

Resolution moved by me at
the Judicial Section, Nov 11 or 12, 1966

Agricultural production without question, should be assigned priority No. 1 in all our plans and schemes. If India has to live, it has gradually to reduce its dependence on foreign food and produce its own. It is heartening to find that the farmer all over the country is now fully awake. He has to be help helped by the Government to find all necessary inputs at reasonable prices. If only Government can reach improved seed, assist the farmer to put up small means of irrigation of his own and, in addition to manufacture and supply of chemical fertilizer, undertake a country-wide campaign to make the farmer realise the importance of organic manure that is going waste, the battle for food self-sufficiency would have been more than won within five years. Besides land reforms aimed at making every tiller the owner of the land under his plough, consolidation of holdings and conservation of soil are two other major steps that will promote agricultural prosperity.

Further, industrialization of the country cannot precede but will follow, at best, accompany, agricultural prosperity. It is a developing agriculture alone -- agriculture whose productivity increases faster than demand for its products -- that is the key to economic development of India, and no other. And, in this manner:

(a) Inasmuch as a developing agriculture makes it possible to secure the production of more and more food and raw materials with fewer and still fewer men on the soil, it would release manpower required for running industries, transport, commerce and other services.

(b) A developing agriculture will provide larger and still larger food surpluses for feeding increasing number of workers that may be engaged in urban or non-agricultural occupations.

(c) A developing agriculture will secure continuous and increasing production of raw materials for feeding the wheels of industry. (in this context, agriculture may be taken to include forestry, animal husbandry, fisheries and mining.)



(d) It is only when there is purchasing power in the pockets of the farmers that a demand for non agricultural or industrial goods arises. Inasmuch as, and to the extent, therefore, a developing agriculture will bring income and furnish purchasing power to the farmers, it will convert them into a ready market for industrial goods and, thus, promote and become a direct cause of industrial growth.

The same is true of services or tertiary industries, especially those engaged in exchange of goods and in providing education medical aid, public transport and power. Experience shows that there is an immediate demand for, and strong response in rural areas to, the provision of shops, schools, hospitals, railway, motor services for the carriage both of goods and passengers, electrical facilities, etc., which is directly proportionate to the increase in the farmers' purchasing power.

(e) Lastly, surplus materials and food stuffs that a developing agriculture will make available, can also play a role in earning foreign exchange with which we can finance import of capital goods for industrial development.

This conference is further of opinion that with a view to avoiding public inconvenience, waste of food and corruption and further to strengthen the forces working for national integration, it is essential that the food zones be abolished and the country be declared one single market. Government can influence the market by building up sizeable buffer stocks through compulsory levy to stabilise prices.

That every farmer possessing a certain minimum area should be made liable by law to deliver at fair price a part of his produce on a graduated scale to the State for feeding those who are engaged in non-agricultural occupations still such date when India becomes a definitely agricultural surplus country. Government should not engage itself in purchase, movement and sale of foodgrains. This should be entrusted to the Food Corporation of India which should function as the agent of Government.

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