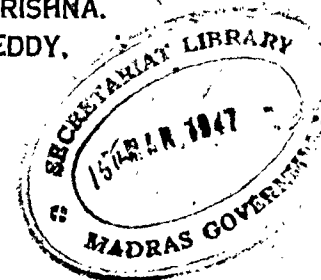


FAMINE IN RAYALASEEMA



PROF. N. G. RANGA,
SWAMI PREMANAND,
K. V. RAMA KRISHNA,
K. BUTCHI REDDY,



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FAMINE IN KAYALASEEMA

PROF. N.G. RANGA

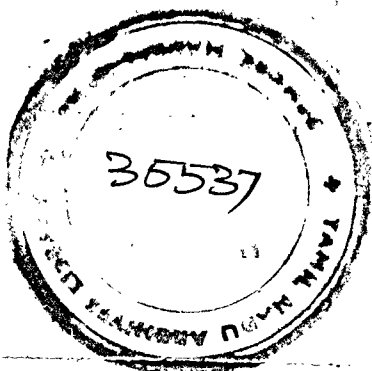
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PREFACE



We are publishing this report of our Famine and Food Commission and also of our President's on famine condition [5 Districts] of Madras Presidency in order to draw the attention of the Indian and wider public to the sufferings of the people and their entire dependence upon imports of food grains, vitamin products medicines and clothing.

We have submitted this report to the American Food Mission to India and Indian Food Mission to Argentine and also to the Governments of Madras and India. We are now submitting it to the World Food and Agriculture Organisation which meets at Copenhagen on 2nd. September and International Federation of Agricultural producers through our President in the hope that they may all try and increase our food import in time, to save the people of Rayalaseema and Mysore, which comprise a population of more than ten Millions, from mass deaths due to starvation.

I happen to belong to this unhappy woe-stricken land which is called Rayalaseema that suffers from perennial semi-famine even in normal times. But this time when the whole country is enveloped in famine and food distress, it is not difficult to imagine the sad plight of the people inhabiting this part of Andhra desa. As a member of the Rayalaseema Famine Sub-Committee appointed by the Andhra Provincial Kisan Congress I toured extensively in these districts in the months of January and february and submitted a report to the Anhra Provincial Kisan Congress Committee on the fast deteriorating conditions and I can safely say that this is just a mild account of the exact state of affairs that are prevailing there.

I am extremely happy to declare that our consistent emphasis on famine and food shortage is appreciated by the Government of India, who realised the need of sending a Food Mission to Argentine. But this is not enough. More Food Missions must be sent to

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other surplus countries like United States of America, Canada, and Australia. Very soon our Chief, Professor Ranga will be contacting the leaders of these countries at the Copenhagen World Food and Agricultural Organisation, and will do his best to influence these people to take up our cause and fight in their respective countries for giving us timely succour so as to tide over the famine crisis that threatens our doom so much.

As envisaged by both our President and Swamiji, the food stores of our Presidency will come to be exhausted by the end of October. This was strengthened by the latest statement of the Madras Premier, Mr. T. Prakasam on the floor of the Legislative Assembly (date 5-8-1946.)

Imports must be rushed in by then. Otherwise November and December of 1946 are likely to witness dire underfeeding of all people of the Presidency on 8 ozs. per day and even the outbreak of mass deaths in the famished areas.

There is only one ray of hope. The Madras Congress Government have decided to introduce prohibition in these districts. It has also realised the urgency of the constructive side of irrigational and drainage development. It is anxious to do everything possible to save the children by special supply of vitamin tablets. It is trying to provide emergency productive employment for able-bodied workers and full free maintenance for all dependents, instead of pursuing the traditional famine relief stone-breaking and road works.

But everything hangs on imports and more imports. Hence this appeal to all our foreign friends for timely help.

September 1st, 1946.
Bezwada.

K. Obulareddy,
General Secretary,

Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

FAMINE IN RAYALASEEMA

Prof. N. G. RANGAS' REPORT

NIDUBROLE, 17-7-46

Prof. N. G. Ranga, M. L. A. President of the Andhra P. C. C. has issued the following report to the press upon the famine conditions in Rayalaseema.

I have toured in parts of Rayalaseema, that is, Kurnool, Anantapur, Ballary, and Cuddapah; Districts during the 27th to 30th. June and visited villages and met groups of villagers, especially Harijans, Boyas, Reddis and other sections of the agricultural workers. I have also talked to peasant gatherings, interviewed a large number of merchants and big landholders, and professional people. I must have covered in my car at least 400 road miles, of the famine ridden land.

Swami Premanand and Mr. K. V. Ramakrishnareddi, M. A. B. L., of the Congress Famine and Food Front accompanied me throughout. The Presidents, and Secretaries of the Local District Congress Committees and the Organisers and Presidents of the Kisan (Peasant) Congress also followed me in my tour.

I have abstained from sending this report to the press, though it was sent to Govt. in the hope that rains might come and provide employment on land and hope in the hearts of the masses. But, C. Balireddi, the

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strength enough to drive away flies from their diseased eyes. Almost all are infested with heavy itch, caused by mal-nutrition. There is no spring in their feet nor lustre in their eyes. The awful cheerless children are the worst sufferers.

'NO ADEQUATE STATE HELP TO CHILDREN

Only in a few villages have I found the free distribution once a day of horlicks milk, supplied by Government agency. Even in some of those villages this supply is not regular, and many mothers do not know of the existence of such a gift for their children. But in most of the villages, even, such a fitful supply of milk is not available.

RIISING CATTLE MORTALITY

In almost all the villages visited I have received complaints that there is no fodder for their cattle and the cattle mortality is rising very fast. There is no stuff in those cows, bullocks or even buffaloes. They are dried up to their very bones and all colour is gone from their eyes. Many peasants are obliged to turn away their cattle, as they no longer can bear the sight of their silent deaths in their sheds. I was shocked to see how the bullocks which were harnessed to watercarts were in a high state of disease and death; so great is the need of the people for drought animals and so poor is their ability to feed them.

In Anantapur District, about 5 Military lorries are being used to carry chill grass from the Nallamalai hills. But this supply is most inadequate. There is neither fodder nor any other cattle feeding to be purchased at any price. The present rules for the

distribution of oil cakes do not permit their use as cattle food and that is a pity.

What with the degradation and slow starvation of dependents, children and cattle, need one detail the awful prospects that await our peasantry and country-folk in years to come?

Even seeds are unavailable. More and more of even the so-called big peasants are forced to encroach upon their seed stocks. The great majority of peasants have already exhausted their seed stocks and are now in need of fresh supplies of seeds. But the agricultural Department is not dynamic enough to indent for and obtain the required quantities of seed and aid the sowing operations. This is a tragedy.

Peasants' SELFHELP is Marvellous. Despite all these unhappy features and sufferings, almost every peasant is either ready to or has already begun to prepare his fields for seed sowing purposes, now that the usual monsoon season has come in, and is anxiously speculating his fortune for the coming season by observing the thin passage of clouds. Wherever a few showers had descended, lands had been ploughed and seed sown and sprouts have begun to appear. Where there are only the treacherous winds and passing clouds, gloom and death are in the eyes of these hardworking peasants. They never fail mother-earth and they are all ready to borrow money at high rates of interest in order to cultivate their lands.

One other difficulty is being overcome by them at too high a cost to themselves and their dependents; that is, they purchase if need be, in black markets, grain to

Kisan Congress leader has told me on the 17th July that rains have failed and famine has definitely set in most Parts of Rayalaseema. Hence this publication.

WHAT ARE MY IMPRESSIONS? (of this tour)

Although no informal rationing of food has so far been introduced as in the towns, almost all the villagers of every village have come to depend for the supply of their food and food grains, on the local authorised Stores, whether it is maintained by a merchant or a Co-operative Society.

The moment the stores is closed, or supplies to the Stores are stopped, there is nothing to stand between most of the Villagers and starvation.

The number of villagers who can be said to have their own food grains has been dwindling and more than 90% of the land-owning peasants and 95% of all the villagers have no food Stores of their own. So, if no food grains come through the stores, say, after the first of August, all the villagers will be face to face with starvation.

Such extreme dependence of these villagers on authorised food Stores makes the present informal rationing even more unsatisfactory since it gives no assurance of the regular supplies of even the reduced and inadequate but authorised rations to our villagers as are being daily given to the people of towns.

NO MONEY FOR RATIONS

But even if Government were to assure a regular supply of food grains through the authorised stores, most of the peasants, and especially all the Harijans

and other labouring sections have no money to pay for their authorised rations, because there is no local employment for these unemployed.

In a few places, the District Boards and P. W. D. and Minor Irrigation section of the Revenue Department are running the so-called "extension works" to provide employment for some of the unemployed. But I have found that only a small section of them received such employment and there are still large numbers of unemployed. Moreover, unlike, as in the usual famine works, those employed on these "Extension works" receive their wages only once a week and that is a great hardship. The piece-work wages paid at such extension works are too inadequate to enable them to purchase even the authorised rations. And the usual facilities of shelter and water supply at their places of work, prescribed under the Famine Code, are not now made available.

HELPLESS DEPENDENTS

The biggest defect of the present system of Extension Works, instituted in view of Famine Relief works is that there is no provision for the maintenance of the aged housewives, crippled, children and other dependents. The condition of these helpless dependents is already very pitiable. They are obliged to beg more "Ganji" from their own family members who earn their far too low wages at the dwindling Extension Works. Their misery can better be imagined.

HEARTEN THE CHILDREN'S CRY

Wherever I went, I saw only unhealthy, emaciated, underfed and driedup Children. Many do not even have

pay their labour with and they are even ready to encroach upon their own family's rations in order to feed their labour and thus cultivate lands. What a sacrifice for the sake of food production?

Danger of Moneywages :- In other places, a more difficult practice is springing up. Peasants pay wages to their workers only in money. The latter cannot get any food grains in exchange for their wages as there is no local authorised store. Naturally they are forced to pay the blackmarket rates to some one, discovered by stealth, somewhere, and be extremely grateful to that scarce black-marketteer.

Why Black-marketteers :- Pending the more adequate supplies of foodgrains to the stores and the establishment of such authorised stores in every village and the introduction of rationing everywhere, this black-marketteer, who by the way is becoming more and more scarce in these Districts will continue to be looked upon by the labouring sections as indeed a public benefactor ! What an irony of things ?

REMEDIES

These Districts have to be declared a "Famine Area" and every one has to be assured both employment and adequate food rations and "Free kitchens" must be opened for the dependents and disabled.

Famine works have to be opened without any more delay. All the facilities detailed in the Famine Code must be provided for the dependents and children.

To avoid the recurrence of the widespread corruption and wastage of public funds experienced in 1943-44 famine, the whole-hearted cooperation of the public,

especially of the National Kisan Congress and Harijan Congress has to be invoked. Non-official Famine Relief Squads have to be tacked on to the usual Famine Relief Administration and at every stage, the newly constituted Food Councils ought to be expected to checkup famine relief work and distribution.

Free supply of milk has to be supplied to all children both morning and evening and equal care has to be taken over the supply of fodder and cattle feeds for the cattle.

Adequate supplies of food and seeds have to be rushed to these areas; kept properly in a number of stores in easily accessible local centres and regular supplies of rations assured to the people. Then alone can the present atmosphere of gloom, depression and the approach of mass deaths can be despatched.

The vast affliction that is killing the very spirit of the people of these Districts and creating the fear of death from their daily thoughts. One Provincial Legislator has put to me with great chagrin, that in spite of all his attempts to maintain his hope in things ever since he was conscious of public affairs (1928) he found it difficult to prevent the growth of a sense of helplessness in his mind for, as he put it "these famines recur every 2 or 3 years and in no one year do peasants feel confident of good crop and no sooner do we emerge from one famine, we are in for another."

On the top of this seasonal spectre of famine, the present food famine has come in. Even if money is made available - and in fact even that is not available - there are no local supplies of food grains. And the Provincial Government is unable to assure such.

supplies, as it is dependent upon the All India Plan for the allocation of food grains. And even ordinarilly Madras is a deficit province. From what I have seen of All India Food Plans and stocks and their statistics, the Government of India may well be helpless to send any supplies to this area after the end of August.

CAN STARVATION AND DEATHS BE AVOIDED

Therefore unless imports of Foreign Food Grains pour into India by the end of August and unless they can be rushed to these needy centres, mass deaths due to starvation have to be expected.

What can the Madras Government do to postpone that awful day, if not to eliminate its possibility?

The Present Ministry has already offered the most necessary bonus to all these peasants who can economise their food consumption and who will share in the general risk of under-nourishment and starvation, and this is inducing them to reduce their essential stocks and maximise their supplies of food grains to markets. The Government can also offer more adequate subsidies for sinking wells and place all its technical and financial resources at the disposal of our peasants who are ready to dig wells, deepen tanks and raise irrigated crops. (I give below the various suggestions made by our peasants as to what assistance can and ought to be given to them by Government.) The other big thing the Government ought to do is to place greater quantities of food, cloth, kerosine and also to fight black-marketting.

The other hope lies in the peasants themselves; that is their baling out of water from their

wells; their deepening those wells and assiduous cultivation of that poor cereal "Italian Millet". If it is produced in sufficiently large quantities it will be available in September and a good proportion of people may be saved from starvation for just two months, i. e., September and October.

What is to happen thereafter? Either imports or deaths. There seems to be no other alternative. Such is the gloomy prospect. Can the public be complacent about it? I am placing these facts before the public in the hope that both Government Officials, and merchants will learn to treat our people more considerately and the Congress Ministry will soon take up the many irrigation and agricultural projects that people are demanding.

President, A. P. C. C., Bezwada.

ORGANISE NATIONAL FOOD FRONT

In an unheard of food crisis like this, the one lesson that India has to learn from Britain is the way to solve the Food Problem by bringing into existence National Food Front which alone can fight starvation and famine efficiently. Even in her worst hours of trial in that Global War, not a single man in Britain suffered from starvation although it is not an agricultural country. This was due to her unique production policy whose execution was entrusted to the country committees representing all the interests including farmers and workers with the result that the acreage under food production in England went up by 50% and the production of food rose to more than 50% of her national needs.

We ought to adopt the same production policy and create a non-official agency for the vigorous execution of our policy basing it on the spirit of service and sacrifice. This non-official agency may be called "THE NATIONAL FOOD FRONT" to be composed of the representatives of Kisans and their organisations, workers and their organisers and also officials as ex-officio members. It has to supervise, co-ordinate and guide the activities of the Food Committees and otherwise implement the policies and programmes of the Government, thus functioning as the ADVISOR to the Government on the Food Front. The President of the Food Front shall be the Food Minister while the vice-President is elected by the Food Front itself in which the non-officials alone must have the right to vote. Obtaining funds, posting of officers, selection of the

personnel of the various non-official agencies that may have to be created by the Food Front in addition to the Food Committees envisaged by the Madras Premier will have to be generally implemented by this popular organisation, although the minister will have the right to differ from it and decide as he deems necessary. This Food Front shall assist the ministry in appointing and directing the special famine protection volunteer corps to fight black-market and corruption, and it has to draw most of its personnel from amongst the non-official public workers who have been in direct contact with the masses. It will be one of the important tasks of the Food Front to develop regional surveys of the production of the different crops and also the standards of living of different sections of agriculturists and hasten to fix one settled remunerative price per annum for each of the food and other crops.

GRIEVANCES OF PEASANTS Cambum Taluk, Kurnool District.

Peasants complain of the unjust Penal rates, ranging upto 5 times the usual Low Revenue rates upon the so called unauthorised cultivation of lands in the tank-bed of cambam tank. They say that these penalties can only discourage "Grow More Food" campaign. It is true, this unauthorised irrigation hurts no body but yields heavy crops of paddy.

Pattikonda Taluk, Kurnool District

I met this morning (27-6-46) a number of representatives of Pattikonda and from the memorandum submitted by them I realise that the following are their needs.

1. More rice is needed; the present supplies are too inadequate.

2. Drinking water as well as water for irrigation is very scarce in this taluk, which is notorious for its liability to frequent famines. The present conditions for granting subsidies for the sinking of wells are found to be too hard and beyond the means of most peasants. They need at least two-thirds subsidy and the other one-third advanced as a loan and the risk of not finding water must be undertaken by the Government.

3. There is great scarcity of cloth, sugar, kerosine and also agricultural iron implements.

4. Timber for agricultural purposes should be supplied freely from the neighbouring parts.

Famine Situation in Anantapur District

Various possibilities for providing work to the unemployed people:—

1. Construction of a road from Uravakonda to Challapuram Via Renumakalapalle and Nimbagal, and a road upto Challapuram near Kannekal.

2. Village works may be developed to provide work to the local unemployed people, such as sanitation works (manure pits) roads, deepening local tanks. This can be done with the help of the local panchayat boards and food councils.

3. Local irrigation sources and works can be further developed in Uravakonda. Water supply scheme can be developed from Gadehottur or Honour.

4. Free food grain supplies (doles) shall be supplied, or millets from free kitchens to the dependents and the disabled and especially to children below 14 years of age. It seems this is being done in places

where local rainfall is very low, but in centres like Dharmavaram, Uravakonda, Hindupur, Madakasira the huge populations of weavers and other non-agriculturists are now left out of consideration. They too need this protection.

5. Cheap food stores are to be established either directly by Government or indirectly through the local food councils and district boards with adequate financial help from Government.

6. Whenever any of the two kinds of food grains now being supplied millets 5/6, rice 1/6, are not available, some other kind of food grains, such as wheat, wheat flour, maize or maize flour should be supplied.

7. More adequate supplies of fodder are needed and they must be supplied through the provision supply centres, each centre being not more than five miles from the village served.

8. Wherever fodder cannot be made available cattle feeding stuffs such as paddy husk may be imported from Northern circars and supplied.

9. It is necessary that the extent of famine should be recognised by the Government especially in taluks of Uravakonda, Kalyandurg and also Madakasira and parts of Dharmavaram taluk especially Kanaganpalli and Ramgiri villages. In these areas famine in food, money and fodder prevails and the condition of the people is extremely pitiable in view of the visitation of a series of years of scarcity.

10. At all the centres where either formal or informal famine works are being run the following minimum reforms have to be effected—

(a) As far as possible contractors should be replaced by departmental administration.

(b) Every worker who offers himself for work must be provided with work.

(c) If and wherever work cannot be provided a worker must be fed freely at the relief works.

(d) Every worker must be assured a basic and minimum wage and in addition to these rates, piece work rates may be prescribed so that every one would be assured minimum maintenance while official inducement for additional exertion.

I had talks this morning on arrival at Anantapur with messrs. Kalluri Subbarao, Chandra Narayanappa of Uravrkonda, Sivaramakrishna, A. Venkataswamy, Y. Narayanareddi and others. In my interview with the Collector I have laid special stress upon the need for introducing more military civil lorries for the expeditious transport of fodder.

(a) The need for the collector to obtain larger supplies of yarn for weavers.

(b) Also to ask Government of India to supply adequate quantities of standard cloth or any other cloth freely or specially at low rates for distribution among poorer classes of the district.

(c) For the deepening of village tanks.

(d) For the organisation of village food councils with representatives of different classes of people.

I have also mentioned most of the points placed before me by the above mentioned leaders and gentlemen.

MARUR

(1) Cattle is dying.

(2) Food scarcity may set in August but there is

a hope that 'Ragi' may come in by September. There are some private wells. Food distribution arrangements are bad and corrupt.

CHENNEKOTAPALLI

- (1) Iron is not available.
- (2) Cattle mortality not high.
- (3) Labourers are finding some local employment.
- (4) Rations given to the peasants are inadequate.

PENUGONDA

(1) There is water scarcity prevailing. But now it is not so bad as it was 4 weeks back.

(2) Met Gundu Rao, Secretary of Co-operative stores and C. Rajarao Assistant Secretary of the stores and talked to them. Bad distribution of food stuffs - local rice was exported five or six months ago, even as was being exported. Outside rice of inferior quality was being imported. This cross-transport was wasteful.

(3) Co-operative stores are not being encouraged. Pulses are badly needed. When brought in, private merchants are preferred! Sugar must be rationed. Black-marketing is going on through Mysore. There is scarcity of cloth. Local merchants turn everything into black-market. Stores gives preference to its members. There must be corruption somewhere. This must be taken notice of.

URAVAKONDA

Grievances of the Handloom weavers:— At present Government is supplying the yarn to last only for ten days in the month. For the remaining twenty days the weaver is unemployed for want of yarn. So sufficient

quantity of yarn must be supplied. Safeguards for the handlooms as against mill cloth should be provided by the Government.

The weavers request the Government to include one of their members in the local food councils and to include one of their representatives in the Advisory committee of mill-yarn.

Grievances of the Harijans:— The present ration quota is too insufficient for manual worker, so it is requested that it may be extended by 4 oz.

They are not having proper distribution of mill-cloth because of their being outcaste people and the merchants refuse to give them cloth. Hence separate quota of cloth may be allowed to their community.

Higher elementary schools must be opened in every village so that the community may be educated to protect itself from exploitation of other communities.

It is requested that adult education might be popularised by the present Ministry.

They request that poramboke waste lands that are being cultivated by them now should not be assigned to war-returned people, and pattas be granted to them (Harijans).

Water schemes may be started to improve production and save them from recurring famines.

They request that a major portion of the funds allotted for their community by the Madras Government may be used for the Harijans of Rayalseema.

Grievances Mentioned by Ryot Congress:—As this portion of the district is very frequently visited by famines, and as Thungabhadra project is of no use to this taluk, it is requested to expedite Kumudvati, Bhyravan and Upper

Pennar projects and also a thousand pumping engines for wells may be supplied to the district. The present subsidy of Rs. 310 for well-digging is very insufficient. For to dig a well in these parts it costs not less than Rs. 2000. If at all the Government wants the ryots to grow more food grains Rs. 1000 subsidy plus a thousand rupees loan on long term payments should be given to the ryots. Supply of agricultural implements is insufficient. Even 5% of the ryots do not get them. By using the old implements cultivation is not efficiently carried on and so there is less yield. For want of sufficient fodder and adequate medical relief, the number of cattle is going down. Negotiations must be made with Mysore state and fresh stock of bulls is required. It is necessary to open cattle rearing farms at convenient centres in the district. The veterinary staff must be increased to give good medical aid to cattle. Water facilities might be given from Hagari at Honnur. Prohibition may be introduced without delay. The same facts are represented to the Hon'ble K. R. Karanth, the Revenue minister at Bellary.

MADAKASIRA

I had talks with a number of local peasants, teachers, Panchayat Board Presidents, Village Officers and Revenue Inspector and Harijans.

Local Grain supplies are of very bad quality.

There is scarcity of food grain-ragi being sold at Rs. 50 and rice Rs. 60 per palla. There is black-marketing in food grains and sugar and groundnut.

No action is being taken against smugglers. Special Revenue Inspector caught smugglers of sugar, ground-

nut, Bengal gram, and paddy about six weeks back. So far no action has been taken. Officials are reported to be apathetic.

AMARAPURAM AND SIDDAGIRI

Fair Price Shops had to pay Re. 1 extra over the control rate to H. P. M. Seit, Hindupur. The Tahsildar was intimated about it but no action has been taken. The Seit is being reported to be dealing in Black market. The Local Tahsildar is reported to be inefficient.

Whole-sale depots are not working properly. Whether they are interested in black-marketing or not has to be investigated.

The number of cattle dying is increasing. Many are being driven to slaughter houses. Great scarcity of fodder prevails; each head is load selling at Rs. 4. Ground-nut cake is not being made available by the Agricultural Demonstrator, so the local price is eight annas higher than the control rate.

There are no supplies of iron implements or seed grain. Seed grains are very badly needed.

The plight of Harijans is very bad. They are very much famished. The whole village and its neighbourhood are entirely dependent on the store supply.

KALYANDURG

(1) Not enough work for peasants and workers but the customary famine works are not favoured, Stone breaking is not popular.

(a) Village works such as Sanitary pits, house-building, well sinking, deepening old and digging new tanks are favoured.

(2) Subsidies for wells must be increased upto Rs. 1,000 they must be distributed not through village officials who are corrupt or unfriendly but through local food councils on recommendation of Kisan Congress and National Congress Committees. Whether water can be struck or not has to be decided by the Local Food Council and not by a Revenue Inspector.

(3) Subsidies for purchase of Oil Engines are desired.

(4) Harijans are experiencing great difficulty in obtaining drinking water. They are made to pay in terms of labour for the dolling out of water. Local Kisan and National Congress Workers are being exhorted to fight against this injustice. Police assistance for Satyagraha is needed.

(5) Harijans and others were expelled by Village Officials from Government lands. They must be restored.

(6) Forests are being destroyed on account of—

(a) Bad Panchayat Administration (Kalyandurg) and;

(b) Charcoal production for motor buses. This has to be stopped, immediately. Local peasants now realise the necessity of protecting forest wealth. So they do not favour Forest Panchayats.

(7) The development of Bhuvanithippa and Pennar projects are being desired.

(8) Repairs to old tanks and Spring Channels have to be made at Government cost.

(9) Village Officials are demanding from poor peasants, who desire subsidies for wells (bribes of Rs 25 to 50 for a subsidy.) This has to be stopped.

(10) There is great unemployment prevailing among Harijans and weavers. Harijans desire the opening of Famine works. This is, specially so at Kurlagunda and Beluguppa.

(11) The non-availability of Agricultural Implements - The Taluk has not received any quota.

(12) Supplies of seeds are badly needed. Agricultural Department's attitude is unhelpful.

(13) The supply of oil cake for cattle feed is needed. Its present restriction to manural purposes is unhelpful.

(14) Children below 14 years of age must be supplied free meals and milk, especially to those who are landless people.

KOLAGAL

Went there accompanied by H. Sitaramareddi, M. L. A., Govindadas, M. L. A. and T. Subrahmanyam, President, Famine Relief Committee and others.

(1) Met and talked to peasants working on District Board Extension Road works.

(a) For each gravel-head a piece rate of Rs. 1-4-0 is paid. 14 workers made two heaps in 2 days and thus earned Rs. 2-8-0 and so each one got Rs. 0-2-9 per head per day.

(b) The Revenue and District Board Inspectors admitted that the local wage rates when work is available are Rs. 0-6-0 for women and Rs. 0-8-0 for men. So the relief work rates are too low.

(3) An effort is being made now to pay for the removal of top black earth also so that actual wages earned may be raised to 5 as. Even then they will be too low.

(4) With such inadequate wages workers are unable even to secure their inadequate scheduled rations.

(a) Saw the kind of food being eaten by workers at 12 Noon. It is poor, insipid, too dry and only one onion or two, tamarind and chilly stuff are used to spice it.

(b) Appearance of workers is very poor, and weak.

(5) Milk for babies is supposed to be supplied officially and many are not getting it.

(a) Most children are suffering from eye complaint. Many are too weak and suffering from skin diseases.

The supposed surplus producers, owning fairly good acreage, are going for labour and purchasing grain in black market, for they have no grain. On searching their houses found only small stock available. They are in need of rations. The classification is on wrong assumption because more owning land is no indication of having sufficient stock of grains.

SOMASAMUDRAM — 8 Miles from Bellary

(1) Their local total grain quota to be supplied to them is 120 bags. But they have so far received only 31 bags. So local peasants complain of want of grain for the last 2-1/2 weeks. They are forced to resort to black-market. Even black-marketteers are being considered as public benefactors.

(2) Milk is being supplied to children including Harijans.

(3) No gratuitous supplies of food even for the most needy, have so far been begun in this village.

(4) Free kitchens are badly needed.

BOMMANAHALLI — Bellary Taluk

General complaint is there are no rains since two years. So there is no crop. Even the ryots have no stock to give in kind to labourers. Labourers are not purchasing from the stores because they have no work. So work has to be provided to labourers.

Mill cloth is a scarcity and there is no sugar at all. About eight Harijan families left the village for want of food and work.

In the whole district there is no fair price shop.

Milk is supposed to be supplied. There is no fodder for cattle.

The Minister inspected a surplus producer's house and to his surprise he found no grain and he was then declared a non-surplus producer.

NAGIREDDIPALLI — Rayadurg Taluk

There was general failure of rains - there is no cattle fodder. There is no work for the labourers. There are no stocks of grains in stores. People are crying for famine works. They are famished. Visited a house with a family of five members. A lady had cooked a small bowlful of porridge. It is a wonder how they could maintain their lives on such a meagre and useless drink.

Poverty, hunger and hopelessness are bit large on their faces.

KONDAPURAM — Tadiparthi Taluk

General failure of rains - there is scarcity of fodder for the cattle of ordinary type of people. Grain is supplied from stores. The village is mainly well-irrigated and people are mostly self-supporting. The poor people who have no grain are engaged by ryots in

fields. The ryots have distributed 34 bags to the poor. The labourers are paid in kind and are also having their food twice a day. Ration given is 5 chattaks a day but the daily wage given is worth Rs. 0-8-0 plus one seer of meals. But the capacity of eating of a labourer is 1-1/2 seers of grain in these windy days. But the five chattaks of ration supplied by the Government is very insufficient and meagre.

PANGUDA — Mysore State

Met Viswanadhachetty, President, Municipal Council, and Secretary of the Co-operative Stores, and a number of Harijans and peasants.

(1) Rural people are made to suffer more from—

(a) non-supply of cloth, kerosene and sugar;

(b) inadequate and untimely supplies of rice and other food grains.

(2) Local supplies of food grains are exhausted. Conditions of scarcity have prevailed for the last 2 years. There are 8 depots. Each one needs 950 bags. But all of them together get only 950 bags.

(3) An informal ration of 3 chataks for head per day is allowed. This is only one half of the Madras Ration.

(4) No ration cards are issued to the people. So the distribution is indiscriminate and rural people naturally suffer.

(5) Agriculturists (peasants landholding and landless) are being specially neglected in the issue of rations and ration-cards with the wrong impression that as agriculturists they ought to be having their own supplies.

(6) There might be more depots so that the consumers need not have to walk for more than 2 or 3 miles to the stores.

CUDDAPAH DISTRICT

1. Generally rains have not come. Fallen sourings are being delayed. There is an atmosphere of gloom.

2. Great scarcity of food grains prevails in Royachoti, Badvel and Jammalamadugu Taluks.

3. The large masses of weavers, especially of Jammalamadugu, and Proddutur are suffering owing to the growing scarcity of yarn supplies.

4. More and more villages are coming to be dependent upon the authorised food stores.

RAYACHOTI

Visited the town on 30th June, 1946. A large gathering of peasants etc., met me.

1. Loud complaints are made against local merchants and that they being landholders are indulging in black-markets.

2. Cloth and yarn scarcity prevails.

3. Information regarding the Government offer of bonus to food grains which are placed in the markets is not made known to the kisans.

4. Peasants complain of inadequate prices for the grains sold by them; of insufficient stores of food grains; of the vagaries of procurement officers and also of wrong classification as surplus producers.

5. Bigger grants for well-sinking; greater subsidies and more liberal distribution of such subsidies are demanded.

6. Sinking of tube wells, with the aid of electric power to be obtained from mettur is very much desired.

CHENNURU — Cuddapah Taluk

1. Ryots complain of the unwise propaganda by local officials against their betel-leaf gardens, since such gardens produce much more vegetables, fruits leaves and protective foods than ordinary paddy lands.

2. Loud complaints are made against imposition of penalty rates against so-called unauthorised wet-cultivation, though it helps to produce more Food.

Memorandum Submitted to the Indian Famine
Emergency Committee of The United States of America,
by The Andhra Provincial Congress Food Mission.

It is hardly an year since Andhra has become a prey to a horrible cyclone which has swept the East Coast from Vizag down to Guntur causing havoc in Circars. Crops were destroyed; many villages were submerged in water and thousands of cattle were killed. The Andhra Desa has not yet recovered from this shock. To aggravate the situation monsoons have failed as a result Royalaseema with seven millions of population, Vizagapatam District with four millions of population and parts of Guntur and Nellore Districts are very badly affected.

Very recently the Andhra Congress Food Mission has toured the famine-stricken areas of Rayalaseema with Professor Ranga, the President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee and Pandit Kunzru, the President, Servants of India Society and found that Madakasira, Kalyanadurg and Tadipatri Taluqs. in

Anantapur District and Royadurg in Bellary District are now on the verge of starvation. The people have become emaciated and look like skeletons. The children look lifeless. On our way to Penugonda we witnessed the tragedy of the skelton-like bullocks supplying water to the skeleton-like masters. Due to the scarcity of fodder the cattle have been dying here and there in Anantapur District. We saw on our way to Kalyandurg carcasses being feasted by vultures. At places like Madakasira and Penugonda water has become so scarce that it is being supplied to them by lorries. Many a man has left his hearth and home in search of food and water. The conditions of the Harijans are indeed indescribable. Their huts are in a state of collapsing. Being semi-starved and semi-naked, they are the worst affected community in our country. In the countryside there is no work for the labourers. Where there is work, there the workers cannot get more than annas 6 to 8 as wages and even this they do not get regularly. The prices of grain and cloth have grown so high that these poor labourers are not able to get even their rationed grain and cloth with what little money they get from their labour. There are certain co-operative stores which have not been supplying grain to the villages for weeks together, because they themselves are not receiving regular supplies.

Thus the trouble is increasing day by day. If India is left to herself, the trouble may reach to its climax towards the end of August.

The deficit of food-grain in India as estimated by the India Government is 70 lakhs of tons. In our Province, as the Premier Prakasam has explained, we

require immediately nearly 3 lakhs of tons of food materials in order to keep the people alive this year. The Central and the Provincial Governments have resolved to do their best to avert this crisis.

Offering bonus to the Kisans who sell their grains to the Government in the months of June and July and also special bonus for them for short term crops and subsidies for sinking wells, and appointing food committees to solve the food problem, our Premier, Prakasam has been trying to avert this crisis. Yet, after the end of August, he too will be helpless; for by that time every ounce of grain that is available in India will have been exhausted.

Already in Bellary and Anantapur Districts famine Relief Works have been started here and there. Gratuitous relief is being given to all invalids. Milk is being freely given to babies. But this is not enough. Free kitchens must be started, work must be provided to all able-bodied men and women. Grain must be supplied to them regularly. Cloths must be distributed to them according to their rations. Medical relief must be given to them. We are confident our Government can do all these with the help of Prof. Ranga, yet they cannot prevent the calamity befalling to our nation.

In fighting famine, our nation will unite themselves with your people for the realisation of the common ideals cherished by India and America since the days of Maya Civilisation and establish all over the world four-fold freedom envisaged by the late President Roosevelt. If Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramathirtha have brought India and America closer, it is for

this U.S. Mission to fuse them in "Universalism" to save the Indian Nation from this impending disaster! Praying for immediate supply of adequate grain and machinery to destroy famine in India.

We beg to remain,
Dear friends of India, we are
Yours Sincerely,
SWAMY PREMANAND.
K. BUCHI REDDI.

Madras, }
5th July, '46 }

Memorandum submitted to the Honourable Minister
for Revenue, Government of Madras.
By the Andhra Provincial Congress Food Mission.

As rains have failed in many parts in Rayalaseema especially at villages like Bommanhalli of Bellary taluk, Nagireddypalli of Rayadurg taluk and Kondapuram of Tadpatri taluk, crops were raised at few places in these parts. Except those areas which received rain and those plots of land which have irrigation facilities no other piece of land is cultivated to-day. At places like Penukonda and Madakasira water became so scarce that it is being supplied to them by lorries.

Due to lack of fodder, mass deaths of cattle have begun in Dharmavaram and Kalyandurg taluks. Every day reports of deaths of cattle are pouring in. Many a man in Bellary and Harpanahalli taluks has left his hearth and home in search of food and water. About

50 families from Bellary district came to Pattikunnda of Kurnool for the sake of food.

At places like Somasamudram of Bellary District adequate grain is not being supplied to the Co-operative Stores, with the result most of the people are put to great trouble.

The conditions of the Harijans are horrible. Their huts are in a state of collapsing.

Being semi-starved and semi-naked, they are the worst affected community in our country. Most of these labourers especially those of Avulacheruvu, Chennur, Dharmapuri, Mallakaluva, Obulem Palle, Bethalapalle, Erraguntapalle, Nelakota, Darsimala, Gunipalle, Siddapuram, Malagudlapalle, Guttur, Nagulapuram, Malkapuram, Pottamarri, Kottapalle, Elpumadugu, Gantapuram, Mustur, Erraguntillapalle, Lingareddypalle, Sanjeevapuram, Bettulapalle, Malintam, Tadmarri, Narasimhunipalle, Peddakotla, Chinnakotla etc., of Dharmavaram taluk and of Chilumuttur, Gorantla and Pariga firkas of Hindupur taluk are literally eating 'Devadaru' leaves and roots known as 'Tungagedda' and 'Kunkaragedda'.

In the country-side there is no employment for the workers. Where there is work, there they are paid not more than annas eight. They are not, therefore, in a position to take their rationed grain even though it is made available for them through the Co-operative Stores. Some of the peasants are mortgaging their properties in order to get food during this crisis while others are following the 'Nagu' system of taking loan from the ryots at exorbitant interest.

The problem of cloth is increasing day by day. As Blackmarket is rampant, the poor workers are forced to cover their bodies with rags. On the whole, as you see now, the people look emaciated and the children lifeless.

The Government have, no doubt, are undertaking relief measures in Anantapur and Bellary districts. All that they have done hitherto is to free the most affected areas from the burden of taxation and arrange gratuitous relief to the invalids and the destitutes and also free supply of milk to the children in certain parts of Anantapur and Bellary districts. The present District Collector of Anantapur, Mr. W. H. Mitchell and his personal Assistant Mr. Koteswararao and Mr. A. C. Nayak the Subcollector of Panukonda have evinced great interest in famine relief work by offering their whole hearted co-operation to the non-officials in fighting this famine. The present District Board President, Mr. P. Lakshmayya too is earnest to do his best to save the people from the grip of the famine. In this way, this Anantapur District is exceptionally fortunate to secure the hearty co-operation of the officials and non-officials to serve the people with the missionary spirit of service and sacrifice.

Yet, we have not been able to achieve much in the way of organising relief to the people by starting actual relief centres. The non-official organisations such as Andhra Maha Sabha and Rayalaseema Famine Relief Committee of Bombay and the Servants of India Society besides the Congress Organisations guided by Prof. Ranga are rushing to the rescue of the people. The Andhra Maha Sabha has given Rs. 4,000 to Mr. Danti Bhimaiah of Hindupur to start famine

relief centre. It has yet to be started. M. Raghavachari, B. A. LLB., of Anantapur has with him the old Rayalaseema Famine Relief Fund of about Rs. 5,000 collected. Mr. Raja Pedda Subbarayudu of Nandyal has with him Famine Fund of Rs. 7,000 which must be also spent for this famine relief work. We hope that, under the leadership of Prof. Ranga and the aegis of Congress Government, it may be possible for us to mobilise all these non-official agencies and co-ordinate their activities in order to intensify this anti-famine campaign for the success of which the harmonious co-operation of officials and non-officials is absolutely necessary.

Assuring the hearty co-operation of the Andhra Provincial Congress, Kisan Congress, Youth Congress and Students' Congress all guided by Professor Ranga, we request the Congress Government to undertake the following relief measures immediately.

I. Short term relief measures.

1. To introduce prohibition in the worst affected areas of Rayalaseema, especially Anantapur and Bellary Districts.
2. To start famine relief works by undertaking all minor irrigation schemes
3. To secure grain from surplus districts and import it to the famine stricken areas of Rayalaseema. For this purpose, special staff must be created to execute the work vigorously.
4. To enable the food committees to start more depôts with the financial aid of the Government so that black-marketeers may be avoided by the food committees. They must not be left to the fate of

depending on their individual rich members who most often, are responsible for this famine.

5. To empower the food committees to investigate and report all the short term and long term famine relief measures and also undertake them with the help of the Government, thus enabling them to act as planning committees, as well as the relief committees.

6. To establish National Food Front to co-ordinate, supervise, and guide these food committees.

7. To start free kitchens immediately for boys and girls under the age of sixteen.

8. To supply fodder wherever possible through Railway Waggon and then distribute to various centres through lorries.

9. To spare more lorries in Anantapur district for this fodder.

10. To make every military lorry carry the fodder to its full capacity.

11. To start famine relief training camp at Anantapur and give special training to the volunteers and the military and the reserve police in order that they may serve the people in emergency.

12. To intensify the "Grow more Food Campaign" by,

(a). Prohibiting the production of tobacco and bringing that tobacco production area under the cultivation of food crops. This can be done by giving special bonus to the food crops raised in such lands.

(b) Minimising the production of sugar cane, and devoting that sugar cane area to the production of food grains. Instead of sugar, jaggery made out of palm and date trees can be made use of in this crisis as an exceptional case.

(c) By encouraging the production of ragi through offering bonuses to the ragi crops. This crop is raised in Chittoore Cuddapah and Anantapur Districts. The price fixed to-day by the Government for ragi is Rs. 140 per ten pallas (1000 seers of Bellary) while its actual cost of production is Rs. 180. The peasants cannot produce this ragi if its price is not raised as to cover this loss and also gain a little more.

(d) By digging common wells on large scale in tank-beds to enable the peasants to make use of the water for irrigation purposes. Instead of giving subsidies individually, the Government can undertake this work which will be more useful and helpful to the peasants.

13. To make all public charitable institutions, religious and non-religious, undertake this famine relief work with their funds at their respective places.

14. To eradicate the 'Nagu System' by starting rural banks and enabling the workers and peasants to borrow money directly from the rural banks instead of from the usurers.

II. Long term plans.

1. To expand the Ceded Districts Economic Development Board and make it the Rayalaseema Economic Development board including the Chittoore district and giving representation to the peasants and their organisations.

2. To make Anantapur the Head-quarters for the Rayalaseema Economic Development Board and enable it to function like the National Planning Committee and also as the executive committee. For this purpose special staff must be given to it and a Minister for Rayalaseema should be in charge of it. It must also have special budget for it without which no real work can be done.

3. All the major irrigation projects in Rayalaseema must be undertaken by the Government without any more delay.

4 The Government must pursue a bold policy of abolishing land-lordism and Nationalising all private industries and transport-businesses the income of which can be devoted to the reconstruction of Rayalaseema in such a way as to destroy the famine once-for-all and pave the way for its ever increasing prosperity. Any slackening in this work or any fear of capitalists lurking in our hearts will do havoc. And then they will be no salvation to the people.

5. Raise funds for this economic development of Rayalaseema through loans.

6. Levy, if necessary, special famine tax in order to get sufficient money for this urgent task, of developing Rayalaseema.

The only way to make this great work a grand success is to establish the National Food Front with the missionary spirit of service and sacrifice. If to fight the war the Governments here and abroad felt it necessary to create National War Front, it is even now much more necessary to start National Food Front to fight this Famine. Without such an organisation, as Professor Ranga has pointed out in his statement on the National Food Front, no real and lasting work can be undertaken by any Government.

Hoping that you will, with this National Food Front, save our Rayalaseema from Famine,

We beg to remain,
Beloved leader,
Your most obedient servants,
SWAMI PREMANAND,
President.

K. V. RAMAKRISHNA,
Secretary.

Anantapur,

Date 18th July 1946

PROVINCIAL FAMINE AND FOOD FRONT

Resolution of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee

The Andhra Congress Committee which met at the Provincial Congress Office, Bezwada on 29th July 46 under the presidentship of Prof. N. G. Ranga has pressed the following resolution on the formation of the Provincial Famine and food front to start the famine Campaign :—

In order to fight Famine and starvation by guiding the food committees that are formed now and making them work efficiently and vigorously and by encouraging the 'Grow more food campaign', suggesting ways and means of Famine Relief work and submitting schemes to the Ministers for self-sufficiency and securing the hearty co-operation of the public to the Ministry for the successful execution of their plans, the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee hereby resolves to request the Ministry to establish under the Leadership of the Food Minister Provincial Famine and Food Front with the representatives of the National Congress, Kisan Congress to the rural and urban mass Organisations.

President,
A. P. C. C. Bezwada.

THE ROYALASEEMA FAMINE AND FOOD MISSION.

Prof. N. G. Ranga appoints the Committee.

'After studying the reports of the Andhra Provincial Congress Food Mission on the Famine Conditions of Royalaseema and the Famine Relief Work that is being carried on by the public and the Government and

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the kind of work yet to be done, I hereby appoint the Royalaseema Famine and Food Mission consisting of the following members to assist the public and the Ministry in organising Famine Relief Work:—

Sri Premji. (Honourary President.)

Sri C. Balireddi, (President.)

Sri K. V. Ramakrishnareddi, (General Secretary.)

Members

Sri S. Ramireddi.

Sri B. Hanumanthu.

Sri C. L. N. Reddi, B. A., B. L.,

Sri N. V. R. Naydu,

Sri Sidda Linganna.

Sri Raghavachari, B. A., B. L.,

Sri R. Pedda Subbarayadu.

Sri Rama Sundararao, and

Presidents and Secretaries of the District Congress Committees, District Kisan Congress Committees, District Weavers' Congress, District Students' Congress and District Board Presidents and all M. L. As for those districts.

The Committee is authorised to appoint a small Executive Committee and conduct its day to day ordinary business through correspondents between members, provided such decisions are confirmed by its next meeting.

Andhra Provincial
Congress Committee,
Bezwada, 31-7-46.

President,
A. P. C. C., Bezwada,
31-7-46.

