of Supply. This Emergency Sub-Committee is effectively functioning. It is constantly discussing about the Supply matters and have been taking very important decision in consultation with the Hon'ble Minister, Supply who is also a Member of the Sub-Committee. There is no difference of opinion among the Hon'ble Minister, Supply and the members of the Sub-Committee. Therefore, on account of the change of the portfolio, which is not liked by us and over which we have no control, as stated by me previously, we have taken every steps to guard against any inefficiency that might result from such change of portfolio. I can assure Mr. Hardman that there is no change of policy or principles in the matter of Supply in any individual Member of the Government. My Friend, Mr. Bhuyan and Dr. Choudhury have, in course of their speech, dealt with certain matters which pertains to the Department of Revenue and as such I think, I should give some replies. Mr. Bhuyan said that Government should take more effective steps to improve the method of distribution of cattle to the cultivators. I must tell the House that the Government is not oblivious to their duty towards the people. As a matter of fact Government have taken every steps to help the cultivators by way of supply of cattle. From the list of Supplementary Demands of which a copy has been supplied to the hon. Members of the House the other day, it will be seen that an amount of Rs.5 lakhs was allotted for the purpose and that I have been coming forward to increase this amount by 10 lakhs more. If it is necessary, we shall earmark another amount of Rs.10 lakhs to enable the cultivators to tide over the difficulties in Assam on account of poor cattle population of the people of Assam. Therefore it is apparent that Government is not sitting idle, and whatever is possible is being done to help the agricultural people in the matter of enabling them to get the cattle. Another grievance of Mr. Bhuyan is about the question of seed-loan in the district of Nowgong. The necessity has arisen due to seedling in the seed bed being destroyed by the recent flood in Nowgong. When the seedlings grown by the cultivators were ready on the bed, they were destroyed by the recent Kapili flood and necessity arose for giving them seed the loans to make an attempt, if possible, for a second plantation. That is why the necessity arose recently to tide over the difficulty. It has been said that there has been delay in the matter of issue of seed loans. The delay is not due to Government, but it is due to reason elsewhere. It is due to the flood which has come rather late. Now my Friend, Srijut Bhuyan, was telling the House that Government was not doing anything in the matter of having more foodgrains in the Nowgong district. I do not know what is happening in the other districts of the State. So far as my own district is concerned, I hope, my Friend, Srijut

Choudhury, will be able to give the necessary information on the table. I for myself have not got any complaint from any quarter as yet. Whenever any demand comes from any quarter from the Food Committees, Government had not refused their demands. As a matter of fact, it has conspired that the highest amount that is being given to the different food shops is in the district of Nowgong. My Friend, Srijut Choudhury, will be able to enlighten the House in this connection. Wherever the demand has come, the district officers have been instructed by the Government to help these Food Committees.

***Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN:** May I ask the Hon'ble Minister that whether only 10 per cent. of the demand of the Food Committees was supplied as it was informed by the Nowgong District Food Committee ?

***The Hon'ble Srijut MOTIRAM BORA:** Sir, I am coming to that. The district of Nowgong is the smallest in this direction. From a reading of the figures, it will convince the hon. Member that the loans that were issued to the Nowgong district is more in comparison to the other districts of the State.

***Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN:** The Hon'ble Minister has not answered that question.

***The Hon'ble Srijut MOTIRAM BORA:** But then what I want to say that Mr. Bhuyan charges Government of injustice. This Government is doing more than what it ought to do. Because of such places like Hojai in Nowgong, its production should not go out of Nowgong. That cannot be the policy. The policy should be consistent to the policy of the whole State. Because this Government has an obligation towards the entire population of Assam. Hojai supplies should not confine to Nowgong district only. Sir, the hon. Member may please look to the amount given to the food grain shops. Thousands of maunds of rice are being supplied to the people of Nowgong. It will be apparent, Sir, how Mr. Bhuyan has made such a statement that this Government is not doing anything towards the people. Because there is no such area which is surplus, it cannot be compared to the other areas. Therefore, Sir, I feel that it will be hardly fair in a State which is in a position in which the State has come when they are confronted with a crisis, and that we have been resorted to begging. It is hardly fair that an allegation like this should be made that the Government is sitting idle and is doing nothing. With this observation, Sir, I resume my seat.

***Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI:** May I know, Sir, about the Procurement staff which was procuring paddy from Baghmari in the year 1951. On this, I sent some questions during the last Assembly Session, but the questions were rejected, that means were not admitted.

***The Hon'ble Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS:** I have no mind to take part in this debate. An issue has been raised with regard to increased jute produce tion. It has its relation to international market. Due to international demand for jute, the price of this commodity has been raised, and as such the price of jute had to be decontrolled by the Government. Because the advantage with regard to the increased production of jute supplied to the industrialists, only the cultivators will be left apart from the field. That is why the Government had decontrolled jute early this year and owing to this, Government had decided to compensate those States which had converted the paddy areas for cultivation of jute, and we are also getting our share from that scheme. Another issue had been raised with regard to the Grow-More-Food Scheme. Of course, I must acknowledge that Government had not the machinery to assess the expenditure incurred in the

Grow-More-Food Campaign. But during the last year the Statistical Department took the record on the minor irrigation projects. The results achieved by the minor irrigation projects are only a part of the Grow-More-Food Scheme and this survey was conducted in the districts of Kamrup, Nowgong and Darrang. In these three districts, the survey was conducted by the Statistical Department, and in the report which was published in the last year, I find that the whole expenditure incurred in these districts owing to the minor irrigation projects would be near about Rs.1 lakh and the results achieved as additional production is nearly 1,79,894 maunds of clean rice.

This additional production is related to the expenditure made for these projects in the districts of Nowgong, Kamrup and Darrang. Of course, I have already mentioned that we have not the machinery to assess the result of the Grow-More-Food Campaign, but on account of the minor irrigation projects our results have been much more successful.

***Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN:** মই এটা কথা মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ৰ পৰা জানিব খোজো যে তেখেতে এবাৰ কৈছে যে আমাৰ assess কৰাৰ কোনো মেচিনেৰি নাই।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order.

***The Hon'ble Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS:** We have not organised machinery to assess the results for all the districts, but the Statistical Department have organised machinery for survey of the results of the minor irrigation projects.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: মই এইটো কথা জানিব খুজিছো মাত্ৰ

***The Hon'ble Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS:** I have already stated that the Statistical Department have got the machinery and they have carried out a survey with regard to the minor irrigation projects.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The point at issue is whether the present Advisory Committee is efficient or whether a Committee with a non-official Chairman should be appointed. I do not think that there is the necessity of raising all those matters.

***The Hon'ble Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS:** I am only clarifying the points.

Besides this, the Statistical Department made an assessment with regard to the present food position in Assam, but I failed to find any reference in the debate to the food position. I may say for the information of the House that the total availability of rice in the State has deteriorated since last year. During last year our production had deteriorated owing to many factors. There was communal disturbance, there was natural catastrophe and there was loss owing to the Partition. Besides these, due to the heavy influx of refugees and returning of displaced Muslim immigrants, the food situation had deteriorated and after the survey we find that the total availability of rice in relation to the production has come down to 14 ounces *per capita* per day. Again, owing to the high price, the cultivators sold off all the reserve stock during these years. For all these reasons the procurement policy had not been successful in bringing up stock from the cultivators.

Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI: May I know from the Hon. Minister whether he is aware that up to 12th June 1951 there were 316 mds. of declared paddy in Bilashipara which could not be lifted due to the failure of the Procurement Department ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I have repeatedly pointed out that the point at issue is whether a non-official Committee should replace the official Committee.

Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI: Because of the inefficiency of the Government a committee should be constituted with a non-official Chairman. As I have already pointed out that up to 12th June 1951 there were in Bilashipara 316 mds. of declared paddy which could not be lifted. This shows that the Government Procurement Department was quite inefficient to tackle with the procurement problem. So it is useless why Government should maintain this department. We may appoint a private company preferably Messrs. Steel Brothers & Co., who will be able to procure paddy because Government have failed.

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think my friend Mr. Hardman ought to feel gratified that he has already achieved the object which he had in his view in moving this Resolution. As many as three responsible Ministers of the Congress Cabinet had to participate in the debate to meet the various points that have been raised. In accordance with the fact that there is the popular saying of a great President of the greatest Republic in the world, America, *i. e.*, of President Abraham Lincoln that "born of the people, fed by the people, for whom should I work but for the people", the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Supply has admitted that they are all working for the peasant, that they are born of the people whether fed by the people or not. I have been gratified at the heroic effort that you, Sir, as Speaker have been trying to narrow down the issue and drawing pointed attention of the various speakers that the Resolution recommends only a particular committee with a non-official Chairman to look into the matter of adopting ways and means for improvement of the maintenance of supply of rationed foodstuff for the population. Speaker after speaker has digressed into other channels, sometimes overhauling the entire economic laws of nature, sometimes speaking of the calamities that have led to the failure of procurement. I think, Sir, the Resolution is very innocuous and has been recommended by the erstwhile Secretary of the Congress Parliamentary Party. It would have redounded to the credit of the present Government if they had gracefully accepted it.

What does this Resolution want ? It wants that the present Advisory Food Council, which have, for various reasons, failed to satisfy the requirement of the people, should be allowed to make a new experiment. In suggesting to appoint a non-official Chairman I think, Mr. Hardman had two lines of thought in his view. One is that an official Chairman, is bound by the directives of the Central Government and therefore to that extent he is not a free agent. Secondly that each Minister of the present Cabinet is burdened with a number of portfolios which leave him very little time to give much thought to only one particular portfolio. Probably it is for this reason that he recommends that a non official Chairman be tried as an experiment and let us see whether any improvement can be effected in the matter of procurement and incidentally of production of foodgrains with a view to improve the supply of foodstuff to the requirements of the people. Nobody can gainsay or deny the implication of the first factor that the Provincial Ministry is bound under the present set up to obey the directives of the

Central Government. I find, Sir, that till very lately the different policies adopted by the Central Government militated with every attempt of the Provincial Ministry to improve the food situation here. Take for example the questions of jute and cotton. India needs jute and cotton and it is a laudable attempt on their part to endeavour to procure as much jute and cotton raised in India itself, they being dependent for the supply of them on the newly born neighbouring State of Pakistan whose action in not devaluing its currency gave them a fictitious advantage on exchange matters. But the limitations of the availability of the area present arable lands were lost sight of at the time of making this directive to the Provincial Government to increase the production of cash crops. The area available for cultivation is known and limited. If we are to divert a portion of that area for the production of jute and cotton it must necessarily be at the expense of certain other commodities that are grown thereon, and so far as Assam is concerned this directive from the Centre had deleterious effect on the availability of the required paddy grown lands to be utilised for the purpose of raising foodgrains. Probably it is on account of this that Mr. Hardman in his Resolution requests the Government to have a Committee with a non-official Chairman. The next line of thought, as I have already adumbrated, is probably that one Hon'ble Minister cannot devote sufficient time to the discharge of the public function in this matter. Nature demands by way of giving him some relaxation and utilisation of some time for the maintenance of body and soul and enjoyment of sleep. So if any Hon'ble Minister is charged with too many portfolios, he cannot devote much attention to any of the portfolios. There is some force in what I heard from the lips of the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Supply and Procurement, Srijut Mahendra Mohan Choudhury that the present Advisory Food Council with the Hon'ble Chief-Minister as President and in his absence, the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Supply, as President can be of far greater utility than a Committee with a non-official Chairman. People find it a well proved theory that a Ministry, like other officers in the Government cannot solve a problem without the help of the people governed. This I say is only partially correct. In the very nature of responsibility of a representative Government one single Minister alone cannot adopt a policy whether he be a Chief Minister or the Minister-in-charge of a portfolio. A policy is to be adopted and ways and means in implementing such a policy is to be left to the Cabinet as a whole. Therefore whatever advantage there may be in having one of the Hon'ble Ministers, namely, the Minister-in-charge in such an Advisory Food Council as Chairman, it has lost practically its value on account of the nature of joint responsibility in the Cabinet.

—Sir, of late, I find that a debate in this House loses effect just for two reasons. The first reason is that generally we fail to see beyond our own nose although every Government speaks that there are two kinds of policies, one is called a short term policy and the other is called a long term measure. We fail to notice the benefit of the long term policy as we find many defects and criticisms either this way or that way whenever any statement is made by any hon. Member on the floor of the House, and the defect in the working of Advisory Food Council, might lie in the complacency of a particular section of our members with the insignia of their party, "the snow white cap." They consider themselves as the snow capped mighty Himalayas of patriotism. According to them nobody else possesses any grain of patriotism; or if they have they may be termed like the highest peak in the Alps, Mount Blanc. It is the highest mountain but at the same time it is called "Blank"! I noticed these two trends in the debates and interpellations here. The greatest statesmanship lies in the fact of looking into the views of the other side and being charitable in its construction.

Now, certain hon. Members imputed certain facts which some Hon'ble Ministers raised a cry of ignorance while more uncharitable people attributed it to *mal a propos*.

In this connection, Sir, I congratulate the attitude which was adopted by my friend the present Chief Whip of the Congress Party, Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma, who was kind enough to say that they are open to conviction and they will welcome any constructive suggestions from any quarter whatsoever. I also like to congratulate the Hon'ble Revenue Minister for he also wanted to lay facts before the House so that hon. Members may draw their own conclusion. Such attitude leads to healthy impression between Members of every Party.

The subject matter of this Resolution is so vital for the interest and benefit of the State of Assam and her benighted population that we should rise above party politics at the time of discussing this issue.

Those who had University education may remember that a syllogism of logic starts with premises and the premises here have been accepted as true by every section of the House not only my friends from the Opposition but also the Minister-in-charge as well as all those speakers from behind the Treasury Benches, that is, the over-all food situation of the Province, on account of the various causes that have been enumerated, is extremely grave, that the granaries of the producers—and 90 per cent. of the population are producers—are empty. The Hon'ble Minister was good enough to admit that he received daily sheafs of telegrams and correspondence from every nook and corner complaining bitterly of the shortage of food grains. Yesterday I heard from some Hon'ble Ministers that the fact that rice was selling at Rs 120 per maund in certain corners of Assam is a myth. The highest price went up to Rs.80 per maund and Government with utmost expedition has started Cheap-grain shops and they have stabilised the price of rice at about Rs 39 per maund.

Subject to correction by the Hon'ble Minister, I have to make a statement which I saw in the Press as well as two disinterested gentlemen from Margherita side—one is a Mr. Lahiri and another a Mr. Pandey whom I met day before yesterday said that Government has been found to have opened Cheap-grain shops in those areas but their procurement policy has so hopelessly failed that those Cheap-grain shops are issuing only one seer of rice and one seer of atta per head per month! So, giving all credit to Government one cannot escape from the fact that the situation is extremely difficult, that there is extreme shortage of foodstuffs in the Province. Whether it is due to difficulty of procurement or the emptiness of the granaries, I am not going to apportion, the Government must admit that their cry for help from the Centre has not produced the same result as we find other States have enjoyed. Very recently I remember to have read in one of our own Government Press Communique that in spite of the fact that some three months ago the Central Government promised help to Assam with 20 thousand tons of rice, up till now we have received less than 4 thousand tons due to shortage of transport facilities. I think my friend Mr. Kedarmal Brāhmin must have read that same Press Communique and that is why he has suggested that the present Food Advisory Committee should be enlarged so as to include representatives of the Transport Companies, namely, the Steamer services and the Railway administration in our Food Advisory Committees so that any difficulty as regards transport may be met by their advice and endeavours to help the Government of Assam. The same hon. Member was good enough to mention that during my time as Chief Minister of the Province up till 1946 I had also similar Food Advisory Council but our normal meeting period was every month and sometimes earlier. Now I was really surprised to find that the Food Advisory Committee which is in existence now their normal period of meeting is 12 months. During these dynamic days of disaster 12 months is far too distant a period for such Advisory Committee to become effective at all.

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RESOLUTIONS

I therefore request each hon. Member to rise above party politics, give this harmless resolution a charitable construction and either enlarge your present Food Advisory Council, keeping in tact your own Chairman, or, on account of the difficulties which I have already mentioned, experiment with another committee with a non-official Chairman. After all, what does this resolution recommend? It simply says "the Government of Assam do appoint a committee with a non-official Chairman to examine the present Procurement policy of Government and to advise on the methods to be adopted in future to ensure the maintenance of supplies for the rationed population". Well, if my suggestion is adopted I would request my hon. Friend Mr. Hardman to delete the words "rationed population". Let this committee go into the matter of procurement and, incidentally, of increased production for the entire population of Assam and not merely for the rationed population. As has been said by my hon. Friend Mr. Nilmoni Phookan and probably another hon. Member, that the rationed population consist of only 10 per cent. of the total population, whereas 90 per cent. of the people are suffering from the pangs of hunger due to shortage of food-grains and cereals. I also request the Government of Assam to enlist the sympathy, support and whole-hearted co-operation of every party in this House and take a deputation to the Centre and impress upon them that the position of Assam is so calamitous that they must come to our aid immediately. It has really pained me to see that whoever has been coming to Assam from the Centre for the last 12 months has only preached self-help and nothing more! I myself was not present at a certain meeting which was addressed by my Hon'ble Friend Srijut K. Munshi, who was a colleague of mine in the Constituent Assembly and the Drafting Committee for three years; in that meeting Srijut Munshi lectured to Assam not to be panicky and to resort to self-help, while his consort addressing a meeting at the Assam Club during the same period advised the people of Assam to give up rice and to eat the kernel of the stone of mangoes and *kachu sak* whereas it has been brought to my notice that the same honourable lady, who advised us to depend on *kachu sak*, had to be fed with vitaminised carrot. Her host or hostess in a certain public function was seen carrying a tray of juicy, luscious, big and golden coloured carrots for the honourable guest as she had been ordered by the doctor to eat more vitaminised food, and therefore what is sauce for the gander is not sauce for the goose!

Sir, I am obliged to you for the courtesy shown to me and to my hon. friends who have kindly listened to the few words that I had to address in pin-drop silence. I again request both the Government side as well as hon. Mr. Hardman to accept the suggestions that I have made during the course of my speech. I also want to request each hon. Member that in future let us not debase our debates to a verbal duel between the representatives from the same district—one taking up a new symbol and ideology while the other continuing the previous symbol.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have nothing much to say after the very eloquent and inspiring speech which we have heard from the hon. Leader of the Opposition. We are glad to note that illness has not impaired his eloquence or his grip of affairs and we hope he will soon be fully restored so that he can contribute fully to the deliberations of this House.

I detect in the speeches of many hon. Members a conviction that there was little wrong with the proposal that had been put forward. Some unfortunately, possibly out of party loyalty, felt that it was essential for accusations to be made that there were ulterior motives behind this Resolution! I am afraid that I was

even accused of not being serious on what I regard as the most serious and vital subject which is facing Assam to-day. I was accused of having solely the interests of the Tea Industry in view. In my Resolution I had noted that I was concerned with the rationed population. As the hon. Leader of the Opposition has pointed out, the difficulties at present are not confined solely to the rationed population. I welcome his suggestion that this Committee should consider the needs of the whole population of Assam. It is undesirable, in my view, that any section of the population should be left to go hungry. While I admit that in the beginning I was pressing the difficulties of those consumers who live in rationed areas I readily agree that the needs of all should be fully considered.

Sir, the next point is that there seems to have been a great deal of misunderstanding about the committee which I proposed. It is suggested that in some way it would override Government, or dictate to it or force on Government policies which the Government might regard as unacceptable. That certainly was not the intention, nor can it be regarded as in any way inherent in the scheme. It is the intention that we should have some kind of Brains Trust, in order to discover what is the size of the problem and what are the methods that can be adopted to tackle it, and to use the maximum experience and knowledge in order to solve this problem which has so long defied solution. Then there was the criticism based on the ground that a committee could not solve anything and afforded no solution of the problem. I have never said that the food situation can only be solved by the appointment of this committee. All that was intended was this experiment should be given a fair trial: that all section of this House should make a united effort to pool their brains and ability in order to see whether there are ways and means of overcoming our present difficulties. I do not contend that other solutions are not possible. There are many ways of procuring food and it would be entirely a mistaken idea to try and suggest that only by the appointment of this Committee can the problem be solved. But I maintain that it is up to the House to try every method in order to overcome the present shortage.

I am grateful to the Hon'ble Minister, Revenue for giving me an opportunity to retract a statement which I made earlier. I made the suggestion that the areas of requisitioning were to some extent determined by the wishes of the Hon'ble Ministers. The Hon'ble Revenue Minister states that this was not a fact. I can only assure him that my statement was based on information which I had received. I accept without reservation the statement of the Hon'ble Minister of Revenue, and I am glad to note that the requisitioning was left entirely to the discretion of the local officers and that there was no political interference. To conclude, I am indebted to hon. Dr. E. H. Chaudhury for the information that the Food Procurement Advisory Committee is due to meet tomorrow. Though I have been a Member of the Committee for some years, I have not upto this time received any intimation of this meeting. It seems to me somewhat unsatisfactory that a committee of this importance should meet without full and due intimation to its members. After pressing for more consultation with this Procurement Committee it may be regarded as somewhat ungrateful for me to make this criticisms but I believe Government will recognise that there is a considerable amount of work to be done by members of these committees before a committee meets, if they are to give practical assistance in the procurement policy and various allied matters. I hope now that as the Government have remembered this committee they will see that it meets regularly so long as our present difficulties continue. I have no wish to embarrass Government any way by pressing this Motion, but I hope, that at some later date, Government may reflect and wonder whether it would not be a good idea to

appoint an independent Committee to look into these affairs. I feel this independent Committee could produce results which the more formal Procurement Advisory Committee is unable to do. Sir, as I have said, I do not wish to press this Resolution against the opposition of Government, particularly as we feel that certain value has emerged from the debate that has occurred to-day. With these words, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution?

(Voices—Yes, yes.)

The resolution stands withdrawn.

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEV: সভাপতি মহাশয়, আজকে আমি এই প্রস্তাবটি উপস্থাপিত করবার জন্য প্রস্তুত হয়ে আসি নাই। আসামের লক্কেল বদিজ কনফারেন্সের নির্দেশানুযায়ী আমি এই প্রস্তাবটি 'টেবল' (table) করেছিলাম। কিন্তু গভর্ণমেন্টের কার্যসূচীমতে ২৮শা-২৯শা কেবল, গবর্ণমেন্টের জন্য নির্দিষ্ট আছে। সেজন্য আজ আমি প্রস্তুত হয়ে আসি নাই, আমার বন্ধুরা এই কারণে এখানে আজ উপস্থিত নাই। তাই আমি মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়কে অনুৰোধ জানাচ্ছি, তিনি যেন অনুগ্রহ করে আমাকে কাল না হয় পরশু প্রস্তাবটি উপস্থাপিত করবার জন্য অনুমতি দেন।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: In view of the special circumstances stated by Mr. Dev, I am disposed to allow him to move the Resolution later. But the first thing that will be taken up day after tomorrow will be his Resolution.

Now Srijut Nilmani Phookan will please move his Resolution.

Resolution to Secure Funds from the Government of India to effect improvement on various matters of the State

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: In view of the fact that topographical, riverain and rehabilitation problems of Assam as after effects of disastrous Earthquake have become an all-India issue, beyond the capacity of a State Government to tackle, and as Assam and its frontiers are strategic points for whole India in every respect, and as future food sufficiency, irrigation, communication, cheaper transport, soil-fertility will now depend largely on control of Earthquake affected rivers of Assam, big and small, and as a large number of hills and plains people affected by last Earthquake and its attendant floods and river erosion are to be rehabilitated elsewhere, as Dibrugarh and Sadiya towns shall have to be protected at enormous cost, this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do place these major issues before the Government of India with every details and press for necessary funds by way of Central Contribution to effect these improvements and accommodations under a continuing plan scientifically treated.

In moving this Resolution I have in mind the Great Earthquake of Bihar, Quetta and Assam which in recent times have created so much havoc that not only the State or the Centre, but the whole civilized world have come to the rescue of the people of the disastrous states in various ways and in our own State we have seen in 1897 that Great Earthquake which devastated the Lower Assam with hills, and after 50 years this Earthquake have devastated the Upper Assam with the hill areas and these natural calamities, after 50 years, have not, it seems allowed the "terra-firma" of this unfortunate State to settle after

fifty years of the Earthquake of 1897. There were topographical and river changes in the Lower Assam and the hilly portions in the Southern Assam. In this Earthquake, similarly the same topsy turvy happened which devastated the Upper Assam and the Northern Hills. So this question has become so large and vast that it will not be possible for us to tackle as a State. We must take into consideration the fact of this State being as one of the frontiers of India, and we must take into consideration also the fact that as Kashmir is the North-West Frontier of India, similarly Assam is also the North-Eastern Frontier of India. For the last three years, due to its importance as a frontier State, due to its strategic position of India, we fought in the soil of Kashmir against the aggressive human elements no matter what financial commitments we had to bear as a whole. Similarly India had to face with another kind of aggression from Nature, and there also we are to face it.

(At this stage the Hon'ble Speaker vacated the Chair and the Deputy Speaker occupied it.)

I remember, after the Great Earthquake, that indomitable Statesman, our Prime Minister—when he came to the devastated areas,—ask us to muster courage to fight against the Nature and prove our mettle in the midst of calamities. It is a fact that natural element may be uncontrollable but still humanity must exist in the midst of all calamities. We are unfortunate in having these natural calamities recurring off and on but still we as a people shall have to live here. We cannot leave this country because of these natural calamities. If this is accepted, then we shall have to rehabilitate our society, our country economically, physically or otherwise, in the midst of all these calamities which may mean mint of money for the purpose. The time has come, when our Finance Minister even may not think that he will be able to carry this big colossal project on his shoulder. Therefore, we in all earnestness should be able to convince the Central Government that this question of rehabilitation of the State of Assam, after the Great Earthquake is primarily the responsibility of the Centre, like the case of Kashmir because of her strategic position, which was the primary concern of the Government of India. It is for our convenience that we have been federated and there are major and minor problems, and the major problem must be the concern of the Government of India. So is the case of Pakistan's aggression, in which we had to spend mint of money in the case of Kashmir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Member is telling about Kashmir affairs.

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: So this is the concern of the Government of India and the Central Government had to spend as much money as was necessary for doing that work. The experts who have been sent by the Government of India to examine the topographic and other changes of Assam due to after effects of last Earthquake and how the courses of river, big and small affected, and how these changes have affected the whole economy of the State. All these things have been to some extent already examined, and others being examined, and I believe they have sent their recommendations to the Government also. In the light of those expert recommendations and other matters that have cropped up in the course of these few months, I believe, our Government should impress the Government of India that the change of courses of the rivers have for the time being greatly affected our people in raising crops and other economic aspects of lives. This is the most urgent and prior necessity according to our point of view and that these rivers should be controlled as far as possible, otherwise this country will get barren every year and the food crops cannot grow more and more. On the other hand the demand of the people for food is increasing every day. So unless there is a solution of the problem, whatever paper schemes, or our debate or public criticisms might be, it will not solve the problem as a whole.

It is said "It may not be possible to control the Brahmaputra, it is out of question ; and we cannot think that Government of India will help us in any way in this matter."

If they have taken up such colossal river control projects elsewhere in other States for future economic wealth of the country, why here in Assam such projects of controlling rivers which might be the Brahmaputra and other rivers cannot be thought of in the face of such disasters which have affected our whole economic life due to floods and other calamities brought in the trail of the great earthquake ? It may be that a river like the Brahmaputra could not be trained, but it might be possible to divert its superfluous volumes to some other course on the other side of the hills. Take the case of Kopili which brings out a big volume of water affecting the district of Nowgong. Possibly by adopting some such methods at its sources might make the river bring less volumes of water to Nowgong. In this way rivers can be controlled but it is not my business to suggest how that can be done because I am not an expert in that matter. But I do feel that when such bigger schemes have been undertaken in other States, why in Assam alone such schemes have not been taken ? For the protection of the Dibrugarh town the Government experts have already advised to spend, as far as my information goes, an amount of 60 to 70 lakhs of rupees. If the town of Dibrugarh can be saved from the erosion, it must be saved—no matter what the expenditure might be. Let it be 2 crores of rupees. Why the Government of India should not be able to give that 2 crores for the protection of this important town when this 2 crores can be gotten as revenue from that area within a few years ? If the Brahmaputra takes a different course towards the south, who knows even the vast tract of lands of Assam will be affected. Of course the question is a colossal one and therefore it is beyond the capacity of this State Government. But it is our just demand that these rivers should be controlled in such a way so that they may not affect the soil conditions of our country. Sir, the river arteries are the very life of a nation and if these arteries are choked then the whole country is gone. In all earnestness I have moved this Resolution in order to bring these factors to the notice of the Government of India who have been taking an effective interest in this matter and in view of the fact that this great disaster has evoked sympathy and active assistance of people from 4 corners of the world and such a great shock which shocked the whole civilised world, it is the bounden duty of the Central Government to do something in the matter. It is not an ordinary catastrophe for a tiny State like Assam. At the same time we cannot ignore this tiny State. It is the main gate—sentinel of the whole of India. Therefore if we do not protect the strategic State, who knows some day the whole of India might suffer for this neglect. With this hope of fulfilment by the Central Government and with all earnestness we want to place this matter before our Government in the name of our distressed people and devastated country so that they readily accept this Resolution. We lay bare all these facts before the Central Government and not tie their hands with this project or that project, we leave the whole matter to be thrashed by them. I move this Resolution for the acceptance of this House and I believe Government will have no difficulty in accepting the same. There is no intention of tying the hands of the Central Government. It is a free Resolution for the consideration of our Government and the Central Government and to find out a solution of these problems which are beyond our power to solve. Let us in one united voice both by the representatives of the people and Government place this matter before the Government of India.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER : The Resolution moved :

"That in view of the fact that topographical, riverine and rehabilitation problems of Assam as after effects of disastrous Earthquake have become an all India issue, beyond the capacity of a State Government to tackle, and as Assam

and its frontiers are strategic points for whole India in every respect, and as future food sufficiency, irrigation, communication, cheaper transport, soil-fertility will now depend largely on control of Earthquake affected rivers of Assam, big and small, and as a large number of hills and plains people affected by last Earthquake and its attendant floods and river erosion are to be rehabilitated elsewhere, as Dibrugarh and Sadiya towns shall have to be protected at enormous cost, this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do place these major issues before the Government of India with every details and press for necessary funds by way of Central Contribution to effect these improvements and accommodations under a continuing plan scientifically treated."

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: Madam, Deputy Speaker, the main purpose of this Resolution as far as I have seen is to effect an improvement into the conditions that have been created by the last earthquake and to improve the devastation that has been done by the earthquake to the riverine areas and that this Government should make plans and request the Government of India to implement those plans. In short, Madam, what the hon. Mover wants to do in this Resolution we have been doing that since the earthquake of the last year. The hon. Mover has admitted that this Government had constituted an Expert Committee with the approval of the Government of India. This Committee was constituted with a view to see what is to be done in regard to the changes made by the earthquake of last year in the Earthquake affected area and also to the rivers in that zone. That Committee came and examined as far as possible the areas concerned and also the rivers in question. After their examination they made certain recommendations one of which is about measures for training of the rivers and the improvement of their regime. This recommendation was according to one of the terms of reference laid down for the Committee. I may read out this recommendation of the Committee: "To this problem the Committee has given considerable thought. Rivers in the northern areas are very unstable with very steep slopes and high silt charges which they are unable to carry. Consequently their beds are continuously silting up and whenever any obstruction occurs in the bed, spilling takes place which some times result in change in course of the whole river. The whole area is at present in the stage of building up. The situation has been greatly aggravated by the land slides which occurred on an extensive scale in the hill areas during the earthquake. The topography of the country is such that the rivers will continue changing their courses for a considerable time yet and any attempt at straightening or canalising them at this stage will end in failure, specially in view of the fact large accumulation of silt from the hills has yet to move down and may retard the deepening of the silted up beds. We consider that removal of snags from the beds and palisading in the reaches are the only measures we can recommend at the present moment." This recommendation they had to give after careful examination of the changes that occurred are still going on in the beds of those rivers. About permanent training of rivers, as I have read out from the recommendations, they are of opinion that the present is not the time. But regarding immediate relief they have suggested certain measures and those measures we have been executing as far as practicable. Regarding the removal of snags from the beds of the smaller rivers and steps taken by us for the same has been stated by me yesterday in reply to the Resolution moved by my friend hon. Sri Beliram Das and as such I do not like to speak about them again to-day.

As regards financial help from the Government of India in the repair of damage done to the bunds, buildings, roads, etc., I may say that they have been kind enough to give us half of the expenditure required as their share. They have asked us to debit at present to their credit whatever expenditure is incurred by us in the repair of the damage done to our bunds, buildings, roads, etc.,

belonging to this Government. They have also agreed to contribute some share of expenditure required for repairing of the school and some other buildings that are owned by the Local Bodies and for repairing of the semi-Government school buildings. In all these cases we have been getting aid from the Central Government. But I agree with the hon. Mover of this Resolution that to do what is required to be done to the whole area devastated by the last earthquake, and also to the rivers it will not be possible for this Government to meet the expenditure necessary. So we requested India Government to come to our help. At our request they have agreed to help us as their share, as I have stated above. We have also requested them to help us with funds that will be necessary to control in some way or other the small rivers so that some protection can be given to the people who are at present subjected to annual flood damage and erosion. In future also we expect that Government of India will be coming to our help in such cases. On our request when Government of India has shown their favour to us, I think it is not necessary to pass this Resolution in this House and send the same to India. But if the House desires that the proceedings of the Assembly in this connection are to be sent to them then we can do it to comply with the wishes of the House as well as the hon. Mover of the Resolution.

With these words, Madam, I request the hon. Mover of the Resolution to withdraw it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I understand that the hon. Mover of this Resolution is seeking leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution ?

Srijut NILMANI PHOOKAN: Not necessarily, Madam, I mean, not at this stage. If the House want to continue to debate on the Resolution, let them do it first.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then we shall continue to discuss on the next sitting of the Assembly.

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M. on Thursday the 30th August, 1951.

SHILLONG :
The 3rd November 1951.

R. N. BARUA,
Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.