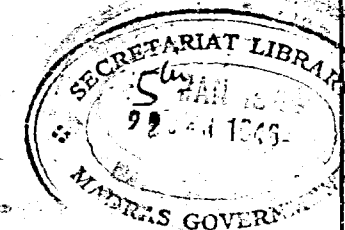


LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

MONDAY, 8th November, 1943

Vol. IV—No. 1

OFFICIAL REPORT



CONTENTS

	PAGES
Members Sworn	1
Starred Questions and Answers	1—22
Unstarred Questions and Answers	22
Statements laid on the table	22—26
Message from His Excellency the Governor General	26
Statement re method of taking votes by division	26—27
Motion for Adjournment re Non-official Delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort—Adopted	27—28
H. E. the Governor General's Assent to Bills	31—46
The Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—Petitions laid on the Table	28
Amendments to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules	29

[P. T. O.]

PUBLISHED BY THE MANAGER OF PUBLICATIONS, DELHI
PRINTED BY THE MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI
1943

Price Five Annas

Copies of the Debates of the Legislative Assembly and of the Council of State are obtainable on sale from the Manager of Publications, CIVIL LIBRARY, DELHI.

Volume IV—8th to 19th November, 1943.

The Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—Presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee	30
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	30
The Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	30
The Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30
The Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30
The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30
The Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	31
Election of members to the Delhi University Court	31



	PAGES.		PAGES.
MONDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER, 1943—		lection of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department	190—95
Members Sworn	1	Election of a Member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore	195—96
Starred Questions and Answers	1—22	Motion re the Food Situation—Discussion not concluded	196—224
Unstarred Questions and Answers	22	SATURDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 1943—	
Statements laid on the Table	22—26	Starred Questions and Answers	225—48
Message from His Excellency the Governor General	26	Unstarred Questions and Answers	248—49
Statement re method of taking votes by division	26—27	Motions for Adjournment re—	
Motion for Adjournment re Non-official Delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort—Adopted	27—28	Arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of Lahore—Ruled out of Order	250
H. E. the Governor General's Assent to Bills	28	Alleged inhuman Treatment to Mr. Jai-prakash Narain—Ruled out of Order	250—51
The Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—Petitions laid on the Table	29	The Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—Passed	251—52
Amendments to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules	29	The Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Passed	252
The Hindu Code Part I, (Intestate Succession)—Presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee	30	The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—Circulated	252—78
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	30	The Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—Passed as amended	278
The Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill—Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee	30	The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill (Amendment of section 503, etc.)—Passed as amended	278—79
The Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30	MONDAY, 15TH NOVEMBER 1943—	
The Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30	Member sworn	281
The Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30	Starred Questions and Answers	281—96
The Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30	Unstarred Questions and Answers	297
The Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill—Introduced	30	Declarations of Exemption and Notification under the Registration of Foreigners Act	297—99
Election of Members to the Delhi University Court	30	Motion re The Food Situation—not concluded	299—343
TUESDAY, 9TH NOVEMBER, 1943—		TUESDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 1943—	
Member Sworn	47	Member sworn	345
Starred Questions and Answers	47—80	Starred Questions and Answers	345—58
Unstarred Questions and Answers	80—82	Unstarred Questions and Answers	358—59
Motions for Adjournment re—		Motion for Adjournment re Failure to implement their Guarantee of Independence to Lebanon by the British Government—Ruled out of Order	359
Banning Publication of Bengal Governor's Order against the <i>Amrita Bazar Patrika</i> —Ruled out of Order	83—84	Reconstitution of the House Committee	359
Failure to give Publicity to Mortality due to Starvation in Bengal—Not moved	84	Motion re the Food Situation—Discussion not concluded	359—401
Failure to take Timely Action for preventing Acute Food Crisis in Bengal—Disallowed	84	Statement of Business	401
Failure to consult the Legislature re Agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration—Ruled out of Order	84—85	WEDNESDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, 1943—	
Hunger-strike of Political Prisoners in Bhagalpore Camp Jail—Ruled out of Order	86	Member Sworn	403
Continuance of Central Government's Subsidy to Sind—Ruled out of Order	86	Starred Questions and Answers	403—38
Nomination of the Panel of Chairmen	86—87	Unstarred Questions and Answers	438—40
Resolution re Stabilization of Prices—Adopted as amended	87—105	Point of Order re Motion proposing communication of formal address to H. E. the Governor General	440—41
Statement of Business	105—06	Election of Members to the Delhi University Court	441
WEDNESDAY, 10TH NOVEMBER, 1943—		Statements laid on the Table	441—42
Starred Questions and Answers	107—37	The Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment) Bill—Passed	442—43
Unstarred Questions and Answers	138—39	The Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill—Passed	443—44
Committee on Petitions	139	The Central Excise Bill—Referred to Select Committee	444—45
The Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—Petitions laid on the Table	139	The Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—Circulated	445—46
The Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill—(Amendment of section 100)—Motion to continue adopted	140	Motion re the Food Situation—Discussion not concluded	446—73
The Dissolution of Muslim Marriages (Amendment) Bill—Motion to continue adopted	140	THURSDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 1943—	
The Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment) Bill—(Insertion of section 12B)—Motion to continue adopted	140	Starred Questions and Answers	475—93
The Muslim Kazis Bill—Motion to continue adopted	140	Unstarred Questions and Answers	493—94
The Indian Evidence (Amendment) Bill—Motion to continue adopted	140	Motions for Adjournment re—	
The Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—Referred to Select Committee	140—43	Conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in Durban—Ruled out of Order	494
The Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—Motion to refer to Select Committee—Withdrawn	143—65	Ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other Muslim Security Prisoners—Ruled out of Order	495
FRIDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 1943—		Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department	495
Starred Questions and Answers	167—83	Election of a Member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore	495
Unstarred Questions and Answers	183—89	Motion re Food Situation—Discussion concluded	495—541
Election of Members to the Delhi University Court	189	FRIDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 1943—	
The Central Excise Bill—Introduced	190	Member Sworn	543

THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES
(OFFICIAL REPORT OF THE NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.)

VOLUME IV—1943

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Monday, 8th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House in New Delhi, at Eleven of the Clock, being the First Day of the Nineteenth Session of the Fifth Legislative Assembly, pursuant to Section 63-D (2) of the Government of India Act, as set out in the Ninth Schedule to the Government of India Act, 1935. Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim, K.C.S.I.) was in the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava, K.B.E. (Food Member);
Mr. Zahid Husain, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Govt. of India: Nominated Official);
Sir Gurunath Venkatesh Bewoor, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Secretary, Posts and Air Department);
Mr. John Dawson Tyson, C.B.E., M.L.A. (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands);
Mr. Leonard John Dean Wakely, M.B.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official); and
Mr. Narhar Ganesh Abhyankar, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

PERSONS DETAINED FOR REASONS OF STATE.

1. **Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) the number of persons detained in British India for reasons of state connected with external affairs;

(b) the amount of family and maintenance allowances paid to every one of them;

(c) whether their cases are reviewed from time to time; and

(d) when the case of Sayad Habib of Lahore was reviewed last time?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) 15; of whom 14 are foreigners;

(b) 9 of these persons (including the one British Indian detenu) receive allowances varying between Rs. 300 p.m. and Rs. 100 p.m. according to their circumstances. The remaining 6 receive no allowances.

(c) Yes; when circumstances so suggest;

(d) May 1942.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: With reference to part (b) of the answer, could I know what provinces the British Indian detenus come from?

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: May I know why these remaining six people did not get any maintenance?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Because I understand they had no income before.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: Then should they starve like in Calcutta? Will any arrangements be made to give them some allowances for their families now that you have locked them up?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I understand that this matter had been considered. They had no families.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Government what is their policy in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: They considered the circumstances of the detenus and gave the maintenance allowances accordingly.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if in view of the abnormal rise in prices the allowance to detenus have also been raised?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Government considered their allowance to be quite sufficient.

Sardar Mangal Singh: When the case of Sayed Habib was reviewed, was he informed?

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Has any case been reviewed so far?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Yes, cases are reviewed and if no action is thought necessary, no action is taken.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

2. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state whether Government adhere to the communal formula for recruitment in the Supply Department?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, what is the number of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians and Parsis, separately?

(c) How did the recruitment take place? Was it made through the Federal Public Service Commission or through the departmental boards?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) The communal formula for recruitment is adhered to as far as possible.

(b) A statement showing the position as on 1st September 1943 is placed on the table.

(c) Recruitment has been made in the majority of cases through the Departmental Selection Committees.

Statement showing the number of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, etc., employed in the Supply Department in posts outside the Ordnance, H. & S. and Clothing Factories on 1st September 1943.

Particulars of Communities.

Serial No.	Name of office.	Hindus.	Muslims.	Sikhs.	Indian Christians.	Parsis.
<i>Gazetted Officers.</i>						
1	Supply Dept. (Main Sectt.)	11	9	1	..	..
2	D. G. S.	133	33	8	5	1
3	D. G. M. P.	86	5	2	..	1
4	D. G. S. R.	..	..	..	1	1
5	Electrical Commissioner	9	..	..	..	..
6	Iron and Steel Controller	23	1	1	1	5
7	C. A. O. (P.)	120	53	6	2	6
8	Controllers of Supplies	17	8	..	1	5
TOTAL		399	109	18	10	19
<i>Non-Gazetted Staff.</i>						
1	Supply Dept. (Main Sectt.)	168	64	7	6	..
2	D. G. S.	2,988	1,350	63	120	8
3	D. G. M. P.	2,129	301	19	*86	7
4	D. G. S. R.	84	11	5	47	..
5	Electrical Commissioner	56	10	6	1	..
6	Iron & Steel Controller	495	11	6	11	6
7	C. A. O. (P.)	1,646	585	63	97	4
8	Controllers of Supplies	372	99	3	24	5
TOTAL		7,938	2,431	172	392	30

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if recruitment in India is still going on for the Supply Department, and if there is any necessity?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is still going on and there is a necessity, otherwise there would not be any recruitment.

* Includes Anglo-Indi

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: The Honourable Member has said that the communal formula for recruitment is adhered to as far as possible. But under how many heads of communities?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and other minorities.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

PROGRESS AS REGARDS ABOLITION OF LOWER GAZETTED SERVICES ON INDIAN RAILWAYS.

3. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to make a short statement on the progress made to settle finally the question of the abolition of the Lower Gazetted Service on Indian Railways, and on the main features of the scheme?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The proposal of Government to abolish the Lower Gazetted Service has been discussed with the Standing Finance Committee for Railways on several occasions and the matter is still under the consideration of Government in the light of these discussions. As regards the second part, I would refer the Honourable Member to the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways beginning with that for the meeting held on 3rd and 4th July, 1942, and ending with that held on 31st July, 1943.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: At what stage are these proceedings and why are they being delayed?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The delay was due to the discussions of the Standing Finance Committee.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Are the discussions at such a stage that this matter will come to an end?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The answer is. Yes, Sir.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I would like to know what still remains to be done?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Government will shortly make up its mind.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: While considering this particular question the Government should not attempt to evade the Resolution of 1934 about communal representation by backdoor methods.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Government will take all facts into consideration.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Does the Government know that the Standing Finance Committee for Railways has rejected the proposal for abolishing, because originally the scheme was to involve only about two lakhs of rupees whereas now it was found that it is going to be more than six lakhs of rupees without serving any adequate purpose?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The advice tendered by the Standing Finance Committee was contrary to the proposals which Government put up; that is why the matter is requiring such careful consideration.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: On the ground that it is costing much more than originally thought?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already mentioned that.

ACCOMMODATION FOR RAILWAY POLICE AT SUKKUR.

4. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:—

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of Railway quarters for accommodating the Railway police at Sukkur Station of the North Western Railway is insufficient;

(b) if it is a fact that the Sind Government and the Police officers have requested for the construction of quarters for their staff; if so, what action has been taken in the matter;

(c) how many units of quarters are required, and what will be the cost of their construction;

(d) whether the cost will be borne by the Railway, or shared with the Sind Government; and

(e) when Government are likely to consider the demand for the construction of quarters referred to in part (b) above?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The number of Railway quarters for accommodating the Railway Police at Sukkur station is considered sufficient.

(b) As far as Government are aware, no such request has been made.

(c), (d) and (e). Do not arise.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: How many are there?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should require notice of that.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Has no complaint been received from the Sind Government with regard to this?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Not by the Police Department?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: May I rise to a point of order on this? The question raises some point that has appeared in some obscure postal magazine called the *Postal Sentinel*, and Honourable Members have no means of knowing what has appeared there, nor has the Honourable Member mentioned what the matter refers to—he speaks something about Urdu pamphlets and this and that—we do not know what the matter is?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): This is question No. 4.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: May I now raise the point?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Let the Government reply; there is no point of order.

ISSUE OF OBJECTIONABLE PAMPHLETS BY POSTAL EMPLOYEES.

5. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state if his attention has been drawn to the Editorial in *The Postal Sentinel*, dated September, 1943, under the heading "A sad state of affairs" regarding certain postal employees issuing objectionable pamphlets?

(b) Is it a fact that for many years past there has persisted a tendency to issue pamphlets by certain postal employees, with a view to making the postal authorities follow a certain course of conduct desired by those employees by that means? If so, what have the authorities been doing for such a long time to checkmate the conduct of such employees?

(c) Is it a fact that about June 1943 a pamphlet in Urdu was issued in Sind under the signatures of those mentioned in the aforesaid *Sentinel* with a view to forcing the hands of the authorities to do what they wanted?

(d) Are the signatories of the pamphlet postal employees? If so, what action has been taken against them? If none, why?

(e) Are these pamphlets of an inflammatory nature which is likely to foment communal trouble? If so, what immediate steps do Government propose to take against the signatories under the Government Servants Conduct Rules, or under the administrative orders? If none, why?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) I have seen the editorial referred to.

(b) Some pamphlets have been issued from time to time by certain employees of the Post Office at Karachi, who are members of one or the other of the two recognised Service Unions of postal employees at that place. The object of such pamphlets has usually been criticism of the action of members of the rival Union and no notice is generally taken of them, although the authorities have for a long time endeavoured to promote feelings of amity and co-operation between the members of the two Unions.

(c) Yes. There is, however, nothing in the pamphlet to indicate that it was intended to force the hands of the authorities to do what the signatories of the pamphlet wanted.

(d) The signatories of the pamphlets are postal employees. No action has been taken against them because it was not considered that such action would be appropriate.

(e) Though the language used in the pamphlets is of an exaggerated and undesirable character Government do not consider that they are likely to foment communal trouble as such and do not, therefore, propose to take any action upon them.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the Honourable Member received a copy of the *Sentinel* which I sent along with the question?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Yes.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Does the Honourable Member think that if the object of such pamphlets from time to time has not been to force the hands of the Government, what was the intention of this particular pamphlet?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Honourable Member must ask that question of the signatories of the pamphlet.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: They are employees of the Postal Department; therefore I am asking the Government whether they have made inquiries or are only assuming in that way?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The signatories issued the pamphlets, not to Government, but among their own members; all I intended to convey was that so far as Government is concerned, by reading the pamphlet we do not think the intention was to force the hands of the authorities to do anything which the signatories wanted. In any case, they would have been disappointed.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: May I know whether those who issued the pamphlet were all Muslims?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: No; pamphlets have been issued from all sides. The particular pamphlet which the Honourable Member is referring to was, however, issued by Muslims.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Mahtia: What are these two rival postal unions?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Provincial Branch of the All India Postal and Telegraph Union and the Provincial Branch of the All India Postal and R. M. S. Union?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Are they communal unions?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: No; they are not.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: This question which has now been discussed deals with a matter which appeared in some obscure postal journal . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As regards that, I have laid down what the procedure should be: that the Member who is the questioner should furnish a copy of the paper to the Assembly Department; it cannot be circulated to all the members.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: The question itself might contain the gist of what has appeared in the papers . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): We looked into that.

INADEQUACY OF PLATFORM SHEDS AT MUTTRA JUNCTION RAILWAY STATION.

16. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** (a) Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware that at Muttra Junction Railway Station there is a shed on only one of the platforms for the protection of passengers from rain during the monsoon and heat in summer?

(b) Is he aware that in monsoon the passengers waiting for trains on the other platforms where there are no sheds to protect them get drenched with rain?

(c) Is he prepared to do anything for these passengers to protect them from rain and heat and consequent illness?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The provision of such facilities is within the competence of the Railway Administration and the matter could suitably be brought to the notice of the General Manager, G.I.P. Railway, either direct or through the Local Advisory Committee. However, I shall send him a copy of this question and answer for his consideration.

RECRUITMENT OF GAZETTED OFFICERS IN SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

7. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state in detail, the total number of gazetted officers appointed in the Supply Department since its inception upto September 15, 1943, in all Centres, *viz.*, Delhi, Calcutta, Cawnpore, Bombay, Madras, Lahore and others?

(b) What is the number of such gazetted officers, province by province, *i.e.*, how many persons have been appointed gazetted officers from different provinces, *viz.*, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Madras, Sindh, Central Provinces, United Provinces and the Punjab, and how many have been appointed from the centrally administered provinces and States?

(c) Is it a fact that Heads of European Commercial Houses at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras have been appointed at the top position in the Departments of Supply in different Presidencies who are not salaried officers? If so, why?

(d) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that those Commercial Houses of which the Heads are honorary employees of the Supply Department are given open orders and tenders from outside suppliers are not called for?

(e) Does the Honourable Member propose to lay on the table the orders for supply issued by the Supply Department in Calcutta on open orders, when tendered suppliers offered lower rates? Why were such preferences given to parties who offered higher rates during 1942 and 1943?

(f) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that there has been discontent and dissatisfaction in the Calcutta office under the administration of the Assistant Controller of Purchase? How many subordinate officers were transferred, and how many have resigned in 1942 in this office?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The information asked for by the Honourable Member is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

DESIRABILITY OF STOPPING SALE OF BALUCHI WOMEN.

†8. **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state, with reference to starred question No. 302 asked in this House on the 15th March 1943, what information has been received in respect of the enquiries made in connection with the memorial submitted to the Commissioner, Multan Division, Multan, on the 25th October 1941, in respect of relief to Baluchi girls?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that decrees for the price of the person of a Baluchi widow in favour of the relatives of her former husband are passed against her second husband under the Frontier Crimes Regulation?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that a divorced Baluchi woman after divorce is sold against her consent to any other man by her former husband, and that if the woman does not marry the purchaser and marries another person, then money decrees for her price are passed by the Courts against the husband of her own choice in favour of the unsuccessful purchaser under the said Regulation?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that if a Baluchi girl after the appearance of signs of puberty gets her infant age *Nikah* cancelled under the law through a civil court by the exercise of her option of puberty, and that the husband gets decrees for the price of her person in his favour passed by Political Courts against her second husband as well as guardian and also gets a decree for damages for the breach of custom, and that orders for expulsion (*Jila Watani*) from the city of the girl and her husband are passed?

(e) Is it or is it not a fact that even before the birth of a Baluchi girl, which is termed as *Lafi Bazu* by Baluchis, many agreements of her sale and purchase take place, and that the Political Courts legalising such sale and purchase agreements pass decrees of the price of their persons?

† Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(f) If the answers to (b), (c), (d) and (e) or to any of them be in the affirmative, do Government propose to consider the advisability of stopping these practices as contrary to good conscience and public policy under section 9 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) A copy of the memorial referred to by the Honourable member, and of the reply that was returned to it, is placed on the table of the House.

(b) to (f). It is a fact that the practices akin to those mentioned do exist. They are in accordance with Baluchi custom, and decisions given under the Frontier Crimes Regulation are merely enforcements of long-standing Baluch tribal custom, which is well understood and accepted by the persons principally concerned, although by modern standards and amongst more advanced communities they might be reprobated. But it is also a fact that although the woman's consent is not necessary to these transactions they are not normally performed against her will. In the opinion of the local authorities much ill feeling and unrest would be caused amongst the Baluchis by any attempt on the part of Government to impose any sudden change of their old established tribal customs. Persuasion and education are the only effective means of liberalising the outlook of the Baluchis to their womenfolk, and local officers miss no opportunity of pressing for modifications of Baluchi tribal law to secure this end. One of the results so achieved is that in several Tumans now the Jirgas no longer recommend the enforcement of pre-natal contract of marriage.

Copy of the Memorial to the Commissioner, Multan Division, Multan.

SUBJECT:—Application requesting that after consulting Legal Remembrancer to Government, Punjab, the following kind of decrees which are being passed and executed by the Political Courts, Dera Ghazi Khan, under section 8 of the Frontier Crimes Regulation No. III of 1901, and which are totally against the spirit of the the Frontier Law should be stopped:—

- (1) The decrees of the price of the person of a Baluch widow in favour of the relations of her former husband against her second husband.
- (2) A divorced Baluch woman after divorce is sold against her consent. If she disagrees with her sale and consequently does not marry with her purchaser but marries another person according to her own choice, then money decree of her price is passed by courts against the husband of her own choice in favour of the original unsuccessful purchaser.
- (3) If a Baluch girl after the appearance of the signs of puberty, gets her infant age *nikah* cancelled under the law through a civil Court exercising her option of puberty, the Political Courts then pass a decree of the price of her person in favour of her earlier unlawful husband against her lawful husband who marries her after the cancellation of her first *nikah*.
- (4) Even before the birth of a Baluch girl (which is termed as *Lafi Bazu* by Baluchis) many agreements of her sale and purchase take place. The Political courts legalizing such sale and purchase agreements pass decrees of the price of her person.

RESPECTED SIR,

It is an established fact that the attitude of Baloches has been antagonistic towards their innocent girls and women since many decades. Selling the girls like animals, selling them before their birth, considering the widows as cattle and as movable property of their families and dividing them like other inherited property etc., are the chief features of the savage and barbarious traditions of the Baloch nation, which are in vogue till this day. Irrespective of the fact that we live under the benevolent rule of justice and equity loving British Government, the unhumanly treatment of Baloches towards their females prevail undiminished and unchanged. The main reason for this is the fact that the fate of the females lies *in toto* in the merciless hands of their males (Muqqadims and Tumandars) in the form of the Frontier Crimes Regulation, who serve their personal ends in preference to the interests of Baluch girls through Frontier Crimes Regulation. The Baloches make illegal use of the Frontier Law to establish their unlawful mentality which can safely be said to be far from humanity. The Political Courts, Dera Ghazi Khan are solely and mainly responsible for such irregularities or at least carry the lion's share of responsibilities for this, by awarding decrees for the sale of Balochi women under section 8 of Frontier Crimes Regulation. It is a matter for surprise that they order decrees of the value of several millions of rupees every year, and these decrees are totally detrimental and contradictory to the intentions of the law.

2. Sir, the above cited decrees are illegal and void and they are effected through the misuse and misinterpretation of the law.

It may be made known to your goodness that we do humbly request for the declaration of these Baluch *Riwajes* as quite illegal and immoral if the Baluch *Riwajes* be relied upon for passing these decrees. We also humbly submit that the Frontier Crimes Regulation

does not permit the passing of such decrees and if in the learned opinion of the Legal Remembrancer such decrees can be passed under the Frontier Crimes Regulation, we humbly pray for the amendment of such law.

A. In the eyes of law there should be no bar or hinderance in the liberty of Baluch women (except sexual limitations which are common to them and the women of the other communities). The Baluch women equally deserve civil liberty as do the other British subjects enjoy.

B. It is an admitted fact that the Civil Courts do never entertain the type of claims noted above as they consider them illegal and think them as prohibited by law. They neither allow such cases to be filed with them, nor do they award decrees of the above type. This prohibition they do not base on any special law. They take legitimate advantage of the provisions of section 23 of Contract Act which lays down that no agreement should be given effect to which is "opposed to public policy". It is a matter for gratification that exactly the same provisions exist in the Frontier Crimes Regulation too; the favour of attention is invited to section 9. It is a matter for amazement that when Civil Courts do not entertain the above cited sort of cases, why should the Political Courts, Dera Ghazi Khan do, especially when the provisions of law are the same for both. Moreover section 3 clearly states that Frontier Crimes Regulation does not supersede any of the Civil and Judicial Law, and if the political courts welcome the above cited cases under Frontier Crimes Regulation and the civil courts do not, under Civil Law, then it may be concluded that Frontier Crimes Regulation supersedes the Civil Law.

It will now be clear that the Political Courts order and execute illegal and unlawful decrees of the cost of Baluch girls, noted as subject which are at one and the same time contradictory to the Civil Law, irrespective of the fact that they are no less prohibited by the Frontier Crimes Regulation than are restricted by the Civil Law.

3. There prevails a feeling of displeasure and discontentment among the public against the abuses of the Frontier Law in the shape of the above noted decrees, and the people are giving vent to their feelings through press also. This can somewhat be gauged from the enclosed pamphlet.

Sir, it is the time of reformation, equity and freedom. Now, the time is ripe to put a stop to the policy of offering partial and preferential treatment to the Baluch males. On the other hand it is high time to have the Baluch women their claims and rights in their cases. No effort should be spared to shower upon them full liberty of which the British benign Government can rightly boast of. The Law should be correctly applied in cases of females and in future, there be no hitch or hinderance in their way, except the sexual restrictions incumbent upon them as imposed by other communities on their women.

4. The Political Courts, Dera Ghazi Khan, do neither allow the appearance of lawyers nor any appeal lies in cases decided by them. Under these circumstances we beg your kindness to consult the Legal Remembrancer to Government, Punjab, and then issue orders to the Political Courts, Dera Ghazi Khan, to discontinue awarding and executing the decrees cited in the subject, and if in the opinion of the Legal Remembrancer to Government, Punjab, such decrees can be passed, we would then humbly pray for the cancellation of such law.

5. This application is being made not for the benefit of a particular section, but this is submitted in order to do away with the wrong doings done to an innocent, weak and oppressed class of human beings. As this request is based upon the human, sympathy, we, the representatives of every class and nationality of the respectable citizens, make a joint request, and would humbly invite your unparalleled, unique and impartial justice to pay a heedful and favourable consideration to the matter.

6. All correspondence may kindly be made at the following address:

AHMAD KHAN, PITAFI BALUCH,
President, Central Anjuman Islamia,
Jampur, District Dera Ghazi Khan.

Praying for the justice at your gracious hands.

We beg to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

Sd. :-

1. SARDAR AHMAD KHAN, PITAFI, BALUCH,
President Central Anjuman Islamia, Jampur.
2. DEWAN JHANGI RAM,
President, Arya Samaj, Jampur.
3. MOHAMMAD MASSU KHAN, KHOSA BALUCH,
Zamindar, Jampur.
4. President, District Congress Committee,
Dera Ghazi Khan.
5. L. GIRDHARI LAL,
Hony. Secretary, District Sanatan Dharam
Sabha, D. G. Khan.
6. JAM MAHMUD, KACHHELA, Lambardar,
Mauza Nawan, Tahsil D. G. Khan.
7. ALLAH BAKHSI KHAN,
Khetran, Baluch, B.A.

8. MAULVI ZAFFAR MOHAMMAD, NUTKANI,
Baluch H.P., H.A. of Mundrani,
Tahsil Sanghar, Dera Ghazi Khan District.
9. DOST MOHAMMAD HAJANA,
Editor, Muhib-i-Wattan Series, Dera Ghazi Khan.

Copy of a memorandum No. 1970, dated the 19th February, 1942, from the Commissioner, Multan Division, to the President, Central Anjuman Islamia, Jampur, District Dera Ghazi Khan.

Reference petition signed by you and others complaining about the enforcement of the Baluch *rivaj* with regard to women.

2. My enquiries into the petition show that the system, which you complain of, is exactly in accordance with the long established *rivaj* of the Baluch Tumans, and Government is reluctant to interfere with that *rivaj* until the tumandars and their people themselves adopt an amendment. I therefore regret that no further action can be taken by me in the matter. I would, however, advise you to represent your case to the Tumandars direct.

PROMOTION OF NON-TECHNICAL HANDS AS CHARGEMEN ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

†9. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that an assurance was given on the floor of the Assembly that since the amalgamation of the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway with the East Indian Railway, the promotion of non-technical hands such as mistries, etc., to the post of Chargemen, had been discontinued and the posts were now kept reserved for the ex-apprentice mechanics of Jamalpur Technical School?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that it has been assured that after the amalgamation of the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway with the East Indian Railway the non-technical hands, such as mistries, are eligible for promotion to the posts carrying pay up to Rs. 140 in the old scales and Rs. 120 in the new scales?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that the posts of Improvers in the Running Sheds and Mechanical Workshops of the East Indian Railway are higher than those of the mistries?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that some posts of non-technical Chargemen have recently been created on the East Indian Railway, and that non-technical hands, such as mistries, have been promoted to the above posts in the grade of Rs. 90—20—250, although better qualified technically trained apprentices on probation as Improvers are available and are employed in lower grades than that of the Chargemen? If so, do Government propose to consider the advisability of—

(i) taking immediate steps against those Railway Administrations who are acting in contravention of the policy laid down by them;

(ii) replacing the new appointees by better qualified ex-apprentice Mechanics who are in a lower grade than that of a Chargeman, and issuing necessary orders to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, to this effect; and

(iii) issuing instructions to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, to stop such practice in all future cases in accordance with the assurance given? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a), (b) and (c). Yes.

(d) The posts referred to are those of non-technically trained chargemen and as such have rightly been reserved for the promotion of deserving mistries, etc. No harm has been done to the prospects of ex-apprentices, and no action is called for.

PROMOTION OF NON-TECHNICAL HANDS AS CHARGEMEN ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

†10. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that the Deputy General Manager (P), East Indian Railway, admitted in his Minute Sheet No. ME 86/87(I) of 6th April, 1942, in reply to appeals from non-technical hands, that they could

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

not be treated equally with the technically trained hands as this would mean the negation of progress for the better training of mechanics to improve the quality of their work and knowledge, by which means alone the increasing demand for better work necessary to cope with the greater demands made on the machines and plants of to-day could be met, and because by such improved systems only could the quality of work in India be raised to compete with industrial standards in other countries?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, what are the reasons for promoting the non-technical hands, such as mistries to the posts of Chargemen (Rs. 250 old and Rs. 180 new scales) in preference to the better qualified technically trained Improvers, which are higher posts than those of mistries?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The grade was specially created for the promotion of mistries, etc., whose channel of promotion is ordinarily distinct from that of trained mechanics; there was thus no contradiction between what was done and what was stated in the reply referred to in part (a) of the question.

**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY (MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT)
AS REGARDS TRANSFER OF SUBORDINATE SUPERVISING STAFF ON MEDICAL
GROUNDS.**

†11. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that racial discrimination is being maintained on the East Indian Railway in the matter of transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on medical grounds in the Mechanical Department?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that Europeans and Anglo-Indians are transferred on medical grounds due to sickness of their family members, whereas Indians are not transferred even on account of their own illness, and in some cases, the applications of Indians are not even entertained by the Railway Administration in spite of the recommendations of the Railway District Medical Officers and Chief Medical Officer?

(c) If the answers to parts (a) and (b) above be in the negative, does the Honourable Member propose to enquire into the matter, and to lay on the table a statement showing the following particulars:—

(i) the number of the subordinate supervising staff to the Mechanical Departments, East Indian Railway, who have been transferred on medical grounds, since 1939;

(ii) the particulars of their transfers; and

(iii) the number of those whose transfers have been refused showing the percentage of Europeans, Anglo-Indians and Indians; in both cases?

(d) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of issuing necessary orders to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, to transfer without any racial prejudice such persons who are recommended by the District Medical Officers and Chief Medical Officer on account of their own sickness?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). I have no reason to suppose that the facts are as stated by the Honourable Member.

(c) I regret I cannot undertake to collect and compile such information under present circumstances.

(d) Government do not consider such orders are necessary as all Administrations are aware of Government's policy not to countenance racial discrimination. I am, however, sending a copy of the question and answer to the East Indian Railway for such action as they may deem necessary.

**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN COMPILATION OF COMBINED SENIORITY LIST OF
SUBORDINATE SUPERVISING STAFF AND DRAFTSMEN ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY
(MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT).**

†12. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that racial discrimination has been maintained in the compilation of the Combined Seniority List of the

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen of the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, as preambled in the Chief Mechanical Engineer's Minute Sheet No. ME 86/37, dated the 1st November 1937?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that Europeans and Anglo-Indians who do not possess the requisite qualifications of technically trained hands as laid down by the Chief Mechanical Engineer, East Indian Railway, in his Minute Sheet No. ME 323/20, dated the 24th July, 1937, have been included in the Combined Seniority List mentioned in (a) above, while Indians have not been included in the said list?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that one European who received only six months vocational training after military service, has been classified as a technically trained hand and his name has been maintained in the said Combined Seniority List mentioned in (a) above for further promotion? If so, why?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that the name of one Anglo-Indian who did not possess the requisite qualifications of the technically trained hand has been maintained in the said Combined Seniority List referred to in (a) above and he has been subsequently promoted as Progress and Planning Superintendent in the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, and is now working in the Lower Gazetted Service as Production Engineer, thus superseding the claims of the several technically trained seniors?

(e) If the answers to parts (a) and (b) above be in the negative, do Government propose to enquire into the matter, with particular reference to the Paint and Trimming Shop Foreman and the Progress and Planning Superintendent, now working as Production Engineer in the Carriage and Wagon Shops, East Indian Railway? If not, why not?

(f) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of maintaining the Combined Seniority List of the technically trained subordinate supervising staff and draftsmen of the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, in accordance with the assurance given in reply to starred question No. 252 (a) and (c) of the 9th September, 1936 and as per Chief Mechanical Engineer's Minute Sheet No. ME 323/20 of the 24th July, 1937, without racial discrimination, and also issuing necessary orders to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, to rectify the anomaly with immediate effect? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). I have no reason to suppose that the facts are as stated by the Honourable Member.

(c) The Railway has been unable to identify the case referred to.

(d) and (e). I have called for information and a further reply will be laid on the table of the House.

(f) Government have no reason to believe that the lists are not being properly maintained but I am forwarding a copy of the question and the answer to the East Indian Railway for whatever action may be deemed necessary.

**ADVERTISEMENTS AS REGARDS ARRIVALS OF FOODGRAINS AND OTHER FOODSTUFFS
VIA BENGAL NAGPUR AND EAST INDIAN RAILWAYS.**

13. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the advertisements that have appeared from time to time in the Press, giving statistics of the arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs through the Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railway systems, under the heading "Is Railway Transport to blame", will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether his attention has been drawn to the following statement made in the Bengal Legislative Council (Upper House) on the 24th September, 1943, by the Minister for Civil Supplies:

"It was a matter of regret that only one side of the picture had been drawn. The Minister did not know why the Railways had put up the advertisement, except probably to exculpate themselves at the bar of public opinion, or perhaps still higher authorities. It was decided between the Railways and ourselves that there would be no such further talk in future and that no opportunity would be given to create an atmosphere either against the Railways or against the Government. It is a pity that the Railways have broken the agreement which was arrived at between us."

(b) What was the agreement referred to above by the Minister, and who were the parties to it?

(c) Why were such advertisements considered to be necessary, and on how many occasions did they appear? Have they been stopped? If so, with effect from what date, and why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The agreement referred to by the Honourable Minister arose out of a discussion between me and the Honourable Minister in Delhi, at which the desirability was accepted of any details published being known and agreed beforehand between the Central and Provincial Governments. Unfortunately the Railways in Calcutta did not receive instructions before the dates on which the information was published.

(c) The advertisements were inserted with the object of informing the public of the facts and of giving them confidence in the ability of the Railways to meet essential requirements. I understand they appeared in the *Statesman* and the *Star of India* on the 22nd, 23rd and 24th September and in the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, *Hindustan Standard* and the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* on the 23rd, 24th and 25th September. They automatically ceased on completion of the insertions originally ordered, and steps have been taken to co-ordinate similar statements with the Director of Civil Supplies of the Bengal Government in future.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to the statement that no such further attacks would take place in future, will the Honourable Member be pleased to indicate the nature of the mutual recriminations or charges and counter charges that were brought either by the railways, or on behalf of the Government of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: There were no recriminations.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: There were charges and counter-charges?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member stated that there was an impression created that sufficient stocks of food were not going to Bengal: was any countercharge brought by the railways against the Government of Bengal by the Honourable Member himself, for instance?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; there were no charges or counter-charges. I merely stressed to the Honourable Minister the desirability of co-ordinating statements that were to be put out to the public.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it not a fact that a very responsible official made this statement, that the Government of Bengal had failed to make adequate arrangements for handling the consignments of food that were for reaching Calcutta?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is rather a vague statement. What I said and am saying here is that before similar statements on quantities of foodstuffs moved to Calcutta or anywhere else are made public, arrangements should be made that so far as possible there will be co-ordination between the Central Government and the Provincial Governments.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I have a recollection that the Honourable Member himself or some other responsible official made a statement explaining or trying to explain the difficulties that had arisen in Calcutta by a statement that the Government of Bengal had failed to make adequate arrangements for taking prompt delivery of the food articles that had been sent to Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Such statements have, I think, been made from time to time.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: That is what I meant. Is it also a fact that in one instance the Government of Bengal thought that the despatching instructions of the railway authorities were defective with the result that while rice wagons went to the wheat siding, the wheat wagons went to the rice siding and the wagons took a long time to be rearranged?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Despatching instructions were not given by the railways but I would like to inform the Honourable Member that so far as I am aware things are now moving quite satisfactorily.

Mr. Latchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member if the food stock in the Punjab is being held up before it is transported by rail, and

in the same manner it is being delayed at the destination until delivery is taken?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That does not appear to arise out of this question.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Is the Honourable Member aware that the statement which is alleged to have been made by a responsible official of the Government that the Government of Bengal were not able to handle or clear off the stock that was being sent there was denied by the Government of Bengal?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Certainly, it was.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I expect it was.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question by Mr. Neogy.

DOMESTIC COKE SUPPLY IN CALCUTTA.

14. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for War Transport been drawn to an advertisement that appeared in the Press on certain dates under the heading "Is there a shortage of domestic coke in Calcutta?" The answer is, definitely—No, giving certain statistics of domestic coke in stock at the Railway depots and the arrivals of wagons containing domestic coke in Calcutta during certain periods?

(b) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to a statement made in the Bengal Legislative Council (Upper House) on the 28th September, 1943, by the Minister for Civil Supplies to the following effect:

"With great difficulty but with the co-operation of the Coal Controller and the authorities of various Railways, the Government of Bengal were able to arrange for the delivery of 25 wagons of coal per day to Calcutta. But all on a sudden other persons who ought to have looked after themselves in a different manner stepped in and took away 20 wagons leaving 5 wagons to be distributed in Calcutta."

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a comprehensive statement explaining the whole position, with particular reference to (i) the supply of domestic coke to Calcutta month by month since July last, and (ii) the diversion of a large number of coal wagons by an undisclosed party referred to above?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) (i). Against an average daily requirement of 25 wagons, Calcutta received the following quantities in July onwards.

July	18 wagons per day
August	23 " " "
September	36 " " "
October up to 22nd	35 " " "

(ii) During the serious situation caused by the breaches on the E. I. Railway when all essential consumers had to be rationed, 25 wagons a day were allotted for meeting the requirements of Calcutta for domestic requirements. At the request of the Bengal Government and on their agreeing to receive and ferry coal across to Jangunj for on carriage by the B. and A. Railway, the Controller of Coal Distribution and the Railways arranged to send a further 25 wagons a day to Azimgunj via the Kiul Sahebgunj loop. Later, as a result of further interruptions of traffic on the B. N. R. the coal stock position of the B. and A. Railway was reduced to a dangerously low level. As it was not possible to supply all the requirements of this railway by the direct route via Calcutta, that Railway was asked to take 10 wagons a day via Azimgunj and a further 10 wagons a day by this route were given to the Eastern Army at Sahebgunj. As only 25 wagons per day could be moved over this route and as supplies were being despatched by the direct route to meet the daily consumption in Calcutta, the quota for Calcutta by the Azimgunj route was reduced to 5.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Will the Honourable Member throw light on this statement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons that 37,000 maunds a day were sent during September and October?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: This relates to coal.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I want to know whether the railways sent 37,000 maunds of food every day to Bengal during the two months?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: This question relates to coal.

COAL SUPPLIES TO VARIOUS INDUSTRIES.

15. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to make a statement showing the improvement, if any, in the position of coal supplies to industries as referred to in my starred questions Nos. 121 and 124 of the 30th July, 1943?

(b) When was the process of building up Railway stocks up to 45 days, as referred to by the Honourable Member in reply to the aforesaid question No. 121, completed, and how were the demands of the industries for coal met up to that date?

(c) What were the "comprehensive proposals" for relieving the industries, that were referred to in the Honourable Member's reply to the said question No. 121, and have they been given effect to in their various aspects?

(d) As regards the use of alternative fuel, to what extent is wood fuel being utilised by the industries in different areas, and what action have the Railways taken towards the encouragement of the development of traffic of the alternative fuel of different characters? Has the Honourable Member considered the possibility of adequately developing the river transport in Bengal for the purpose, particularly, of carrying wood fuel from the Sunderban areas? If so, has any action in that behalf been taken, or suggested to be taken?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The floods in the river Damodar and the consequent breaches in the East Indian Railway in July last seriously interrupted rail traffic, particularly to the Calcutta area and there was in consequence a deterioration, instead of an improvement, in the supplies to that area and to consumers in Southern India. Concerns in Northern and North-Western India obtained better supplies but not their full requirements owing to a drop in output. This was due to a shortage of labour and to flooding of some of the mines in July and August. Railways are now able to carry all the coal at present offering, but the shortage of labour continues to be acute. Steps are being taken to deal with the situation.

(b) In view of the reduced output and the adverse effect on industries of the loco coal stocking programme at a 45 days target, it has been decided to slow down the building up of railway stocks for the present to a target of 30 days. By the end of September stocks did not exceed 26 days' consumption.

(c) The proposals referred to in my answer to part (d) of the Honourable Member's starred question No. 121 on the 30th July 1943, consisted in the main of the Coal Rationing Scheme which was alluded to in my answer to part (a) of his starred question No. 124 on the same day. This scheme has now been put into operation. To prepare the scheme it was necessary in the first instance to estimate, as closely as possible, the total quantity of coal that could be raised and delivered, taking into account the wagon supply and rail capacity on the E. I. and B. N. Railways and the maximum assistance that transport of coal by sea round the coast could afford to the railways. With the resumption of traffic after the breaches—and thanks to a considerable measure of assistance given by His Majesty's Government in providing shipping for the carriage of coal by sea in return for supplies of coal for bunkers and shipments—the E. I. and B. N. Railways expect to be able to provide 2,700 wagons a day for coal. On this basis and taking account of the various measures to maintain and increase output in the coalfields, a total of 25,64 million tons per annum has been adopted as a reasonable figure which can be made available for distribution. Rations have been fixed on the basis of actual supplies made during the 12 months' period from August 1942 to July 1943, and take into account estimated increases in consumption of essential services. The total allotment for industries and domestic supplies has been fixed at 1,024,587 tons a month, which represents an increase of 20 per cent. on actual supplies made between August 1942 and July 1943. The scheme is in essence a compromise between conflicting interests made possible only by the pooling of resources between India and

the United Kingdom. It is proposed to watch its working very closely making internal adjustments whenever required and to review the position again early next year.

(d) It is understood that some industries in various parts of the country have been making extensive use of firewood. Full information is not available as to the extent to which this is being done except in regard to the Ahmedabad area where the textile mills are reported to have used 1,27,319 tons of firewood during the year ending 30th June 1943. In view of the seriousness of the coal situation a circular letter was addressed on 30th August 1943 to Provincial Governments and Chief Commissioners, who are responsible for forests and for supplies of timber and wood fuel asking them to encourage the use of firewood for industrial as well as domestic consumption to the maximum possible extent and to remove local restrictions, if any, on its movement. A Combustion Engineer has been appointed and attached to the Office of the Controller of Coal Distribution, one of whose functions will be to advise industries regarding the utilisation of alternative fuels. The development of the transport of wood fuel from the Sundarbans by country craft falls within the sphere of the Provincial Governments but we are doing what we can to assist that Government in the development of country craft traffic generally.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to the coal rationing scheme to which the Honourable Member has just made reference, may I know whether it was drawn up in consultation with non-official opinion, opinion particularly of the trade and the industries concerned?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As regards the coal raising trade I think there were consultations with the trade from time to time; certainly the liaison between the technical officers in Calcutta and the trade is close, and to that fact I can personally testify. As regards consultation with the industries, the Departments of Government concerned kept in close touch with the industries and the point of view of those industries has been very carefully considered in drawing up the scheme.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What will be the composition of the controlling organisations for the purpose of administering this scheme?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Departments of Government concerned.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member supply the same facilities, as he is doing for Bengal, to other provinces by providing alternative fuels?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My answer referred to the question of country craft in Bengal and particularly the movement of firewood from the Sundarbans. All provinces do not, of course, have the same water facilities as the province of Bengal.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: With reference to the shortage of labour, which has been mentioned by the Honourable Member in his reply, may I ask whether that shortage of labour is not due to the unsatisfactory conditions under which the coal miners are working, namely, their wages are inadequate, the dearness allowance is very small, the housing conditions are not good, and, may I ask whether the Honourable Member is aware that Mr. Hughes, the Commissioner of Labour, has made a report regarding the conditions of miners in the coal areas.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is making a speech.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I am finishing my question. May I ask whether the Government of India is going to improve those conditions immediately?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has posed a rather lengthy question. I will answer by saying that all the conditions likely to result in an increase of coal raising are under the careful consideration of the Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I did not quite follow the Honourable Member when he mentioned that the departments of Government concerned would be the controlling authorities. Would the Honourable Member care to explain the position further? Who would really be the controlling agency for administering this scheme?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As regards coal raising, the Labour Department is responsible. As regards the distribution of coal, the War Transport Department is responsible.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Honourable Member will mention certain respects in which the labour conditions in mining areas have been improved?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That question should be addressed to my Honourable Colleague in the Labour Department.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The Honourable Member in his reply mentioned shortage of labour as one of the causes for the shortage of coal. He has asked me to address my question to his Honourable Colleague in the Labour Department. He is present here. Why should he not reply?

(No reply.)

POST-WAR EMPIRE AND INTERNATIONAL AVIATION POLICY.

16. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department be pleased to make a statement, bringing available information up-to-date, on the subject of Post-war Empire and Inter-National Aviation policy, in continuation of his reply to my starred question No. 40 of the 27th July, 1943?

(b) Who were the representatives of India at the Empire Air Conference which is reported to have opened in London on the 11th October, last? Were they nominated by the Government of India, or the Secretary of State for India, or by the former in consultation with the latter? Was the question of including representatives of the Indian commercial and industrial interests in this delegation considered by Government? When was invitation received by the Government of India, to participate in the Empire Air Conference, and when was the delegation chosen?

(c) What were the terms of reference of the said Conference? Were Government previously consulted in regard to the said terms? What were the views communicated by Government to the British authorities in the course of the "exchange of views", referred to by Sir Gurunath Bewoor in answer to a supplementary question arising out of the said starred question No. 40?

(d) Have Government given any instructions to the delegation which is said to represent India? To what extent, if at all, will the delegation be expected to receive instructions from the India Office?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) Since I replied to the Honourable Member's question on the 27th July 1943, a Conference of official representatives of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, and of the Governments of the Dominions and India has met in London from the 11th to the 13th October.

(b) The High Commissioner for India represented India at the Conference. The nomination was made by the Government of India. As the Conference consisted of official representatives only, the question of representation of the Indian commercial and industrial interests did not arise. Intimation regarding the Conference was received in September 1943 and the delegate was nominated in the same month.

(c) The Conference was convened for the purpose of oral exchange of views on the subject of development of post-war civil aviation. The discussions were of a confidential, informal and exploratory character. The Government of India was aware of the object of the Conference and of the nature of discussions intended. Government are not prepared to communicate the contents of correspondence which has taken place between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government.

(d) In view of the fact that the discussions were to be of an informal and exploratory nature, no question arose of giving any instructions to our representatives. If any instructions had to be given, they would have been given by the Government of India.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that Lord Beaverbrook, the Lord Privy Seal, speaking in the House of Lords, observed that the conclusions reached at the Empire Air Conference were unanimous and that they would now go forward with the talks with the United States on that subject? Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate very generally the nature of the conclusions arrived at, and whether the Government of India had any chance of considering the proposals before getting their representative to agree to the conclusions there?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: As Lord Beaverbrook himself observed, these conclusions are subject to confirmation by the Governments concerned. The proceedings of the Conference have not yet been received and I am not therefore in a position to reply to the Honourable Member.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Legislature have any part to play before any final agreement is signified by the Government to any proposal of this kind?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: As I have said, these conferences are of an exploratory character. There is no question of arriving at any final agreement at present.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Will the Central Assembly have an opportunity of considering this question?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Central Assembly has the matter in its own hands. It can bring up this subject for discussion, if it so desires.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: For the purpose of securing a fruitful discussion, will the Honourable Member consider the desirability of supplying the available information to the Members?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: If any Honourable Member desires to raise the question, he can do so in the form of a Resolution.

AGREEMENT FOR FIXATION OF MAXIMA PRICES OF JUTE BY INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION.

17. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to make a full statement relating to the reports that have appeared in the Press from time to time on the following points:—

(i) that an agreement has been entered into by the Indian Jute Mills Association for fixing certain maxima prices of jute for the coming season;

(ii) that this has been done with the full knowledge and concurrence of the Government of Bengal and the Central Government;

(iii) that the prices have been fixed in view of the expectation that the United States of America would place large orders for the supply of hessian, provided its price does not exceed a particular figure;

(iv) that there has been a tripartite understanding between the interests concerned, between the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Indian Jute Mills Association in this connection; and

(v) that the prices fixed are lower than what could be legitimately expected by the cultivator in view of the war orders from different parts of the world coupled with the internal demand?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (i) and (ii). The Committee of the Indian Jute Mills Association has informed the Government of India that member mills have agreed among themselves not to pay above certain maxima prices for raw jute and the Committee has passed a bye-law to that effect.

(iii) It is understood that the fixation of maximum prices for raw jute by the Committee of the Indian Jute Mills Association was the outcome of the acceptance by the mills of an order for hessian for export to the United States of America.

(iv) and (v). No, Sir.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: When was it that this Committee communicated to the Government of India their proposal or decision in this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I understand it was sometime in July.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Was any requirement laid down by any rule or understanding that in all such matters the Committee would be expected to inform the Government of India or obtain its concurrence?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: There is no question of obtaining the concurrence of the Government of India. As the Honourable Member knows, the Chairman of the Indian Jute Mills Association is also an officer of the Government in another capacity and it is usual for him in that capacity to acquaint the Government as to what is going on in the Indian Jute Mills Association from time to time.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Have the Government satisfied themselves that the interests of the jute growers have not been adversely affected by this agreement among the capitalists?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I can say that I have personally satisfied myself that up to now it has not been affected because when the maximum price is about 17, I understand the present prices are very much below that.

ACCUMULATION OF STEEL SUPPLIES BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

18. ***Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India have accumulated considerable supplies of steel to meet the requirements of the Government and of the Allied Governments, for at least a year;

(b) whether it is a fact that the stocks of steel with the Steel Companies are so large that a part of these are being disposed of by the manufacturers as "rejected material"; and

(c) if the Government of India propose to consider the desirability of releasing a part of the stocks for civilian consumption in order to mitigate the difficulties which the civilian population is experiencing in obtaining necessary requirements of such goods?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) No, Sir.

(b) No.

(c) The Government of India are considering the possibility of increasing the allotment of steel for civilian consumption in the light of the total demands for steel as compared with the total amount of steel likely to be available from Indian production, imports and stocks. Increased allotments of some categories for civilian consumption in the first quarter of 1944 have already been approved.

REVIEW BY GOVERNMENT OF INDIA OF THE PURCHASE PROGRAMME OF SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

19. ***Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state whether the Government of India have reviewed the purchase programme of the Supply Department?

(b) Are the stocks of all materials so far purchased by Government more than necessary to meet their requirements as well as of the Allied Governments?

(c) Is it necessary to continue purchasing materials in the same quantities as hitherto?

(d) Is it possible to reduce the purchases of the Supply Department in order to allow larger quantities of these materials for the civilian consumption?

(e) Is it possible to release a portion of the stock in the hands of the Supply Department for civilian consumption in order to mitigate the difficulties of the civilians?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) to (e). The Government of India have had under review, particularly during the last few months, the question of what stocks of materials are required for war purposes, whether they can be reduced, and how much can be released for civilian

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

consumption. It is not advisable to mention any figures in this connection but from time to time certain materials have been released for civilian consumption in order to mitigate the difficulties of the civilian consumer.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Has any steel been actually released for the use of the agriculturists?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It will be released in the first quarter of 1944. The quantity of steel for the first quarter of 1944 for the civilian consumer has been approved and the Iron and Steel Controller will give effect to that proposal.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Will the Honourable Member tell us what proportion will be released for civilian consumption?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I would like to have notice of the question. I can say that no definite proportion can be fixed for any length of time.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Has the Government in contemplation any progressive policy for increasing the quantity of release of steel and of other commodities for civilian consumption? Have they got any definite policy in the matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That is exactly the idea that I intended to convey, perhaps unsuccessfully, by the answer that I have given. It is the definite policy of the Government to release in increasing quantities available articles of consumption for civil use.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Do I take it that in fixing the quota which they will release they will take into consideration the civilian needs, say, the average for the last three years before the war?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: They would certainly take the needs of the civilian population, particularly the needs as ascertained by the average consumption during the last three years, but that does not imply, I would like to say even at this stage, that they will be in a position to supply any large percentage of the actual needs. They will try to do their best.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I ask whether the Government while considering the question of releasing steel and other articles for civil population will pay proper attention to the needs of the rural population as well?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Agricultural implements is one of the first things that is under the consideration of the Government. The proposal is to release the steel to the Provincial Governments, if possible, so that they may themselves see that the agricultural implements are manufactured and properly distributed at a fair price.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: In view of the fact that that is one of the steps which Government propose to take as a measure against inflation, do Government propose to fix those quotas from time to time in accordance with civilian needs?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That is the idea. It must have some proportion or some bearing on the actual war needs, of course, but the idea is to fix from time to time proportions by taking into consideration the needs of the civilian population and the war needs.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Do I take it that Government adopts this as one of their anti-inflationary measures?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is certainly one of the anti-inflationary measures also.

MEASURE FOR SYNTHETIC PREPARATION OF MINERAL OIL.

20. ***Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** (on behalf of **Mr. R. R. Gupta**): (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state if, in view of the suspension of supply of mineral oil, specially of motor spirit, from Burma, Government have considered the advisability of ensuring some supply of India's requirements of mineral oil from an Indian synthetic source? If so, what is the result of Government's examination?

(b) Are Government prepared to assist a private enterprise for the installation of a plant for hydrogenation of coal? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I understand that this proposal was considered by the Commerce and Industries Department some time back. The question may be addressed to my Honourable colleague, the member for Industries and Civil Supplies.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate if there is any plan for this?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I was able to give this answer because previously in my capacity as the Commerce Member I had an opportunity to deal with it. There is no plan for the production of alcohol by synthetic process from coal.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is it a fact that the Government does not stand in need of a synthetic product?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Certainly it stands in need of it, but whether the process suggested, the quantity of coal that should be absorbed by the process and the amount of alcohol which will be released are all matters which have to be taken into consideration before the issue is settled whether this plan is an economic and effective plan.

REPRESENTATION OF INDIA AT THE EMPIRE AIR CONFERENCE IN LONDON.

21. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department please state:

(a) if India was represented at the Empire Air Conference held in London; if so, whether by an official or a non-official member; if by an official, what the reasons were for not securing non-official representation;

(b) if the Conference reached an agreement on general principles; if so, what those agreed principles are; and

(c) if Government have any proposals to advance India's interests in the post-war civil aviation; if so, what these are?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply which I have just given to parts (a) and (b) of Mr. Neogy's question.

(b) It is understood that the Conference arrived at certain unanimous decisions. These decisions are not binding on the Governments concerned until they are confirmed by them. The proceedings of the Conference and the decisions have not yet been received.

(c) Government have in hand the preparation of plans for the development of civil aviation in India after the war, but these are not yet complete.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The plans may not be complete, but can I not have an idea of the plans which exist at the present moment?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The plans are being prepared at present. When I say that they are not complete I do not mean to say that they are complete in some particulars and not in others. The whole scheme has to be taken as one and as Honourable Members are aware the whole scheme will be placed before the Reconstruction Policy Committee, on which we have got representatives of the Provinces and of the Indian States and of Trade and Industry.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Then, may I take it that so long as the Reconstruction Policy is not complete, this Department has got no plan and no idea?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Department itself is preparing the plans for the Committee.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask if the Government representative at this Conference went with a completely blank mind and had nothing to say there?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Of course not. He went there with an open mind.

CURRENT LUGGAGE RULES ON STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS.

22. ***Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the current Luggage Rules on all the State-managed Railways; and

(b) whether his attention has been drawn to the latest revised Luggage Rules of the North Western Railway, published in column 4 of page 5 of the *Dawn* dated the 21st October, 1943?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The current rules for the carriage of luggage on all State-managed Railways are, as far as I am aware, substantially the same as those published in the *Dawn*. Although Railways publish their luggage rules in their Time Tables or Coaching Tariffs, the preparation of a comprehensive statement is being undertaken and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(b) Yes.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the Luggage rules of the East Indian Railway differ from the Luggage rules just published by the North Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I understand that the rules of all Railways are now uniform but that will appear when the statement to which I have referred is laid on the table.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: The Honourable Member referred to the time-table. Is any time-table for the East Indian Railway in preparation at the present moment?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I shall require notice of that question.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member aware that the time-tables of the East Indian Railway are framed only for the benefit of the persons leaving Calcutta without considering the convenience of the intermediate stations and the arrival of the trains in Delhi? Will the Honourable Member consider the suggestion which I made to the General Manager that there should be an expert to prepare the time-table?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member appears to have taken action in referring himself to the General Manager. That will doubtless bear fruit in due course.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that there is a great inconvenience to passengers due to present timing. Inappropriate timing is due to the fact that they have got no expert in the office of the General Manager?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I venture to suggest that that is incorrect.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I challenge the Honourable Member's statement. My statement is quite correct.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

METHOD OF RECRUITMENT OF INSPECTORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS IN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

23. ***Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) the method of recruitment to the posts of Inspectors and Superintendents in the Posts and Telegraphs Department; and

(b) whether direct recruitments are made to the said posts; if so, in what proportion; and with what qualifications?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to posts of Inspectors and Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service.

Recruitment to the posts of Inspectors of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service is made by selection from amongst departmental officials who have passed the prescribed examination. No direct recruitment is made to these posts.

Recruitment to the posts of Superintendents of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service is made 50 per cent. by promotion of selected Inspectors of Post Offices and Railway Mail Service and 50 per cent. by direct recruitment on the results of a combined competitive examination held by the Federal Public Service Commission for recruitment to the Indian Audit and Accounts Service and certain other Services. The main qualifications required of a candidate for admission to the competitive examination are that he must be a graduate or the holder of the Chiefs Colleges Higher Diploma (Final) and that he must be over 21 years of age and below 24 years of age, or below 27 years of age in the case of those already in Government service.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know if the efficiency of the Department suffers on account of the recruitment of low qualified people from the clerical staff to the post of Inspectors?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: No, Sir; on the contrary, it is considered that men of experience, who have actually worked in the Department, would make better Inspectors.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it not a fact that there was a rule of direct recruitment to the Inspector's grade before? If so, why has it been stopped?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: So far as I remember, it might have existed some 20 years ago, but it was changed as long ago as that. I cannot say now why it was changed unless I look up the old papers.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the experience only counts towards the efficiency or the educational qualifications too?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: There is an examination prescribed before the clerks are promoted as Inspectors and their ability is thus tested.

UNSTARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER.

PERSONAL ASSISTANTS TO STATION MASTERS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

1. **Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the names of stations on the North Western Railway where Personal Assistants to Station Masters and Station Superintendents are employed, and their grades of pay?

(b) What duties are allotted to these Personal Assistants?

(c) Who sanctioned the creation of these appointments? If the General Manager, is he competent to do so? If so, under what rules?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The Station Superintendent, Keamari, has a Personal Assistant in the grade Rs. 320—15—350; at Delhi an Assistant Station Master in the grade Rs. 200—10—250 is utilized as Personal Assistant to the Station Superintendent.

(b) Their duties are generally to assist the Station Superintendents in the disposal of their work.

(c) The Senior Assistant Personnel at the Headquarters of the N. W. Railway. The General Manager has powers to create non-gazetted posts within certain limits by virtue of Appendix X of the State Railway General Code, and to delegate his powers in this respect to lower authorities.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to part (b) of Unstarred Question No. 49, asked by Mr. K. C. Neogy, on the 11th March, 1942.

NON-ACCEPTANCE OF LARGER QUANTITY OF GOOD QUALITY COAL FOR RAILWAYS.

(b) No. The total quantity ordered for delivery before 31st March, 1942 was 286,000 tons but only 184,158 tons were delivered and paid for. The balance could not be despatched due to shortage of wagons.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to part (c) of Starred Question No. 99, asked by Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani on the 16th February, 1943.

EXPORT OF SUGAR, WHEAT AND RICE AND THE PRODUCTION OF PETROL FROM MOLASSES.
Statement showing the total production of motor fuel (power alcohol and/or rectified spirit) from molasses during the period 1st September 1939 to 31st December 1942 in India.

Name of the Province or Indian State.	Quantity (in tons) of power alcohol and/or rectified spirit produced for use as motor fuel during 1st September 1939 to 31st December 1942.	Remarks.
1. United Provinces	797.58 (power alcohol)	No production in 1939-40.
2. C. P. and Berar	Nil.	
3. Punjab	251.7 (rectified spirit)	Produced only during 1st September 1942 to 31st December 1942.
4. N.-W. F. P.	Nil.	
5. Orissa	Nil.	
6. Madras	Nil.	
7. Sind	Nil.	
8. Bengal	5.24 (rectified spirit)	Only during 1942.
9. Bihar	Nil.	
10. Bombay	Nil.	
11. Assam	Nil.	
12. Coorg	Nil.	
13. Travancore (State)	517.16 (rectified spirit)	No production during 1st September 1942 to 31st December 1942.
14. Jaora State (G. I.)	Nil.	
15. Bhopal State (G. I.)	72.9 (rectified spirit)	June 1942 to December 1942.
16. Mysore State	64.772 (power alcohol)	September 1939 to December 1942.
17. Hyderabad State	3,66,186 gallons (power alcohol)	1939 to 1942.

Information promised in reply to parts (a), (c) and (d) of Starred Question No. 390 and Starred Question No. 391, asked by Mr. Muhammad Nauman, (on behalf of Mr. Muhammad Ahsan) on the 29th March 1943.

MUSLIM AND NON-MUSLIM APPRENTICE PERMANENT WAY INSPECTORS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.

No. 390.—(a) 3 and 8 respectively in 1935 and 2 and 4 in 1942. There was no recruitment from 1936 to 1941.

(c) No.

(d) Of those apprentices appointed in 1935 who have so far been absorbed permanently, two Hindus completed their training on 15th March, 1938 and 23rd May 1938 and were appointed permanently on 26th May 1938 and 1st August 1940, respectively; two Muslims completed their training on 28th November 1938 and 7th February 1939 and were appointed permanently on 23rd December 1938 and 18th June, 1942, respectively.

NON-OBSERVANCE OF QUOTA OF ASSISTANT PERMANENT WAY INSPECTORS ON THE BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.

No. 391.—(a) Only posts of Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors are filled by the promotion of Head Mates.

(b) and (c). Yes.

(d) Yes, through a misunderstanding on the part of the Railway Administration who have now been instructed to apply the rules regarding reservation for minority communities in making appointments of Sub-Permanent Way Inspectors.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 25, asked by Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi on the 26th July, 1943.

DESIRABILITY OF CONSTRUCTING A MOSQUE IN THE INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY, DEHRA DUN.

(a) So far as can be ascertained, no sum was ever allotted for the construction of a mosque or other religious building at the Indian Military Academy.

(b) No mosque exists at present in the Academy and no representation has been received from Muslims regarding difficulty in offering prayers.

(c) The nearest places of worship for all communities are in Dehra Dun which is five miles distant, and every cadet has an opportunity of visiting a place of worship at least

once a week if he wishes to do so. In the circumstances, Government do not propose at present to undertake the special construction of religious buildings within the Academy.

Information promised in reply to supplementaries to Starred Question No. 41, asked by Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto on the 27th July, 1943.

LETTER-BOXES REMOVED BY RIOTERS AND POSTAL AUTHORITIES DURING RECENT DISTURBANCES.

Letter-boxes removed by rioters and those withdrawn by Postal authorities during the recent disturbances in the Provinces of Bihar and Orissa :

Number of letter-boxes damaged or removed by rioters ...	235.
Number of letter-boxes withdrawn by the Postal authorities. ...	24.
Number of letter-boxes replaced by the Department so far ...	125.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 120, asked by Sardar Sant Singh on the 30th July, 1943.

COMPLAINT AGAINST DEPUTY CHIEF ACCOUNTS OFFICER FROM THE SUB-HEADS IN TRAFFIC ACCOUNTS BRANCH OF THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

It is understood that a telegram alleged to have been sent by the Sub-heads in September, 1941, contained the complaint referred to by the Honourable Member. As regards the second part the reply is in the affirmative. As regards the last part, the complaint was baseless.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 122, asked by Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad, on the 30th July, 1943.

CASH AND SMALL COINS RECEIVED FROM SALE OF PASSENGER TICKETS BY EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

(a) Cash receipts by the East Indian Railway from the Booking Offices selling passenger tickets under the account "Railway Fares" were as under :—

June 1941.	June 1943.
Rs. 54,31,932	Rs. 75,17,041

(b) It is not possible to give correct figures of small coins received under the heading referred to in (a) above as the small coins received at stations are not recorded separately for passenger and goods traffic. However, the value of small coins received on all accounts is given below :—

June 1941.	June 1943.
Rs. 1,54,560-9-0.	Rs. 12,102-0-0.

Information promised in reply to Starred Questions Nos. 168, 169, 170 and 171, asked by Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon on the 3rd August, 1943.

DUTY-FREE INDUSTRIAL COLOURED SALT AND THE FISHING INDUSTRY IN SIND.

No. 168.—(a) No. No monopoly was given to any particular salt works at Maurypur. All the salt works there were free to manufacture coloured salt and to apply for the concession. Only one firm claimed it as they alone at that time had evolved a process for manufacturing such salt for the purpose of curing or preserving fish.

(b) One other Company entered the field in February, 1940 but the salt manufactured by them was sold at a low rate only from November, 1941.

(c) No.

(d) Yes.

(e) Does not arise.

DUTY-FREE INDUSTRIAL COLOURED SALT AND THE FISHING INDUSTRY IN SIND.

No. 169.—(a) The rules were revised in the light of the experience gained of the scheme and with a view to guarding against abuse of the concession and in the interests of Government revenue.

(b) A few representations to this effect have been received.

(c) Government have no information on the point.

(d) There are natural deposits of salt in certain areas on the Sind Coast but the Customs Launch patrolling the coast does not guard or exercise any control over these deposits.

(e) No complaints have been received from any fishermen that there has been any harassment by the Customs Preventive Staff on patrol duty nor has any action been taken by the Customs Preventive Staff against any fishermen for attempted smuggling of natural or white salt. The scheme is still in the nature of an experiment and the question of making it permanent will be considered in due course.

(f) Yes.

(g) The matter is under consideration.

DUTY-FREE INDUSTRIAL COLOURED SALT AND HIDES AND SKIN MERCHANTS IN SIND.

No. 170.—(a) Yes. The issue of coloured duty-free salt has been agreed to recently with a view to assisting poor fishermen. Issues of salt for industrial purposes are governed by separate rules and the issue of salt to hide and skin merchants is governed by these rules.

(b) No. All indents of January or February 1943 put in by local salt merchants have been complied with.

DUTY-FREE INDUSTRIAL COLOURED SALT AND HIDES AND SKIN MERCHANTS IN SIND.

No. 171.—No.

Information promised in reply to parts (d) and (e) of Starred Question No. 178, and Starred Question No. 179, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, on the 4th August, 1943.

MUSLIM DEMAND OF REGULATING PROMOTIONS ON COMMUNAL BASIS.

No. 178.—(d) Government have seen the letter referred to, which has been correctly quoted.

(e) Government understand that in the Watch and Ward Department of the E. I. Railway the practice was in vogue of adjusting promotions by communities in order to maintain discipline in this semi-military force. The practice has now been abandoned and promotions are made without regard to communal considerations. The particular promotion complained of has been reviewed and no change is considered necessary.

GRANT OF INCREMENTS FOR THE PERIOD BEFORE CONFIRMATION TO A STATE RAILWAY NON-GAZETTED SERVANT.

No. 179.—(b) The rules at present followed on the Allahabad and Lucknow Divisions are the same. During the years 1936—1941, however, owing to a misapprehension, the Lucknow Division continued to follow an earlier rule which permitted guards to be placed on the incremental scale only on the occurrence of permanent vacancies; the Railway is considering whether any adjustment in the position of staff dealt with in the Lucknow Division during this period is possible.

Information promised in reply to part (a) of Starred Question No. 232, asked by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai on the 6th August, 1943.

DESIRABILITY OF STOPPING THE PUBLICATION OF THE INDIAN INFORMATION.

Average monthly expenditure incurred on Indian information.

1. Printing	Rs.
2. Despatching	4,108
	2,046

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 250, asked by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai on the 9th August, 1943.

TEMPORARY TRACERS IN THE OFFICE OF DIVISIONAL SUPERINTENDENT, KARACHI.

(a) Nine in all : 2 since 1934, 3 since 1939 and 4 since 1942.

(b) There have not been permanent posts against which these men could be confirmed.

(c) Yes.

(d) Government do not propose to do anything in the matter, since there is no necessity for increasing the number of permanent posts.

Information promised in reply to Starred Question No. 254, asked by Mr. Muhammad Nauman on the 9th August, 1943.

PERSONS RECRUITED IN INTERMEDIATE GRADE ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

(a) Information as to the number of persons recruited to intermediate grades on the East Indian Railway between January 1942 and June 1943 is not readily available. The number of persons recruited to intermediate grades during the period from 1st October, 1941 to 31st March, 1943, was 24, of whom 18 were appointed temporarily.

(b) Out of these twenty-four, three were Muslims, 3 Hindus and 10 Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.

(c) and (d). Ten posts were filled after advertisement in the newspapers and in accordance with the rules for direct recruitment. 13 ex-employees of the Burma, E. I., G. I. P. and O. & R. Railways were absorbed; and one specialist's post was filled on the recommendation of the Director-General, Munitions Production.

Information promised in reply to Starred Questions Nos. 257 and 260, asked by Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan, on the 9th August, 1943.

REDUCING OF TICKET COLLECTORS TO LETTER DELIVERY CLERKS BY THE DIVISIONAL SUPERINTENDENT, MORADABAD.

No. 257.—(a) (ii) and (iii). The letter of 25th March, 1935 referred to by the Honourable Member is not traceable. In 1935 and 1936 six Ticket Collectors who failed to pass the periodical test for the fourth time were reduced to the post of Letter Sorter in the grade of Rs. 18-1-27 and not to the post of Letter Delivery Clerk in the grade of Rs. 26-2-40, as the latter posts had been abolished. Subsequently, some posts of Letter Delivery Clerk were revived and the pay of the ex-Ticket Collectors was re-fixed in those posts with effect from 1st October 1938.

(b) Government do not propose to take any action as the staff have suffered no wrong.

CONTRACTS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF GRAINS TO EAST INDIAN RAILWAY SERVANTS.

No. 260.—The terms of the contract with Messrs. Ballabhdas Eswardas and other contractors for selling commodities in Grain Shops on the East Indian Railway are:—

(1) The contractors are responsible for all handling and cartage charges from reserve grain depots to grain shops or Railway siding to grain shops if taken direct, or local mandi to grain shops if purchases are made locally.

(2) The contractors are responsible for the salaries of the staff.

(3) The contractors bear liability for wastage, etc., during the time they transport the commodities and during sales.

(4) The contractors are required to pay for the goods on delivery, to return empty containers and furnish grain shop accounts to the administration.

The selling commission is As. 8 per maund for all contractors except Messrs. Ballabhdas Eswardas who are paid As. 10 per maund for the reason given in the reply to unstarred question No. 53 asked on the 9th August 1943.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received a message from His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General to be communicated to the Legislative Assembly. The message runs thus:

“Members of the Assembly,

It is customary for a new Viceroy to address both Houses of the Indian Legislature at the first opportunity. I have decided to depart from precedent, and shall deliver no address during the November Session. My reasons for this decision are first that whereas my predecessors assumed office in April and were able to devote several months to the study of the Indian situation before an opportunity of addressing the Legislature occurred, I assumed office in October, less than three weeks before the opening of the November Session; and secondly that for the time being my energies must be very largely devoted to the study and treatment of the food problem—a matter upon which I do not feel that I could make a comprehensive statement in the immediate future. It is my intention to address both Chambers at an early stage of the Budget Session of 1944.

(Sd.) WAVELL,

Viceroy and Governor General.”

STATEMENT RE METHOD OF TAKING VOTES BY DIVISION.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question was raised again by more than one Member at the last Session whether the President when he is of the opinion that the Division is unnecessarily claimed and decides to take the votes by asking the Members who are for ‘Aye’ or for ‘No’ to rise in their places, should have the names recorded of those who vote one way or the other. I have, therefore, considered the matter once more. Standing Order No. 30 (2) leaves the method of taking the votes by Division to the discretion of the President and, as is usual in such cases, the Presidents of the Assembly beginning with Sir Frederick Whyte have followed closely the practice of the British House of Commons in the matter. There, if the Speaker or the Chairman is of the opinion that the Division is unnecessarily claimed, he takes the vote of the House or the Committee by calling upon the Members who support and who challenge his decision to rise in their places and thereupon as he thinks

fit, either declares the determination of the House or the Committee or names tellers for a Division (House of Commons Standing Order 31). The number of the voters is not even announced to the House by the Speaker who simply announces the decision. In the Assembly, however, some Members have at times shown a keen desire in such cases to have the names taken down of those who voted for them or against them and on two or three occasions the President acceded to the demand. But on investigating the matter further in 1929, I found that the practice generally in the Assembly was in accordance with that of the House of Commons, that is, not to record the names of voters and I have ever since acted accordingly. It is obvious that otherwise the very object of this method of taking votes would be frustrated. The President would not depart from the ordinary method of having votes recorded in the Division Lobbies unless he was satisfied in any particular case that there was a clear preponderance of opinion in support of his declaration and against the challengers.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

NON-OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO SPEAK ON INDIA'S WAR EFFORT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received a notice of motion for adjournment of the House from Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh. He wants that the “business of the Assembly be adjourned for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the unwise decision of the Government of India to send non-official gentlemen selected by it to undertake a tour abroad in Great Britain and United States to speak on the War effort”.

I should like to know what the facts are.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): This question arose after the last Assembly Session. It appears from the proceedings of the Council of State that this question was casually referred to in answer to the reply to Question No. 2, in the other House put by Pandit Kunzru.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What has happened?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What I know is this: that some gentlemen whose names were announced were selected to go round the world. They are now undergoing training in the Secretariat where nobody seems to take any notice of them, as I understand from newspaper reports. I suppose they are undergoing some sort of training as to how to lecture and so on.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But what is the objection?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The objection is so far as selection and also as regards the time when this tour is undertaken. If Government wanted propaganda to be carried on as regards war efforts of India, they could have done it long before. Now the whole world knows about India's war efforts. The Secretary of State referred to it the other day. Even His Excellency Lord Wavell referred to it. Where is the necessity to send these gentlemen abroad and thus waste taxpayer's money on a propaganda which is not necessary at present. As regards selection, they have taken up some gentlemen at random. It was pointedly asked whether several organisations would be asked to nominate persons who should be sent, and the reply was that the whole matter was under consideration. Further question was asked whether the members of the delegation would make comments and defend the actions of the Government of India, the reply was that the whole matter was under consideration. Now, Sir, these gentlemen are supposed to go round and speak on war efforts, and they are at liberty to make comments and defend the actions of the Government of India, they may be repressive actions or all sorts of actions at present taking place in this country.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Member for Information and Broadcasting): Sir, the motion is so vague that it is very difficult to deal with it. We do not know whether the objection is as regards the selection of non-official gentlemen or selection by the Government or against the decision to send them to speak on war efforts. In either case the position is perfectly clear. It is for the executive to take action, as it has done. This is not a new policy that we have enunciated. This has been done from time immemorial. Such selections have been made by the Government and they are entirely responsible for sending this delegation out.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The contention is that it is a waste of money to send them out now.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I submit the war is going on now and the Government are satisfied that there is a tremendous lot of information with regard to war efforts which has to be placed before the public of America and England.

An Honourable Member: This is on the merits of the question.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Because this point was raised, I have to meet that point. I submit the question whether the decision is wise or not cannot be the subject matter of a motion for adjournment. It is a matter purely of opinion. What I submit is this. It is not a matter of urgent public importance because we have simply followed the policy which we have followed in the past. When Government decide to send people abroad, they have to make the selection themselves.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Are not the Members of this House entitled to say that the selection was not rightly made or the step taken was not the right one? Are not these matters of public importance to be discussed in this House?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I submit respectfully, not, because we have simply followed a procedure which has already been followed in the past. This is nothing new. We have arranged tours for various purposes and it is for the Government of India to decide whether these tours are necessary or not. They have done nothing new which may form the subject matter of a motion for adjournment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the motion is in order. If selection of this character has been made before by the Government without consulting any public bodies, it does not conclude the question. The question that has been raised is that in this instance, the sending of any nominees of the Government to speak on war efforts is not justified and that the selections have not been properly made. I hold the motion in order. The motion will be taken up at four of the clock, or earlier, if the business of the House is finished.

H. E. THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S ASSENT TO BILLS.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, intimation has been received that the following Bills which were passed by both Chambers of the 12 Noon. Indian Legislature during the Monsoon Session, 1943, have been assented to by His Excellency the Governor General under the provision of sub-section (1) of section 68 of the Government of India Act, as continued by section 317 of the Government of India Act, 1935:

1. The Indian Boilers (Amendment) Act, 1943.
2. The Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 1943.
3. The Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Amendment Act, 1943.
4. The Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Amendment Act, 1943.
5. The Indian Army and Indian Air Force (Amendment) Act, 1943.
6. The Reciprocity (Amendment) Act, 1943.
7. The War Injuries (Compensation Insurance) Act, 1943.
8. The Delhi University (Amendment) Act, 1943.

THE HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION).

PETITIONS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, under Standing Order 78, I have to report that fifteen petitions as per statement laid on the table have been received relating to the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd March, 1943, by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed.

Petitions relating to the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd March, 1943, by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed.

Number of signature.	District or Town.	Province.
15	Nagpur	Central Provinces.
13	Benares	United Provinces.
3	Nagpur	Central Provinces.
265	Durbhanga, Purnea and Monghyr	Bihar.
45	Muttra	United Provinces.
168	Calcutta	Bengal.
170	Gauhati	Assam.
1	Calcutta	Bengal.
184	Lyalpur	Punjab.
130	Burdwan	Bengal.
160	Calcutta	Bengal.
9	Gonda	United Provinces.
31	Muzaffarnagar.	United Provinces.
44	Mangalore	Madras.
72	Calcutta	Bengal.

1,310 Total

AMENDMENTS TO THE BRITISH BALUCHISTAN MOTOR VEHICLES RULES.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of notification No. 1525/35-40/M.V., dated the 24th July, 1943, issued by the Chief Commissioner of British Baluchistan under section 21 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (VI of 1939).

CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF BRITISH BALUCHISTAN. NOTIFICATION.

Quetta, the 24th July 1943.

No. 1525/35-40/M.V.—In exercise of the powers conferred by Section 21 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1939 (VI of 1939), the Chief Commissioner of British Baluchistan is pleased to direct that the following amendments shall be made to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules 1940, published in the Notification No. 347/M. V., dated the 1st April, 1940, printed at pages 841 to 982 of the *Gazette of India* Part II-A, dated the 27th April 1940:—

1. After Rule 2.4(c) the following shall be added:—

“(d) No fee shall be charged for the test if the applicant satisfies the licensing Authority that he previously held a license granted or renewed under any provision of law which was in force in British India at the time it was granted or last renewed, to drive a vehicle of the class to which the application refers and was prevented, by reason of absence out of India on service connected with the present war, from obtaining or renewing a license in accordance with the provisions of the Act, on the expiry of the previous license.”

2. After Rule 2.19 add the following as Rule 2.20:—

“2.20. A refund of Rs. 2 out of the license fee of Rs. 5 shall be granted if the applicant satisfies the Licensing Authority that he previously held a license granted or renewed under any provision of law which was in force in British India at the time it was granted or last renewed and was prevented, by reason of absence out of India on service connected with the present war, from obtaining or renewing a license in accordance with the Act, on the expiry of the previous license.

By order,

H. D. RUSHTON,

Secretary to the Agent to the Governor General in Baluchistan.

THE HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION).

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Sir, I present the Report of the Joint Committee on the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898.

THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I present the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to make certain provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by a High Court exercising original criminal jurisdiction.

THE INDIAN TEA CONTROL (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938 (*Second Amendment*).

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938 (*Second Amendment*)."

The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (*Second Amendment*).

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (*Second Amendment*)."

The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE VICTORIA MEMORIAL (AMENDMENT) BILL

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, 1903.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, 1903."

The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN TRADE UNIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926."

The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913."

The Motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE DELHI UNIVERSITY COURT.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I move:

"That the elected members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a further four persons from among their own number to be members of the Court of the University of Delhi in pursuance of clause (xiv) of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the Delhi University Act, 1922 (VIII of 1922), as amended by the Delhi University (Amendment) Act, 1943 (XXIV of 1943), read with clause (5) of Statute 2 of the Statutes of the University set out in the Schedule to the latter Act."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the elected members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a further four persons from among their own number to be members of the Court of the University of Delhi in pursuance of clause (xiv) of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the Delhi University Act, 1922 (VIII of 1922), as amended by the Delhi University (Amendment) Act, 1943 (XXIV of 1943), read with clause (5) of Statute 2 of the Statutes of the University set out in the Schedule to the latter Act."

The Motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I may inform Honourable Members that for the purpose of election of Members to the Court of the Delhi University the Notice Office will be open to receive nominations up to 12 noon on Wednesday the 10th November and that the election, if necessary, will take place on Saturday, the 13th November, 1943. The election which will be held between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M. in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, New Delhi, will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

NON-OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO GREAT BRITAIN AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO SPEAK ON INDIA'S WAR EFFORT.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I move that the Assembly do now adjourn for the purposes of my motion. I propose to read just a few lines from the Questions and Answers in the Council of State.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I might remind the House that the debate will not exceed two hours.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I will be very brief and I will only read such portions as are necessary to follow the debate and which will help the Members who propose to take part in this discussion.

Sir, the following Questions and Answers were exchanged in the other House: The first reply to a question was:

"Government are considering the question of inviting a few non-official gentlemen to undertake a tour abroad to speak on the war effort."

Q. Will they be expected to defend the policy of His Majesty's Government towards India and the actions of the Government of India?

A. I have stated what their functions will be. They are going to speak on the war effort.

Q. So they will not be expected to speak on any other question or they will not be permitted to speak on any other question?

A. That is my information at present.

Q. May I take it that they will not be permitted to speak on any other question than the war effort of India?

A. The whole question is under consideration.

Q. Will they be expected to speak on the war efforts of India in accordance with any brief that might be prepared for them by the Government of India in this connection?

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

A. I do not see any harm in that.

Q. It is not a question of harm. I want to have the reply on a question of fact—whether that is the intention of the Government of India.

A. As regards the war effort, I suppose facts and figures will be supplied by the Government of India.

Q. Will they be expected to state only the facts supplied by Government or will they after stating the facts be at liberty to comment on them?

A. They will certainly be at liberty to make comments. The persons chosen will be absolutely reliable from the point of view of the war effort.

Q. How is the selection going to be made.

A. As I said, the whole question is under consideration."

What has happened is this: We gather from the newspaper reports that the Government itself have selected a few persons and those gentlemen are being trained for the purposes of this tour abroad to speak on war effort. To all intents and purposes they will speak according to the wishes of the Government but they will be at liberty to say what they like while making comments. Those remarks may not be only restricted to war efforts, but they may be advanced in justification of the actions of the Government of India. We know what the actions of the Government of India are and what is going on in this country. Will they justify the repressive measures adopted by the Government, the ill-treatment, at times the most inhuman treatment, that is meted out to the political prisoners? Perhaps they will try. There is nothing to prevent them from doing so; there are no restrictions that they should not speak on these subjects.

Having made these preliminary remarks, I come to another point: Where is the necessity at this stage of sending these gentlemen abroad for broadcasting the war efforts of India? Has anybody denied that India has made no war effort? Has anybody ever said that India did not rise up to the occasion and did not do what was expected of her? So far as my information goes everybody has said that the efforts made by India are more than sufficient. Persons who have come from foreign countries—whether Americans or British—have all said the same thing. The M. P. who came here sometime ago used to say openly at the time of interviews that the sacrifices of India in the matter of war efforts were terrific. What other certificate could this country have so far as the war efforts are concerned? Mr. Amery has several times praised the war efforts of India, and similarly the present Viceroy during his public speeches in London has always said that the war efforts of India were excellent and nothing better could be expected. When everybody has praised and nobody has ever said in Great Britain or in the United States of America that India has made no war effort or the efforts made by her are not up to the mark, is there any necessity of sending these gentlemen for propaganda abroad.

Then, Sir, may I ask whether any other country has sent out delegations like the one we propose to do? Has any delegation, say, from the United States of America, come here to advertise their war efforts? Did Great Britain do so? No, they did not. The whole world knows what each country is doing. In the absence of anybody denying our war efforts and in the absence of any such example of any other country, I am of the opinion that there is no necessity for a group of persons from India to carry on this propaganda.

Sir, as I have said, these gentlemen will not merely speak on war efforts. The ostensible purpose given out is of course "speeches on war efforts", but from the Questions and Answers which I have just read out it is apparent that the real purpose of the Government of India is to justify its actions before the outside world. They think that because the whole world is not with them and because some people in some countries, like the United States of America and others, are pressing for better rights and for a better constitution for this country, these gentlemen should go abroad and carry on propaganda. A few gentlemen were sent sometime ago also. They were not sent to carry on any cultural education or to enlighten other countries about the Indian civilization, but, I suppose, they were sent to speak about war effort. We know very well that those gentlemen not only

carried on the propaganda of the Government, but communal propaganda also. One of them said that so far as the constitution of this country was concerned, it was just as good as the American constitution.

There is another aspect which we have to see. It would be interesting to know whether these gentlemen who would be going abroad would be speaking to open gatherings or would they be addressing a limited audience collected by invitation. Let them not forget that in every part of the world—be it Great Britain or the United States of America—there are Indians—I do not wish to say anything about the abilities and capacities of the members of the delegation; they may be very good—who are more able than these gentlemen, and if they are allowed to address public meetings they will find themselves in a very hot place; they will not feel comfortable to answer the questions. As a matter of fact I have heard that one of the gentlemen, who is an Executive Councillor now, when he was going about in America saying that India had the same constitution as America, a lady, who is very well known—Mrs. Kamla Devi Chattopadhyaya—addressed one of the meetings. Afterwards the result was that she was not allowed to speak at any of the meetings which was addressed by any of these gentlemen who had gone abroad.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Who is the Executive Councillor you are referring to?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I do not know whether it would be fair, but I could let you know privately.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Neither is the Executive Councillor.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: If you are insistent I will tell you. It was Sir Firoz Khan Noon. He said that the constitution of India was as good as the American constitution. So let us take this fact into consideration. (An Honourable Member: "You are wrong. We have a better constitution.") That part of the Act which provides for repression and suspension is better.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Where is the constitution? It will be coming after this war.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I am confining myself to the remarks of that Executive Councillor. I am merely saying that if these gentlemen want to educate they should be thoroughly prepared to answer these questions that will be put not only by Indians but by Americans who have seen this country and gone abroad and by the Englishmen who have come and seen things for themselves. Therefore, I say, that there is no necessity why we should be spending, as I have read in the newspapers I think, Rs. 60,000 on each person. I suppose he gets it or the money is spent on him.

Sir, we have an Information and Broadcasting Department which is in the hands of a very able person, who is expanding the Department in all its sections, male as well as female, and the lady at the head happens to be a very capable person who has also toured the country once. Now why cannot this Department send literature? Have you got no literature which can speak for the war efforts of this country?

Recently there was a cry all over this country and the American journalists carried the news of the scarcity prevalent in Bengal and the mortality that prevailed there to America. This Information and Broadcasting Department issued a statement saying that India was making every effort to provide Indians in that part with food. If they think that the United States or other countries may think that the Government of India is not managing things properly and that things are so bad that the sympathies of other countries may naturally be drawn to India, which thing very likely they do not like, then why don't they follow the policy which they themselves are following in the case of food. Why don't they issue communiques or pamphlets or literature for the purpose of broadcasting? I submit that it would be a better thing, if your purpose is merely to carry on the war propaganda, to send pamphlets or literature giving only the idea of the war efforts of this country which has been repeatedly done in England and America. I can tell my friends that the Indian Army and

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

Indian Air Force pilots particularly receive more publicity in American magazines than in any advertisement given by the Department concerned here.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I move:

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Assembly do now adjourn."

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind): Non-Muhammadan Rural: Sir, I rise to support this motion. The main question is whether it was necessary to send any deputation to countries outside and America in particular so that the people there might know whether India was doing her war effort or not. By this time it is fully known, not only to America but even to our enemies also that India is doing its utmost in the war effort.

The next question is whether this war effort is being properly advertised or published. I submit that there are several ways by which it is being done. America and every country is being kept informed of what is happening here. It is done by pamphlets, by papers and especially by the All India Radio and by the B. B. C. Therefore, there was no necessity for this deputation. On the contrary if the money that is being spent on it had been kept for food for famine-stricken Bengal, it would have been money well spent. But this is the governmental way of doing things, which however is not on behalf of the public but on behalf of Government and countries should know that what is being done is not according to the dictates of the representative Government of the country.

Then, Sir, the question was put in the Council of State whether these gentlemen would be propagating the war effort or any other matter also. The first answer was that it was under consideration. Of course it was, but meanwhile Government had not consulted any public body, nor even the Legislature nor any responsible people who could have given them advice on the point.

It went under consideration and what happened? The second answer was that they are left at liberty to say anything. That prejudices the case of India. They may be packed off from here to go and say that everything is all right in India. There is no discontent, no food scarcity and no deadlock in India. The people in America will be inclined to believe this deputation because they will say that it is from India, unless there is counter-propaganda there, which you have not allowed. Propagandists may say the truth on behalf of the Government and not on behalf of the public. Therefore that is a wrong way of doing it. Further, if they are at liberty, they may go and say anything they like; the information that is now going there may be countered and the people there may say "Here are these men from India who say that everything is all right there". People there will thus be misled. If at all any one had to be sent, they should be sent after consultation with public bodies or at least with the legislature. But here they select their own men and call them reliable persons. Reliable how? We do not know; a person may be reliable from the Government point of view but not according to the public point of view. From that point of view the selection is very bad and it prejudices India. It brings India into contempt with those people there who do not know the truth about India. Therefore, it is condemnable.

First of all they said that the nominations were under consideration; but did you consult anybody at all? We know your methods of consideration. You consider things in your own light and for your own purposes, not for the purposes of the public. In that way also, the nominations are not right and proper. I have no information as to why these people have been selected, but perhaps the Honourable Member on the other side will tell us if any Members of this House and the other House have been selected or not. If they have been so selected, then the case is much worse against the Government. They may have selected our members; very good; but who are they? Are they reliable persons from our point of view? Have they got any instructions from us? They can go and speak for themselves, but what right have they to speak for this

Legislature? What can they say? They may say "I am a Member of the Council of State or of the Legislative Assembly". Then the people there will say "These are people who can be believed". Is that a proper way of doing things? I think the Government is adding fuel to fire by such actions, and the country will say that the Government is not only not responsible but it is doing things which are most condemnable and reprehensible. If these people had to be sent at all, it would have been wise, or at any rate, commendable to some extent, if they were told "Speak on no other matter except the war front". But they may go and say anything there—for instance, the constitution, the matter which is under deadlock now. If they were to speak on that, do you not think that we will be wholly prejudiced in the eyes of those people? If that liberty is given to them, there may be certain backdoor instructions to go and say other things also. Do you not think that if they were to speak at this critical moment, when people are dying in thousands and thousands and more are destitute, and Government is not able to give them food, if they were to go and say "It is all right now; food is coming from this side and that", it would not be proper at all. Therefore I would ask the Leader of the House whether this is the time to do these things. If they must send any one, they must have sent proper representatives so that the people there may know what things are like here, and any thing else is merely propaganda. I need not say more. At this critical moment Government should not have blundered like this. I support the motion.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): Sir, the proposition before the House is that this motion seeks to condemn the Government of India for sending three or four people abroad, obviously to whitewash the sins of omission and commission of the Government of India. The only justification which the Honourable the Leader of the House can put forward is that the executive has been doing it from time immemorial. Is that the only justification for sending these gentlemen abroad? What will they say? If you want to say anything, the press correspondents of the world are next door here; tell them and they will send out whatever you want to say; but if you want to say anything which is questionable, that you dare not say in India, then, all right, send these people who will whisper and who will tell the American people that the Government of India is a people's representative government, that Mahatma Gandhi was sent to jail by a Government composed of Indians. Will they say this? Will they say that the Indian Press is all muzzled, that the leaders of India are shut up in jails? Will they say that the country is governed by Ordinances, that the present Government of India does not enjoy the confidence of the public? If they say that, then send a delegation elected by the elected Members of the Central Legislature. If you are prepared to face that sort of propaganda, then send a duly constituted delegation which can really be the voice of India. I have nothing against these gentlemen personally; but I presume these gentlemen will be the agents of the perjured publicity organisation of the present enlarged Government of India. What will they say? Will they tell the world outside that Lord Linlithgow and the Governor of Bengal are responsible for the deaths of thousands of Indians? They dare not say that. Will they tell the world that Lord Linlithgow and the Governor of Bengal should be publicly impeached before the bar of public opinion for making this muddle, for bungling like this in Indian politics? They are responsible for these deaths of thousands; they are responsible for this deadlock which is continuing, and for this mistrust in the country. Will they tell all these things? Or will they tell them that there are Indians on the Viceroy's Executive Council, that the country is governed by Indians themselves? If they say that, they will be lies and white lies by which they want to mislead the world outside. . . (An Honourable Member: "Black lies!") Whether it is black lies or white lies I do not mind. (An Honourable Member: "Brown lies!") What is the position in the country? I welcome this opportunity that the Government of India is prepared to face the glare of publicity. Come along, select proper representatives of India. Let the representatives of the people go abroad and tell how this country is being governed, how this country is being misgoverned, how the Government has bungled in every sphere, how

[Sardar Mangal Singh.]

they bungled in the food crisis, how they bungled in the handling of the political situation,—how they have bungled in every sphere of Governmental activity. Are the Government prepared to face public opinion? Can the Government of India tell that they enjoy the confidence of any section of public opinion in this country? During the last twenty-five years of public life I have never seen so much mistrust, so much irritation and so much dissatisfaction in this country as is now found, to-day against the Government of India. If the Government of India are prepared to send a delegation outside and if they have to tell the world what will do any credit to them, by all means send a delegation composed of representatives of the real people of India. Otherwise, there is no use sending such a delegation as will simply carry on a propaganda against the people of India, as will spread lies, as will tell different stories that the people of India are quarrelling amongst themselves, that the people of India are being governed by the Government of India which is representative and so forth. Will they tell the world how ex-Premiers, ex-Ministers, and Members of Legislatures are being treated in jails? Will they tell the world how the greatest man of the world, Mahatma Gandhi.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The motion under consideration relates to war effort.

Sardar Mangal Singh: This is part of the war effort. They have shut up Mahatma Gandhi as part of the war effort. Will they tell the world that Indian leaders are not even allowed to come together to discuss and settle their political and communal differences? Will they tell the world how villages after villages have been destroyed during the last year when they began to suppress the Congress movement? Will they tell the world how thousands and thousands of our countrymen are shut up in jails without trial and how they are being treated? Will they tell these things? I am sure they are going there to throw dust into the eyes of the world and to praise the Government of India—that they are nice people, they are very good gentlemen, they can make after-dinner speeches and so on? This will amount to defamation of my country. I cannot approve of such an act on the part of the Government of India and I therefore support this motion. I hope and trust that all elected Members at least will vote for this motion and condemn this action of the Government of India. Sir, I support the motion.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): May I suggest that the House may sit till this motion is finished instead of adjourning for lunch at quarter past one? I have consulted Leaders and they are agreeable.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If that is the general desire of the House, the House will sit till this adjournment motion is finished.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I feel happy that I have got an opportunity to clear up a few misconceptions which seem to surround this lecture tour. I have got another satisfaction. After I listened to Mr. Lalchand Navalrai's speech I felt happy that the war efforts of India were fully appreciated by all sections of people in this House. But I would like to tell the House how the question of sending a delegation to the United Kingdom and America arose.

Late in 1942 we received an intimation from our Agent General in America that it was necessary to send a delegation of people, who had actually seen the war efforts in munitions production factories and other factories, to go over and give a first hand view of the position of war efforts in this country.

An Honourable Member: Why?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: In 1943 the Ministry of Information in England, made a proposal to the same effect and we could not possibly tell both of them that we would not send any delegation from here to explain our war efforts. That would have been an impossible position for any Government to take. We therefore decided after full consultation with His Majesty's Government through the Secretary of State and with our Agent General in America to send this delegation.

The misapprehension that this delegation will go and lecture on politics must be cleared up. The lecturers have been definitely instructed not to utter one word about politics, and if they are asked to say anything they must say, that they have come there only to explain the war effort.

An Honourable Member: What are the instructions?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The instructions are that they must go and tell them what has been done in the shipyards, in the munitions factories, in the textile factories, about recruitment and so on. These things will have to be explained and explained fully. Instructions have been given to them to this effect, and indeed one of the members of the delegation, when speaking at a function in Bombay, made it perfectly clear—his speech was reported in the press—that the delegation was going there simply to explain war efforts and no more. They are expressly asked to avoid politics and not to give any expression to their views in public or in the press.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Is the question of food scarcity excluded from politics?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Let the Honourable Member go on with his speech.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The question also arose as regards expenses and I am happy to inform the House that the expenses of their tour in England will be borne completely by His Majesty's Government. As regards the question of expenses of travel from here to the United Kingdom and the United States of America, it has yet to be settled. As to expenses incurred in India in order to gain a knowledge of the various things which are being done—the question of apportionment of those expenses is still under consideration. I, therefore, submit that the Government of India had no alternative but to send this delegation when they were told that it was necessary that India's war effort should be explained more fully and more specifically by people who had first hand knowledge of these efforts. They had no choice and they would have failed in their duty if they had refused to comply with the request made. (Interruption.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Let the Honourable Member make his speech.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The delegation consists of four people, all of them according to us are men who are competent to speak. They have received three weeks instructions if you may so call it, three weeks experience, they paid visits to different factories in Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and other places. I have absolutely no doubt that they are men of experience, they are men of knowledge, and they will not go and say anything which they are definitely asked and prohibited from saying. It has been said that they are receiving instructions from various departments in the Government of India. The four men had been here only for the last 3 or 4 days and they are leaving tomorrow night. I do not think they can get much instruction from various departments except two or three departments like the Supply Department or the Commerce Department and my own Department of Information and Broadcasting. I do respectfully submit that considering the position that we were in, we had to comply with the request of the two Governments.

I may also mention that the field of selection was very limited. Whatever may be said here on the floor of the House as regards the participation of certain sections of the people of this country in war efforts, I am sure the House will recognise that it was difficult for the Government to have a very wide selection. We have done the best that we could and I submit that we are fully justified. I hope that by their action, by their speeches and by their conduct in England they will raise the status of India and they will not in any way compromise the position of this country. I submit that this motion may be rejected.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I listened to the Honourable Member defending his case. As far as I know, I do not think that anybody has ever doubted the great war efforts which India has made during this war. They have been reiterated on many occasions by responsible persons in the House of

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

Commons, by the Commanders-in-Chief, and different personalities and by the Viceroy in his speeches. There is no doubt whatsoever about India's war efforts. When it is said that two million people have been recruited in a short time, that shows clearly what efforts India has made. The only thing which my Honourable friend has emphasized is that enlightenment in America was to be made in regard to what has been done in munition factories, textiles and ship-yards. I think if public speeches are made in America on these subjects and broadcasted, they will do great harm by giving information to the enemy, instead of serving any useful purpose. These are things which ought to be kept secret, even from those people who have no internal knowledge.

Then, Sir, if the idea was to enlighten the factory owners and the industrialists in America and the proceedings were to be kept confidential, then the best thing to do would have been to select some mechanical engineers for this purpose. If your idea is to select politicians whose business had been to edit certain newspapers or certain people who have got no other experience except this that they have on many occasions differed from public opinion and sided with the Government—if this is the only qualification—then I think it is sheer waste of money and the selection of these men, by reason of their character and their antecedents, is going to result in the greatest misrepresentation of India. I know that there is a strong public opinion in America, in England and other countries that India's war effort would have been far greater than what it has been up to now, if the Government had taken into confidence those parties who were willing to co-operate with the Government but they have been excluded for certain political reasons. There is a suspicion on this side that the Government has chosen to send those very people who have been speaking against public opinion to whitewash all these things. I do not think any useful purpose will be served by this delegation and I do not think it will be wise to send any messengers from here, as demanded by the Agent General of India in America. The Agent General has seen these very places. He has been Executive Councillor and Secretary to Government for many many years. He has got first hand knowledge of India's war efforts. He can speak with better authority than the people who have been allowed to peep into the factories for three weeks, as to how many labourers are there and so on. These people had a joy ride for three weeks in India and then they will have a joy ride to England and America. This will be meaningless. They will have to face public opinion there and when public questions are put to them, they will fail and that will be the greatest blow to India's war efforts and India's claims. We wanted that India's claims should be represented by people with first hand knowledge, as the Honourable Member has himself admitted but he destroyed his very case by saying that he has selected these people who have no first hand knowledge at all and who are going to be trained now. This is not first hand knowledge. If he had chosen Sir Guthrie Russell or somebody else, then one can understand Government's case that they have selected men with first hand knowledge but the men chosen by the Government are not the men who, he can say, possess first hand knowledge.

Then, Sir, the Honourable Member said that the expenses will be borne to a great extent by the British Government and that certain expenses will be borne by this Government. Well, I do not see what was the necessity for the British Government to bear all these expenses of four persons going to lecture on behalf of India, as to what war efforts India is making. We want to show the British and the American peoples that India would have contributed far greater efforts if the Government had chosen to accept the co-operation of those who were willing to give their co-operation and whose co-operation was not accepted.

Another point I could not understand is this. The Honourable Member, after receiving this demand from the Agent General in America, at once consulted the Ministry of Information in England. Why did the Honourable Member ignore this House?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: We did not consult the Ministry of Information. I did not say that. What I said was that we received requests both from the Agent General in America and the Ministry of Information through the Secretary of State.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I am sorry I understood him to mean that he consulted the Ministry of Information on receiving this request. Anyhow, it was the first duty of the Government members, when they receive requests like this, that they must place the matter before this House, which is the House of the representatives of Indian opinion. Even if a section of the House is absent, there are others. As long as this Assembly is carrying on its work as it has been constitutionally framed, it is the duty of the Government to place this matter before this House and get their opinion. If they had appointed these people after getting the sanction of this House, then there could be no objection but the Government has acted in different manner and we are sorry we cannot support the action that has been adopted by Government. Even if the people would not talk on politics, we do not think it will serve any useful purpose. We think that will create lot of misapprehension in the minds of the people whom they are going to address on India's war efforts. We therefore cannot support this action of the Government and we support this motion.

Honourable Members: The question be now put.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Mr. President, the question before the House is whether it is necessary to publicise the war effort of India in the two countries, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The minor question thereafter is whether the delegation that has been chosen is the proper delegation.

Let me deal first with the minor question. It is impossible for any Government at any time, whatever the nature of the Government may be, to justify the personnel of any delegation that an Executive chooses. The only kind of delegation that may stand justified, at least so far as criticism on the floor of the House is concerned, is the delegation which is elected by the House itself. If it is a question of an Executive constituting a delegation, then I have no doubt that my friends will realise that there will always be criticism from one point of view or another, criticism of one person or another as not being properly chosen. I have, therefore, characterised the question of the personnel of the delegation as a very minor issue indeed. My Honourable friend the Leader of the House has also pointed out the restrictions and inhibitions under which the Government of India had to choose the delegation. He referred to the fact that the choice was necessarily limited owing to considerations beyond the scope of the Government itself. Into that I need not enter.

Honourable Members: What are those limitations?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have had the opportunity to a certain extent of being responsible for recommending the choice of a delegation only a few months back and I am aware of the limitations under which I had to work and the restrictions under which those gentlemen who were invited to serve on the delegation had to work.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Is it a fact that Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai actually sent a cable asking the Government of India not to send such a delegation?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Which delegation is the Honourable Member referring to?

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: The delegation which is under consideration now.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is not correct and it is hardly necessary for me to say that. My Honourable friend cannot have sources of information which are not available by Radio or Cable-gram or any method of communication that may exist between Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai and the Government of India.

Let me come to the major question. Honourable Members take the line that there is no need at all to publicise the war effort of this country either in

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]

the United Kingdom or in the United States of America because our war effort is widely well-known and because everybody realises that India has made a great war effort. In fact, according to my Honourable friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, India has made as great a war effort as could have been made in any circumstances whatsoever. (Honourable Members: "No, No.") that is what the Honourable Member said. Now, Sir, I do not think it is fair for Honourable Members who have had no opportunities, due to no fault of theirs, of understanding the position either in the United Kingdom or in the United States of America to suggest that the war effort of this country is widely well-known. If for a moment they concede that it is necessary in the interests of this country and of the Government of India that the actual amount of war effort that has been made by this country should be known in the United Kingdom and the United States of America, then the question whether it is now widely known there or whether there is still so much of ignorance in those two countries that they do not properly appreciate it, is a matter which the Government of India with the sources of information at its disposal is better competent to judge than Honourable Members who, as I said through no fault of their own, are not in a position to judge how much is known in these two countries. Mails, correspondence, newspapers are all too scarce. You cannot get a newspaper from England today. Only a few have got that privilege of reading some of the rare newspapers that come. Air communications are very limited. Sea communications are even more precarious and a question here and there by a Mr. Sorensen or a Mr. Cook is not, I venture to say, the real test of the public opinion of the United Kingdom. Much less is known of the opinion in the United States of America. I have ventured to rise in this debate because I have felt from personal experience the need for propaganda on behalf of the Indian war effort, particularly in the United States of America. Little is known of what India has done and let me assure the House that it is necessary that the United States of America should know of the war effort not because it will bring credit to the Government of India and not because the Government of India wants to advertise its part in this war effort, but I venture to state and I hope Honourable Members will agree, if not openly at least tacitly, that it is of the utmost importance that the part that this country has played and the part the labourers and workers of this country have played in the production of the munitions and the contribution which the capitalists and industrialists have made to help the war effort and also the part played by gentlemen belonging to all classes of people irrespective of their political discontent or dissatisfaction, should be known for the good of the country itself. At the Peace Conference various countries will come forward boasting of the efforts that they have made in this great war. At the Peace Conference many nations and their delegates will talk of what they have done in this war. I venture to say that this country has done at least as much as the United Kingdom or the United States of America taking into consideration its resources, its manpower, the facilities that were available at the beginning of the war and the facilities that could possibly have been developed during the years of the war. This country has done at least as much as any other country or any other people who are fighting on the side of the Allies. That is a fact of tremendous importance for the good of the country and not for the prestige of any Government. That is a fact that is going to stand in good stead when decisions are going to be made at the Peace Conference. Some Honourable Members may ridicule the idea because according to them nothing good is going to come out of any International Conference. I realise that pessimistic frame of mind that some Honourable Members have. I realise that that is an obsession with some who feel that nothing good will come out of any war efforts. I personally do not take that view. I, therefore, think as an Indian we ought to express what we have been able to do and we should tell the people of other countries what this country has been able to achieve.

I have found in my recent tour in America the greatest amount of ignorance of the scope and activities of the Indian war effort. From place to place, from

audience to audience, I have gone about and was amazed at the ignorance. Even so is the case with the United Kingdom whose people say they have a direct responsibility for the Government of this country. They have shown almost equal ignorance in matters connected with India and the Indian war effort. It is the realisation of this fact that has made the Governments of the two countries ask that through Indians themselves they should know the part that India has played in the war effort. What is the good of sending Sir Guthrie Russell as my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, suggested? What is the good of sending any official who will be suspect of putting forth only the views of the officials or putting forward the views on behalf of the officials? Let the gentlemen who know the conditions in the country and who have been able to study the conditions in the country—and it does not require them to go about from factory to factory, though it may be the finale of their education but as gentlemen who have played their part in industrial efforts, as one or two of these delegates have done, in politics as one or two of these have done, in journalistic and other ventures, as one or two of them have done,—let these gentlemen go forward and tell from their personal knowledge, not gathered in three weeks, but gathered in as many years after the war has broken out what they feel about this war effort what India has done and is doing, how much it has strained its resources, how much its people have responded to the call of the Allied Nations and to the call of democracy for which we are supposed to fight this war. I venture to think that this is of inestimable value to the cause of India and it is from that point of view that the delegation has been chosen. I came to the conclusion myself when I was in America that repeated delegations ought to go from time to time from the Government of India, of the people of India and of Indians only so that they will tell the people of America what is being done. (Interruption.) My Honourable friend may ridicule the whole idea. My Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan just suggested seriously that men like Sir Guthrie Russell could be sent. My Honourable friend does not realise that Indians should really speak for India's war effort. I have already said that the question of selection of personnel of any delegation is a very difficult question. Will Honourable Members at least agree with me that it is a matter of such importance that the Government of India should send some delegation?

Some Honourable Members: No, no.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Elected by this House, if necessary.

Some Honourable Members: No, no.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If Honourable Members do not agree on the first fundamental question, then the question of personnel need not bother any of us at all. I have been trying to show, from my own experience, from the experience of others, from the knowledge and experience of our own Agent General in Washington, that it is necessary that there should be publication of the war effort of this country in America. Honourable Members say that they are satisfied that all publicity is there and that they need not bother about it. When I turn round and see that some of my Honourable friends in this House have not got an adequate appreciation of what has been done in this country, either on the industrial side or on the military side, that our own countrymen have not got a proper realisation of what has been done in this country, then I venture to think that they are not the proper judges of what Americans know or what the Britishers know in these matters. If therefore it is conceded, as I hope it will be conceded by some at least that there is need for publicising the part that India has played in this great war, the stresses and strains through which India is passing—somebody referred to the food situation—well, that may be part of the case for war effort which has been going on in this country and I can easily visualise its connection with war effort itself, or as a consequence of some kind of war effort that has been going on in this country. This morning there was a question of the need for greater release of consumers goods to the civilian population, again an indirect by-product of war effort that this country

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]—

is making. These are matters which will have to be placed before other countries who are thinking that they alone are making the greatest sacrifices and that others are not making the same amount of sacrifices.

An Honourable Member: Who is concealing all these facts from us?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is not a question of this being concealed. It is a question of being revealed in proper terms, in adequate measures to those who have no knowledge and those who have no idea of what is going on here. Has any one here any idea of what is going on in America? Does any Englishman know here, has he any idea of what is happening in his own country during the war? If that is so, do you mean to suggest that Americans, most of whom have never visited this country, or that Englishmen, most of whom have had no opportunity of coming to this country during the war, know exactly what is happening in India. It is merely a question of trying to convey first hand knowledge through some people of what is actually happening in this country, and how far war effort is being carried on by the industries themselves. Somebody said why not avail of the American correspondents in this country and ask them to put before their countrymen all these matters.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Or cinema films.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I know we can use a great many artists both from within and outside this House, but they are not all available, at any rate they are not at the disposal of the Government of India. Anyhow we have to use only those artists who are available to us either from this House or from outside.

Somebody said why not rely on American correspondents to send news from this country about war efforts of India. I would only like to have that question put to any journalist whether any journalist is prepared to be used, particularly by the Government. When a matter is given by the Government, surely there will be the greatest objection for any journalist to use it as such. After all the American journalists have got their own ideas of what to send and what not. They have their own views as to how much should be communicated to their countrymen having regard to the difficulties about cable and so on. If I know anything about American gentlemen, they would have nothing except hot news gathered on the spot. But these are more mundane matters of long policy, matters, comparatively speaking, which will interest only certain classes of people and it is necessary that these matters should be conveyed by our own representatives directly. I therefore suggest that the House should come to the conclusion that the idea of giving publicity to the war effort of India in America and in England is of vital need to this country and that the Government of India have done the right thing in taking an opportunity to send delegates to convey the facts to those wider audiences.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): Sir, the arguments advanced by the two Honourable Members of the Government of India leave us absolutely unconvinced. While the Honourable Member for Information was pleased to tell us that part of the expenses which will be incurred in connection with this delegation in Great Britain will be borne by the Government of the United Kingdom, he was careful enough, not to tell us as to who will bear their expenses when they are actually travelling in America for which country they are primarily meant. I have been informed, and I hope I have been correctly informed that when these gentlemen are travelling in America, it will be given out that they are travelling at their own expense and not at the expense of the Government of India, and that they are non-official representatives of Indian public opinion.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: May I know who gave this information? I do not know where my Honourable friend got this information. It is not in fact correct.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member himself knows that it is not correct.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: The Honourable Member himself admitted if I heard him correctly that it has not yet been decided as to who would bear that part of the expenses of the delegation which relates to America. However, this was the information which I received from somebody who was closely connected with the delegation, and it would not be politic to name that gentleman. They were expected to give out that they were travelling at their own expense. If the Government of India had been a responsible Government like the ones we have in other Allied countries, we would not have objected to their sending out a delegation to America to throw light on the war efforts of this country. But we notice that in this country we have an irresponsible executive. Therefore it is the duty of the representatives of the people to see that they are not allowed to do things without open and timely criticism, which would in any way convey some wrong idea about the feelings of the people of India. Now, Sir, the greatest objection to the sending out of this delegation is that it would not represent the true state of feelings in this country.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is not a question of feeling, but war effort.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: As regards war effort, they would deliberately misrepresent facts, suppress facts, and give expression only to half truths. If the Government are very anxious that the delegation should visit America to inform them about our war efforts, has it ever occurred to Honourable Members of this Government that so far other free countries like America, Russia, China, England, have never thought of sending out any delegation to this country to inform us about their war efforts or tell us what they have been doing in the cause of the United Nations. If these free countries do not think it necessary or proper to send a delegation to this country, why should the Government of India be so anxious to advertise their war efforts in the United States of America? Sir, I should like this Government to do one thing, and it is a suggestion which I make in all seriousness, that instead of sending out this delegation send out an invitation to the United States of America, to the Russian Soviet Union, to the Chinese Government, to send out delegations to this country with absolute freedom and full facilities to see things for themselves, to see what the Government of India and the Government of Great Britain have done in this country which has resulted in the frustration of the maximum war efforts which this country could have put forth. If such delegations were invited, and allowed to go round to see things for themselves, they would find out the many acts of omission and commission on the part of this Government which have been really responsible for the frustration of the genuine war effort of this country. They should be taken to the prisons of India where the elected representatives of the people are kept behind the prison bars without any trial, at least most of them; and even now in my province the Government of India refuse to release 12 Members of the Assembly who have been put in prison, while they have thought it proper to release a number of other prisoners. If they are allowed to go to Bengal which is behind the fighting line they would see that people are dying of starvation as a result of the maladministration of the British Government, and of their agents in India who are sitting here right opposite,—that thousands and thousands of people are dying of hunger in a province which is the richest and the most fertile in this country and where excellent means of communication exist in the shape of waterways to take round food from one place to another. It is the gravest example of maladministration, that behind the firing line, and in close proximity to the place where the actual battle is going on, there should rage a famine and hundreds and thousands of people die of starvation. Is not this a case of frustration of real war effort? Will you allow people from outside to come and see this aspect of your activities? I have been informed that certain orders have been passed under the Ordinance on newspapers in Calcutta not to publish reports about the famine and not to send out information to other parts of India or abroad as

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]
to what is happening in that province. If people are allowed to come with these delegations they will see for themselves that these arrests of people, and detention of thousands of people without trial, the shootings and bombing of innocent crowds from the air, affairs which have blackened the name of Government like the affair of Chimur in the C. P. where the honour of our womenfolk was violated . . .

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): Sir, I deny that.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: You may deny it but we are not going to take our instructions from you.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is diverting to all sorts of subjects. He must confine himself to the war effort.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: These are things which cause resentment in the minds of our people and if these delegations are invited to this country they will see things for themselves.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is no such question now before the House. The Honourable Member should confine his remarks to the subject of this motion.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: I submit that it is absolutely wrong and monstrous on the part of this Government to send out a delegation of people who are not known in this country, who do not represent anybody,—like the present Government of India, to misrepresent facts when they have already got an Agent General there whom they can supply with facts and figures. The radio is there and the American press is there. After all it is not asserted that India is cut off and that there is no communication between here and Washington. They can send out all the information they want; but they want to send out Indians and they have selected people who can be counted upon not to state the truth or at least to state things which the Government of India want them to state. The Honourable the Leader of the House would have us believe that they have given instructions to these gentlemen not to say anything about politics. But while these people who have received some money or will receive some money and will go and speak on the war effort may be loyal enough to carry out the instructions issued by my Honourable friend opposite, may I know whether the Government of India have got power to enforce those instructions on the American people? Do the Government of India take it for granted that the American audiences will be absolutely blank and will not ask any questions about politics—which is the burning topic of the day? Certainly questions will be asked and answers will be given and no one in this country, because of censorship, will know anything as to the activities of these so-called representatives who are being sent out from this country.

Therefore, Sir, I and my Party support this motion and we condemn the action of the Government of India in sending out a delegation of people who represent nobody, in order to misrepresent facts about this country.

Several Honourable Members: The question may now be put.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That the question be now put.”

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I have heard all the arguments and I have very little to say in reply. I was trying to get some of the cuttings which I had arranged but which were not available to me because of the time at which the discussion of this motion has been taken up. I casually referred in my opening remarks to certain Members of Parliament from England who came over here and who said that there were terrific sacrifices on the part of India in the war effort. I think it was the Conservative M.P. Mr. Stillwell who reported to this effect. Then we have reports of speeches in London given by *Reuter*, and it was Major-General Molesworth who said that India's

efforts are prodigious. What more sacrifice do you want? We are already told that India's efforts are terrific and prodigious. Is anything more wanted? Then I referred to certain efforts which can be made by the Agent-General as well as the Broadcasting Department, and I referred in my opening speech to a certain effort made in the matter of food. I said that the Americans were certainly under the impression that the Government of India were doing nothing to solve this food problem and the press said all sorts of things against the Government of India and their mismanagement of things. There was a message from Washington dated October 29 that the Government of India through the British Information Service have issued a statement that efforts to help Bengal by sending food from surplus areas is already bearing fruit, etc. In other words, they can issue statements like this to dispel any wrong impression which may be there. This they did because they saw that American sympathies were strongly drawn towards India, that they were saying that the people's cooperation should be enlisted and the only way to seek that cooperation was to have a sort of national Government or a Government representative of the people. The Government here issued a statement before, why cannot they issue another statement in this case too? Why cannot their Agent-General and other persons either in America or in Great Britain do it? They can send literature, and all sorts of statements. These gentlemen will make speeches and attend social functions but when questions about Indian politics are asked they will say that they cannot say anything about politics. What impression will these winged but muzzled people create there? Think of your own men going to other countries and saying, when questions are put to them, “our Government has asked us not to say anything even in social functions; we are tied down.” What is the earthy good of sending such people abroad? In reply to a question in the Council of State it was stated that these gentlemen will be free to comment and they would be free to make any speeches. If they are invited to speak on the political subject, they should do so. They cannot say, “We cannot speak on this matter”. Think of these people—representatives of India!—not answering questions of which they are expected to have full knowledge. If they are unable to address those meetings, what will the people think of such representatives—not of us, but of the Government of India? Sir, I strongly condemn this action of the Government of India and I hope the House will support me in my adjournment motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

“That the Assembly do now adjourn.”

The Assembly divided:

AYES—43.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
Abdul Qaiyum, Mr.
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Banerjee, Dr. P. N.
Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.
Choudhury, Mr. Abdur Rasheed.
Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
Deshmukh, Dr. G. V.
Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.
Gupta, Mr. K. S.
Habibar Rahman, Dr.
Hans Raj, Raizada.
Hegde, Sri K. B. Jinaraja.

Ismail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muham.
mad.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.
Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr.

Krishnamachari, Mr. T. T.
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.
Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muham.
mad.
Maitra, Pandit Lakshmi Kanta.
Mangal Singh, Sardar.
Misra, Pandit Shambhudayal.
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
Naidu, Mr. G. Rangiah.
Nairang, Syed Gulam BhiK.
Neogy, Mr. K. C.
Pande, Mr. Badri Dutt.
Parma Nand, Bhai.
Ramayan Prasad, Mr.
Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
Reddiar, Mr. K. Sitarama.
Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
Srivastava, Mr. Hari Sharan Prasad.
Umar Aly Shah, Mr.
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
Yusuf Abdoola Haroon, Seth.
Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.
Zia Uddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

[8TH Nov. 1943.]

NOES—39.

Abhyankar, Mr. N. G.
 Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
 Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
 Bhagchand Soni, Rai Bahadur Seth.
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
 Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
 Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
 Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
 Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
 Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haidar.
 Ismaiel Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
 Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
 Lawson, Mr. C. P.
 Maxwell, The Honourable Sir Reginald.
 Miller, Mr. C. C.
 Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 9th November, 1943.

Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan
 Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami.
 Phare Lal Kureel, Mr.
 Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
 Richardson, Sir Henry.
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam
 Kadir Muhammad.
 Sira Raj, Rao Bahadur N.
 Spear, Dr. T. G. P.
 Spence, Sir George.
 Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala
 Prasad.
 Stokes, Mr. H. G.
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
 Thakur Singh, Major.
 Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.
 Wakely, Mr. L. J. D.
 Zahid Husain, Mr.
 Zaman, Mr. S. R.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 9th November, 1943

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN

Mr. M. Ramachandra Rao Nayudu, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

Sardar Mangal Singh: Question No. 24.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is the Honourable Member in his place? He ought to be?

Sardar Mangal Singh: I do not know.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If there has been reallocation of seats by the Party, of which no intimation has been given to me, the old arrangement will stand.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: In half an hour we will furnish the new seating arrangement.

DEATHS DUE TO STARVATION IN BENGAL AND ASSAM AND FOOD POSITION IN INDIA.

24. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) the total number of deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam from the 1st August to the 31st October 1943; and

(b) whether the Government of India has been sending reports regularly to His Majesty's Government about the food position in India with particular reference to Bengal; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) I regret that I am not in a position to supply figures which I can regard as complete and accurate. Further reports have been called for.

(b) Yes.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know if the Government of India in their reports to His Majesty's Government said that the Punjab Government had hoarded foodgrains?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That does not arise out of the question on the order paper.

Sardar Mangal Singh: It does. When the Honourable Member says that they have been sending reports regularly to His Majesty's Government, it does arise whether in the reports they have sent they said that the Punjab has hoarded foodgrains.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No; the reference is specially to Bengal in the question—not to the Punjab.

Sardar Mangal Singh: The reference is not only to Bengal, but whether the Government of India has been sending reports regularly to His Majesty's Government about the food situation in India with particular reference to Bengal. Obviously the Government of India has said somewhere in those reports that the Punjab is hoarding foodgrains or withholding from Bengal, because in the House of Lords it has been said that the Punjab is not coming forward with their foodgrains. I want to know what was the foundation for that report which the Government of India sent to His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I would like to have notice of the question.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Has this Government been sending any reports regarding the food situation in India or not?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes. I have answered that in the affirmative.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Government in a position to lay those reports on the table?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No; the reports are confidential, I am sorry.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Can we take it that the statements made by the Secretary of State or other official spokesmen in Parliament from time to time are based on such reports?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They may be partly based on those reports.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Have they any independent sources of information, to the knowledge of the Honourable Member?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I believe so: I could not say definitely; but he has got so many sources of information.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table that portion of the report which has been used in the Parliament?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am afraid not; I do not know what report he has used.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: About the food situation in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have been sending to the Secretary of State weekly telegrams about the food situation in India; and I do not know which of these telegrams or what portions of them he has used and what other sources he has drawn upon.

Sir F. E. James: Will the Honourable Member say how it was, at any rate in the earlier stages of this crisis, that the Secretary of State made such grossly inaccurate statements in regard to the food situation, which every one in this country knew was not in accordance with the facts?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That question ought to be addressed to the Secretary of State, I am afraid.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member kindly enlighten the House since when he started giving His Majesty's Government information about the food situation in India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I would like to have notice of the question. This has been going on for some time; I could not tell you from what time we have been sending him reports.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate in regard to what points the Secretary of State or other official spokesmen of the Government departed from the reports sent by the Government of India, particularly on material points?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is very difficult to answer that question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to supply this House with a copy of the recent White Paper on the food situation in India? Has the White Paper been received in India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No; we have not yet received it. I have not seen it yet.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to say whether the White Paper is based on the information supplied by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No: I am not in a position to say whether it is entirely based on it, or not.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Did the Government of India supply information for incorporation into the White Paper, particularly the appendices to the White Paper?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have not seen the White Paper yet.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Do I take it then that the Government of India was not consulted in regard to the issuing of the White Paper or asked specially to supply materials for the purpose of enabling His Majesty's Government to issue the White Paper?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Statements were given from time to time and the Secretary of State may have based the White Paper on those; but I could not say for certain; I have not yet seen the White Paper and I do not know what it contains.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India propose to lay before this House a white or blue paper or a paper of whatever colour, giving information to this House regarding the food situation?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes; it will be done in a day or two.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member tell me if the reports that are sent to England are based on reports received from the provinces or from the public of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Reports received from the provinces and also our own appreciation.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: As regards the reports of deaths from starvation, is it the practice of the Honourable Member to submit such reports to the scrutiny of Mr. Conran-Smith before they are sent to the Secretary of State for India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: How does the Honourable Member then assure himself that such reports do not suffer from overdramatisation of the situation?
(No answer was given.)

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LONG RANGE FOOD POLICY COMMITTEE.

25. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) what recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee have been accepted by the Government of India; and

(b) whether, in view of the seriousness of the food situation, Government propose to allot a day or two for discussion by this House of the food situation during this session; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Government of India have generally accepted all the major recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee relating to the Basic Plan, Procurement, Price Control, Rationing and Imports and Exports. All the subsidiary recommendations are being examined and many of them have been accepted.

(b) Government have already agreed to allot two days for discussion of the food situation.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India propose to circulate to Members of the Legislature the report of the Long Range Food Policy Committee?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have not yet been able to get sufficient copies printed, I think, but I will endeavour to supply Members with as many as I can. Three copies of the report have been placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware that the proceedings of the First Food Conference which was held I suppose in December 1942 are not available in the Library of this House although proceedings of the Second and Third Food Conferences are available, and that, although requests have been made by the Librarian as well as by non-official Members for being supplied with copies, no response has yet been received?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will look into the matter. It may be due to scarcity of paper.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Is the Honourable Member prepared to place a copy on the table of the House or in the Library—I mean the First Food Conference Report?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will endeavour to do so.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know if the Government of India are importing half a dozen experts on food, because that was one of the recommendations of the Committee—that experts should be imported from England?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No. We are not importing any just now so far as I know.

Sardar Mangal Singh: You are not importing now. Then next week?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No.

Sardar Mangal Singh: People want food, not experts.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Will the Honourable Member kindly explain what he means by just now?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, at present.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Has any indent been made?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know when those two days will come?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Leader of the House will make an announcement about it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know what are those two days so that we may be prepared?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Leader of the House will make an announcement.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: It has not yet been announced.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: May I know from the Honourable Member if there are any food experts in India?

An Honourable Member: Experts or exports!

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I expect all Honourable Members are food experts.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: May I know from the Honourable Member whether there are any food experts in India

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Next question.

HOLDING OF A SECRET SITTING OF LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DURING CURRENT SESSION.

26. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state whether, in view of the fact that the secret sitting of the Legislative Assembly during the last session was adjourned after the lunch interval for want of a quorum, thereby depriving the non-official members of an opportunity to elicit valuable information from His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief about the war situation, Government propose to allot a day for a secret sitting of this House during this session? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's speech on the occasion to which the Honourable Member refers was fully informative and I have ascertained that His Excellency has no further information of importance to impart to the House at this juncture. In these circumstances Government do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by a continuance of the debate.

HOLDING OF FRESH ELECTIONS OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE.

27. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable the Law Member please state:

(a) when the electoral rolls of the Central Legislative Assembly were prepared last time;

(b) when Government propose to hold fresh elections of the Central Legislature; and

(c) whether Government propose to continue giving extensions to the present Legislative Assembly till the termination of the war?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) The preparation of the current electoral rolls was completed on dates varying in different provinces from the 1st September, 1941 to the 31st October, 1942

(b) The Honourable Member is referred to sub-rule (1) of rule 27 of the Council of State and Legislative Assembly Electoral Rules, from which he will observe that a general election to each Chamber must necessarily be held on the expiration of the current extension of the Chamber, or, if further extensions are effected, on the expiration of the last extension so effected.

(c) Under clause (b) of the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 63D of the Government of India Act as set out in the Ninth Schedule to the Government of India Act, 1935, the decision with reference to the effecting or otherwise of further extensions will rest with the Governor-General, and I am not in a position to anticipate the decisions at which His Excellency may from time to time arrive

REPORTS BY MESSRS. H. R. HUTCHINGS AND A. K. CHANDA ON THE EVACUATION OF INDIANS FROM BURMA.

28. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state:

(a) whether the reports of Mr. H. R. Hutchings and Mr. A. K. Chanda regarding the evacuation of Indians from Burma will be placed on the table of this House; and

(b) whether Government have taken or contemplate taking any action thereon; if so, what?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) and (b). As the House is aware, the Government of India have received a number of reports on the evacuation of Burma. As promised by my predecessor, these reports were collated and scrutinised and the preparation of a consolidated report undertaken, the work being entrusted to Mr. A. K. Chanda. As this work neared completion, it became apparent that it would be impossible to present a clear picture of the whole operation without including matter that might be of great value to the enemy. The question has therefore been re-examined in the light of the existing military situation and after detailed consideration the Government of India have decided not to publish any report on the subject for the present.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Did the Honourable Member say that this report would not be published for the duration of the war because it will give information to the enemy?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I say for the present.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: When Mr. Chanda was appointed specifically for drafting the report, did not Government anticipate that the report when made might be of use to the enemy? Why did it not occur to the Government at the initial stage?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: It is for the Government to decide. It is confidential.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: I wanted to know whether it did not occur to the Government at the early stage that such a document would not be worth publication, that the report need not be drafted at all when it was not going to be published as it was likely to give information to the enemy?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Government could not anticipate the war situation.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: When Mr. Chanda was deputed to undertake this work of drafting the report on evacuation from Burma, did it not occur to Government that it would not be advisable to have the report drafted?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: It is a matter of opinion.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: May I take it that the report is ready and will remain with the Government?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Of course.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is it the case of the Government that the fact of publication of the Report should not be made known to the enemy though he knew the way in which Indians were evacuated from Burma? Is that the contention of the Government?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: That is also a matter of opinion.

CONTROL ON PAPER OTHER THAN NEWSPRINT.

29. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state whether any control exists on paper other than the newsprint? If so, what are its main features and what powers have been delegated to the Provincial Governments?

(b) Is it a fact that Provincial Governments requisition paper for their use as well as for sale on permits issued and for assisting essential consumers? If so, under what provisions are these functions carried out?

(c) Has the term 'essential consumer' been defined? If so, where? If not, are registered associations essential consumers?

(d) Which associations in Sind have been given permits or otherwise assisted in obtaining their paper requirements during the current year, and which associations have been refused such assistance?

(e) What is the controlled price of paper at Delhi, Karachi, Lahore, Bombay and Calcutta?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes; statutory control exists on maximum wholesale prices of certain varieties of paper. Provincial Governments are competent to fix such retail prices in their areas as they may consider reasonable.

(b) Yes, some Provincial Governments have had occasion to requisition paper under the Defence of India Rules for Government use and for assisting certain essential consumers.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The Central Government have not issued any permits or given any special assistance to any Association in Sind.

(e) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the Notification of the Government of India in the Department of Commerce No. Econ-Ad. (P.C.) 16/41, dated the 16th January, 1942 as amended from time to time, copies of which are available in the Library of the Legislative Assembly. The controlled prices at places other than those mentioned in the Notification are fixed by the Provincial Governments concerned.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member if there is any price control over the paper which is required for courts, professional advocates and others who want to make applications to courts, etc.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have lost sight of the professional advocates' requirements for some time and I have not been able to find anywhere in the file that there is any such.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member if the Government do not propose to have any control over that paper which is required for the courts and that sellers can charge any price they like?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Government has made its position quite clear and I have made it quite clear, that we exercise a certain amount of control only and not to the fullest extent, and as such any individual item is a matter which is not under consideration just now.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member tell the House what percentage of Indian output of paper has been released for civilian consumption in India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: 30 per cent.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is it the policy of the Government to review the needs of the civilians from time to time and to increase the quota of release?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I may say that this 30 per cent. is as a result of the review of the whole position. I can assure Honourable Members that the position is being watched from day to day and if at any time Government feels that, consistently with other requirements, it is possible to increase the quota, Government would certainly be prepared to do so.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is the Honourable Member aware that last year a similar figure was quoted by the Member in charge that only 30 per cent. of the Indian produce of paper has been released for civilian use. If

so, will the Honourable Member tell us whether any further improvement has since been made?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: If my friend wants the actual date, I require notice.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know what kind of consumers of papers are included in the list of essential consumers?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have said that there is no definition of the term 'essential consumer' and as such I am not in a position to enlighten the Honourable Member except to say that they are required for essential consumers.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member take note of the requests of Universities and educational institutions for increased quotas of paper?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am aware that certain Provincial Governments have taken special consideration of the requirements of the Universities but that is a matter for the Provincial Governments. So far as the Central Government is concerned, we have left it entirely to the Provincial Government to function.

Mr. Hooseinhoy A. Lalljee: Will the Provincial Government supply the list?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The work is too vast for a continent like India.

BOMBAY GOVERNMENT'S APPLICATION FOR MANUFACTURE OF SULPHATHIOZOL.

30. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) if the application of the Bombay Government to the Government of India about a year ago for the manufacture of sulphathiozol which was referred to the High Court of Calcutta has been allowed; if not, the reasons for rejecting it; and

(b) if the Government of India intend to move in the matter instead of leaving it to the individual provinces; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The application was referred to the Calcutta High Court, but as the Bombay Government decided not to proceed with the case it was dismissed with costs.

(b) As the manufacture of Sulphathiozol in this country would require the importation of a number of chemicals, which would greatly exceed the weight of the manufactured product, it is not considered desirable to utilise the limited transport available in war-time in importing the raw materials instead of the finished product which will occupy much less space. I may add that the question is now being examined in connection with the Drugs Committee, as to what drugs we should try to develop in this country.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Last time it was said that the Government was making attempts to manufacture this and that it was a question of plant. Now that the war situation has improved, cannot the plant and the chemicals be ordered now with a view to manufacture this important drug?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is very difficult to answer the question with reference to an individual item. The Government has to take into consideration the demands of the country as a whole. I can assure the Honourable Member that the whole question is being examined. In many cases it is not merely the manufacture of raw materials. We have also to manufacture certain machines, tools and plants and that makes the position extremely difficult at times but we shall certainly carefully consider the situation.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is the Honourable Member aware that this is not one of those things or articles which are required by everybody for ordinary consumption. It is one of the most essential drugs.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is arguing.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I am putting the question. Having regard to that, may I know whether the Honourable Member will give serious attention to this and try to secure all the necessary chemicals and plants?

(No answer.)

MANUFACTURE OF 'ATEBRIN' IN INDIA.

31. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

- (a) if 'Atebrin' is manufactured, now in India; if so, on what scale; and
- (b) if it is not manufactured, what are the obstructions in manufacturing it; and what steps Government have taken to remove them?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) It is understood that two private firms in Calcutta manufacture a drug which is an exact equivalent of atebrein. Their monthly output is estimated to be a few pounds.

(b) The main difficulty in the way of manufacturing atebrein in India is the fact that it requires the importation of a number of chemicals which are not available in India and which together weigh about ten times the weight of the finished product. In view of war-time difficulties of transport and the fact that the manufactured product, which occupies much less space than the required chemicals, is available for export both in the United Kingdom and the United States of America it is considered desirable in the interest of economy in shipping, to import the finished product instead of the materials required for manufacture.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What is this drug which is equivalent to atebrein? Does the Honourable Member know about it?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know anything more about it than what I have said.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What is the name of the drug?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know what they call it.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is any such drug which is equivalent to atebrein manufactured?

(No answer.)

AFFILIATION OF FORESTRY TRAINING INSTITUTE OF DEHRA DUN TO UNIVERSITY.

32. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if the Forestry Training Institute of Dehra Dun can be affiliated to any university in the United Provinces? If not, what are the objections to its affiliation?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: There are two Forestry training Institutes at Dehra Dun—the Indian Forest College and the Indian Forest Ranger College. The question whether either can be affiliated to any University in the United Provinces has not been considered before. They are Government institutions designed primarily to train candidates selected for appointment to the Superior and Subordinate Forest Services of the Provinces and the Indian States and, if places are available, private students, who have a guarantee of appointment in a province or State after successfully completing the course. Forestry is a specialised subject and no University in India has on its staff the technical experts required to control all aspects of Forest Education. The Colleges at Dehra Dun, on the other hand, are self-sufficient, and staffed by practical forest officers on deputation from the Forest Services of the Provinces and by research officers of the Forest Research Institute, under the control of the President of the Institute. It is not obvious what advantage would accrue to the Colleges from affiliation to a University and it is not proposed to pursue the matter at present.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Was any inquiry made as to whether there is any competent technical staff to manage the school and college?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: There are competent staffs for managing both the colleges.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: If any University is prepared to make arrangements for training in forestry to the satisfaction of the Government, will Government be pleased to give the sanction?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: That is a hypothetical question. When that situation arises, we shall consider it.

FRAMING OF RULES TO ENFORCE RECIPROCITY ACT.

33. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state:

(a) if all the necessary rules to enforce the Reciprocity Act have been framed; and

(b) if measures have been adopted to enforce economic sanctions, where necessary, against the Colonies and Dominions ill-treating the Indians living therein?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Draft rules have been prepared governing certain matters covered by the Reciprocity Act.

(b) No measures have yet been adopted designed to operate as economic sanctions against any dominion or colony.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: In spite of so much demand from the public, in the Press and on the platform, why has the Government not been alert enough to devise means for enforcing economic sanctions?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have said that the draft rules have already been prepared. I may add that the question of economic sanctions is under active consideration.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: When are the rules likely to be put into force?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Certain matters have still to be examined.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Have the rules received the approval of the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have said that the draft rules have been framed.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: When are they likely to be approved by the Government? When will they come up for consideration before Government?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I want notice of the question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: When will the Honourable Member be in a position to enforce these rules?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I cannot give the exact date.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I do not want the exact date. I want to know approximately?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: As soon as the other paraphernalia is finished.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether he can state whether they will be finished in a month or two months or three months?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I cannot say that.

PROPOSAL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDIAN COCOANUT BOARD.

34. *Sir F. E. James: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

(a) whether the establishment of an Indian Coconut Board on the lines of the Ceylon Board was recommended by Dr. J. S. Patel, who was deputed by the Imperial Institute of Agricultural Research in 1934 to make an enquiry into the coconut cultivation;

(b) whether similar recommendations have been made by the present Diwan of Travancore in recent years in the Travancore Legislature;

(c) whether, in view of the present shortage of coconut products and the necessity for increasing production, Government would give their urgent consideration to such a proposal; and

(d) whether definite proposals have been circulated to various Provinces and States, what stage they have now reached, and when the Government of India will be able to establish the Board?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) No, but a proposal for the establishment of a Coconut Marketing Board was made by the Dewan of Cochin in 1936;

(b) Government have no information;
 (c) and (d). Yes, proposals regarding the establishment of an Indian Coconut Committee are considered urgent and have already been circulated to Provinces and States. Further action in the matter will be taken as soon as their replies are received.

PROVINCIAL STOCKS OF WHEAT, RICE, ETC.

35. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state the stock of wheat, rice, maize, millet and sugar left in each province in India on the 31st March, 1943, including the provinces under the Central Government?

(b) What is the number of civil population, province by province, which had to be fed with the stock left in each province from the 1st of April, 1943?

(c) What quantity of wheat, rice, millet, maize and sugar was produced, province by province, in India between the 1st April and 30th September, 1943, indicating separately the total stock of the aforesaid commodities left in each province in India on the 30th September, 1943?

(d) What total quantity of foodstuff was supplied to the military population, province by province, between the 1st April and the 30th September, 1943?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The information required for a complete reply to the Honourable Member's question, in the form asked, is not readily available with the Central Government, and they consider that their collection would involve an amount of time and money which would not be justified in present conditions, but statements are placed on the table showing:

- (a) Population according to the 1941 Census, province by province.
- (b) Normal requirements and production and surplus/deficit position of all provinces in respect of foodgrains.
- (c) Total quantity of foodgrains supplied to the Defence Services for the period in question.

Statement showing population and the surplus and deficit position of each province in respect of principal cereals in 1943 as compared with the normal.

Name of province.	Total population. (In '000).	*Average total quantity of rice, millets, wheat and gram available within the trade block for human consumption and seed purposes. (In '000 tons).	Production of 1942-43. (In '000 tons).	Surplus.	Deficit.	Net position: surplus (+) or deficit (—)
Ajmer-Merwara	584	76	18	..	58	..
Assam	10,205	1,808	1,688	..	120	..
Bengal	60,314	9,278	7,080	..	2,198	..
Bihar	36,340	4,157	4,323	166	..	..
Bombay	20,858	3,844	2,902	..	942	..
Baluchistan	502	66	(a) 66	..	..	..
C. P. and Berar	16,822	3,337	3,730	393	..	..
Coorg	169	56	60	4	..	..
Delhi	917	109	37	..	72	..
Madras	49,342	7,431	6,181	..	1,250	..
N.-W. F. P.	3,038	342	357	15	..	..
Orissa	8,729	1,362	1,259	..	103	..
Punjab	28,419	4,234	5,919	1,685	..	..
Sind	4,537	760	1,074	314	..	..
U. P.	55,021	7,049	7,698	649	..	..
TOTAL	2,95,797	43,909	42,392	3,226	4,743	—1,517

* Three pre-war years' production (+) or (—) net imports or exports.
 (a) Estimated, actual net available.

Statement showing the delivery of principal foodgrains for the Defence Services for the period 1st April, 1943 to 30th September, 1943.

	(In '000 tons).
Wheat	184.6
Rice	75.3
Millets	1.5
Gram	35.1

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I ask whether the Food Department can work efficiently without the information that is asked for in this question.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Certainly.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I thought that if anyone frames a food policy, then the statistics which are asked in this question are the first essential before any policy can be framed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

STEPS FOR RELIEVING FOOD SCARCITY IN BENGAL.

36. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state approximately the total civil and military population, separately, which had to be fed in Bengal during the 1st April and the 30th September, 1943, and what quantity of rice, wheat, millet and maize had to be supplied for the purpose?

(b) What is the number of men, women and children, separately, who expired on the footpaths and streets of Calcutta, Dacca, Chittagong, Dinajpur, Rungpur, Rajshahi and Khulna between June and September, 1943, on account of starvation, how many were sent to hospitals during that period, how many died in the different hospitals, and how many were cured and sent back to their homes?

(c) What special steps did he take to stop such deaths in Bengal? What were the causes that led to such a scarcity of food specially in Bengal, and why was not Bengal declared to be a province under famine condition?

(d) What is the total quantity of deficit in rice, wheat, millet and maize in Bengal, separately, and the quantity of the aforesaid commodities supplied to meet Bengal's deficit?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The civil population in Bengal is estimated at 63 millions. It is not in the public interest to reveal the size of the military population. The requirements of this population for six months are estimated by the Government of Bengal to be of the following order:—

Rice	3.9 million tons.
Wheat	21,000 tons.
Millets and Maize	2,000 tons.

(b) An enquiry was made from Government of Bengal and this is their answer: "No accurate figures are available".

(c) Arrangements were made by the Central Government for the despatch to Bengal by rail and sea, and from overseas, as quickly as possible, of large quantities of foodgrains. In addition the Bengal Government have opened free kitchens, orphanages, poor houses and cheap foodgrain shops for destitute persons, and have arranged for the free distribution of foodgrains, cloth and milk for such persons. Arrangements have also been made for the treatment of destitute persons in hospitals. Test relief schemes have been started for able-bodied persons, and loans granted.

The scarcity of food in Bengal is due to many causes, amongst which may be mentioned the destruction of crops caused by cyclones and floods, loss of imports from Burma, increase of population and refugees, lack of confidence caused by war conditions which led to hoarding both by traders and consumers.

All districts of Bengal are not equally distressed. The question of applying the Famine Code to certain districts is under the consideration of the Provincial Government. Meanwhile, special relief measures have been undertaken.

(d) The deficits estimated by the Bengal Government were as follows:

	Tons.
Rice	450,000
Wheat	112,000
Millets and Maize	2,000

The quantities of foodgrains supplied from outside the province to Bengal during the 6 months April to September, 1943, were as follows:

	Tons.
Rice	204,400 (including arrivals during the Free Trade period).
Wheat and Wheat Products	187,200
Millets and Gram	48,500

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to the Honourable Member's answer to part (b) of the question that there is no accurate information as regards the number of deaths from starvation, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state whether any attempt was made to obtain accurate information with regard to this matter by Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As I have stated, we made an inquiry from the Government of Bengal and they say they have got no accurate figures.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Did the Government of India try to impress upon the Government of Bengal the necessity of getting accurate information on such an important matter?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With what result?

(No answer.)

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the free kitchens which the Honourable Member has referred to in answer to part (c) of the question, is the Honourable Member aware that according to general opinion the gruel given to the destitute from these free kitchens is not sufficient to keep a fair sized rat alive?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That is a matter of opinion. I am not aware of that.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member taken the trouble of getting expert opinion for his own satisfaction on this point?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes; when I visited Calcutta, I did look into the matter and I was told it was quite sufficient. In fact, it was too much in some cases.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does the Honourable Member remember the composition and the quantity of the gruel allowed?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I had the recipe.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member try it on himself for a day to find out how he flourishes on it?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have eaten it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But has the Honourable Member tried to subsist on it exclusively?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I can live on very little.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I put a question? I have been getting up so many times.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The food situation is going to be discussed very shortly and I cannot allow further supplementary questions.

VACILLATING POLICY AS REGARDS PRICE CONTROL OF WHEAT, RICE, ETC.

37. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state the dates on which control on prices of wheat, rice and sugar was announced under the Defence of India Rules? What was the effect of such announcement, and what led to the withdrawal of such control of prices from time to time?

(b) Is it a fact that with the announcement of control of prices the commodities vanished from the market? If so, did the Honourable Member take any step to find out how and where the stock vanished? Did he take any step to punish the traders responsible for such sabotage? If not, why not?

(c) Is it a fact that the Provincial Governments did not co-operate with the Central Government with a view to meeting the food emergency due to which the Central Government failed to cope with the situation? If so, what steps have the Central Government in view to meet the situation?

(d) Is it a fact that the consumers or the Peoples Co-operative Stores in the United Provinces have proved to be the effective instruments for stopping black-market transactions in the Province and a great relief to the people? If so, why have not such peoples Consumers Co-operative Stores been utilised by the Government of Bengal, or, for the matter of that, by the Central Government by ordinances in other provinces and particularly in Bengal where the situation is so serious?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) A control price for wheat for certain markets in Northern India was first notified on the 5th of December, 1941. The price of sugar was first fixed on the 14th of April, 1942. No control price for rice has been fixed by the Government of India. Control in the case of cereals was only partially successful and led in some cases to the commodity disappearing from the market. The control of sugar has been continued with success. Statutory control on the price of wheat was withdrawn in January, 1943 owing to procurement difficulties.

(b) In order to deal with the situation created by the disappearance of controlled foodgrains, the Government of India promulgated the Foodgrains Control Order on the 21st of May, 1942. The object of the Order is to enable Provincial Governments to ascertain the location and amount of stocks of foodgrains and to penalise the holding of stocks in contravention of the Order. The Order is administered by the Provincial Governments, and has been applied with varying degrees of energy and success. Prosecutions under the Order have been instituted by Provincial Governments.

(c) There have been differences of opinion between the Central Government and certain Provincial Governments over various aspects of measures which the Central Government considered necessary. These differences are being progressively removed.

(d) Cooperative Stores in the United Provinces have proved successful as a distributing agency. The strength and efficiency of the Cooperative organisation in different Provinces varies considerably, and it is not considered suitable that the Government of India should prescribe uniformity all over India in this matter by means of an Ordinance.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member say why price control on rice was not instituted by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is very difficult to impose control on rice. There are so many qualities of rice, and the prices vary in different localities enormously.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Does the Honourable Member say that wheat had a standardised price all over India and therefore it was easy of control?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, the producing provinces are somewhere near the standard.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Have Government considered that as no price control was imposed on rice, it brought on the heavy increase in price and consequent scarcity?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is arguing. He must put specific questions.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: May I know whether Government have actually taken steps to enquire whether price control on rice could be imposed?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We did enquire. We looked into the matter. First of all there were difficulties of which I have spoken

and then the Provinces themselves did not agree. They found it very difficult to institute control.

Mr. Hoosseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Is there any price control on rice at present?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, in some Provinces.

Mr. Hoosseinbhoy A. Lalljee: How was that arranged?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: By the Provinces themselves. If the Provinces want they can do so.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Is it not a fact that in some Provinces, they have enforced price control?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, some of the Governments have done.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Assam and Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, Assam has imposed it.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Is it not a fact that though the maximum price fixed for rice in Assam is Rs. 25, yet the selling price is as much as Rs. 35 and this happens in the presence of high Government officials?

(No answer.)

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member indicate the nature and extent of the success attained by the administration of the Food Control Order referred to in answer to part (b)?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: May I deal with this point in the course of the debate on food which is coming on. I will have to give a lengthy answer.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the statement made by the Director General of Food in his own presence in Bombay on 1st October, that the scheme had failed in Bengal? I have a copy of the press report in my hand.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That has been contradicted since. It was a case of misreporting.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Was it misreporting or was it a mis-statement?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It was misreporting. I was present at the conference.

FOOD CONFERENCES AND STANDING FOOD COMMITTEE.

38. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state how many Food Conferences were held from time to time in Delhi, Bombay and Bengal, separately, and what schemes were adopted in these Conferences, and to what effect?

(b) What was the total expenses incurred on these Conferences?

(c) Has the Standing Food Committee, which was formed under the Chairmanship of the Commerce Member at the end of the Budget Session in 1943, been convened even once during these six months? If not, why not? Why were the members of the said Standing Committee not invited to attend the Food Conferences? Why was the Food Conference held without any representative from among the non-official members of the Central Legislature?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) No Food Conference was convened by the Government of India either in Bombay or Bengal. Altogether, four All-India Food Conferences were held in Delhi. A summary of the main conclusions reached in the Conferences is laid on the table.

(b) The information is not readily available and Government do not consider that the labour involved in collecting it would be justified.

(c) One meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee of the Central Legislature for Food and Commerce Departments was held on 7th November, 1943.

The members of the said Committee were not invited to attend the All-India Food Conferences as those conferences were for the purpose of obtaining agreement among representatives of the Provincial and State Governments. For the same reason no representative from amongst the non-official members of the Central Legislature was invited.

A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE ALL-INDIA FOOD CONFERENCES.

First Food Conference (December, 1942).—This Conference was convened immediately after the creation of the Food Department, with a view to make contact with the representatives of Provinces and States on food matters. The Conference was merely exploratory in character.

Second Food Conference (February, 1943).—This Conference was called for the purpose of discussing the Central Procurement Scheme and the Basic Plan for distribution of foodgrains among surplus and deficit areas. The Conference did not agree to the introduction of statutory price control. Provinces were directed to initiate and improve their procurement machinery.

Third Food Conference.—1. The Basic Plan should be continued with such arithmetic adjustments to figures as are necessary.

2. In execution of that plan the operations of procurement shall be carried out by Government or by agencies under the full control of Government—State or Provincial.

3. Action to control prices must be taken. Action on a regional basis appears to be favoured with co-ordination between regions.

4. Energetic steps must be taken to ease and facilitate transport for the distribution plan.

5. As an instrument for control both in respect of physical control and of exerting an influence on prices, the Foodgrains Control Order must be given vigorous application everywhere and that food drives in execution of this should be carried out.

6. As a means of securing equitable distribution and of controlling prices in urban areas, the rationing of such areas in a progressively increasing measure must be resorted to.

7. To facilitate supply, transport and administration, the financial settlement for supplies should be direct as between the surplus and deficit Governments and without the intervention of the Centre.

8. Metal coinage and consumer goods should be made more freely available as the means of securing greater surpluses from the cultivator.

With the Compliments of the Principal Information Officer, Government of India.

UNOFFICIAL NOTE

Un-official Notes are issued for the information of the Press. They may be published as worded or used as background material.

Un-official Notes are not communiques and are issued only on the understanding that their source will not be referred to in any way in what is published.

Passed for Publication.

Fourth Food Conference.

CONCLUDING DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

Governments' decisions.

STATUTORY PRICE CONTROL, RATIONING, AND PROVINCIAL PROCUREMENT.

Announcing the decisions of the Government of India today, Mr. Hutchings, Secretary of the Food Department said,

BASIC PLAN.

Subject to the use of a common formula the Policy Committee had recommended that in case of differences of opinion over the target figures, the matter should be dealt with by an arbitration committee. Calculation of target figures are to be made half-yearly and provinces and states must leave entirely to the Centre any question concerning allocation, the use of the Central reserve and the conduct of special rescue operations. The main difficulty which emerged in the Conference was the feeling of certain administrations that they had not the requisite statistical basis to work the proposed formula and they were afraid consequently that the formula, if adopted, would lead to unreal results. The Government of India agree with the Committee that a common formula is desirable and that the formula proposed by the Policy Committee is, having regard to all the circumstances, the most suitable that has so far been devised. We accept the recommendation that we should continue to improve upon it. We realise that to proceed merely on the basis of a formula without taking into account special or local conditions is likely to produce serious anomalies. We, therefore, propose to proceed as follows in two stages. First to devise a plan of distribution as between the different deficit areas, in the light of the declared surpluses of provinces and states for immediate operation from the beginning of the relevant crop year, the actual movements being adjusted to the harvesting periods of the state or province concerned. This plan would, in effect, be in the nature of a "budget estimate" calculated on the basis of the best information then available. This preliminary plan would be circulated to the provinces, and movements could begin in accordance with the allocations. We will then pass to the second stage using the formula proposed by the Committee for calculating the target deficits and surpluses of the provinces and states to serve as the basis of discussions between the Centre and provinces or states concerned. In applying the formula regard will be had to all the relevant facts such as actual crop conditions, harvesting periods, abnormal increases in population and statistics of past imports and exports. The first edition of the plan is expected to be in operation from November. 1. The information on which to check the first stage in the light of the formula and other relevant factors will begin to be available in January. The revised or final edition of the plan would be issued in April, and begin to be operative from the beginning of May. The Government of India accept the views of the Conference rejecting the proposed Export Arbitration Committee. Consultations between the Centre and provinces or

states will normally be conducted direct between the Centre and the administration concerned, but the Government of India will be willing to invoke in any case presenting peculiar difficulties, such expert opinion as may mutually be agreed upon by the governments concerned.

PROCUREMENT.

The Government agree with the Policy Committee that the Central Government food grains monopoly is in principle the only completely satisfactory solution, but consider that it is not a practical proposition to establish such a monopoly at present. It is intended however to pursue actively the examination of this question. At present procurement both on behalf of the provinces for themselves whether for their own consumption or for export to deficit areas, or on behalf of the Central Government must continue to be carried out by provincial or state agencies. In view of the Centre's responsibility for the success of food administration in India as a whole, procurement operations cannot be regarded as a matter which solely concern provinces or states. Although procurement is delegated to the provinces, the Government of India feel that it is incumbent upon them to exercise that degree of direction, superintendence and control which is necessary to secure the effective discharge of the function. This does not however, mean that the government intend to interfere at every stage in the day to day administration of the subject of procurement by the provinces. Nor does this mean a uniform pattern of procurement machinery or procedure in every part of India, as conditions vary in different provinces. Generally speaking, we favour a single procurement agency in a province, which should be essentially a government procuring agency but which associates with itself, and utilises to the fullest extent possible, existing trade organisations. We do not, however, wish to insist on the utilization of trade agencies if the provincial government decides against it. If procurement is to be successful, however, the provinces and states' administrations must bring to bear upon it the whole resources of their administrations and it is upon the determination of the administrations concerned to use their resources to the full that ultimate success depends. There is no desire to interfere with procurement machinery that is adequate to the purpose and functioning successfully, but the Central Government must be kept informed as to how procurement is progressing and must have the right to make suggestions or in the last resort to issue directions.

The Government agree that requisitioning should be resorted to with caution, that it should take account of the crop seasons and that it should be a weapon to be held in reserve. There is no desire, however, to restrain provinces and states from resorting to requisitioning, when they consider it essential in the public interest to do so. The Government of India desire to stress the importance of eliminating as far as possible competitive buying.

STATUTORY PRICE CONTROL.

The Government accept the recommendations of the Conference that statutory price control should be instituted for all major foodgrains in all provinces, and a similar control in respect of an increasing number of non-agricultural commodities, particularly those necessary to the cultivator. The Government are, however, of the opinion that in the present emergent conditions all-India statutory prices for all foodgrains are an impossibility. They consider that this will become possible by building up price control first on a provincial, then on a regional basis and as efficient distribution arrangements supported by imports from abroad, enable the government to regain control of all stocks or sufficient stocks to influence the markets. Pending the enforcement of statutory control of prices throughout India, such provinces as desire to enforce statutory control or ceiling prices will be permitted to do so. Special forms of price control are at present in operation which are designed by a descending scale to reduce prices. Such forms of price control may be a necessity in the present emergency but our ultimate conception of statutory price control is a price fixed for a crop, which will remain fixed throughout that crop season. It should be fixed on the basis of a fair return to the cultivator. We agree that statutory prices for foodgrains must be fixed with regard to variations in other commodity prices. We consider that it must be the function of the Centre to co-ordinate statutory prices throughout India with a view to the eventual building up of an all-India price control. For that purpose statutory prices cannot be fixed without the consent of the Central Government and the Centre must have the right to suggest changes of prices both upwards and downwards. The Government accept the recommendation of setting up of a small Standing Prices Committee at the Centre and that disputes relating to price changes which may arise between the provinces and states and the Central Government should be referred to this committee.

RATIONING.

The Government of India regard recommendations relating to urban rationing as a fundamental part of the co-ordinated food plan. We recognise that the implementation of these recommendations involves the acceptance of a considerable administrative burden and expense but we do not accept the view that the acceptance of these burdens is beyond the capacity of different administrations in India. The Government of India realise that planning and organisation of rationing schemes must take time, but we urge all administrations not already engaged on the task, to take it up at once.

All provinces and states are urged to prepare plans for the card rationing of their towns with a population of one lac and over, and to introduce as quickly as possible the essential preliminary forms of food control, such as zoning the areas in a city for decentralised control administration, compiling information relating to streets and houses, enforcing the Food Grains Control Order, preparing the schemes for card rationing, the

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

establishment of Government grain shops where necessary and allocating officers and senior staff for the duties of food control administration. In some cases provinces are already operating, or have made detailed plans for, limited rationing schemes which are less extensive than those recommended by the Policy Committee. The Central Government are prepared to allow such administrations to continue the operation of these schemes, provided they are satisfied that the schemes are associated with an effective application of the Food-grains Control Order measures to check private hoarding, and to secure effective limitation of the overall demand. Such limited schemes should not be regarded as final but as a basis for the eventual introduction to full urban rationing.

Sir J. P. Srivastava in his concluding remarks informed the Conference that the first ship of foodgrains from abroad was already unloading at an Indian port and the second ship was expected to arrive at any moment. The Food Member congratulated the Conference for having evolved an integrated food policy for all India. Unless India was treated as one economic whole, he maintained that the solution of the food problem would be extremely difficult. Sir J. P. Srivastava stressed the importance of public association with all schemes of food control. In the course of his remarks he made a special appeal to the Punjab representatives to give their utmost in this hour of national crisis, and asked for the co-operation of all in this vital problem of India's food.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: How many people attended this conference and to what extent were they themselves responsible for the shortage of food in the country?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have already said that this conference was attended by representatives of the Provincial and the State Governments.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether there is any truth in the report which has appeared in the newspapers that the Government of India propose to strengthen the Advisory Food Council? Can the Government give us any information on that point?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am considering the matter.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Is it not a fact that the representatives of profiteers were in this conference, directly or indirectly?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No, Sir. That is news to me.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Were any representatives of rice trade invited to this conference?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No, Sir, official representatives only.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: What was the result of this conference?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: A report has been laid on the table giving the main conclusions.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Is it not a fact that these conferences tended to increase the price of rice?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Certainly not.

AWARD OF ENEMY PRIZE SHIPS TO INDIA.

39. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Commerce be pleased to state whether any prize ships from the enemy have been awarded to the Government or to the nationals of India? If so, what are the particulars about the number and tonnage of such ships?

(b) Are such prize ships being operated on the coast of India or outside, and through what agencies?

(c) If no prize ships have been awarded to India, what is the reason for it, when such ships have been awarded to some of the Dominions like South Africa?

(d) Have Government made any representations to His Majesty's Government in this connection, and, if so, what was the nature of such representations and the replies received by them?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The Government of India and other Empire Governments have come to a working arrangement with His Majesty's Government whereby the ultimate disposal of the net proceeds of prize accruing in all parts of the British Commonwealth will be a matter for decision at the end of the war. There is therefore no question of any immediate award of prize ships to India.

Since the outbreak of war, prize proceedings have been instituted in India in respect of 11 ships with an aggregate gross tonnage of 60,008. Of these, three were seized in Indian ports and the remainder were seized elsewhere and brought to India for prize adjudication.

(b) At the request of His Majesty's Government, all ships in respect of which prize proceedings were instituted in Indian courts have been placed at the disposal of the Ministry of War Transport in view of the very heavy demands made on United Kingdom ships for war purposes. I regret that no information can be given as to where these ships are employed.

(c) and (d). The Government of India have not asked for the award of any prize ship, and are not aware that prize ships have been awarded to any of the Dominions.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Was there any request from His Majesty's Government for being allowed the loan of these prize ships that were seized in Indian waters?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It was the request of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to part (b) through what agencies these prize ships are being operated?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: They were placed at the disposal of His Majesty's Government by the Indian Government and by the Governments of the Dominions.

GOVERNMENT CO-OPERATION TO NON-OFFICIAL RELIEF ORGANISATIONS IN BENGAL.

40. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that in the District of Faridpur in Bengal the District Magistrate informed the organisers of the non-official relief organisations and committees that no facilities would be provided by local officials to any such non-official organisations, especially those with which the Opposition is associated in one form or the other?

(b) Have the Government of India enquired whether the Government of Bengal are helping or hindering the activities of the non-official relief organisations in Bengal? If the answer is in the affirmative, have the Government of India pointed out to the Government of Bengal the above specific case of hindrance to the activities of the non-official relief organisations?

(c) In what circumstances will the Government of India contemplate over-riding the powers of the Provincial Government, and controlling the supplies and distribution of food in the Province of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) I have no information. An inquiry has been made from the Bengal Government and a reply is awaited.

(b) The Government of India have specifically drawn the attention of all provincial Governments to the importance of enlisting the co-operation of non-official organisations in Food and Relief organisation.

(c) It is not possible to define the circumstances which will justify the exercise by the Government of India of their statutory over-riding powers.

TRANSFER OF POWER TO INDIANS OVERSEAS DEPARTMENT TO GRANT OR WITHDRAW VISAS TO EVACUEES OF FOREIGN NATIONALITY.

41. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas be pleased to state whether in pursuance of Notification No. 3785-D/43-Public (c), Government of India, Home Department, New Delhi, dated the 9th October, 1943, by which the subject "Evacuees of British and foreign nationalities" dealt with by the Home Department was transferred to the Indians Overseas Department with effect from the 1st October, 1943, the power to grant or withdraw transit and permanent visas to the evacuees of foreign nationalities is now being transferred to the Indians Overseas Department?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: The answer is in the negative. This power remains with the Home Department.

SUPPLY OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES OF LIFE TO CIVIL POPULATION.

42. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) the detailed measures taken to make available to the civil population in India supplies of all essential commodities of life at controlled rates;

(b) what steps have been taken for the equitable distribution of indispensable articles to the people of India with a view to rendering the food front impregnable to enemy attack or propaganda;

(c) whether civilian needs will be fully and adequately met before the export of foodstuffs is allowed out of India; and

(d) whether import of foodgrains into India from abroad will be arranged to meet any deficit; if so, when?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). In respect of foodstuffs:

A plan for the distribution of foodgrains from surplus to deficit areas is in operation. Distribution to consumers is the function of provincial governments, and urban rationing is being progressively introduced.

(c) Yes, the export of foodgrains from India has already been prohibited.

(d) The import of foodgrains into India has already been arranged and several ship-loads have arrived.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: What are the ports at which the ships have arrived?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: For security reasons I am unable to disclose that information.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is it still a secret after arrival here?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, certainly.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: What happened to the foodgrains which have come?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I shall want notice of that, but generally I can say that they have been made over to the Provincial Governments which want them most.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Do not Government have any information as to the number of ships that have come and the quantity of food received?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have the information but for security reasons it cannot be disclosed.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: What is the total quantity of foodstuffs that have arrived so far?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Six ship-loads aggregating about 30,000 tons have already been delivered and more is coming shortly.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: When did the Government of India first realise the necessity of arranging for the importation of foodstuffs from abroad?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have always recognised the need for it but shipping difficulties intervened.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate, even approximately, the time when they first impressed upon His Majesty's Government the need for arranging shipping space for importing foodstuffs into India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I shall require notice of that question.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Are the foodstuffs that have come into India still lying at the ports or have they been sent to these various provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They have been delivered to the provinces.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Have they been delivered at the ports or have arrangements been made to transport the stuff to the various provinces? What does the Honourable Member mean by "delivered"?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I understand they have already been cleared by the provinces.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Cleared out of the ships or have they been cleared out of that particular port?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They have been taken over by the provinces in any case but I cannot say definitely whether some of it is not lying in the port.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Do I understand that the Honourable Member has no information on that point?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: May I know at what price wheat from Australia is being landed in India? And if the Honourable Member feels that he is not prepared to give the precise price, will he be good enough to state whether it is substantially less than the price at which wheat can be purchased by the Government of India from the wheat producing provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, that assumption is correct it is substantially less.

PRIVATE IMPORTS OF INDUSTRIAL PLANT AND MACHINERY.

43. *Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (on behalf of **Mr. R. R. Gupta**): Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state the total value of the industrial plant and machinery, including Prime Mover and Electrical Generating Equipment, that has been imported into this country on private account since the outbreak of the present war, and indicate industry-wise the importation that has taken place?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: A statement showing, in such detail as is practicable, the value of machinery and millwork imported into India from September 1939 to July 1943 is laid on the table.

Statement showing value of machinery and millwork imported into India during September 1939 to July 1943.

(All figures in thousand rupees.)

(1) Serial No.	(2) Articles.	(3) Total imports from September 1939 to July 1943.
1	Prime-movers—	
	Railway locomotives, engines, etc.	93,21
	Other locomotives	48,60
	Other than locomotives	2,01,22
	Total Prime-movers	3,43,03
2	Electrical machinery including generators, alternators, etc.	7,82,27
3	Aerated water making machinery	33
4	Agricultural machinery	73,95
5	Boilers	1,98,59
6	Boot and shoe manufacturing machinery	5,88
7	Leather tanning and curing machinery	3,27
8	Metal working machinery including machine tools	2,32,47
9	Mining machinery	1,18,66
10	Oil crushing and refining machinery	39,88
11	Paper mill machinery	94,09
12	Pumping machinery	1,19,73
13	Refrigerating machinery	54,82
14	Rice and flour mill machinery	14,41
15	Saw mill and wood working machinery	37,80
16	Sewing and knitting machinery and parts	1,86,58
17	Sugar machinery	95,35
18	Tea machinery	57,40
19	Textile machinery—Cotton	6,67,28
20	Textile machinery—Jute	1,83,35
21	Textile machinery—Wool	16,37
22	Textile machinery others including shuttles	1,46,07
23	Typewriters and parts	84,66
24	Unenumerated machineries	8,93,20
	Total	44,49,44

IMPORTS OF AMMONIA SULPHATE AND OTHER SYNTHETIC FERTILISERS.

44. *Mr. R. R. Gupta: Will the Secretary of the Education, Health and Lands Department be pleased to state the quantity and value of the Ammonia Sulphate and other synthetic fertilisers which have been imported into this country during each year of 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43, the importation of each chemical compound being shown separately?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: A statement is placed on the table of the House.

Statement showing the quantity and value of synthetic fertilizers imported into India during the year 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43.

Manures.	Quantity.			Value.		
	1940-41. Tons.	1941-42. Tons.	1942-43. Tons.	1940-41. Rs.	1941-42. Rs.	1942-43. Rs.
<i>Nitrogenous.</i>						
Nitrate of Soda	3,151	2,639	2	4,85,173	7,13,831	336
Sulphate of Ammonia	32,154	1,627	1,361	54,68,702	3,69,032	3,53,860
Others	900	20	..	1,69,043	6,457	..
<i>Potassic.</i>						
Muriate of Potash	1,585	100	696	2,02,839	23,656	2,91,959
Others	140	..	..	23,017	..	..
<i>Phosphatic.</i>						
Superphosphate	6,732	2,722	..	10,49,898	4,59,677	..
Others	337	20	..	42,260	1,104	..
<i>Compounds.</i>						
Ammonium Phosphate	1,389	250	..	3,38,209	63,700	..
Others	1,015	1,202	2	64,234	66,316	100
Total	47,403	8,580	2,061	78,43,375	17,03,773	6,46,255

RATION PERMITS FOR PURCHASE OF AUTHORISED NEWSPRINT.

45. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state if it is a fact that instead of supplying newsprint quotas to newspapers in India, Government now issue ration permits for purchase and use of authorised newsprint?

(b) Is it a fact that the allotted ration of newsprint has to be purchased in a calendar month, and if not so obtained the permit in regard to that month lapses?

(c) What arrangement have Government made to ensure the supply of newsprint to be regularly made in accordance with ration permits? If none, why?

(d) Have any instances come to the notice of Government in which the rationed newsprint has not been supplied to the newspapers? If so, what action have Government taken to ensure the rationed supply? If none, why?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (b). The reply is in the affirmative.

(c) Stocks of newsprint, whether with dealers or with newspapers, are 'frozen' and can be issued in so far as the former are concerned only against ration permits issued by the Central Government, and in so far as the latter are concerned, against use permits given to them or against special instructions given by the Government which are issued only when stocks with newsprint dealers are exhausted. Thus the Central Government has complete control over stocks within the country, and to the extent that they are satisfactory, supplies against ration permits too will be satisfactory.

(d) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. Action in such cases has been taken as indicated in the reply to para. (c).

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it a fact that very often these people go with ration permits but no newsprint is available?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is not correct.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I know if the freezing order applies to stock imported into this country after the date of this order or stocks held by newspapers prior to that date?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: So far as stocks in possession of newspapers are concerned, they are frozen and we are in complete control of any stocks that are brought into the country by import.

INDIAN SEAMEN ENGAGED ON THE UNITED KINGDOM REGISTERED SHIPS, ETC.

46. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state the number of Indian seamen engaged on the United Kingdom registered ships in (i) the coastal and (ii) overseas trades of India during the last four years since the commencement of the present war?

(b) Were any Indian seamen employed by the ships of any other member of the United Nations? If so, which, and how many?

(c) What is the total number of Indian seamen engaged by ships on the Indian Register during the last four years?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

EQUALIZATION OF RATES OF ALLOWANCE FOR MEN AND WOMEN UNDER THE INDIAN WAR INJURIES SCHEME.

47. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Labour Member been drawn to the fact that the difference made between the rates of allowances paid to men and women under the War Injuries Schemes in Great Britain has been removed some time back so that men and women receive allowances at the same rates?

(b) If the reply to the above be in the affirmative, do the Government of India propose to make a similar change in the Indian War Injuries Scheme, and to bring the rates of allowances paid to men and women on the same level?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Since notice of this question was received, I have ascertained the position in Great Britain. It is a fact that the distinction between rates for relief for men and women has been abolished in Great Britain.

(b) The question will be considered.

INSERTION IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS OF CONDITION FOR FAIR TREATMENT OF LABOUR.

48. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the subject of the need for insertion in Government contracts of a condition regarding fair treatment of labour was discussed at one of the Tripartite Labour Meetings? If so, what action do the Government of India propose to take on the subject?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, it was at the third meeting of the Standing Labour Committee. To be precise the subject discussed was need for insertion of a condition regarding fair wages for labour in Government contracts, and not fair "treatment" of labour. Government have already accepted the principle so far as the Central Public Works Department is concerned and the necessary preliminary steps for enforcing such a provision are under active consideration. The question of the introduction of such a clause in the contracts of other Government Departments will be taken up soon after the scheme has been introduced in respect of Central Public Works Department labour.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: What is the meaning of "active-consideration"? Is there any time limit involved?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes; I see quite clearly the difference between a matter being under consideration and under active consideration.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Is there any difference of time?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That means that the matter is really nearing completion.

RULES CONCERNING "OUT OF CLASS" ALLOTTEES IN NEW DELHI.

49. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that before the introduction of the revised rules for allotment of residences in New Delhi during the war, persons who were allotted quarters were allowed as a concession to remain in occupation of those quarters after they became out of class, when no accommodation of the class to which they were entitled was available?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, what are the reasons for penalising the same occupants by the introduction of the proviso below rule 7 (2) (b) by relegating them to a junior position by treating the dates on which they became out of class as the dates of their posting?

(c) Is it not a fact that by the operation of the proviso referred to in (b) above, the persons remain longer in occupation of the lower class of quarters and thus great hardship is caused to persons who are entitled to those quarters under revised rule 4 by compelling them to wait longer than it would be necessary had the proviso not been in operation?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to reconsider, and to remove the grievances of all concerned by deleting the proviso below rule 7 (b) under lists II and III.

(e) Does the Honourable Member realise that by the introduction of the new policy viz., determination of seniority as regards the claim for quarters by the total length of service, practically all new entrants to whatever class of quarters they were entitled will have to go without quarters and be put to great hardship?

(f) With a view to redressing their grievance, does he propose to consider the feasibility of amending the rule so as to allow the counting of seniority from the date of posting in the case of new entrants who have not been allotted any quarter, so far and in the case of others from the date on which they became out of class?

(g) If the amendments suggested were accepted, will they be given immediate effect?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) The penalising arises more from the shortage of accommodation than from the proviso to rule 7 (2) (b).

(c) Yes, but this cannot be helped under the existing circumstances.

(d) No. Nothing can remove the grievances unless there is increased accommodation at the disposal of Government, which does not seem to be possible so long as the war lasts.

(e) I do not consider that this is the case, but so long as the accommodation available is short of requirements, whatever rules are made, some persons are bound to be put to hardship.

(f) This is already provided for in the rules.

(g) Does not arise.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS.

SUPPLIES OF IRON, STEEL, CEMENT, ETC., TO CIVIL POPULATION AND FUNCTIONS OF HONORARY ADVISERS OF CEMENT, IRON AND STEEL.

50. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) how the needs of the civil population in matters of iron and steel and cement, coal and paper, are met;

(b) what the functions are of the Honorary Advisers of Cement and Iron and Steel; who they are, and where their offices are located, and who deals with Bihar cases;

(c) whether the Honourable Member has any control over these Honorary Advisers;

(d) whether an Honorary Adviser is paid any allowance; if so, how much; what his establishment charges are and how they are met;

(e) whether the Honourable Member is aware that there is acute scarcity of cement in Bihar, and black marketing is rampant there and cement cannot be had for less than Rs. 12 per bag and that, too, not without much difficulty and the help of black marketeers; and

(f) the quantity of cement, iron and steel supplied to the population in Bihar last year, and whether the persons supplied with, cement, iron and only Rajas and Maharajas or middlemen?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) to (f). I lay on the table of the House a statement showing the information required by the Hon'ble Member.

Statement.

(a) With regard to iron and steel, the system of control enforced under the Iron and Steel (Control of Distribution) Order, and the Iron and Steel (Scrap Control) Order, provides for civil needs by (1) the allotment of a quota to the Industries and Civil Supplies Department for distribution to various civil applicants for licences to acquire steel; (2) allowing certain quantities of steel to be acquired and disposed of without licence up to limits fixed by the Industries and Civil Supplies Department. The Industries and Civil Supplies Department allots a portion of its quota to the Iron and Steel Controller for distributing to stock-holders to meet these unlicensed sales; (3) allowing the Iron and Steel Controller and his Deputies to meet important civil needs from rejected and defective steel.

With regard to cement, the needs of the civil population are met from quotas allotted each month to the five Regional Honorary Cement Advisers situated at Bombay, Calcutta, Cawnpore, New Delhi and Lahore.

With regard to coal, the needs of the civil population are met under what is known as the Provincial Coal Control Scheme which was introduced in January, 1943. Under this scheme, the Controller of Coal Distribution fixes monthly quotas of the number of wagons of coal that he can make available for each Province to meet the requirements of domestic consumption and of small industries not directly engaged on war work after meeting the priority requirements of essential industries, loco. and shipping coal, etc. He also works out for each Colliery the quotas that a colliery can supply to each Provincial area. The detailed distribution of the Provincial quotas among different consumers within the Province is the responsibility of the Provincial Coal Controller appointed by the Provincial Government. In October 1943, a coal rationing scheme for all-India was put into operation under which quotas have been fixed for consumers of coal of every category.

With regard to paper, 30 per cent. of the Indian mill production of paper has been released for consumption by non-Government users of paper in India. An organisation known as the Paper Control and Distribution Association consisting of representatives of the paper industry has been set up at Calcutta to arrange for equitable distribution to all non-Government consumers of paper at controlled rates.

(b) and (c). The functions of the Regional Honorary Cement Advisers are to issue authorisations for the supply of cement against the allotments received by them from the Office of the Honorary Cement Adviser to the Government of India, New Delhi, each month. Following are the Honorary Cement Advisers:—

Advisers:—1. Mr. H. E. Ormerod, lent by the Cement Marketing Co. of India Ltd., Bombay—Honorary Cement Adviser, New Delhi.

2. Mr. C. W. Fowler, lent by the Cement Marketing Co. of India, Ltd. Bombay—Regional Honorary Cement Adviser, Bombay.

3. Mr. S. E. Sara, lent by Messrs. Balmer Lawrie & Co., Ltd., Calcutta—Regional Honorary Cement Adviser, Calcutta.

4. Mr. J. C. F. Davidson, lent by Messrs. Bird & Co., Lahore—Regional Honorary Cement Adviser, Lahore.

5. Mr. C. J. L. Stokoe, lent by Messrs. Bird & Co., New Delhi—Regional Honorary Cement Adviser, New Delhi.

6. Mr. D. H. Peelyates, lent by Messrs. Bird & Co., Cawnpore—Regional Honorary Adviser, Cawnpore.

The Regional Honorary Cement Adviser, Calcutta, deals with Bihar cases.

There is no Honorary Adviser for Iron and Steel. The Honorary Cement Advisers are under the control of the Supply Department.

(d) The Regional Honorary Cement Advisers receive no allowances and their establishment charges are not met by Government. The Honorary Cement Adviser to the Government of India, New Delhi, is, however, paid a car allowance of Rs. 100 p. m. and out-of-pocket expenses. The establishment charges of this Adviser are Rs. 715 p. m. which are met by Government.

(e) Yes. I may add that scarcity of cement for civil needs and conditions resulting therefrom are not confined to Bihar alone but exist in all parts of India, due on the one hand to the heavy Defence Services demand, and on the other, to the shortage of coal resulting in reduced production.

(f) The information asked for by the Hon'ble Member cannot be supplied without an expenditure of time and labour which would be unjustifiable in war time, but the civil needs of Bihar in respect of cement and iron and steel receive exactly the same consideration as of other parts of India and are judged on their merits, irrespective of the social status of the applicants for supplies of these articles.

APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF IN THE FOOD DEPARTMENT.

51. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) whether the appointments of officers in the Food Department have been completed;

(b) the number of officers appointed with their ranks and salaries;

(c) whether the Department called for any suggestions from the Muslim League Party; if so, if any one so nominated has been appointed; if so, to what post and on what salary; and

(d) the total number of ministerial officers appointed, and the number of Muslims therein?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) No.

(b) and (d). Statements giving the required information are laid on the table of the House.

(c) Yes. The suggestions are still under consideration.

STATEMENT I.

Serial No.	Name.	Designation.	Pay. Rs.
<i>Department of Food (Secretariat).</i>			
1	Mr. R. H. Hutchings, C.M.G., C.I.E., L.C.S.	Secretary	3,500
2	Mr. W. H. Kirby	Rationing Adviser	2,500
3	Mr. W. H. J. Christie, O.B.E., L.C.S.	Deputy Secretary	1,700
4	Mr. N. T. Mone, L.C.S.	Deputy Secretary	S.P. 400
5	Mr. N. N. Wanchoo, L.C.S.	Under Secretary	S.P. 400
6	Mr. S. M. Yusuf, L.C.S.	Under Secretary	S.P. 150
7	Mr. S. R. Maini, P.C.S.	Under Secretary	S.P. 300
8	Rai Bahadur D. N. Maitra	Assistant Secretary	S.P. 300
(Inclusive of pension).			
9	Mr. N. G. Abhyankar, M.Sc. (Lond.)	Statistical officer	600
10	Mr. M. Y. Qureshi, B.A.	Superintendent	500
11	Mr. S. K. Sen, M.A.	Superintendent	500
12	Mr. I. J. Malhan, B.A.	Superintendent	600
13	Mr. A. A. Shah	Superintendent	600
<i>Directorate General, Food.</i>			
1	Mr. B. R. Sen, L.C.S.	Director General of Food	3,000
2	Mr. A. P. Hume, L.C.S.	Deputy Director General (Military)	1,800
S.P. 400			
3	Brigadier E. J. Boughton, O.B.E., I.A.	Deputy Director General (Purchase)	O.S.P. £30
(Pay of rank).			
4	Hon'ble Somerset Butler	Deputy Director General (Grains)	2,750
5	Col. L. J. L. Addison, I.A.	Assistant Director General (Purchase).	2,205
(Pay of rank).			
6	Mr. J. R. H. Bartlett, F.A.C.I., F.C.S.	Chief Technical Adviser	1,800
7	Mr. E. W. Mathew	Director Foodstuffs Supplies	1,500
8	Major F. P. M. O'Sullivan, R.I.A.S.C.	Director of Purchase (Military)	2,000
(Provisional).			
9	Mr. Blois Johnson	Director Processed Foodstuffs	1,750
10	Capt. A. M. Thomson	Director of Purchase (Foodgrains)	2,000
11	Mr. M. D. Apostolides	Officer-in-Charge, Karachi Foodgrains, Reserve Depot.	2,000
12	Mr. J. F. Morse	Deputy Director	1,750
13	Capt. H. Khan	Deputy Director	900
14	Mr. D. N. Khurody	Dy. Director of Purchase	1,200
15	Mr. Nazir Ahmad	Dy. Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	1,125
16	Mr. Ijaz Ahmad	Dy. Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	1,200
17	Mr. T. G. Rama Iyer	Deputy Director	900
18	Mr. B. L. Sahney	Deputy Director	750
19	Mr. S. N. Sikand	Deputy Director	750
20	Dr. H. S. Bhai	Deputy Director	800
21	Mr. N. C. Mukerji	Assistant Secretary and Administrative Officer.	1,000
22	Mr. A. E. daCosta	Assistant Secretary and Administrative Officer.	1,100
23	Capt. E. W. Hart	Inspector of Controlled Flour Mills and Grain Depots.	1,130
(Pay of rank).			
24	Mr. C. R. V. Subhan	Assistant Director (Tobacco)	1,000
25	Mr. M. R. Thadani	Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	555

Serial No.	Name.	Designation.	Pay. Rs.
26	Capt. N. S. Gidwani	Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	830
27	Mr. H. R. Khan	Assistant Director	500
28	Capt. R. Whalley	Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	960
29	Mr. K. Gopalan	Assistant Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	600
30	Mr. G. Chaudhary	Assistant Director	400
31	Mr. P. P. Nair	Assistant Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	600
32	Mr. M. N. Das Gupta	Assistant Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	600
33	Mr. J. S. Narayana	Assistant Director of Purchase (Foodgrains).	600
34	Mr. I. U. Lakhia	Assistant Director (Grains)	600
35	Lt. M. G. Abhyankar	Assistant Director (Grains)	550
36	Dr. D. V. Karmarkar	Assistant Technical Adviser	350+
37	Mr. E. M. Bee	Technical Adviser	500
38	Mr. M. A. H. Khan	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
39	Mr. S. A. Qureshi	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
40	Mr. B. Mitter	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
41	Mr. Barkat Ahmad	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
42	Mr. D. D. Gupta	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
43	Mr. Brij Raj Kishore	Deputy Assistant Director of Purchase (Military).	350
44	Mr. S. P. Joshi	Industrial Planning Officer	300
45	Mr. T. M. Rama Aiyengar	Industrial Planning Officer	300
46	Mr. W. D. Saleem	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	225
47	Mr. Harcharan Singh Rai	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
48	Mr. M. A. Kabir	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	225
49	Mr. S. R. Johri	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer (Tobacco).	300
50	Mr. P. R. Kashyap	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
51	Mr. Y. A. Mehta	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
52	Mr. S. R. Swarup	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	250
53	Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
54	Dr. D. V. Raja Gopal	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
55	Mr. B. S. Lalia	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
56	Mr. S. K. Srivastava	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
57	Mr. Sarmukh Singh	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
58	Mr. P. G. Kurup	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
59	Mr. P. Thothadari	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	175
60	Mr. Abdul Hamid	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	175
61	Mr. K. K. P. Narasingharao	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	250
62	Mr. Abdul Rahim Khan	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
63	Mr. Y. V. Salpekar	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
64	Mr. G. Vaswani	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
65	Mr. Tazimul Haq	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
66	Mr. R. Parikshit	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
67	Mr. Bala Ram Dhawan	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
68	Mr. Mohd. Sadiq	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
69	Mr. Jon Benedict Chitambar	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
70	Mr. Mohd. Ikramullah	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	200
71	Mr. A. N. Chaddah	Assistant Industrial Planning Officer	175

Sugar Controller for India.

1	Mr. N. C. Mehta, I.C.S.	Sugar Controller for India	3,250
2	Mr. S. A. Iyengar, I.C.S.	Dy. Sugar Controller for India	1,150
3	Mr. R. C. Srivastava, B.Sc., O.B.E.	Technical Adviser	S.P. 250*
4	Rai Sahib S. K. Dikshit, B.A. (Hons.)	Assistant Sugar Controller for India	S.P. 250
5	Mr. Shashi Kiran, M.A., LL.B.	Assistant Sugar Controller for India	775
6	Rai Sahib I. H. Desai, B.A., LL.B.	Assistant Sugar Controller for India	625
7	Mr. I. P. Mathur, M.A.	Inspector	1,000
8	Mr. S. N. Gupta, M.A.	Inspector	300

* Pay not debitable to the budget of the S.C.I.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Serial No.	Name.	Designation.	Pay. Rs.
<i>Regional Food Commissioners.</i>			
1	Sir Colin Campbell Garbett, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.M.G.	Regional Food Commissioner, Punjab Region.	2,750
2	Mr. M. R. Ghulati	Deputy Regional Food Commissioner, Punjab Region.	1,000
3	Rai Bahadur Col. Dina Nath, C.I.E.	Regional Food Commissioner, U.P. Region.	2,500
4	The Hon'ble Mr. Justice H. B. L. Braund, Bar. at-Law.	Regional Food Commissioner, Eastern Region.	4,000
5	Mr. P. K. Basu	Deputy Regional Food Commissioner, Eastern Region.	900
6	Dewan Bahadur C. P. Karunakara Menon.	Regional Food Commissioner, Madras Region.	2,300
7	Mr. J. B. Ross	Regional Food Commissioner, Bombay Region.	2,650
8	Khan Bahadur Sir Abdul Hamid, C.I.E., O.B.E.	Regional Food Commissioner, Rajputana Region.	2,500
<i>Group Liaison Officers.</i>			
1	Mr. Balkrishen	Group Liaison Officer, Punjab States	1,000
2	Mr. Onkar Nath Bajpai	Group Liaison Officer, Eastern States.	500
3	Rao Bahadur S. V. Kanungo	Group Liaison Officer, Central India States.	1,000

STATEMENT II.

Name of the Department/Office.	Total No. of Ministerial Officers appointed.	Total No. of Muslim Ministerial officers.
Food Department (Secretariat)	133	33
Directorate General, Food	335	75
Sugar Controller for India	44	11
Regional Food Commissioners	38	8

BAN ON THE SAILINGS OF PILGRIM SHIPS FROM INDIA.

52. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state whether the announcement by the Central Government made on the 10th August, 1943, imposing a ban on the sailing of pilgrim ships from India, has been widely resented by Muslims in this country?

(b) Have Muslims protested against that decision and asked Government to make arrangements for pilgrim ships? If so, what action has been taken on their demand?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware that the Honourable the Defence Member took the courage to tell the House on the 12th August, 1943, that if the route this year became safe and the lives of Hajis were not in danger, he would again raise the question in the Executive Council and with the Member for Indians Overseas?

(d) What action has been taken on his promise?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) and (b). Dissatisfaction with Government's decision and requests for the provision of pilgrim ships have been expressed by certain Muslim Associations and individuals. Government regret they have been unable to alter their previous decision.

(c) and (d). Yes. The position has been watched but it has not been possible to reopen the matter as the route is still unsafe.

PILGRIMAGE TO ARABIA BY LAND ROUTES.

53. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state the number of persons who have applied for permission to perform pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes?

(b) Do Government propose to make satisfactory arrangements for their journey? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: The question should have been addressed to the External Affairs Department.

FIXATION OF WHOLESALE AND RETAIL PRICES BY GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL FOR PADDY AND RICE.

54. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the order of the Government of Bengal fixing a graduated scale of maximum wholesale and retail prices at which

paddy and rice can be sold or purchased with effect from different dates, and penalising any breach thereof on the part both of the buyer and seller, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state how far the object of this order has in practice been realised?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement showing, for the different periods in respect of which the different rates have been fixed by the aforesaid order, the actual prices for which the principal foodgrains were available in any quantity to the civilian population generally in the city of Calcutta and the different district headquarters of Bengal? Is it a fact that while this order has been rigorously enforced against cultivators from whom purchases of rice or paddy are made at the instance of Government, the prices authorised under the order for retail sale of rice and paddy to the general consumer have proved altogether illusory, and that one of the immediate results of the promulgation of the said order has been the almost complete disappearance of stocks of rice from almost all the important centres of consumption?

(c) Is it a fact that the aforesaid order has so far, in effect, put a premium on black market operations? To what extent have the summary powers given to the executive put into operation and proved successful in bringing out hidden stocks?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The material required for a complete reply to the Honourable Member's question is not available with the Central Government. An inquiry has been made from the Government of Bengal, and their reply is awaited.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS AT CONTROLLED OR CONCESSIONAL PRICES TO NON-MILITARY EMPLOYEES OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

55. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state what the different classes are of non-military employees of the Central Government, including those of Railways, employed in Bengal, as well as the employees of the Government of Bengal, that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees of the Central Government and the Government of Bengal, separately, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or concessional prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are the authorities in Bengal charged with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these Government employees, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they have maintained from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

(d) Is it a fact that persons belonging to certain official or semi-official organisations, such as the Air Raid Precaution Services and Civic Guards, have also been given the benefit of the aforesaid concession? If so, who are the authorities in Bengal charged with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these persons, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they have maintained from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

(e) Have the acquisition and maintenance of stocks for supplying the aforesaid privileged classes of persons with foodgrains at concessional or controlled prices, contributed towards the creation of scarcity conditions and the prevalence of high prices in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) All Central Government Civil servants stationed in Bengal who are in receipt of pay of Rs. 300 p.m. or less, and all Railway servants and their families are entitled to get foodgrains at concessional rates.

(b) and (c). The total number of eligible Central Civil Government employees, including the Posts and Telegraphs and Railways, in Bengal is about 1,62,000. In Calcutta arrangements for supplies have been made by the

Supply Department in collaboration with the Provincial Director of Civil Supplies, and in the mofussil by heads of Departments in consultation with the local authorities. The Railways have their own purchasing organisation, whose duty it is, in the first instance, to buy locally for their requirements, but the responsibility for ensuring that the Railways receive adequate supplies rests with the Provincial Government.

In regard to the quantities supplied, the stocks maintained and the prices at which purchases were made from time to time, details are not readily available and the Government consider that their collection would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable in existing conditions.

(d) Information regarding Bengal Government employees and the official and semi-official organizations such as the A. R. P. Services and Civic Guards, has been called for from the Bengal Government and their reply is awaited.

(e) No.

STOCKS OF FOODGRAINS HOARDED BY EMPLOYERS IN BENGAL.

56. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Food Member been drawn to the following statement made in the Council of State by the Honourable Mr. Parker in the course of the Food Debate, on the 12th August, 1943:—

"I must say that my impression is that there is a large amount of hoarding, but that a large proportion of it is what I would call unintentional. I will tell you two cases where I have been a hoarder myself, as an employer. When I found that my employees could not get grain, I went out and bought grain in larger quantities than I or they had done before. I had never bought such large quantities before in normal times. Why did I do that now? Not so much because I was frightened about the future, but because I wanted to start my own organisation of grain shops to supply my employees with food. I naturally had to stock the required foodgrains in fairly large quantities in order to make sure of supplies for a reasonable period of time. Not only did I do that for a few thousand people whom I happened to be employing as manager of a company, but I also did it for my own personal staff. I started a little grain shop in my compound which was run by one of my servants. There also I had to keep a stock of grain. That is all very harmless, in general terms. But the fact remains that it gives the impression that large stocks are being bought and taken away?"

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware—

(i) that the practice referred to above has been followed almost universally by all the important and influential employers in Bengal, either directly or through their organised Associations and purchasing agencies, and that the enormous stocks of foodgrains available within the Province of Bengal, were acquired at different times by them at comparatively high prices for initially building up such stocks and replenishing them from time to time; and

(ii) that these hoarding operations have materially helped in the withdrawal of a very large proportion of available stocks in Bengal and the creation of conditions of scarcity throughout the Province and prevalence of continually soaring prices?

(c) Was any attempt made at any time to impose official control on such operations, or even to obtain accurate information about the nature and extent thereof, and their bearing upon the food crisis in Bengal?

(d) Is it a fact that prior to the "recent" amendment of the Foodgrains Control Order, referred to by the then Member-in-Charge of the Food Department in his reply to my starred question No. 143 on the 2nd August last, there was no authority enjoyed by the Provincial Government to require returns of stocks of foodgrains hoarded by employers, far less to require them to take out licenses for the storage of foodgrains? What information has been obtained as regards the extent of the hoarding resorted to by the aforesaid employers since the promulgation of the aforesaid amendment of the Foodgrains Control Order and what Government control, if any, has been imposed upon their stocks?

(e) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a detailed statement giving information as to the extent of stocks of foodgrains available in the different areas of Bengal obtained as a result of the successive "food-drives" undertaken by the Government of Bengal in respect, firstly, of the mofussil districts and rural areas, and, secondly, of the Calcutta and Howrah areas? Were the hoards of foodgrains held by employers referred to above fully comprised within the scope of these food-drives, or was any exception made in favour of any single party or interest in this matter in the actual course of the food-drives?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes.

(b) The Government of India are aware that there has been large scale purchasing in Bengal and other provinces by employers of labour as an insurance against shortage of foodstuffs. They have no reason to believe that such purchases have on the whole been excessive for the purpose in view, and they have consistently advised Provincial Governments and employers, through their regional Food Commissioners against the holding of excessive reserve stocks.

(c) Yes.

(d) The Provincial Government have had since November 1941 powers under the Defence of India Rules to make orders regulating or prohibiting the keeping, storage, distribution, acquisition, use or consumption of foodgrains. Material for a complete reply to all parts of the Honourable Member's question is not readily available with the Government of India.

REPATRIATION OF DESTITUTE PERSONS FROM CALCUTTA.

57. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether he is aware of any proposal of the Government of Bengal for the promulgation of an ordinance authorising the repatriation of the destitute persons from towns to their respective villages? If so, is the Honourable Member in a position to state the approximate number of people who may be repatriated under such a measure?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that an increasing number of destitute villagers have been pouring into the City of Calcutta and other towns, big and small, particularly because of the absence of anything like adequate relief measures in their respective villages?

(c) Will the enforcement of the proposed Bengal measure against such persons take place only after necessary arrangements for famine relief in the respective rural areas have been made on the basis of the relevant provisions of the Bengal Famine Code? Has any such or other conditions been agreed to by the Government of Bengal in any consultation, either formal or informal, that may have taken place between that Government and the Food Department of the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The material required for a complete reply to the Honourable Member's question is not available with the Central Government. An inquiry has been made from the Government of Bengal, and their reply is awaited.

STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA ON FOOD SITUATION IN INDIA.

58. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether the recent statements made by Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, on the food situation, particularly those made in the House of Commons on the 12th and 14th October, and in a public speech at Birmingham on the 15th October, were based upon information supplied by or through the Government of India?

(b) To which period does Mr. Amery's statement that the death rate in Bengal was estimated at about 1,000 a week, including Calcutta, but it might be higher, relate?

(c) What are the detailed figures in respect of Calcutta and the different districts of Bengal, separately, which went to make up the above number during the period in question?

(d) Has the attention of the Government of India been drawn to the editorial article in the *Sunday Statesman*, dated the 17th October last, under the head

"The Death roll" in which the estimated death roll from starvation in Bengal was put between 9,000 and 11,000 per week on the basis of official statistics as indicated particularly in the following extract therefrom:—

"adept at under-statement, Mr. Amery admitted that Bengal's weekly death-roll from starvation 'might be higher' than his 1,000; the very imperfect official statistics available suggest that it might be higher than our 9,000 or 11,000, which figures have those official statistics alone as their shaky basis"?

(e) Have the Government of India taken steps for the purpose of verifying these statistics, and conveying to Mr. Amery the correct position in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: In reply to (a), (b) and (c), the Government of India have supplied information on the food situation in India, regularly, to the Secretary of State, but it is not known whether Mr. Amery's statements have been based on that information, nor whether the press reports of these statements are correct. An inquiry has been made from His Majesty's Government and their reply is awaited.

(d) Yes.

(e) The Government of India have made and will continue to make every effort to supply correct information.

STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA ON FOOD SITUATION IN INDIA.

59. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) With reference to Mr. Amery's statement at Birmingham on the 15th October that the dangerous possibilities of the situation were fully realised by the Government of India as soon as the loss of Singapore and the invasion of Burma showed that India could no longer rely upon her customary rice imports from Burma or easily secure wheat cargoes from Australia, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state what precautionary measures in regard to augmentation of food supplies were taken after the loss of Singapore and before the fall of Rangoon? Was the attention of the Government of Bengal drawn by the Central Government to the necessity of augmenting or conserving supplies of foodgrains in the Province, particularly for the benefit of the civil population, at any time within this period as a precautionary measure? If not, were any other precautionary steps suggested to the Government of Bengal during the said period? If so, to what effect, and on what dates?

(b) With reference to Mr. Amery's statement in the House of Commons on the 12th October last, that at the beginning of the year His Majesty's Government provided the necessary shipping for substantial imports of grain to India in order to meet prospects of serious shortages which were subsequently relieved by the excellent spring harvest in Northern India, when was such shipping provided, and were such shipments on their way to India and actually reached any port of India at any time? What quantities of foodgrains were represented by these shipments? Was any opinion conveyed to His Majesty's Government since the aforesaid provision of necessary shipping that the shipments were not needed in India? If so, on which dates and on whose advice was such opinion communicated, and with what result?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to explain fully the position referred to in a Reuter's message quoted by Lord Strabolgi in the House of Lords on the 20th October to the following effect:

"In the early part of this year the Indian Government realising the possibilities of continued shortage pressed for large imports of food into India and received 1,50,000 tons. This was only part of the amount asked for. With operations in North Africa and U. Boats sinking, the position became acute and in view of these facts coupled with the bumper harvest in the Punjab, the Government decided not to press for further imports. It is now admitted that this was a serious mistake"?

The Honourable Sir Jawala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The period between the loss of Singapore on 10th February and the fall of Rangoon on 7th March was only 20 days. The action taken by the Government of India was not precisely related to this period, nor specifically addressed to the Government of Bengal. During the first four months of 1942, three important conferences, attended by

representatives of provincial Governments, were called by the Government of India, at which were considered the control of prices, conservation of supplies and the increased production of foodstuffs, with special reference to the emergency caused by Japan's entry into the war. That Emergency was described, and the steps necessary to increase the country's food supply outlined in the speech of the Honourable Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands, in opening the Food Production Conference on the 6th April 1942, a copy of which will be found in the Library of the House.

(b) and (c). Shipments of wheat from Australia amounting to about 160,000 tons, in all, arrived in India between November 1942 and the end of April 1943. This quantity did not represent the full amount for which the Government of India had asked, but in view of the very difficult shipping position of the United Nations at that time, as well as the serious shortage of foodgrains in Ceylon, coupled with the success which had attended the efforts of the Government of India to procure old-crop wheat earlier in the year and prospects of a good *rabi* harvest, the Government of India agreed to forego further shipments of wheat, on the understanding that a claim for imports later in the year might be favourably considered. We have had to make that claim, and shipments of wheat are now arriving in Indian ports.

STATEMENTS BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA ON FOOD SITUATION IN INDIA.

60. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the speech made at Birmingham by Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, on the 15th October, mentioning the gradual increase of population of India as a factor contributing to the present food situation, will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state when for the first time the steady increase of population of India came to be realised by the Central Government, and how far the efforts of the Central as well as Provincial Governments have been successful ever since in increasing the production of essential foodgrains so as to keep pace with the said increase of population?

(b) What are the reasons for not initiating the "Grow More Food" Campaign earlier than April, 1942?

(c) Will the Honourable Member refer to the answer given to my unstarred question No. 51 on the 5th August last, indicating the increase in area and yield of foodgrains in 1942-43 over 1941-42 in different Provinces, and, explain the decrease recorded therein in the case of Bengal of 660 thousand acres under *Kharif* foodgrains and 701 thousand acres under rice, and a falling off of 2,608 thousand tons in the production of *Kharif* foodgrains and of 2,905 thousand tons in that of rice? How much of the said deterioration is explained by unfavourable weather conditions or natural calamities, and how much approximately is by the denial policy followed in certain parts of the Province, as well as evacuation of civil population due to military reasons or occupation of tracts of land on behalf of the fighting forces? Is the Honourable Member in a position to furnish details approximately indicating the acreage of homestead, cultivated and culturable waste lands in Bengal occupied by the military or vacated by the civil population for reasons of security, and assess approximately the effect, if any, on the "Grow More Food" Campaign in Bengal by military policy?

(d) What steps have been taken in different Provinces to re-instate the agricultural population of areas compulsorily evacuated for military reasons and occupied on behalf of the fighting forces, in other areas and provide them with all facilities of finance and equipment, so as to enable them to resume their activities of farming; and what is the acreage thus brought into cultivation as compared with the acreage vacated as stated above?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). The pressure of a growing population on the supplies of essential foodgrains produced in India has been realised by the Central and Provincial Governments for some decades. Efforts have been made over a long period to counter this pressure by the initiation of such schemes as financial resources permitted for the extension of irrigation and the development of agriculture by means of vigorous research and the application of the results

of research to the land of the cultivator. Judged by import figures India's normal production of foodgrains fell short of her normal requirements by no more than 4 per cent. This deficit was easily made good by imports, mainly of rice from Burma which, till 1937, was a part of India. Until the outbreak of hostilities in the Far East there was no difficulty in making foodgrains available to the people of India at a reasonable price. The need for an intensive "Grow More Food" Campaign, prosecuted at the expense, to some extent, of India's valuable cash crops, did not, therefore, arise until, in the course of the war with Japan, India was threatened, in the spring of 1942, with the loss of supplies from Burma.

(c) In the statement attached to the reply to unstarred question No. 51 of the 5th August last, *Kharif* foodgrains included rice. The figures for rice were also given separately, to show the increase or decrease under rice. The decrease in the area and production of *kharif* foodgrains in Bengal in 1942-43, was mainly attributable respectively to an increase in the area under Jute and to extensive damage to the rice crop by the cyclone of October 1942 and by insect pests and diseases. Details are not available of the effect on production of the other factors mentioned in the question, but that they could not have affected the production to any appreciable extent will be evident from the fact that this year's first forecast of rice acreage in Bengal shows an increase by 2 million acres over the 1941-42 acreage and by 2½ million acres over the 1942-43 acreage.

(d) The information asked for is not available and is being collected from the Provinces.

POSITION OF SUPPLIES OF FOODGRAINS IN BENGAL.

61. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a comprehensive statement, indicating district by district, as far as possible, the position of the supplies of foodgrains in Bengal during the last months of August, September and October, separately?

(b) Has any instruction been given by the Food Department, formally or informally, to Provincial authorities for the purpose of ensuring an improvement in the methods of distribution of foodstuffs and organisation of relief measures in the districts, towns and rural areas of Bengal? If so, to what effect and with what result?

(c) To what extent, on material points, does the present scheme of relief inaugurated by the Government of Bengal differ from the requirements of the Bengal Famine Code in regard to (i) the controlling organisation, (ii) relief works, (iii) allowances of food to different classes of persons, and (iv) special measures for the relief of poorer families among the middle class?

(d) Has the Honourable Member satisfied himself about the suitability of the standard gruel served from free kitchens to the destitute population in Bengal at different centres, from the points of view, firstly, of sufficiency as regards the minimum human requirements, and, secondly, of its suitability as regards its ingredients and their effect upon the health of the people served, having regard to their ages and varying degrees of continued privation? Has any expert opinion been obtained either by the Central Government or the Government of Bengal, on these points? If so, what is the substance of that opinion, and by whom has it been expressed?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (c) and (d). Material for a reply to parts (a), (c) and (d) of the Honourable Member's question is not readily available with the Central Government, and has been called for from the Government of Bengal. The suitability of the standard gruel is at present under examination and I do not wish to make any pronouncement until that examination is concluded.

(b) The Government of India are closely and continually in touch with the Government of Bengal with the object of improving methods of distribution and relief measures. Practical assistance and advice have been given; rail and river distribution has been improved; a senior military officer has been appointed as Director of Transport in Bengal; local rationing schemes have been introduced, and over 5400 relief centres have been opened. Reports from certain districts show that there has been a perceptible improvement in conditions.

62. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the Associated Press message, dated New Delhi, the 19th October, 1943, to the effect that arrangements are being made by the Military authorities to relieve the Bengal Government of its responsibility for feeding labour engaged on military works, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement:

(i) fully explaining the arrangements that were hitherto in force between the Military authorities and the Government of Bengal in this matter;

(ii) giving the quantities, month by month, since January last, of the foodgrains supplied by the Government of Bengal for this purpose; and

(iii) showing the average prices paid per maund for different kinds of foodgrains by the Military authorities to the Government of Bengal during this period, comparing them with the average prices paid by the Government of Bengal for procuring such supplies?

(b) What quantities had to be acquired and maintained by the Government of Bengal, month by month, for carrying out its responsibility in this matter, ever since it was undertaken by that Government?

(c) What independent arrangements for the procurement of foodgrains in Bengal will be made hereafter by the military authorities for feeding labour engaged on military works in that Province?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). No final decision has been reached with regard to the arrangements referred to in the Press message. In the case of most of the works in question the Military Authorities have hitherto had no direct responsibility for providing the requirements of Civilian labour; this responsibility rests with the employers of the labour under the Civil Department concerned, and with the Provincial Government.

The Statistical Material for a complete reply to parts (a) and (b) of the question is not readily available and a report has been called for from the Bengal Government.

(c) None.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ALUMINA IMPORTED DUTY FREE.

2. Shams-ul-Ulema Kamaluddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state the quantity of alumina that has been admitted duty free in this country since 1939? Is any action under contemplation for withdrawal of the facility for importation of alumina free from customs duty?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The information asked for in the first part of the question is being collected and will be laid on the table in due course.

The reply to the second part of the question is in the negative. The attention of the Honourable Member is invited in this connection to the Government of India, Commerce Department Resolution No. 6-T/Sim/40, dated the 20th July 1940, published in the *Gazette of India* of the same date.

SUPPLY OF RATIONS TO THE MILITARY IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

3. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state what the different classes are of personnel of the military forces, combatant as well as non-combatant, stationed in Bengal, that are entitled to free rations or the supply of essential foodstuffs at concession rates?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement indicating the quantity of rice, wheat (including flour) and other foodgrains that had to be acquired in Bengal, month by month, since January last, for the benefit of such personnel? Through what agencies were such supplies acquired in Bengal, and at what average prices, month by month? What stocks had to be carried by the supplying agencies or any other authorities responsible for maintaining these supplies from time to time in Bengal?

(c) To what extent has the acquisition and maintenance of stocks for supplying the above privileged classes of persons, stationed in Bengal with food grains, contributed to the creation of scarcity conditions and the prevalence of high prices in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The necessary information will be given by the War Department.

(b) No foodgrains have been purchased for the Defence Services from Bengal since January last.

(c) Does not arise.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

4. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Departments and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The information is not readily available but is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

5. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to reply given by the Honourable the Food Member to starred question No. 55 on the 9th November 1943.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE FOOD DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

6. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) I am replying to this question on behalf of all the Departments of the Government of India other than the Railways to whom the Honourable Member has addressed it. All Central Civil Government servants stationed in Bengal who are in receipt of pay of Rs. 300 per month or less are eligible for a concession of the nature indicated.

(b) and (c). The total number of eligible Central Civil Government employees, including the Posts and Telegraphs but excluding railways servants in Bengal, is about 22,000. In Calcutta arrangements for supplies have been made by the Supply Department in collaboration with the Provincial Director of Civil Supplies and in the mofussil by heads of Departments in consultation with the local authorities. In regard to the quantities supplied, the stocks maintained and the prices at which purchases were made from time to time, details are not readily available and Government consider that their collection would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable in existing conditions.

STOCKS OF FOODGRAINS RELEASED FROM ARMY RESERVES FOR CIVILIANS IN BENGAL.

7. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to the statement made by Mr. Amery in the House of Commons on the 14th October that some stocks of foodgrains have already been released from Army reserves for the benefit of the civilian population in Bengal, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the quantities of the stocks thus released during different periods and in different areas in Bengal, and what proportions the stocks thus released roughly bore to the amounts of Army reserves of foodgrains held in Bengal during the corresponding periods?

(b) Since which date has the Food Department been responsible for the procurement of foodstuffs for military requirements, and what are the different kinds of foodstuffs that the said Department procures to meet these requirements? Is the said Department solely responsible for the procurement of foodstuffs for such requirements in respect of the fighting forces stationed within India, as well as the export of foodstuffs for the benefit of Indian forces stationed abroad?

(c) How much of the military requirements have been met by the procurement of foodstuffs of different kinds within the Province of Bengal since January last? What quantities of rice have been procured in Bengal for meeting such requirements, month by month, since January last, and what were the average prices paid for it in the respective months?

(d) Is the Honourable Member in a position to satisfy the House that the procurement of foodstuffs in Bengal for military requirements has not contributed either to the shortage of foodstuffs available for civilian population or to the high prices thereof?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) About 23,000 tons of wheat have been released for the civil population in Bengal this year from imports specially ordered for the Defence Services. It is not in the public interest to disclose the Army Reserves of foodgrains in Bengal.

(b) The Food Department has been responsible for procurement of foodstuffs for the Defence Services since its creation on 2nd December 1942.

The types of foodstuffs procured for the Defence Services include all grains and products thereof for men and animals of the Defence Services and, in addition, such items of processed foodstuffs for men as are available from indigenous sources.

(c) Certain quantities of Shakapara Biscuits, tinned and bottled provisions including chutney, pickles, condiments and a few other minor items, are obtained from Bengal. As regards biscuits, wheat products for the manufacture of these are supplied from Defence Services stocks and are not drawn from the resources of Bengal. No rice has been purchased in Bengal.

(d) Yes.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

BANNING PUBLICATION OF BENGAL GOVERNOR'S ORDER AGAINST THE *Amrita Bazar Patrika*.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi has given notice of a motion for the adjournment of the business of the House for discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the prohibition under Sub-rule (1) of Rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules, by the Chief Press Adviser to the Government of India, of the publication outside the Province of Bengal of an order (intended to be applied only within the Province of Bengal) served on the Editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* under the Order of His Excellency the Governor of Bengal on 8th October, 1943 under the clause (b) of the sub-rule (1) of Rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules prohibiting the printing or publishing within the Province of Bengal only any document containing a reference by way of comment or otherwise, relating to the economic condition in Bengal, the food and supply situation, relief and distress, etc.

I have not been able to understand the position clearly. I should like to know what the facts are.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the facts are that the order of the Government of Bengal was limited to Bengal only. May I read the Order?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Yes, if it is not a very long one.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: It is not. It runs thus:

"In exercise of the power conferred by Clause (B) of Sub-Rule (1) of Rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules, the Governor is pleased to prohibit the printing or publishing within the Province of Bengal of any document containing a reference by way of comment or otherwise to Order No. 923-Pr., dated the 8th October, 1943, of which a copy is hitherto annexed."

The annexed Order is absolutely clear; it only applies within the Province of Bengal.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What is that Order referred to?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I will read that also:

"In exercise of the power conferred by Clause (a) of Sub-Rule (1) of Rule 41 of Defence of India Rules, the Governor is pleased, for the purpose of securing the public safety and the maintenance of public order, to order that any matter, relating to economic conditions in Bengal, the food and supply situation, relief and distress and Civil Defence services or organisations, shall, before being published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* newspaper, till further orders, be submitted for scrutiny to the Special Press Adviser, Calcutta."

It is absolutely clear that this Order was intended only for Bengal and not outside Bengal. Therefore, I submit that the Chief Press Adviser had no business to kill this news by prohibiting its publication throughout the rest of India. Of course it cannot be published in Bengal, that is admitted. The Order has clearly defined that it has only to be used in the Province of Bengal and nowhere else.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I would like to know why it was confined to Bengal.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: That is the Order. I have read it to you. The Government of Bengal have only applied it to their own province.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Would the same reasons apply for other parts of India?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Not necessarily.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Member for Information and Broadcasting): The assumption that any Order was passed by the Chief Press Adviser prohibiting, under Rule (1) of Rule 41 of the Defence of India Rules, the printing or publishing of any paper or document or anything like that, is in itself unfounded. There is no such order.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): In view of the statement made by the Leader of the House I rule the motion out of order.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Was there any advice.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

FAILURE TO GIVE PUBLICITY TO MORTALITY DUE TO STARVATION IN BENGAL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh. He says that the business of the Assembly be adjourned for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of the Government of India to give true and extensive publicity, in time, of the mortality in Bengal due to starvation.

It is rather general. Besides, this question can be discussed on the days which will be allotted for food debate.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I do not wish to move this and the next adjournment motion which stands in my name.

FAILURE TO TAKE TIMELY ACTION FOR PREVENTING ACUTE FOOD CRISIS IN BENGAL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Mr. Essak Sait. He wishes to move for the adjournment of the business of the Assembly to discuss an urgent matter of definite public importance, namely, the failure of the Government of India to take timely action to prevent the acute food crisis which Bengal is undergoing now the possibility of which must have been in Government's knowledge previously.

That can also be discussed in the food debate.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): I understand that the Leader of the House has to make a statement in connection with the allotment of two days for food debate.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): I have already stated in answering questions that I am going to get two days for food debate.

Many Honourable Members: We want three days.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will agree to three days provided no Resolutions are moved.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): We will agree to that.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The announcement should come through the proper channel. The Leader of the House should make a statement in this connection.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): May I ask which are the three days allotted for food debate.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

FAILURE TO CONSULT THE LEGISLATURE re AGREEMENT FOR UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Mr. Krishnamachari. He proposes to move for an adjournment of the business of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of the Government of India to consult the Legislature in the matter of the agreement for United Nations relief and rehabilitation administration.

I think this matter was brought up before the House once before.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore cum Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The Resolution tabled in the last Session was subsequently withdrawn and it happens that today the Agent General to the Government of India at Washington is signing the Agreement. It has also transpired that the department has communicated to several bodies, like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, that before the final draft is approved the Legislature's approval will be obtained. I now see an announcement in the papers—a Press Note—and it says that the signature of the Agent General will be

subject to the Legislature approving. It is an unheard of procedure. I think the Legislature is entitled to discuss this matter and voice its views on the action of the Government.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): I should explain the whole position; it was in September 1941 that His Majesty's Government invited the representatives of the Dominions and India to consider the question of post-war relief and thereafter the United States Government, the Government of China, and the Government of Russia considered all these matters from different points of view. It was before the last Session that the question came to us whether India is prepared to sign an agreement. We raised from India from the very start that in any question of post-war rehabilitation of devastated areas we in India have a special liability towards those territories in Asia which have been under enemy occupation and in which there is a large Indian population; and that is the attitude which we took all along; and then we actually tabled a Resolution before this House in which we desired the approval of this House. But thereafter there were certain further inquiries to be made in view of the discussions which we had with several Members informally. These points required to be clarified, and at that stage we did not anticipate that the conference would be called, as it has been called today. In between that time there has been a new principle, namely, our signature to that agreement nowhere binds India to any effective action. In other words, it is merely a conference of Dominion representatives and the United Nations and India to put the signature to a document that in case the Legislature approves of any further action, India will participate in the details. Till then India will be a member, and at any time if India feels that she cannot thereafter agree to any decision, we will stand out. It has been consistent with the attitude of India from the very beginning, not only during the war, but even before, that India is always associated in all international conferences. We took part in international conferences and I may say that this question was taken up by the international conference at Geneva also. In view of that we thought that at least our agreement to the extent of signature subject to legislative sanction at a later stage, will be the proper action, consistently with the attitude of India; and I feel that there is nothing to fear. We have consulted Chambers of Commerce; we propose at the proper stage to consult the Legislature for any effective action to be taken.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to submit that that is not exactly as it has been stated; the Honourable Member has not told us about the urgency of subscribing India's signature to this document.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: What more urgency is there except that the United Nations decided, not India, that the conference will be held on the 9th November and there was no time for us to table a motion before this House.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: In that case, I submit that it would not have mattered at all if the signature had not been given and India had been allowed to enter into an agreement after the Legislature had discussed it. Besides, it forces the hand of the Legislature.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, no. I can assure the House that it would be the free decision of this Legislature whether India will be isolationist or will be a participant in international cooperation not only for the post-war world rehabilitation but in other matters also.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to state one thing with your permission, Sir. If the Honourable Member will say that the approval of the Legislature shall be that the elected members of this Legislature alone decide

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is not allowed. On the facts stated by the Honourable Member for Commerce and the assurance given by him I hold that the motion is not in order.

HUNGER-STRIKE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BHAGALPUR CAMP JAIL.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next is Mr. Kailash Behari Lall's notice. He wishes to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the assault by lathi charge on the political prisoners in Bhagalpur camp jail on 21st October, 1943, and the consequent hunger-strike of some of the prisoners in the same jail since then and the failure of the Government to resolve the seriousness of the situation to save the lives of the hunger-strikers.

This happened on the 21st October; what has happened since then to these hunger-strikers?

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): That is not yet known; as far as my information goes, they are still on hunger-strike.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What are the facts?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): I have no information as to whether they are on hunger-strike or not. The matter is entirely one falling within the provincial responsibility, and the Government of India have no information on the subject, nor have they any responsibility for passing any orders in such a matter.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The administration of jails is, I suppose, a provincial subject?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: But at present the Bihar Government is under section 93 of the Government of India Act, and there is no responsible government there; the Government of India is responsible for law and order in the province and these prisoners are all political prisoners on account of the political movement there which was controlled by the Government of India, and the Government of India owes some duty for the welfare of those prisoners.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well; it has been ruled more than once that the administration of jails, being a provincial subject, no motion can be made here on that matter. I therefore hold that the motion is not in order.

CONTINUANCE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S SUBSIDY TO SIND.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next one is in the name of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. He wishes to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the continuance by the Government of India of the payment of a subsidy to the Province of Sind in spite of the highly improper conduct of the Government of that province in profiteering in the supply of food grains to the other provinces who are bearing the burden of that subsidy.

I do not know whether the allegations are correct or not. How is a question like this a fit subject for an adjournment motion? The object of the motion seems to be to recommend that certain action should be taken by the Government of India with respect to the Sind Government's subsidy. That surely can only be done on a Resolution; it cannot be the subject of an adjournment motion.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): May I submit that it could be done by the Government of India by some Ordinance immediately?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know that. You had better approach the proper authorities for that purpose; the House does not issue any ordinance. I hold that the motion is out of order.

NOMINATION OF THE PANEL OF CHAIRMEN.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the House that under sub-rule (1) of rule 3 of the Indian Legislative Rules, I

nominate Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee and Sir Henry Richardson on the Panel of Chairmen for the current Session.

RESOLUTION RE STABILIZATION OF PRICES—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Further discussion of the following Resolution moved by Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad on the 12th August, 1943:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to modify their currency policy and to concentrate their attention more on the stability of prices than on the stability of the bank rate of interest."

That has already been moved and three Members have spoken.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I rise to support the object of this Resolution although the text of the Resolution is somewhat lacking in precision and is even inconsistent and incoherent. Some of the statements which the Honourable Doctor made are in effect a contradiction of what he wants to be done, and he has announced certain economic doctrines which also show that he is not really supporting his own Resolution. The learned Doctor is so transparently honest that in one place he confessed that he never studied economics at college; he says that he has now started reading Marshall and Ricardo; I quite agree that it is never too late to learn, but I doubt very much whether his learning has progressed very much if his speech is to be the test. He has, in fact, far from supporting his arguments, weakened his case by making admissions. For instance, I shall only mention one. In one of his arguments he has said that Government should take the utmost care that the purchasing power of the rupee should not increase. If there is anything notorious to-day, it is this that the purchasing power of the rupee has declined by 80 per cent. At such a time he wants Government not to increase the purchasing power of the rupee. Does that show that he really supports his own proposition?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am not giving way. I have got only fifteen minutes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member raises a point of order. What is the point of order?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: He is not quoting me correctly.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is not a point of order. The Honourable Member knows that.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Let my Honourable friend read his speech. He has on page 686 definitely mentioned that the Government should take every care to see that the purchasing power of the rupee does not increase. (Interruption.) Let him say that he has committed a mistake, but let him not say he did not say that. I can read from the text of his speech but I have no time. Secondly, he has paid compliment to Government; I do not mind that but he should remember that the Honourable the Finance Member is such a skilful gentleman that on some occasion he will use them against us. As a matter of fact, there is not much to compliment about as I will show hereafter. The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman's speech was applauded on the floor of the House. He received a good press; the impression created was that he had made such a cogent and convincing case for Government that nothing remained to be said. I am reminded of the instructions which a gentleman by name Gregsbury in Dickens' novel "Nicholas Nickleby" probably a Chancellor of the Exchequer gave to his Secretary as to what points should be taken in preparing his speech. Mr. Gregsbury gives instructions for his speech like this. He says:

"I should expect him (Secretary) now and then to go through a few figures in the printed tables, and to pick out a few results, so that I might come out pretty well on timber-duty questions, and finance questions, and so on: and I should like him to get up a few little arguments about the disastrous effects of a return to cash payments and a

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

metallic currency, with a touch now and then about the exportation of bullion, and the Emperor of Russia and bank notes and all that kind of thing, which it is only necessary to talk fluently about, because nobody understands it. Do you take me?"

"I think I understand," said Nicholas.

When the Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman gave instructions to Mr. Jones to prepare his speech, he said something about this inflation, something about mopping up savings, something about bears and bulls, he was savaging the bull, and he was to talk eloquently because nobody understands . . .

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Nobody prepares my speeches except me.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am simply assuming. I am glad. You said to yourself then, "I will only say something about bear and bull and make the most sweeping statement eloquently, nobody will understand me and everybody will applaud it." He had the peculiar advantage of speaking at the last moment of the last Resolution day of the Session so that there was nobody to reply. He could say what he liked, it cannot be replied to for a period of more than two months,—therefore he felt himself safe and made a speech extending over seven pages in which he spoke so much and said so little; it is one of his master performances on all questions if inconvenient matters are under discussion. As a matter of fact the whole of the speech of the Honourable Member was full of imaginary triumphs, of irritation with his critics, and there was no hope held out for lower prices and there was no real reply. For instance, what does it matter, he asked, in a country like India whether your currency in circulation is 180 crores or 1,000 crores? I wonder why he did not say 10,000 crores. Does he really wish this House to believe that it makes no difference whether the notes in circulation are 100 millions or 200 millions or 500 millions? I say that it makes every difference, when even a crore of rupees of currency is added to the existing volume. After the debate in the House of Commons now, he will have to admit that inflation is at the bottom of this great tragedy of starvation of Indian masses and that the prices have grown and grown not so much because of the many extraneous circumstances, but definitely and clearly on account of the unbalanced inflation that has gone on during the last 3½ years. My Honourable friend not only denounced those who were complaining of inflation but claimed some victory over inflation. I say that his victories are imaginary. The London *Economist* describes his financial methods as methods of crude inflationary finance. My Honourable friend thinks that it makes no difference what inflation there may be. I shall tell him what difference it does make. He could not have forgotten Ricardo, though Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad has not understood it. Ricardo more than 150 years ago made it quite clear that every unit of currency in circulation carries out transactions worth 20 units. That was in the days when scientific invention and industrialisation of the world had not made much progress, when the number of transactions was few. To-day it must be, not one rupee to 20 rupees of transactions, but one rupee of currency to 50 rupees of transactions. And what does that imply? It implies that for every rupee note in circulation, 50 rupees worth of transactions are gone through. Further as the *Economist* points out that it is not a question of any sacrifice India has to make but it is a sacrifice already made in terms of services and of commodities by the masses in India by which sterling accumulation has taken place in England. If you calculate the growing sterling accumulations they work out, according to my calculation to no less than nearly 1,800 million sterling in three years. If you multiply 1,800 by 50, it comes to transactions of goods and services worth £90,000 millions.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: What about the distance of the sun from the earth?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: That is an astronomical picture, but you have done more than that. You are capable of achieving more than the calculation of

astronomical figures. And I assure the Honourable Member that according to the *Economist* and according to the calculations I made—I am willing to be subject to correction—the people of India have, as a result of the currency inflation during the last four years, denied themselves 18 thousand crores of rupees worth goods and services. I am making this statement on the floor of the House and if the Honourable Member wishes to correct me, I shall gladly accept the correction, if I am wrong.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: He has omitted three zeroes.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You said that you were still studying the subject but my figures are quite correct—eighteen thousand crores of rupees worth, denial to ourselves of food, clothing and other necessities of life. That is the contribution of India to the war—starvation and denial of food, goods and services to the extent of 18 thousand crores of rupees. Do you wonder when the prices have gone up so high, that a large number of people—many millions—are unable to obtain food and they have lost whatever of blood and flesh they had, that only their skin and bones remain. That skin has also become very soft now and the bones have become brittle; indeed, no country in the world has sacrificed more than the people of this country from the point of view of denial of goods and services of the most essential character. That is the fact of the matter and the Resolution has only asked him to stabilise the prices. No, Sir. I want him to lower the prices. Stabilising the price means continuing the present starvation of the people.

The Finance Member had also boasted of the several triumphs he had achieved. Let him look at page 90 of the Report of the Gregory Committee. What does it say? The Honourable Member promised great victories over the profiteers in the months of March and April. (*An Honourable Member:* "What is that report please?") It is the Food Grains Policy Committee Report. It has been published in the Press. (*An Honourable Member:* "We have not seen it.") It has been published in the Press. You have not read it. If you have read it, you will find that in March and April . . .

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadian Rural): We are not members of the National Defence Council.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: This is a more tragic subject. You may have a joke about the National Defence Council of which you are so fond but I wish to read the figures of the triumphal march of the success of the measures taken by the Honourable Member. He boasted that from April he had been savaging the bull. Let us see. The price of rice was in April 634 as against 100 at the beginning of the war. The price of rice in July, after three months' progress of his success, was 951 points, that is, it had risen nearly 317 points after the supposed success began. The price of wheat rose by 134 points after his triumphs started. The price of kerosene rose from 194 to 203 points since he began to suppress profiteering and the price of cloth had risen by August from 469 points to 493 points since he boasted on the floor of the House that he had taken stern measures and that there was no cause for defeatism. Now, that kind of thing which simply believes in words, while the facts are quite contrary is not worthy of my Honourable friend.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Does the Honourable Member deny that there has been a fall in cloth prices?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am quoting from an authoritative Committee's report.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Will the Honourable Member kindly relate his figures to some precise period of time?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am giving even the month.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Is it the Honourable Member's suggestion that since Government began to control cloth prices, the prices have moved up?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Let the Honourable Member read his speech. I have read it many times. If he reads his speech, I do not think he will be able to challenge me. He was speaking in August, when the figures for July alone

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

were available—not other figures—and I say that his boast on the floor of the House that he will crush the profiteers was made in March. It is the profiteers who crushed him by July when the ruling prices of cloth were 493 points against 469 points in March. I am in sympathy with him. I do not say that it is his fault that the profiteers are there. It is the fault of the Government of India but let him not indulge in imaginary triumphs. What we want is a reduction of prices. A reduction of prices alone will give some consolation to the poor who have to pay 500 per cent. for cloth, one thousand per cent. rise for rice and similar rises. My friend is very fond of mopping up the purchasing power which does not exist in the hands of 99·5 per cent. of the people. The mopping up of the power can only be done in the case of ·5 per cent. Let him do it and he will have my full support but, in season and out of season, to have the poor working classes' wages in his mind and to talk of mopping up purchasing power which only the ·5 possess is like Mrs. Partington mopping the Atlantic with her broom. I cannot imagine that the Honourable the Finance Member will ever be able to mop up fugitive purchasing power unless he goes against the real perpetrators of these high prices.

The last thing I wish to say is this—that the Government will not succeed by the measures that they have taken so far. They are good measures, they are measures in the right direction but they are measures whose effect can only be to the extent of 10 to 15 per cent. If they want to produce real effect, it must be in two directions. One is to lower the prices of foodstuffs and other essential supplies by stopping inflation. The *Economist* has said it. He can have the cutting from me if he likes. Mr. Pethick Lawrence has said the same thing in his speech. My Honourable friend has consistently tried to ridicule those who talked of inflation. That is at the bottom of the rise in prices and the second thing in connection with the rise in prices is profiteering. He has not yet really touched this latter. In his speech, I find that any appeal to him to touch this profiteer will be considered by him as hostility to the profiteers. What a calamity to the people of India, that the Honourable the Finance Member should think that in asking him to take measures against the profiteers we are showing any hostility. We are hostile to the deeds, not to anybody personally.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: When did I say that?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You have said it, in describing the action you have taken in lowering the prices of cloth. I shall refer you to your speech. Do you want me to read it?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Surely, I did not deprecate hostility. The point was whether it would succeed in getting the price of cloth reduced.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You warned us against hostility which does not exist. On page 695, five lines from the bottom of the last but one paragraph, the Honourable Member says:

"At the same time, it was equally true that you were dealing with one of the most powerful and most organised industries in this country and that if you were to proceed to deal with it by methods purely of hostility and force. . . ."

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Go on.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: That is what he says. But no one has suggested the method of force or of hostility.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Where is the profiteer? He says 'organised industries'.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: But they are the biggest profiteers. You must pardon me because I am in earnest about telling the Honourable the Finance Member that there is no question of hostility or force to the profiteers who have raised the price of cloth 500 per cent. Do you describe any protest against this as hostility and force? And what will you do? Will you give them a bouquet of flowers for robbing the public by 500 per cent.?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: That is what the Civil Supplies Department is now doing.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am telling the Government of India that there is no method of violence or force in what I am saying. It is an appeal to

them that the profiteers deserve no mercy. Today the greatest thing to do in India is to lower the prices. You have really suffered the biggest disaster of the war by the rise in the food, cloth and other prices in this country. Therefore, the reply to this debate should not have been: "Never mind, if the unit of currency is one thousand millions. Is the Government to go on counting the currency figures or to conduct the war?" Is not this mere rhetoric? Will you lose the war if you looked after the currency statistics? On the contrary, if you do not look at the bloated currency expansion, you will lose the war. Therefore, your rhetorical expression that a Government responsible for the conduct of the war cannot go on watching the currency statistics is, in my humble opinion, a mere flourish and as an argument, absolutely bottomless and is indeed against the effective prosecution of the war. For these reasons, I beg the Government of India to apply their mind in carrying out the latest foodgrains policy and other controls into effective action without loss of any time because the time is heavily against you. Four hundred millions of the people of India are involved in the war and you must lower the prices, no amount of temporising and no amount of casuistry will do. The problem is far too tragic and far too important. It goes at the bottom of the war effort. All our publicity and all our National War Front work cannot carry any weight with the people who have to think of their food next morning. Children do not get their milk and the whole generation is getting stunted in growth and will be not A1 population but Z26 population.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already exceeded his time.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I shall conclude. Therefore, my submission to the Government on this Resolution which is already accepted is that the acceptance is only verbal, the argument being all against taking any action. The argument is that the Government is doing all that it can and that it is succeeding; this is a sad illusion. Government are not succeeding; they are failing every day. The profiteer goes scot-free and unless they arrest the progress of inflation and arrest the progress of the profiteers all their attempts will be a flea-bite against disaster which awaits this country. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I have full sympathy with the spirit of the Resolution which was moved by my Honourable friend, Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad, but unfortunately the Resolution was not very happily worded. So far as I know, my friend himself was not happy about the form of the Resolution and he wanted to move an amendment to his own Resolution which was not permitted by the Chair.

Now, Sir, what my Honourable friend really means is this that the Governor General in Council do modify their currency policy and to concentrate their attention on the stability of prices after bringing them down to the normal, and I do not think he insists very much on the stability of the bank rate of interest because that is somewhat irrelevant. If that be the real purport of his Resolution, I fully support it. More than a year ago, in the course of putting a question in this House, I asked the Honourable the Finance Member to guard against the inflationary tendencies which were manifesting themselves at the moment and I also told him that such safeguarding was being taken in other countries such as England and America against inflation. My Honourable friend at that moment thought that I was referring to the actual steps which were being taken in those countries. I was not referring to the actual steps which were being taken in the United States of America and England in order to guard against inflation, but my object was to invite his attention to the necessity for providing against inflation in this country in accordance with our own needs. Then, a few months ago, when the Finance Bill was under consideration, I discussed this question at considerable length and I pointed out that the sole cause of the phenomenal rise in prices was not currency inflation. On the other hand, I thought that the inter-connection between demand and supply was mainly responsible for it. And I also warned the Government against the expansion of currency

[Dr. L. N. Banerjee.]

which was going on and I warned the Government against what might take place in future and I mentioned the fate of the mark in Germany. The Honourable the Finance Member in reply said that he agreed with me to a very large extent and he had the goodness to compliment me on my views and he told us that he would take effective measures against inflation.

Shortly afterwards a number of economists headed by Professor Kale, an old friend of mine, wanted to issue a manifesto and a copy of this manifesto was sent to me for my signature as I was at one time a University Professor and a President of the Indian Economic Conference. Now, Sir, this manifesto appeared to me to be too theoretical and very one-sided and I did not sign it. In that manifesto, the authors placed too much emphasis on the currency side of the rise in prices and the remedies which they suggested were of the old orthodox type, namely, increased taxation and increased savings. Shortly afterwards I read in the papers that the Honourable the Finance Member took two steps, one relating to restriction on capital issues and the other relating to the excess profits tax. These two measures taken by themselves were quite unobjectionable, but they did not go far enough in my opinion. Subsequently he took other steps also of a somewhat modest character, namely, his attempt to check control of cloth prices. But I do not deny that the steps which he did take were in the right direction, but they did not go far enough. He was faced with this problem of how to finance the war purchases by Great Britain and the Allied Nations in this country. For that money was needed and where would this money come from? That would come from the expansion of currency. He was himself placed in a very difficult position and that was why he said that war effort of the Allied Nations should not be ignored altogether. But there were certain steps which he might have taken in order to overcome the fix of expansion of currency. The most important of these were greater production of goods for civilian consumption. That was a great need of the hour. That would have at once brought down the price level, at least the price level of goods consumed by the ordinary people and would have checked the inflationary tendencies.

Sir, it is known to everybody that inflation breeds inflation. Unless serious attempts are made to check inflation, it goes on from more to more. What do I find? In March last year, the amount of notes in circulation was somewhere about 550 crores. In August it amounted to nearly 700 crores and now it is nearly 780 crores. When it was put to him whether the expansion of currency had ceased, he said, no, the volume of currency expanded has not been reduced or ceased to expand, but the rate of expansion had decreased. But that is not enough. You should go further. You will have to take definite steps in order that within a reasonable period of time the prices should be brought down to the normal or something near normal, if not exactly normal and then the prices should not be allowed to go up higher. Now, Sir, for that purpose, as I have already said, the first thing that is necessary is to increase the productivity of this country, production of industrial goods for civilian consumption and greater production of agricultural food grains and other products in order that starving people may be saved from death. These are the two most important suggestions which I have to make. Besides, I may suggest that if he wants money for financing the purchase of war materials by the Allied Nations, the sterling balances at London may be utilised for this purpose, by utilising them for buying up some of the capital assets in this country. Now, all these steps taken together would not only give immediate relief but would produce a new atmosphere and there will be a gradual downward tendency of the price level and the people of India will cease to starve and will cease to die of cold.

My Honourable friend being a Member of the Government of India has his responsibility for helping the war efforts of the Allied Nations. What I have suggested to him will not hamper his activities in that regard. If the sterling balances are utilised for the purpose mentioned by me, well, the war effort of the Allied Nations will not be hampered. If greater attention is devoted to

the production of goods for civilian consumption both on the manufacture and on the agricultural side, no greater impediment will occur in the progress of the war. Now, Sir, you all remember that this subject was discussed in the British Parliament a few days ago, and an economist of the calibre of Pethwick Lawrence said that inflation was one of the causes of the famine in Bengal. So, it will not do to ignore the effects of inflation altogether although I do maintain that inflation is not the sole cause of the present height to which prices have risen. But if you take the steps which I have mentioned, you will not only help the people to get food and other necessary articles, but you will be able at the same time to reduce inflation and guard against further flights of the currency which might reach the heights which were reached by the mark in Germany 25 years ago. Sir, my Honourable friend the Finance Member is not an unreasonable man. But it seems that his hands are tied. If his hands are tied, of course, he is helpless, but he should take courage in both hands and say that this is the way to save the country.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I would not have liked to participate in this debate but for the fact that there have been certain misstatements about the price position and the control position, and specially with reference to cloth. It is impossible for me to imitate the similes and metaphors of Mr. Jannadas Mehta. Sometimes I feel that the best saying I have ever known is that of a Scotch poet who said:

"O, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursel's as others see us."

I will leave the matter there. I will only say that the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies was made a separate department only about the end of April and therefore we had barely six months' time to tackle the cloth position of India as a whole. It is well known that at an earlier part of the year, even in April, May and June, the cloth position was as acute as the food position itself, and it was towards the end of June that we convened a conference of the provincial and State representatives to discuss the whole cloth position. We immediately took up the matter and we came to an agreement in consultation with the trade that, in the best interests of the consumers we should push on with the scheme of standard cloth. The industry had been putting forward for some time past that it would fall into line with Government in the production of standard cloth of the requisite quantity desired only if adequate and satisfactory arrangements to distribute it in the provinces could be made. We consulted the provinces and devised a scheme and the Provincial Governments and State representatives undertook to distribute it in as satisfactory a manner as local conditions permitted. After that, it is well known that we have been going on with the cloth control scheme and we insisted that all the quantity which was lying in stock with the dealers all over India should be unbaled, and we stood firmly by that because we knew that in the interest of the consumer we must not allow any time to the dealers, —the dealers who had been saying only four months before that there was not sufficient stock in the country. Sir, it is now well known that at least about eight months of the total production of textiles in India was in the hands of dealers when there was cloth famine in the country. We gave about two months' time and we found that it was a physical impossibility to sell the entire quantity of eight months' production in the course of two months; and therefore we have allowed another two months to sell all this cloth. In the meantime we have placed orders with the mills for the production of standard cloth and its production has been going on.

It will be interesting to the House to know that within the last two months or so we have sent to the different provinces and States standard cloth to the extent of about 218 million yards. This has been distributed all over the provinces, and to quote only a few examples, U. P. has got over 31 million yards, Madras over 31 million yards, Bengal about 27 million yards, Bihar about 22 million yards, Assam a little over 8 million yards, and so on. This will show that we have been pressing for the quicker dispatch and production of standard cloth; and I believe Mr. Jannadas Mehta will at least admit that we have also been able to bring before the public the stock which was lying

[Sir M. Azizul Huque.]

stocked with the dealers; and this distribution of 218 million yards of cloth throughout India has undoubtedly helped to ease the cloth situation, even though we would like much further progress to be made in this matter. There is one thing which should be realised, and that is that in economic life we have often to contend against human nature and against the elements at work. Matters which take some time to be completed cannot be done in the course of a few weeks. In any case all I am concerned with is that we have taken the step of distributing the standard cloth, and if Mr. Jamnadas Mehta had time in the last Session during which I informed the House that samples of standard cloth were on exhibit in one of the rooms of the Assembly Chamber, he would admit, as would be admitted by every one who saw the samples, that standard cloth was being sold at a comparatively much cheaper price in comparison with the prices raging at that time. Our aim is to distribute 2,000 million yards all through the year. We have already placed orders for the next six months of a thousand million yards which the mills are producing and we have been distributing as much as we could to the different provinces and States. But quite apart from that it is well known that at the inception we succeeded in fixing a ceiling price for certain kinds of cloth, i.e., of certain counts and yarns; and thereafter we found that we had made some progress in the matter. At the last meeting of the Textile Control Board, it was decided to fix ceiling prices for all varieties of cloth and yarn in the market with effect from early next year. If we have succeeded in that I think it must be admitted that we have done something at least to ease the present situation, and we are constantly at work to find out what further steps may be taken. Not only that, we are fully cognisant of the fact that something should be done to supply yarn at cheap rates to the handloom industry; and since we have thought of this question we have decided to have a conference of all the provincial representatives about the end of this month at Madras, which is one of the largest handloom industrial areas, to see what steps should be taken for distribution of handloom yarn and what control, if possible, could be exercised over the price of handloom cloth. Quite apart from that we found that at the present moment there was nothing in the nature of a law to deal effectively with profiteers in any form. The House is aware that an Anti-Hoarding and Profiteering Ordinance has been promulgated; though it is not even a few weeks since this has been done we have already succeeded to this extent that only yesterday I was told that about 20 to 30 trade representatives met together at a certain place and decided among themselves that they should try their best to see that no profiteering was indulged in and that they keep within the limits of the profits which are laid down under the law or which may be specially permitted by the Controller General. It is too early for me to say what will be the result. The question affects the whole continent of India and the millions of people who are distributed all over India. But we have taken up the task and I can assure the House that we have taken it up with a view to keep a check over profiteering and to keep control over prices.

Apart from these two things the question of high prices of drugs and medicines are not only under active consideration, but I believe Honourable Members will be able to know in a few days the nature of the steps we are proposing to take to control the prices of drugs and medicines all over India on the same principle that we have been following in the case of cloth.

Apart from drugs, medicines and cloth, we have taken steps to get more consumers' goods into the country. We are trying our best to see that more of these goods are available and produced in the country, and I can assure the House that the question of high prices cannot be tackled solely at one end. You cannot deal with it, as was said by the Honourable the Finance Member, purely by hostility against the industrialists; you have to attack it on all fronts. And we have been trying for some time past to deal in this effective manner with all these problems, i.e., not only the supply of consumers' goods, but the availability of more of these goods, better distribution arrangements, better supply of cloth, etc.

As regards food, the Honourable the Food Member will explain the position to the House when the matter is discussed, but we in the Industries and the Civil Supplies Department have been constantly watching to see that the position is eased. And I claim that at least so far as textiles are concerned, we have succeeded in bringing down prices, even though we would like the prices to go very much further down. Economic factors, as I said before, depend on various circumstances. We have been tackling the position as best as we can, and I can assure the House that we in the department and its officers are determined to see that the price racket is stopped and that as soon as possible.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir, the question of price of cloth has been introduced. In this connection I want to submit that on the one side it has been pointed out that an Ordinance has been passed against profiteering and also regulating and controlling the price of cloth. Subject to correction I say that the last day for clearing old stock of cloths was fixed as the 31st October last but has now been extended till December. The result is that whatever tendency had been shown by the cloth merchants in the reduction of the prices, now they have raised it to the exorbitant limits. They are openly saying: "Let us make as much profit as possible within the limited time at our disposal". This is because the time has been extended by the Government. I think this was not fair on the part of the Government. The attention of the Government was drawn during the last Session and they were asked not to extend the last date of clearance of the old stocks. But they paid no heed to those words. The result is that the poorer classes are suffering.

We have read in the press that an Ordinance has been issued to control the price of cloth—I have not seen the Ordinance myself—if so it is quite welcome. But we have a very sad experience of the controlling agencies. Unless they are put right all the efforts of the Government of India will be frustrated and what will remain will be a pious hope and nothing else. We find from our experience that corruption is rampant in every corner of the country—whether the management is in the hands of officials or non-officials, Indians or anyone else. Unless this is checked, no Ordinance will be of any help to the people.

I will say a word about the change of Government's currency policy also. On account of the absence of silver and gold coins the people in this country have got very little attraction for the slips of paper currency. It discourages people, and the purchasing price has been reduced. People going into the market with paper currency have to pay more than those carrying silver currency. There should be some satisfaction given to the public that there is some reserve at the back of currency papers. With these words I support the Resolution.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, these Resolutions on the currency policy that are put before the House off and on are the result of the extreme trouble and difficulty which India is and has been experiencing not only now but for a long time past. You are, of course, unfortunately following the footsteps or the dictates from Home on the currency policy. We have objected to it several times, but the time has now come when we must raise our voice of protest very seriously and strongly about this currency policy of the Government. The Resolution has been moved because there is a lack of a centrally administered policy for the control of essential commodities. We all know that there is a great scarcity in this country now of essential commodities; not to speak of our food only which is the mainstay of every human being, there is also the scarcity of cloth, the scarcity of kerosene oil, the scarcity of fuel and the scarcity

[Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali.]

of everything imaginable which sustains the life of a human being. Under these conditions, if we come before this House and raise questions of currency policy, we submit that we ought to be heard more patiently and the Government should reconsider its currency policy. The country suffers and there is a likelihood of a crisis, just as we find today in Bengal, in other provinces too. It is not simply because there is not sufficient foodgrains in the country—we find some time back in this very House it was said that there was sufficient food to be found in this country; but the fact remains that there is not sufficient food and there is not sufficient cloth to cover ourselves. It will be a very serious affair if the crisis comes throughout the whole of India; and the Government will have perhaps no time to meet the crisis if it comes on suddenly. We ought to take some lessons from the conditions in Bengal and we ought to be prepared to consider again the currency policy of the Government of India. We find that an unworkable price control schedule has been fixed by the Government, but we know how it has been counteracted by the *bania* of the country and also by the Government contractors by hoarding and profiteering. Nobody can deny that there is hoarding by the *bania*, that there is hoarding by the military department, that there is hoarding by the contractors of the Government and that due to all this, we are in a fix now. In fact, if the Government arranges for regulated supplies and consumers receive sufficient supplies through effective control, then it is possible that the crisis on some occasions may be averted.

I find that in one of the speeches of Sir George Anderson recently made in the House of Commons—it is in every way instructive and Indian politicians and economists ought to take a lesson from that and I hope the Honourable the Finance Member will remember what Sir John Anderson said—he said:

"I sincerely believe we have reached the peak of inflationary prices which have been going on."

If that is the statement of such a high authority in the House of Commons, how can it be denied here in India that we are not labouring under very serious inflationary evils?

I also hold that there are not sufficient consumers goods nor capital goods that can be imported for their manufacture; therefore in future we ought to be more careful about the crisis which may come. Unfortunately if prices in future will not decline and the present condition is as it is, how are we going to manage the government of this country, and how can we hold that there is no inflationary profiteering going on in this country? In the markets, at least in my own province, if I go with a rupee in my hand and want to buy grain, we get not more than 4 seers for a silver rupee.

An Honourable Member: Five seers?

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Where do you get 5 seers?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Five seers for a silver rupee.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: If I go with small change in my hand, I get not even four seers. Every one knows that in the U. P. there is such a scarcity of small coin that it is absolutely impossible, not only in the urban areas but also in the agricultural areas and small towns, to have a two-pice coin or an anna coin or a two-anna coin. It is absolutely impossible to get any change and so any grain in the market. If I tender a rupee note, they will never give me more than 2½ seers of grain. Under these conditions, what more proof do you want that inflationary conditions are prevailing in India? These are very serious conditions and circumstances. The Government has not fixed any purchasing power for this our rupee by any executive order or Ordinance. I ask why? Is it the policy of the Government that the present conditions should prevail and remain as they are? Government ought to fix at least some purchasing power for the present rupee so that the present conditions may not continue. At the same time we find that there is no metallic reserve for all the paper currency that is existing in India. There are 780 crores of currency notes at present circulating in India, whereas we have only

44 crores worth of gold to back that paper currency. Nobody knows where the stock of gold is or where the stock of silver is, to back this currency. In these circumstances what are we to do except to bring to the notice of the Assembly that the country is in a very serious condition, that a crisis may come any day, not only because of no metallic background, but also for the other reasons which I have just placed before the House? We all know that prices are going up higher and higher from day to day, and to say that the prices are declining—I submit that it is not to the knowledge of the people of this country, though it may be to the knowledge of the officials of the Government. In the Resolution it is stated, "more on the stability of prices than on the stability of the bank rate of interest". If the Government is trying to stabilise the bank note, then the Government ought to know that the poor people of this country have not enough money to put in the bank so that stabilisation of these bank notes can make any difference. But stabilization of the purchasing power of the rupee is more necessary. Of course, in the eyes of the Government bank notes may be of very great value, but to the people of this country, to the people at large, the bank note is only a paper. If anybody can come with me to the United Provinces I can show him that the villager does not attach any great importance to the value of the note at all. These bank notes have not the face value even which is fixed by the Government. With these words I support the Resolution.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): I would make only a few observations with regard to this Resolution. I would confine myself to the first part of the Resolution which says:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to modify their currency policy and to concentrate more on the stability of prices"

Sir, that there is inflation everybody admits, I believe, Government too. I listened with very great interest to the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Jannadas Mehta. He charges the Government of India with this, that, although the Finance Member said several times on the floor of this House that every step was being taken and had been taken to reduce the prices of commodities which are required for civilian use, my Honourable friend thinks that nothing has been done in this respect except making speeches on the floor of this House and making various statements. I myself do not think that they have done nothing, but I feel that they have done things which will never reduce the prices. I will tell you why. The whole trouble is our sterling balances in London. Unless you devise means to absorb those sterling balances which are in our favour in London, nothing else on earth will give you that result which you and I and every one else want, namely, a reduction of the prices of commodities. Now, Sir, I will give a few figures. These I have obtained from the Government publications. Index numbers of wholesale prices in Calcutta were in June 1940, 114; June 1941, 137; June 1942, 182; June 1943, 319; and September 1943, 343. Look at the rapid rise in prices of the commodities. The Reserve Bank of India agrees with what I am saying now.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: In Great Britain it is 122.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: These rapid and general upward movements in prices are an inevitable reflection of the economic and monetary situation in this country. The growing scarcity of consumers and producers goods available for civilian use and the expansion of money and supplies both arising in the process of diversion of resources to war services—this is, as I said, confirmed by the Reserve Bank of India report for the year 1942-43. What is the root cause of the inflation? Everybody says and I think it is agreed, that it lies at the door of Government's policy both in regard to monetary as well as production aspects. The fundamental problem lies rooted in the ever-growing accumulation of the huge sterling balances in London. The effective disposal of that alone can lead to a right and proper solution of inflation in this country. A large amount of expenditure is incurred in India on behalf of the British and other allied Governments in rupees, and with the

[Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.]

development of the reverse lend-lease or lease-lend the expense of maintaining the American army also involves larger disbursements of rupees by the Government of India. The rupee finance required for all these is first found by the Government of India. In respect of India's exports and His Majesty's British Government's purchases in India not only on their behalf but on behalf of other Allied Governments, India as a return has obtained credits in sterling in London. While sterling thus goes on accumulating to the credit of the country in London, it is all the time a continuing process of increasing note circulation in this country. That is the problem. The whole problem is the problem of these sterling balances in London, and it is going on day to day increasing. Although it would be argued—and this is the argument which Government makes—that legally India's note circulation is amply covered, in fact more than amply covered, it is not realised that receipt of sterling by India is responsible for the ever-increasing note circulation in this country and logically therefore these very sterling balances should be utilised in such a way that the utilisation involves withdrawal of note circulation from the country.

How is that to be done. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry have repeatedly urged upon the Government that the sterling balances should be utilised in such a way that it would prove beneficial to the country's economy, at present, in the immediate future as well as in the long term. Part of the solution of the inflationary situation in the country lies in her using the sterling balances in the same manner as other Governments have used them or would use them.

If the Government of India had insisted to purchase investments of British nationals in Indian industries, against the sterling credits that had been accumulating, these investments would have been purchased by the Indians in the country and thereby the contraction of currency would have been automatically provided for. Such a policy, if pursued in a manner to achieve a gradual disinvestment of British investment in the country, would have ensured stability of commodity prices, as well as the stabilisation of India's finances. This was and still is the most effective cure against the evil effect of the inflationary tendencies in the country caused by the processes of British and Allied purchases of Indian goods.

I would mention that even in the House of Commons Mr. Pethick Lawrence said that the Government of India is responsible for inflation, as everyone knows. That is the aspect I want to place before this House. The inflation is there and is admitted and unless you can absorb the sterling balances, which are in our favour in London, in such a manner as to reduce the circulation of notes, you will never be able to achieve the object, namely, the reduction of the price.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): I understand there is an agreed amendment to this motion.

Mr. Muhammad Hussain Chowdhury (Bakarganj cum Faridpur: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to give foremost place in the monetary policy to the stabilization of prices on which the prosperity of the country largely depends."

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): Amendment moved:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to give foremost place in the monetary policy to the stabilization of prices on which the prosperity of the country largely depends."

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Before I touch on other points, I would like to say a few words about Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, who has left the Opposition Benches and has now become a camp follower of the Treasury Benches.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You may console yourself for your ignorance by that statement.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I am not accustomed to harsh language. I will just quote a few sentences from my speech to which he referred, which he quoted or rather misquoted. I said in 1931 that the prices were very low, too low and we had to raise that. The prices at the present moment are too high, and we have to lower them. Later on I said very clearly that the price should be fixed at not more than 50 per cent. of the prices in 1939-40. That is, prices should in no case be allowed to go beyond 50 per cent. higher than they were before the war in 1939 and on this basis, I said that Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 4-10 a maund, which is about 50 per cent. higher than the price which prevailed in 1939.

Now, my friend Mr. Mehta gave us to understand that he read the speech very carefully. But he misrepresented, or he misunderstood it. This reminds me of the statement made by a member of the House of Parliament 'I can give my friend the argument but I cannot supply him with the brain to appreciate and understand it'. This is not the only occasion when he has misread and misrepresented the views expressed from this side of the House, either intentionally or otherwise. It has become a habit with him, a habit that has been unfortunately created on account of the flattery of the Treasury Benches of which he has now become a camp follower. Therefore I leave him alone.

I will tell my friend another thing. I challenged him as an economist to define inflation. I said that when you talk of inflation there must be a border line which is the starting point. Anything above that must be called inflation and anything below that would be deflation. The border line may shift with the change of conditions. Let us say that 300 crores is the border line. Anything above 300 will be inflation. 301 will be inflation, and 299 will be deflation. Then I could have understood him but he did not care to understand and entirely misrepresented what I said. Then the other thing to which I drew attention on page 684 was this. I don't know whether he read it really or simply pretended to have read it. I said that inflation does not depend upon the quantum of the currency notes. It depends upon the velocity with which they are circulated and I said on that occasion that the speed of circulation in 1939 was 16.7, and now it is only 5. This really means that there are a large number of persons who have been hoarding these

currency notes. This we know definitely that the hoarding of currency notes is a very common thing nowadays. I think everybody understands that there is a good deal of corruption at present all round and those persons who got these currency notes not by the front door but by the back door will hide them from the Income-tax officer also. So, they do not like to deposit them in the bank lest they may be found out. They keep these notes in the stock and hoard them in the same manner as some other people hoard grains or metallic coins. So, when you talk of currency notes in circulation, you must deduct the quantum of those notes which have been hoarded by these persons. The number of notes which are hoarded can be calculated by the velocity in circulation. If the velocity of circulation of notes is small, then currency notes must have been frozen somewhere. My Honourable friend, Mr. Mehta, poses himself to be very good at calculation except that he forgets the three zeros whenever he gives his figures. He ought to tell us by finding out the speed of circulation as to how many currency notes have now been frozen and were put out of circulation by those persons who acquired them in an illicit manner. This is a thing which I expected from him as an economist to calculate and comment. If he can find out the number of these frozen notes, then he will find that number of notes in circulation will be reduced to a figure which he will not call inflation. I have repeatedly challenged him and I challenge him again today that the word 'inflation' is really used by economists without understanding. Whenever you use the word 'inflation', you must define it and you must fix a

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad.]

limit which is neither inflation or deflation. Everybody knows that a unit in such matters cannot be defined. They do not define the limit but they talk of inflation simply to find an excuse for raising the prices. Those persons who desire to raise the prices always talk of inflation and give it a reason for increasing the prices. This is really a device which good many industrialists and good many merchants use and they always hire out the economists to support their views.

Now, Sir, I come to my Resolution. This Resolution which I have moved stood in the name of Mr. Ahsan. At that time I wanted to move an amendment but as I took it up I was not allowed to do so. Of course, I would like to put the amendment in the form in which now my Honourable friend, Mr. Piracha, has given notice. Now, there is no doubt that there is a depreciation of the rupee. The rupee now has not got the same purchasing power and I appeal to the Finance Member that it should be his first business to raise the purchasing power of the rupee and attempt to bring it at par, or at least not beyond 50 per cent. to what it was before the war. The wage of a labourer is thermometer by which purchasing power of a rupee can be judged. The wage of a labourer before the war, at least in my part of the country, was 5 annas per day; it is now Rs. 1-8 per day. Therefore, it means that 5 annas before the war is practically equivalent to Rs. 1-8 at the present moment. This really means that at least the value of a rupee has now been depreciated to about 4 annas or less. It was 6 annas when we discussed this Resolution last time and it has now been further reduced to 4 annas. I think it is the responsibility of the Finance Department of the Government of India to see that the paper currency which they are now using should be maintained at its proper level and should have definite and stabilised purchasing power. When in the original motion we put down the bank notes, it really meant on this because the bank notes determine the value of Government securities. I lent to the Government of India Rs. 100 about 5 years ago when that amount had a certain purchasing power. If I get back my Rs. 100 today, then I will get them in terms of paper notes and their purchasing power will really be that of Rs. 25. So, the Government securities have been depreciated by 75 per cent. and the value of a hundred rupee security is now only Rs. 25. This is what I meant when I said that the bank rate of interest should be set aside and we must concentrate our attention on the stabilisation of prices. We said on the previous occasion and it has not been challenged by anybody that at present the security of the paper rupee is the prestige of the Government. It is not the metallic reserve or anything else which used to be at one time. Therefore, if the purchasing power of paper rupee diminishes, then it really means that the prestige of the Government also diminishes proportionately. Of course, the law of mathematical proportion does not apply to this because there are so many other factors to be taken into consideration. Therefore, in order to maintain the financial prestige of the Government it is the duty of the Finance Department to see that the purchasing power of the rupee remains approximately the same as it was before the war. The maximum that could be allowed is 50 per cent. higher and nothing beyond.

I will discuss in detail when I have no time-limit that even your food problem cannot be solved without stabilising the purchasing power of the rupee. It was mentioned by several speakers here that the purchasing power of the silver rupee is quite different to the purchasing power of the paper rupee or of small coins. That is our repeated experience of every day. Supposing you want to purchase something worth Rs. 1,000. If you pay the amount in terms of silver rupees, the price will be Rs. 1,000, but if you pay the amount in terms of paper money, the price will be Rs. 1,500. The price goes down if you assure the man who sells the article that he will be paid in terms of silver and not in terms of paper money.

There is one point which I would like to make quite clear as there is a good deal of misunderstanding amongst the statesmen both here and in Europe. I have heard and read that some people are under the misapprehension that the recruitment for the army depends upon the high prices. Now, I agree with the Finance Member that at present our war efforts must take the priority to every other problem. But if you overlook the stability of your rupee, then the war effort will also suffer and in this way. At present the labourer who used to get 5 annas a day is getting Rs. 1-8 a day and he does not like to go to the front and leave his home and family unless he gets much more than what he is getting as a labourer. If my Honourable friend will inquire from the Recruiting Officers he will find that the recruitment is not going on in the same proportion as it used to be about some months ago. It is not on account of the fact that those people who wanted to go to war have already gone, but it is due to the fact that they can earn almost the same amount at home which they would earn by going to war.

Now, I implore the Honourable the Finance Member that for stabilising the prices or for fixing the purchasing power of the rupee the first step he should take is to ask America to give gold and silver to India under lend-lease system. We ought to make some kind of arrangement that for every paper rupee, we should be able to give one tola of silver. Then, as soon as this thing can be done, people will come to know that they can get silver for a paper rupee and confidence will be restored. We heard a good account from the Honourable the Commerce Member this morning about cloth, though of course the reply given by the Food Member was disappointing. Our position as regards food will still remain the same unless the value of the paper rupee is stabilised and some effective steps are taken.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, the learned Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad made a personal attack on me. I wish to give a reply.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): The Honourable Member, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, made certain remarks in the course of his speech this morning and it was only with reference to them that Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad replied.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: But he did not quote his own speech correctly.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): I will not allow the Honourable Member to reply.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I wish to make just a few remarks on what has been said in the course of this debate and in particular, I should like to define the attitude of the Government to the revised Resolution. In speaking the other day in response to the desire of this House that I should speak early, in speaking on the Resolution as it then stood, I deliberately refrained from dealing with the question of the rate of interest, what was called the bank rate. I presume that what was meant was the rate of interest on Government borrowings. I did not deal with that aspect of the matter because I understood that it was the desire of the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution to put his motion in a different form, in the form in fact in which it has now been embodied in the amendment. I feel it important to make it clear that the Government's policy in regard to the rate of interest on Government borrowings is quite definite and deliberate and that they have no intention of departing from that policy. It is a policy which has been vigorously criticised in certain quarters, but which on the whole, I think, has the overwhelming support of the majority of opinion in this country. I need not go into details of why it would be highly undesirable to depart suddenly from the cheap money policy which we have followed hitherto. We should of course thereby be inflicting very heavy loss on the investors, and particularly the institutional investors who have been our main customers for Government loans. We should be inflicting loss on insurance companies who represent the interest of large numbers of small investors. A sharp increase in the rate of interest would mean

V2, 3 IN 43
N 43.451

60652

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

that the value of their investments would go down and would have to be written off in their balance sheets at this time. That is hardly a gesture which is likely to encourage increased lending to Government, which is agreed on all hands to be one of the most important remedies for the existing situation. Besides, the policy of increasing the rate of interest is not even likely to secure the object of attracting more borrowings. It has been found as a psychological fact that if the securities market gets the impression that the rates of interest are likely to rise, investors are at least as likely to hold off as to come forward, in fact they are more likely to hold off, and in that respect the position is very similar to the situation in regard to food prices. We have always found that while food prices are rising, it is extremely difficult to procure our requirements and in order to procure food, you must either maintain a stability or preferably a downward movement in prices. It is paradoxically enough at times when prices are falling, that stocks come out of hoards for sale, and an exactly similar process takes place in regard to purchase of Government securities. I will not labour that point further, but I thought it important to make it quite clear what the policy of the Government is in regard to the only rate of interest which is directly relevant to this discussion, namely the rate of interest on Government borrowings. I need only add that in regard to securities which are specially devised to attract the small saver, there is, of course, some departure from that policy, and slightly more advantageous rates of interest are offered in order to attract the small man. But that is not a contradiction or a serious departure from the general policy.

I feel that I too must have a word or two to say about some of the observations of my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, and I take leave to support my Honourable friend, Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad, in deprecating the extremely cavalier and arbitrary way in which Mr. Jamnadas Mehta regularly handles statements of other Members of this House. He complimented me on my skill in some field or other, but I could never hope to emulate the incredible dexterity with which he handles the astronomical figures which he manages to produce out of his hat. He managed to establish by a process of complete and absolutely irrefutable mathematical argument that this country had been called on to supply 18,000 crores of rupees worth of goods and services. Well, I am very glad to feel that we have done better than the United States of America or Great Britain or any of the wealthiest belligerents in the world. At the same time, I would ask Mr. Jamnadas Mehta to endeavour to import some sense of ordinary proportion into his handling of figures of this kind. I do not wish to make a rhetorical or debating point, but I do think that Mr. Mehta permits himself a good deal more liberty or even licence than he would be prepared to admit to any of the other participants in a debate of this kind.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am more moderate. I assure you the figures are much larger.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is surely a very large figure, in the absolute. Eighteen thousand crores of rupees reduced to millions is 180,000 millions, that is to say it is 180 billions. Now if we put it into dollars it is about 60 billion dollars.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If you reduce it to annas or pies, it might be much more, 60,000 billions.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do suggest that as the figures increase in quantity they seem to get more and more remote from any reality in which we can possibly be interested. Now it is not part of my contention to say that this country has not been called upon to make extremely large contributions in the way of goods and services to this war, and it is quite clear that the process which has been taking place is that in return for these goods we have received money which at the present time we are unable to use. We are

unable to use that money because the outside world is so engaged, as we are, in the prosecution of the war that they cannot pay us in the goods which we would like to receive. We have the utmost difficulty in obtaining either capital goods or consumer goods. There is nothing mysterious about the process. What has been happening is that goods and services for civilian consumption have grown less whereas the money which could buy these goods and services has grown greater. It is a process which really is very easy to understand. For the time being large sums of money are available for consumption spending but goods are not available for the same process. And that is why I have always agreed with my Honourable friend, Dr. Banerjee's diagnosis of the situation. It seems to me that you have to take both aspects into account. It is equally wrong to say either that the situation arises merely out of scarcity of goods or to say on the other hand that nothing else is the matter excepting the inflation of currency. It is a combination of both these processes, and that suggests that the appropriate method of treatment is a treatment which applies to both aspects. You have to apply monetary remedies; you have to try and reduce the amount of money in circulation by taxation and borrowing and at the same time you have to try, as far as possible, to increase the quantity of goods available for consumption. Or, if you cannot do that, you have to try and control the prices at which these goods are sold. Well, control of commodities in the conditions of India has, as might have been expected, proved extraordinarily difficult, and particularly in regard to the main commodity, food. I hope we are making progress even in regard to the treatment of that highly intractable problem. We have at the last Food Conference secured a remarkable degree of unanimity of view about the policy that should be followed in regard to price control of food; but of course we still are in the dangerous position that the province which produces the largest surplus of food regards the whole idea of controlling the price of food as anathema. It is no use disguising or hiding the fact that that is one of the most serious and fatal weaknesses of the whole position in India. Unless the province which is the main producer and supplier of surplus food to the rest of India can take a larger and wider view of its responsibilities, unless it ceases to pursue the idea that as the intensity of distress and demand increases, so the price which it can exact shall advance,—until that stops we are faced with an extremely great difficulty in dealing with the situation. It is a difficulty internal to the country and it can only be overcome, or rather, an alternative remedy can only be sought by going elsewhere for the supplies of food for distressed areas,—an extremely tragic diversion of resources and a most lamentable state of affairs. This is not the proper time to go in any detail into the food position, but I am merely making clear the attitude of the Government of India in regard to the inflationary problem, because the food problem and inflation are very closely connected. You will never solve the inflationary problem if you cannot do anything about food, because food underlies the whole price structure of the country; and you may as well try to erect a castle without having a foundation. You cannot deal with the food problem also unless you can control inflation. The two things are really two aspects of the same problem; but you can attempt to tackle both simultaneously; and that is what the Government of India to the best of their ability have been trying to do.

Now, Sir, Dr. Banerjee quite rightly drew attention to the immense importance of production of goods, and it is quite clear that if the production of goods could be stepped up to the requisite degree you would not have a currency or a price problem in the country. But here again you are faced with the fact that the rest of the world is at war, and although you have foreign exchange to purchase the instruments of production, money alone will not now buy them. They are not available because they are not being produced at the present time. The productive forces of the world are engaged in producing guns, tanks, aeroplanes, and so on, and not in producing factory plants or even agricultural implements. If all those resources which are necessary to step up production in India to the requisite level were available inside India, then the Government of India would indeed stand condemned for their failure to increase production

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

at the present time. It is true that there are still large resources of untapped labour and in some respects there may still be considerable resources of raw material, but we have not got all the tools that we require to finish that job; we have not got all the instruments of production in the country, and those instruments which are here are already fully employed.

It may be asked, what then? Does that mean that we must submit to the continuance of the intensification of scarcity of the present kind? I say, no. I think relief will come in two ways: it will come by some expansion of production in the country even during the existing difficulties; and the Government of India are continually on the alert to promote and assist such expansion wherever possible. It would also come, we may hope, by some increase in the shipping which can be allotted to India in the further stages of the war. And, finally, I must admit that we have to attempt now, even to some extent at the expense of India's war effort, to switch back the productive resources of the country to supplying the clamant needs of the consumer. We realize that. The Government of India realize that a stage has been reached at which the needs of the home front have become extremely important, at which the internal economy of the country must be preserved, that we must cater for it and that, in fact, we could not go further without endangering even the war effort. That position is realized. The situation is very different from what it was in the earlier days when there were surpluses of various kinds available which could be rapidly switched over to meet military demands. The position now is that we have reached a stage at which, in order to maintain the war effort of the country, it is necessary to cater for civilian requirements. Otherwise the civilian morale will undoubtedly suffer. These are considerations which are very present to the mind of the Government of India. But on the other hand, I would ask critics to realize that there are many factors which are beyond our control. There are many factors which we cannot even estimate. We here cannot estimate the comparative importance of diverting goods and shipping from other parts of the world to India or to some other sector of the war effort. It is natural that we should always claim that our demands and our requirements are so serious that they should be given priority. We do claim that. Some day when the history of this war comes to be written, it will be found that the Government of India have been clamouring months ahead of most of its critics for all the things which its critics said it should have insisted on getting. But the necessities of the whole world situation and the necessities of the prosecution of the war can only be truly judged by those who are familiar with the picture on all sides, and one of the problems of this war has been so to organize the United Nation's effort that the knowledge of these things is brought together in a single point. As a member of the United Nations we have as loyally as we can to accept the decisions which are taken at a very high level. But we continue to press our demands for the requirements of the civilian consumer of this country and we do hope that we shall be able to produce a very marked improvement in the situation. That, I think, will be a great contribution to dealing with this very important problem.

For the rest, on the monetary side, I may say that the response to Government loans in the last few months has been most encouraging and that if the volume of loans to Government continues at that rate, we are far from taking a discouraging view of the matter. The small savings campaign in the provinces has also had an exceedingly favourable response and we hope to develop that and intensify the drive. I must differ entirely on that point from my friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, who always seems to think that there is no scope whatever for securing savings from the small man. There are many competent economists who hold that unless you can secure the savings from the small man you cannot deal with inflation. It is precisely the purchasing power in the hands of the small consumer which exerts a disastrous effect on prices. The large profiteer is capable of putting his money aside, of investing it in various ways

and waiting till after the war, but the small man is liable to try and turn his money into consumption goods as soon as he can, and that is why a savings drive amongst cultivators and even industrial workers is of the utmost importance.

I did not mean to traverse the whole field again, but merely to touch on a few aspects of the various fronts on which we are trying to tackle this problem. I will only say that I have no difficulty whatever in accepting the Resolution as amended.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang) The question is:

"That for the original Resolution the following be substituted:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to give foremost place in the monetary policy to the stabilization of prices on which the prosperity of the country largely depends."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): The next Resolution on the agenda stands in the name of Nawab Makhdum Murid Hossain Qureshi. Has he authorized any other Member to move it on his behalf?

An Honourable Member: No, Sir.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I am not moving the Resolution which stands in my name because it is in connection with the food situation in Bengal.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I am not moving the next Resolution which is in my name.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I am not moving, either.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): I am not moving today.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): Are you moving the next Resolution, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): No, Sir.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Sir, we had proposed to allot Friday and Saturday in this week for the general debate on the food situation and to include all the Government legislative business of the Session in a combined list of business for Monday to Thursday next week. Now that we have agreed to allot three days for the Food debate we would have proposed to allot Friday, Saturday and Monday for the same and to take the legislative business on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next week. We have however, been informed of a desire in certain quarters that Saturday should not be one of the days allotted for the food debate and in deference to this desire we are prepared to put down the food debate for Friday, Monday and Tuesday and to take part of the legislative business on Saturday. This involves one complication, namely, that the Honourable the Commerce Member has an important engagement on Saturday which will preclude his presence in the House with the result that we will not be in a position to put down the Tea Control (Amendment) Bill or the Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill on that day. The other three Bills introduced yesterday (the Bill to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, the Bill to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act and the Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment Bill)) can scarcely occupy the whole day and we, therefore, propose to include in the list of business for Saturday the consideration and passing of the Bill to make provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by High Courts exercising original criminal jurisdiction and of the Bill to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure in the matter of commissions on both of which Bills the Report of the Select Committee was presented yesterday. These Bills are not controversial and in consideration of our having

[Sir Sultan Ahmed.]

adjusted our programme to meet the convenience of the House we would ask for an understanding that no objection will be taken to their consideration before the expiration of the seven-day period referred to in Standing Order 44.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Will the change in programme mean extension of the Session?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): May I take it that the House agrees to this programme?

Some Honourable Members: Yes, yes.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 10th November, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 10th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

METHOD OF RECRUITMENT OF CUSTOMS PREVENTIVE OFFICERS.

63. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the method by which the recruitment of Preventive Officers is made in Customs Offices in India, particularly in the Karachi Customs House?

(b) Are there any rules or administrative orders prescribing qualifications, academic and others, for entering this service? If not, do Government propose to frame such rules?

(c) Is it a fact that in former times there was dearth of qualified graduates and double graduates, specially amongst the Mohammadan candidates, who aspired for these posts and, therefore, the appointments were being made not on any such solid qualifications but on judging their physique and appearances? If so, is that system still continuing in Customs Offices for making the selection?

(d) Do Government propose to reform the system of recruitment? If so, how? If not, why not?

(e) Are there any rules or orders specifying qualifications for appointing Examiners in Customs Houses in India? If so, what, and what is the method by which they are selected?

(f) Is direct recruitment made for Examiners' posts or are they raised by promotion? If by both, what is the percentage of each?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) to (c). The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to his question No. 326 on the 11th March, 1940. The position has not changed since then.

(d) The present system of recruitment is working satisfactorily and no change is considered necessary.

(e) Yes, Sir. An Arts or a Science degree is the minimum educational qualification prescribed for direct recruitment, which is made through the Provincial Public Service Commission in Madras and by selection by the Collectors of Customs at Bombay and Karachi. There are no Examiners in the Calcutta Custom House.

(f) Vacancies in the Examiners' grade are usually filled by direct recruitment. Appointments by transfer of ministerial staff possessing the necessary qualifications are also made occasionally. No definite percentage has been prescribed for such appointments but this question is under consideration.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Why is the Honourable Member getting shy and not giving this work to the Public Service Commission?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not think that is a proper form of question; you had better put it in proper form.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Why does the Honourable Member hesitate to give this work to the Public Service Commission, especially when the public opinion is different from the Government opinion?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The question has been examined and in provinces where it is found possible to enlist the services of the Public Service Commission, this has been done.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: When there is a joint Public Service Commission for Bombay and Sind, I want to know why these appointments to the preventive service are made only by statute and voices and why they should not be given to the Public Service Commission?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is an argument.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am asking a question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): One can argue in the form of a question. Next question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am asking why is not this procedure going to be followed?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I disallow it.

DEATH OF MAJOR E. M. MARTIN IN IRAQ.

64. ***Sir F. E. James**: Will the War Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware—

(i) that Major E. M. Martin, Commandant of No. 36, Rest Camp Paiforce, died while on active service in Iraq on the 21st December, 1942;

(ii) that he had been medically examined by the military authorities and passed as fit for general service in May, 1941, when he was 42 years 8 months old;

(iii) that after being posted to Delhi on the 18th July, 1941, he had a severe attack of malaria and was detained in hospital for several weeks;

(iv) that he was subsequently posted to Iraq; and

(v) that the medical and military authorities have now held that he had extensive coronary atheroma, that he died of heart failure, and that his death was not brought about or aggravated to any material extent by the conditions of military service;

(b) whether the Government of India have accepted this opinion and held that his widow is not entitled to any pension;

(c) whether the facts that Major Martin was passed as fit for general service by the medical authorities when he had extensive coronary atheroma, and that after a severe attack of malaria he was sent overseas do not impose some obligation upon the Government of India to pay to his widow either pension or modified pension or compensation;

(d) whether there is any appeal against the decision of the Government of India in this or in similar cases;

(e) whether he is aware of the Pensions Appeal Tribunals Bill recently discussed in the Parliament of the United Kingdom which provides for a right of appeal on entitlement issues in respect of disablement or death of members of the Armed Forces and the Auxiliary Services;

(f) whether Government propose to consider the desirability of enacting similar legislation to provide for appeals on entitlement issues, particularly in those which arise in death cases; and

(g) whether he is aware that the outstandings due to Major Martin on his death on the 21st December, 1942, have not yet been received by his widow?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) (i), (iv) and (v). Yes.

(a) (ii). The officer was medically examined by the military medical authorities and on being commissioned on 1st July, 1941, was placed in category "B" permanently. Such classification indicated that the officer was not fit for general service, but fit for all ordinary duties in India, and for garrison duties, base or lines of communication duties abroad, or for specially selected employment abroad. The appointment he was holding as Commandant, No. 36 Rest Camp, Paiforce, was a form of employment selected to suit the medical category of the officer.

(a) (iii). On 21st August, 1941, he was admitted to the British Military Hospital, Delhi, with a freshly caught attack of malaria. The attack was not severe the patient responded well to treatment and was discharged from Hospital on 9th September, 1941, as recovered.

(b) Yes.

(c) I invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the reply to part

(a) (ii) of the question.

(d) The decision in this case was given by the Secretary of State and an appeal lies to the Appeal Tribunal Board in this and similar cases. The Government of India have been informed that the case is under review.

(e) and (f). Yes, Sir.

(g) No amount was due to Major Martin on the date of his death. On the other hand, his account showed a debit balance.

Sir F. E. James: May I ask the Honourable Member whether there is an appeal against the decision of the Secretary of State in the case of dependants resident in the United Kingdom so affected at present?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, Sir.

Sir F. E. James: May I further ask him whether that means that there is no appeal against the decision of the Government of India in the case of dependants permanently resident in this country who may be so affected?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: May I explain the position in some greater detail? Dependants of officers and men of the British Army have a right of appeal to the appeal tribunals, wherever the dependants are. Dependants of the personnel of the Indian Army and the Indian unattached list who are under the rule-making control of the Secretary of State have a right of appeal to the appeal tribunals. There is no right of appeal for the personnel of the Indian Army who are subject to the rule-making control of the Government of India; but as I have said, this question is being considered.

Sir F. E. James: May I ask my Honourable friend whether, in view of the very great importance of this matter, he can assure the House that the Government of India will give urgent consideration to the proposal to put the personnel of the Indian Army subject to the rule-making powers of the Government of India on the same basis?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I assure the House that we are dealing with this question with as much expedition as possible.

RESIGNATION OF MR. J. R. BLAIR, I.C.S.

65. ***Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh**: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state if he is aware of the resignation of Mr. J. R. Blair, I.C.S., lately Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal? Was it in any way connected with the breach of conduct rules? Was it enforced on him?

(b) Did he instruct the Government of the Central Provinces to serve an order like the one dated the 25th September of that Government on *Hitavada*, a Nagpur daily paper, asking for the disclosure of the name and address of the person supplying the information about Mr. Blair's resignation? Was this order under the Defence of India Rules?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) I am aware of the recent retirement of Mr. J. R. Blair. Mr. Blair's retirement was voluntary and was in no way connected with any breach of the Government Servants' Conduct Rules.

(b) The Government of the Central Provinces were asked to obtain, from the editor of the *Hitavada* newspaper of Nagpur, information as to the source of an article entitled "Another civilian resigns. Story of a censored letter" which appeared in the issue of that newspaper dated 21st of August. This article purported to disclose the working of the censorship, and it was clearly necessary in the interests of Military Security as well as in the public interest to investigate its origins. The Government of the Central Provinces were accordingly authorized to resort to Defence Rule 116 if the editor of the *Hitavada* declined to give this information voluntarily. I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the communiqué issued by Government on this subject on October 22nd, a copy of which I place on the table of the House.

Copy of the Communiqué issued by the Government of India, Home Department, New Delhi, on the 22nd October, 1943.

Certain sections of the Press have recently condemned the action of Government in asking the editor of a newspaper to disclose the source of his information in regard to a particular article and in using the powers provided by law for enforcing such a request. Their action has been characterised as an unjustifiable attempt to pry into the private affairs of newspapers and to interfere with the well-established journalistic convention that the relations between an editor and his correspondents are confidential.

The article in respect of which Government desired information alleged that official action had been taken against a particular officer of Government on the basis of a private letter written to a relative, which had been censored and brought to the notice of the higher authorities. The information contained in the article, if true, could only have

emanated from official sources in complete disregard of the provisions of the Official Secrets Act and of the well-known rule that the operations of the censors are, in no circumstances, to be disclosed. If, on the other hand, the information was untrue, it amounted to a most unfair attack on the integrity of Government and their officers. In any case, the publication of confidential information is an offence.

In these circumstances, Government considered that the matter called for the most thorough investigation in the public interest, so that, if there had been a leakage of official information, the officer responsible could be brought to book or, if the allegation proved to be groundless, an undeserved slur on their officers might be removed.

The Government of India agree that it is undesirable in all ordinary circumstances to disturb the confidential relations that exist between an editor and his correspondents, but editors cannot expect that any journalistic convention, however, honoured by time or usage, should be allowed to override the law. Moreover, it is clearly necessary, both in the public interest and also in the interests of military security, that abuses of the censorship or of the rules of censorship, if they have indeed occurred, should be stopped by all possible means, and it is Government's duty to ensure that the contents of private correspondence remain private to the greatest extent possible under the exigencies of war. If editors wish their confidential relations with their correspondents to be respected, Government and members of the public, whether they happen to be officials or not, have no less right in common fairness to claim that neither editorial privilege nor official indiscretion should be allowed to extend with impunity to the disruption of the equally confidential relations that should subsist between the censors and those whose private correspondence it is their duty to examine.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: With reference to part (b), who authorised or who solicited this explanation? Was it the Government of India or the Government of the province where he was serving?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Government of India raised the question in the first instance, and asked the Provincial Government to take the appropriate action.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if it is the policy of the Government to give reasons in case an I.C.S. gentleman resigns his post?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Why not?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know whether in the letter by which he tendered resignation voluntarily, he gave any reasons or he merely said "I wish to resign"?

(No answer was given.)

REPATRIATION OF ITALIAN PRISONERS IN INDIA.

66. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: (a) Will the War Secretary please state if the Government of India has sent or intends to send the Italian prisoners out of India to Italy?

(b) Has there been any correspondence with His Majesty's Government on this point? If so, has it been brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government that if these prisoners were sent out of India, it will release a considerable amount of food for the consumption of the army as well as the civil population?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) and (b). The question is still under consideration in consultation with His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is it not high time, in view of the fact that there is scarcity of food in India, that this matter should have been considered long ago? Since when is this matter under consideration? Since when has the Government of India been in communication with His Majesty's Government?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The matter has been under correspondence with the Secretary of State for about six weeks.

Sir F. E. James: May I ask my Honourable friend whether he is aware of the fact that there is a great deal of waste of food at these camps and that recently a certain prisoner of war camp sent a deputation to Dr. Gilbert Fowler in Bangalore asking for a recipe as to how to make compost out of bread, and that this has been brought to the attention of the G. O. C. of the Southern Army?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am not aware of that.

Sir F. E. James: Will the Honourable Member look into that question?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, Sir.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will my Honourable friend indicate the quantity of foodstuffs consumed by these Italian prisoners in this country?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I should like to have notice of this question.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Can the Honourable Member give any idea of the cost involved in the matter of these foodstuffs?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am afraid I have not got the information readily available with me.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the standard of treatment which these Italian and other prisoners of war receive approximates more or less to the traditional standard of hospitality that is shown to sons-in-law in Indian households?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The treatment is governed by international conventions on the subject.

SELECTION OF PERSONNEL OF CONCERT PARTIES FOR BRITISH AND INDIAN TROOPS.

67. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state the method of selection and the designation of the officer who actually selects the personnel of the concert parties to entertain (i) the British troops, and (ii) the Indian troops? Do the Government of India bear the whole expenditure of entertaining the British troops?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: The officer responsible for the selection of entertainment personnel is the Director-General of Welfare and Amenities assisted by the Assistant Adjutant General in charge of Amenities, Comforts and Entertainments for Services and a British officer in the case of British troops, and an Indian officer with experience of the entertainment industry in the case of Indian troops.

The method of selection is by trial of the performances by the above-mentioned officers. Two-thirds of the cost of entertainment of British troops is paid by His Majesty's Government and one-third is paid by the Government of India.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Am I right in believing that even the selection of personnel so far as Indian troops are concerned is entrusted to a person who is not an Indian but who is an European?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: That is not my information.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Do these concert parties go overseas?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: Not that I am aware of.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: I am asking whether these concert parties which are selected by the Government of India tour round wherever these troops are stationed?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: Yes.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is the Honourable Member aware that the concert parties included dancing girls?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: No.

CONSTITUTION OF THE INDIAN SOLDIERS BOARD.

68. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state:

(a) what the constitution of the Indian Soldiers' Board is;

(b) who the members of the present Board are; and

(c) the names of the towns where the branches of the Board, if there be any, are located?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I place a statement on the table.

Statement.

(a) The constitution is as follows:—

(1) *President*—

A member of His Excellency the Governor General's Executive Council nominated by His Excellency the Viceroy.

(2) *Six members*—

1. His Excellency the Governor of the Punjab.....*ex-officio*.

2. Two other members of the Executive Council nominated by His Excellency the Viceroy.

Ex-officio—

3. Adjutant General in India.

4. Secretary to the Government of India in the Defence Department.
5. Financial Adviser, Military Finance.

(3) *Secretary*—

An Under Secretary to the Government of India in the Defence Department.

(b) The following are the names of the President, Members and Secretary of the present Board :—

President—

The Hon'ble Malik Sir Firoz Khan Noon, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Defence Member.

Members—

His Excellency Sir Bertrand Glancy, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., Governor of the Punjab.

The Hon'ble Sir Jeremy Raisman, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Finance Member.

The Hon'ble Sirdar Sir Jogendra Singh, Education, Health and Lands Member.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. MacI. G. Ogilvie, C.S.I., C.B.E., I.C.S., Defence Secretary.

Lieut. General W. H. G. Baker, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., Adjutant General in India.

E. T. Coates, Esq., C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Financial Adviser, Military Finance.

Secretary—

S. R. Kaiwar, Esq., I.C.S., Under Secretary, Defence Department.

(c) There are no "branches" of the Indian Soldiers' Board. List showing the names of the District and State Soldiers' Boards in India follows :

DISTRICT SOLDIERS' BOARDS.

Punjab

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ambala. | 10. Hoshiarpur. | 19. Montgomery. |
| 2. Amritsar. | 11. Jhelum. | 20. Multan. |
| 3. Attock (Campbellpur) | 12. Jullundur. | 21. Rawalpindi. |
| 4. Ferozepore. | 13. Kangra (Dharamsala) | 22. Rohtak. |
| 5. Gujranwala. | 14. Karnal. | 23. Shahpur (Sargodha) |
| 6. Gujrat. | 15. Lahore. | 24. Sheikhpura. |
| 7. Gurudaspur. | 16. Ludhiana. | 25. Sialkot. |
| 8. Gurgaon. | 17. Lyallpur. | |
| 9. Hissar. | 18. Mianwali. | |

United Provinces

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Agra. | 14. Etawah. | 27. Moradabad. |
| 2. Aligarh. | 15. Fatehpur. | 28. Muttra. |
| 3. Allahabad. | 16. Farrukhabad (Fatehgarh). | 29. Muzaffarnagar. |
| 4. Almorah. | 17. Fyzabad. | 30. Partabgarh. |
| 5. Azamgarh. | 18. Ghazipur. | 31. Rai Bareilly. |
| 6. Balia. | 19. Garhwal (Lansdowns). | 32. Saharanpur. |
| 7. Bara Banki. | 20. Gonda. | 33. Shahjahanpur. |
| 8. Bareilly. | 21. Gorakhpur. | 34. Sitapur. |
| 9. Basti. | 22. Hardoi. | 35. Sultanpur. |
| 10. Bullandshahr. | 23. Jhansi. | 36. Unao. |
| 11. Cawnpore. | 24. Lucknow. | 37. Benares. |
| 12. Debra Dun. | 25. Mainpuri. | 38. Badaun. |
| 13. Etah. | 26. Meerut. | |

North-West Frontier Province

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Hazara (Abbottabad). | 4. Nowshera. | 6. Waziristan (Dera Ismail Khan). |
| 2. Kohat. | 5. Peshawar. | |
| 3. Mardan. | | |

Bombay.

- | | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Ahmadnagar. | 5. Khandesh (East and West). | 8. Ratnagiri. |
| 2. Belgaum. | 6. Kolaba. | 9. Satara. |
| 3. Bijapur. | 7. Poona. | 10. Sholapur. |
| 4. Dharwar. | | |

Central Provinces.

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Akola. | 3. Buldana. | 5. Nagpur. |
| 2. Amraoti. | 4. Jubbulpore. | 6. Yeotmal. |

*Delhi.**Delhi.**Rajputana.*

Ajmer-Merwara (Beawar), Ajmer.

Bihar.

- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Champaran. | 4. Santal Pargana. | 6. Shahabad (Arrah). |
| 2. Patna. | 5. Saran (Chapra). | 7. Singhbhum. |
| 3. Ranchi. | | |

Assam.

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Shillong. | 2. Sylhet. |
|--------------|------------|

Bengal.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Chittagong. | 2. Bakarganj (Barisal). |
|----------------|-------------------------|

Hyderabad (Deccan).

Secunderabad, C/o Headquarters, Deccan District. Bolarum.

Madras.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Ceded Districts' Board, Cuddapah. | 6. Kistna, Masulipatam. | 12. Sout Arcot, Cuddalore. |
| 2. Chittoor. | 7. Madras City Chingleput, Madras. | 13. Tanjore. |
| 3. Coimbatore. | 8. Madura-Ramnad. | 14. Tinnevely. |
| 4. Godavari (East and West), Ellore. | 9. Malabar, Calicut. | 15. Trichinopoly. |
| 5. Guntur-Nellore, Guntur. | 10. North Arcot, Vellore. | 16. Vizagapatam. |
| | 11. Salem. | |

STATE SOLDIERS' BOARDS.

Kashmir.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Jammu. | |
| 2. Mirpur. | |
| 3. Poonch (Palandri). | |

Rajputana.

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. Alwar. | 4. Jaipur. | 7. Bundi. |
| 2. Bharatpur. | 5. Jodhpur. | 8. Dholpur. |
| 3. Bikaner. | 6. Mewar. | |

Punjab.

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Bilaspur. | 4. Kapurthala. | 7. Nabha. |
| 2. Faridkot. | 5. Loharu. | 8. Patiala. |
| 3. Jind. | 6. Malerkotla. | |

*Hyderabad (Deccan).**Aurangabad.**Deccan States.*

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Kolhapur. | 3. Phaltan. | 5. Sawantwadi. |
| 2. Kurundwad (Junior). | 4. Sangli. | |

Central India.

Gwalior.
Ramnagar (Benares State).

ACTIVITIES OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE IN EAST ASIA.

69. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) whether Government have got any information about the recent activities of Babu Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia;

(b) whether it is a fact that a large force named "Indian National Army" is being raised under Babu Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia by the Japanese for the purpose of invading India; and

(c) whether the Indian prisoners of war in Japanese hands have been forced to join this army?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Yes.

(b) Enemy broadcasts provide reason for supposing that an attempt in which Subhas Chandra Bose has probably taken a large part, has been made to form an Indian force on military lines to assist the Japanese.

(c) The statements of prisoners of war, who have escaped from the Japanese, leave little doubt that the latter have attempted to force Indian prisoners of war to perform duties entirely outside the sanction of international law and it is likely that the force I referred to above includes a number of Indian military personnel who have been forcibly converted from their allegiance.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if in the case of any of these Indian military personnel who are prisoners of war in Singapore and other areas the payments to their families have been stopped in India because of their taking part in this campaign?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I must have notice of that question.

TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AND CONGRESS DETENUS.

70. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state what action has been taken to improve the conditions of the political prisoners and Congress detenues after the debate held last session on the resolution moved by Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari with particular reference to the following items:—

- (i) Diet Allowance;
- (ii) Interviews and letters;
- (iii) Books, newspapers and games; and
- (iv) Family Allowance?

(b) Has any Family Allowance been given to the family of any Congress detenu in the Punjab? If so, what is the name of the detenu, and the amount of allowance sanctioned?

(c) What is the difference between a "security prisoner" and a "detenu"? Is there any difference in their treatment? If so, what?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) I am not yet in possession of details for all provinces, but as a result of correspondence with the Provinces since Mr. Krishnamachari's resolution a considerably larger measure of uniformity has already been achieved in the treatment of security prisoners. As regards diet allowances, it is now generally accepted that these, in the case of all security prisoners, must be rather better than those provided for the corresponding grades of convicted prisoners. As regards interviews and letters, all Provinces now allow Congress security prisoners to correspond with members of their families on domestic matters. Most Provinces allow interviews, but some have not yet been able to see their way to doing so. As regards books, newspapers and games, I have no reason to believe that any security prisoner suffers from a lack of suitable reading matter or facilities for recreation. As regards family allowances, the general principle has been accepted that they may be granted where the detention of the person concerned has deprived his family of a legitimate source of income and has resulted in real hardship.

(b) I have no detailed information.

(c) The terms 'security prisoner' and 'detenu' are synonymous.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether any interviews are allowed to Congress security prisoners in the Punjab? Has the Honourable Member any information about that?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No. They are not allowed in the Punjab.

Sardar Mangal Singh: As regards books, is it not a fact that the security prisoners are not allowed to take books inside the jail but that the books should be sent to the jail library first and then the books are issued to the security prisoners?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: There is no general rule on that subject. That will depend on the practice in each province.

Sardar Mangal Singh: I may inform the Honourable Member of my own personal knowledge that the Punjab Government has issued a circular that no Congress security prisoners can import any books but those books should first be sent to the Library.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has got the information. He is not putting a question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: I ask whether that circular still stands, or the Government of India have asked the Punjab Government to change it?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No. We have not entered into details of the practice followed in regard to the supply of books to security prisoners.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Then what grounds have the Honourable Member to say that the treatment of prisoners has improved after the discussion in this House of the Resolution of Mr. Krishnamachari?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Treatment of prisoners does not consist exclusively in giving them books.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member with regard to this uniformity of treatment that the Government of India is trying to achieve all over the provinces, whether the conditions that are imposed for release of certain prisoners in the provinces have also been drafted by the Government of India on the basis of securing uniformity?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I am afraid I do not understand what the Honourable Member is referring to.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to repeat my question with your permission, Sir. Provincial Governments have offered to release some of the security prisoners on certain conditions. Have all those conditions also been

discussed between the different Governments and approved by the Government of India on the basis of securing uniformity?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No. That would obviously be a matter which the Provincial Government would have to consider on the merits of each case.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member make enquiries from the Punjab whether they have given any family allowance to any Congress security prisoner?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes. I will make such enquiries if we have not already got the information, but the Honourable Member might give notice of the question as that will be the most convenient method of dealing with the subject.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if any instructions have been issued by the Government of India to the provinces that the members of the Assembly should be the last to be released or should not be released?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if in the Frontier province, while there have been wholesale releases, all the M.L.A.'s have been kept inside?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: That shows what dangerous people they must be.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is the Honourable Member aware that they are being constantly released on parole but during the Assembly session they are all shut up?

(No answer.)

POSITION CONCERNING RECRUITMENT TO EMERGENCY COMMISSIONS.

71. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** (a) Will the War Secretary please state whether direct recruitment to the Emergency Commissioned Ranks has been altogether stopped for His Majesty's Land Forces, or whether the old method of selection has been modified? If so, what is the latest position regarding recruitment to the Emergency Commissioned Ranks?

(b) What is the annual intake to the permanent posts of the Indian Commissioned Officers from the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun?

(c) How many Indian Commissioned Officers have been put on the general staff?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) No. In certain special circumstances direct commissions may be granted to those serving in the ranks and to civilians, with necessary educational qualifications, who are accepted by G. H. Q. Selection Boards. The majority of candidates after selection by G. H. Q. Selection Boards undergo a period of training in Officers' Training Schools before being commissioned.

(b) None. No permanent commissions are now granted.

(c) The numbers of Indian commissioned officers serving on the staff in graded appointments on the 1st of October, 1943 were:—

(i) Numbers in appointments in G. H. Q. (I)	30
(ii) Numbers attached to Armies, Divisions and other Headquarters formations	68

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member inform the House why the number of Indian officers is so small on the General Staff?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Mainly because most of the Indian officers have joined only recently.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With reference to part (a) of the question, I would like to know whether these provincial boards continue to function at present?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, Sir. They do.

LEASE-LEND AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND INDIA.

72. ***Sardar Mangal Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state whether any lease-lend agreement has been entered into between the United States of America and India? If so, what are its main features?

(b) Is there any foundation for the widely held belief that the revenues of certain departments have been mortgaged with the Government of the United

States of America in consideration for the lend-lease materials supplied to India by the United States of America?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) No.

(b) No.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Is it not a fact that talks are going on between India and the United States of America about the Lease-Lend Act?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: There have been conversations with the American Government.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Are these conversations still going on? Is there any hope of ending these talks?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: At the present moment, discussions in regard to the mutual aid agreement are suspended.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the House be taken into confidence before you conclude this Lease-Lend Act with the United States?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Well, Sir, as I said, at the present moment, the discussions are in abeyance.

ALLOCATION OF EXPENDITURE FOR RE-CONQUEST OF BURMA AND MALAYA STATES.

73. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state whether the expenditure for the conquest of Burma and Malay States will be met by His Majesty's Government or by the Government of India?

(b) If this expenditure will be shared by the two Governments, what are the arrangements, giving full details of the agreement between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply which I gave to Mr. Neogy's question No. 48 on the 21st September, 1942.

COMPANIES PERMITTED BY THE CONTROLLER OF CAPITAL ISSUES TO BE REGISTERED UNDER THE COMPANIES ACT.

74. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:—

(a) the number of companies whom permission has been accorded by the Controller of Capital Issues to be registered under the Companies Act;

(b) how many of them are banks, insurance companies, and commercial concerns;

(c) the considerations which govern the grant of permission; and

(d) how many applications from limited companies have been rejected for selling their issued but unsubscribed capital?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The permission of the Examiner of Capital Issues is not required before a Company can be registered under the Indian Companies Act, but the consent of the Central Government is required before the initial issue of capital can be made by any such company. The number of consent orders issued up to the 30th September, 1943 in respect of initial issues by such companies was 255.

(b) Banks, two; insurance companies, six; commercial concerns, 37.

(c) Briefly, the object is to prevent the utilisation of investable funds and of scarce materials and services for purposes which make no positive contribution to the prosecution of the war, to the early production of articles of general consumption or to other beneficial purposes. The policy of the Government was more fully stated in their Press note dated 10th July 1943 of which I lay a copy on the table.

(d) Up to 30th September 1943, 13 such applications had been rejected.

PRESS NOTE.

Control of Capital Issue: The Underlying Policy.

In their recent press note dated June, 21, 1943, the Government of India clarified certain technical points relating to the Control of Capital Issues. Since apprehension continues to be expressed in certain quarters as to the fundamental principles involved in this control, the Government of India desire to draw the attention of the public to the following points:—

+Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

At the present time, there is the most serious shortage of many of the most essential goods and services, including not only iron and steel, machines and mill stores, but also of skilled labour and of transport facilities. These shortages grow directly out of the war situation, and cannot be wholly remedied so long as the war lasts.

In order to prevent a scramble for the available supplies, which can only result in raising prices still further, it appears best to encourage those industrialists whose enterprises will directly assist in aiding the war effort or will be in a position to embark upon production of essential consumers' goods at an early date. There is no public purpose in allowing priority to the manufacture of luxury goods, for instance, when the same capital equipment can go to the production of articles in more common use. Without control of capital issue, there is no guarantee that such supplies as are available will in fact go to the most suitable applicant.

Control thus serves in present conditions to further industrialisation on sound lines. These remarks apply with even more force, when the contemplated enterprise purports to be in a position to produce only at the end of the war. Such enterprises may also compete for plant, skilled labour, etc., and they can certainly add nothing to immediate productivity. A special care is therefore required in dealing with them.

Consent will however be granted in suitable cases for an issue of capital required to purchase plant or machinery for which an order has been placed for delivery after the war subject to the condition that the money is invested in Defence Loans or other new Government securities and is kept so invested until it can be spent for the intended purpose.

Moreover in so far as so-called new undertakings merely take the form of offering to the public shares in enterprises which were already in existence, but which have been converted to a joint stock basis (sometimes at extremely inflated prices) no net addition to the productive resources of the country is made at all, and the only effects are to swell the speculative boom which is already assuming an unhealthy form, and possibly to secure advantages in the matter of taxation at the expense of the general taxpayer.

Secondly, it will be generally agreed that the battle against inflationary tendencies cannot be won unless there is a large scale subscription to the various loans issued by the Government of India. Although part of the Capital subscribed to new banks, investment trusts and insurance companies will no doubt flow into these loans Government have to consider whether there is not a danger that a good deal of it may be diverted to speculative uses, such as the financing of hoarding of scarce commodities and loans to the stock exchange, which are definitely anti-social at the present time.

SECURITY AND STATE PRISONERS.

75. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state the number of security prisoners on the 30th December, 1942, and, October 15th, 1943?

(b) What was the number of State prisoners under Regulation III of 1818 on the 30th September, 1943? How many such prisoners have been released during 1943?

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement regarding the state of health of security prisoners under the Defence of India Act confined in jails or private houses under the custody of the Governments of different provinces in connection with the sabotage movement of August, 1942?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The number of security prisoners of all sorts in detention on 1st January, 1943, was 9,853. The corresponding figure for the 15th October is not yet available. The number on the 1st September last was 10,780, but it is understood that a good many prisoners have been released since that date.

(b) The number of State prisoners detained under Central Government warrants under Regulation III of 1818 on the 30th September, 1943, was 10. No such prisoners were released during 1943. I have no information as to the number of prisoners detained under the Regulation or released by Provincial Governments.

(c) The health of security prisoners detained by Provincial Governments is a matter for those Governments and I have no information on the subject. As far as the health of the Central Government security prisoners detained in the Provinces is concerned, the Government of India have asked Provincial Governments to inform them immediately if any such prisoner becomes seriously ill. In the absence of such reports, it may be taken that their health at present is satisfactory.

EXAMINATION BY TRIBUNALS OF CASES OF DETENUS AND INTERNEES UNDER DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT.

76. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state if the tribunals set up for examining the cases of detenues and internees under the Defence of India Act are continuing examination of their cases, how many sittings there have already been, and how many detenues have been released up to date through such scrutiny?

(b) Have the cases of the Chittagong prisoners who had been convicted and transported to Port Blair and subsequently kept confined in jails been taken up for scrutiny? Did the Honourable Member have any correspondence in the matter with the Honourable the Home Minister of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) So far as I am aware, no special tribunals for examining the cases of persons detained under the Defence of India Rules are at present in existence. As I have more than once informed the House the cases of these persons are under constant review by the Governments concerned—both Central and Provincial—and a number of persons have been released from detention as a result of these reviews.

(b) The Chittagong prisoners referred to by the Honourable Member were duly convicted and sentenced by the courts and there is no question of their cases being specially reviewed.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Are these tribunals set up by the Provincial Governments themselves or in consultation with the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I said that there were no tribunals at present in existence. If they were appointed, the provinces would appoint them in regard to their own prisoners and the Central Government in regard to its own prisoners.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: May I take it that the Central Government has not got a tribunal of its own for reviewing such cases?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No such tribunal is required.

CASES TRIED BY THE ANTI-CORRUPTION TRIBUNALS.

†77. *Sardar Mangal Singh: (a) Will the War Secretary, please state the number of cases that have been tried or put up for trial before the two Anti-Corruption Tribunals that have been recently set up by the Central Government?

(b) How many of the cases relate to Government contractors, and how many to Government officials?

(c) What punishments have been awarded to those held guilty, and how many have been found innocent?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) 54 cases have been put up for trial.

(b) Six of these relate to Government contractors and 38 to Government officials (including railway officials), while in the remaining 10 cases both officials and contractors are involved.

(c) The Tribunals started work in October 1943 and only one judgment has so far been delivered. In that case the accused was sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment and Rs. 500 fine under section 161/116 Indian Penal Code and rule 38, Defence of India Rules.

WELFARE AND AMENITIES DIRECTORATE AND ENTERTAINMENT OF INDIAN TROOPS.

78. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state whether the Welfare and Amenities Directorate, Simla, is the only department responsible for the entertainment of Indian troops in India, or whether there is some other department at the General Headquarters which shares with the Welfare and Amenities Directorate the duties of arranging to entertain Indian troops with music, dances and theatrical performances or jugglery? If there is any such department, what is its name and functions?

(b) What is the procedure adopted by the Welfare and Amenities Directorate in providing entertainment for Indian troops? Are singers, dancers, etc., engaged by Impressarios on a contract basis for the week or month or are

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

suitable singers and performers chosen from among the soldiers in service and after due training formed into concert parties on a no-cost basis?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that suggestions on a no-cost basis were laid before the Director General, Welfare and Amenities Directorate, to select suitable men from among the sepoys, to give them training, and to form them into concert parties, for every big military station or a group of a few smaller stations?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that these concrete proposals were very much appreciated by the General Headquarters, and that steps were taken to give this scheme a trial?

(e) Has this scheme yet been tried? If not, why not? Is this not the cheapest method of entertaining the troops, and would it not obviously entertain a much larger section of the troops than the other method of entertainment through contract parties?

(f) Does the Honourable Member propose to consider the advisability of giving a fair trial to the measures of selecting and enlisting a few sepoys and other ranks from among the serving soldiers with taste in music and performances, particularly acceptable to Indian troops, and seeing if it is not the best and the cheapest way of entertaining Indians?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: (a) The Directorate of Welfare and Amenities is solely responsible.

(b) Indian Concert Parties are engaged through Impressarios on a contract basis.

(c) Yes.

(d) and (e). The proposals were appreciated as any offer to help is, but they cannot be put into effect, as it is not possible to release soldiers in any numbers from their military duties for wholtime participation in concert parties. They are of course available for spare time participation to amuse their own Units provided that their training as soldiers continues. If the scheme were practicable, it is true that it would be the cheapest method of entertaining the troops, though not normally the best, as high grade talent is rare.

(f) No. The soldiers no doubt like to see their colleagues perform but they also appreciate performances by professionals as is the case in the British Army also where concert parties consisting of professionals have rendered such valuable services.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: How long ago were these concert parties disbanded?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I have no information.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Has the Honourable Member made any inquiry about the exact reason for the disbandment of that party?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I have already said that the reason for the disbandment was that the soldiers could not be spared from their work as soldiers.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Was any inquiry or report made on this matter? Was there any actual correspondence between the authorities on this matter?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I do not know which authorities the Honourable Member is referring to.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: The concert parties must have been disbanded on the recommendation of some person. I want to know whether that recommendation was made by the local authority to the General Headquarters or the suggestion came from the Headquarters themselves. Does any correspondence of that kind exist?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I have no knowledge of that.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: If the Honourable Gentleman has no knowledge of that, how is he in a position to say that it is on account of this particular difficulty that the party was disbanded.

(No reply.)

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know why the Honourable Member is not giving a reply?

(Mr. Wakely did not get up to reply.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot compel any Member of the Government to give reply to a particular question.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Then, may I take it that my inference is correct?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member might draw his own inference.

CONCERT PARTY DISBANDED AT FEROZEPUR CANTONMENT.

79. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that one really good concert party with talented singers, dancers and performers consisting of purely serving sepoys and others, which had been functioning at Ferozepur Cantonment with great success, and entertaining military stations round about for over a year and a half, was disbanded for no obvious reason other than to make room for the engagement of a party or parties on contract basis?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to consider the advisability of inquiring the reasons which led to the disbandment of this party, and to reinstate it for reasons of economy, cheap amusement and satisfaction of the troops?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: (a) and (b). It is not a fact that the concert party was disbanded for the reasons alleged. It was given up owing to administrative difficulties, and in this particular case, owing to the fact that the sepoys concerned preferred to give their time to their legitimate profession as soldiers and asked to be returned to military duty.

SCHEME SUBMITTED BY MR. S. M. ZAHUR ALI RE CONCERT PARTIES.

80. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that a concrete scheme with copious proposals for working out a concert party consisting of purely serving sepoys was first submitted by one Mr. S. M. Zahur Ali, Bar-at-Law of Lucknow to the District Commander, Lucknow District Headquarters, and then to the Director General, Welfare and Amenities Directorate, in February last and after mature consideration this scheme of Mr. Zahur Ali was much appreciated by both the authorities and declared to be in consonance with their own settled policy?

(b) Is it a fact that Mr. Zahur Ali also visited Simla in consequence of an engagement with General Lewis but the appointment did not come off as the latter had left Simla on the due date without informing the former?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that it was in compliance with General Lewis's wishes that Mr. Zahur Ali visited a number of military stations to study on the spot the chances of success of his scheme after that scheme had been duly considered and approved by the Welfare and Amenities Directorate?

(d) Has any action been taken so far to put that scheme in force? If not, why not?

(e) Is it or is it not a fact that Mr. Zahur Ali offered to show and work out his scheme to the military free of any remuneration or cost? Is the Honourable Member still prepared to take advantage of Mr. Zahur Ali's scheme and his offer of working free for a time on purely philanthropic grounds?

(f) Is it or is it not a fact that the Honourable Member offered to have Mr. Zahur Ali's scheme recommended through General Lewis to the Central Command? If so, what was the fate of his or General Lewis's recommendation in this respect?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: (a) The interest taken in the matter by Mr. S. M. Zahur Ali was appreciated, but the scheme put forward by him cannot be said to have been in accordance with the settled policy of the Directorate of Welfare and Amenities.

(b) Mr. Zahur Ali expressed a desire to see the Director-General of Welfare and Amenities and suggested a date. The Director-General had, however, arranged to go on tour at that time. Mr. Zahur Ali was informed of this by wire and was asked to postpone his visit. He came however on the day he had originally proposed and therefore did not find the Director-General.

(c) The Director-General was neither aware of Mr. Zahur Ali's intended visit to military stations, nor did he request him to visit them.

(d) No, for the reasons given in my answer to parts (d) and (e) of question No. 78.

(e) The offer was made, but cannot be accepted for the reasons given in my answers to part (d) and (e) of question No. 78.

(f) The answer to the first part of the question is "Yes", but as already explained it is not possible to put the scheme into practice.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Was there any defect found in the scheme?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: Yes, Sir. I thought my answer would have made that clear. It was not practicable.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I ask who was the gentleman who considered that scheme and came to this conclusion?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I do not know what person the Honourable Member is referring to.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: I am asking who was the gentleman who considered that scheme and came to the conclusion that it was not practicable?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: It was considered in the Directorate of Welfare and Amenities.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Has the Honourable Member himself seen that correspondence or he is simply relying on an answer that has been sent from the headquarters?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I have seen the correspondence.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Is the Honourable Member prepared to lay on the table of the House the correspondence and the recommendations that were made in connection with this scheme?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: No, Sir.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know the reason why the Honourable Member is afraid of laying that correspondence on the table of the House?

(No answer.)

Mr. K. C. Neogy: While recognising the importance of Concert Parties for purposes of the defence of India, may I know whether the Honourable Member or any responsible official of his Department, has considered the advisability of transferring these activities to the hands of the expert, namely, the Honourable the Leader of the House?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: As far as I know, that has not been the considered settlement.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Will the Honourable Member be prepared to consider the advisability of the suggestion that has been made for it would be the best arrangement if these Concert Parties come into the hands of the Leader of the House?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I should want notice of that question.

GREGORY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING SUPPLY OF PRECIOUS METALS FOR SALE TO THE CULTIVATOR.

81. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to the recommendation of the Gregory Committee as one of the means for procurement of food supply, "that it would be advisable for Government to secure supplies of the precious metals for sale to the cultivator"; and

(b) if Government propose to give effect to it; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) Government are in sympathy with this recommendation but it must be realised that the securing of precious metals involves international arrangements which are naturally not entirely within the control of the Government of India.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if the recent sales of gold by the Reserve Bank were in anticipation of this recommendation?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not think that it required any particular gift of prophecy in order to embark on this kind of transaction.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if he is aware whether any portion of the gold sold by the Reserve Bank has gone into the hands of farmers and agriculturists?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have reason to believe it has.

INDIAN AGENT'S PROPAGANDA IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

†82. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state:

(a) whether the Government of India have received any report about the propaganda carried on by the Indian Agent stationed in the United States of America;

(b) whether his report will be laid on the table of the House;

(c) who prepares the brief for propaganda for the Indian Agent stationed in the United States of America; and

(d) whether he receives any instructions from the Foreign Department of His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). The Indian Agency General is responsible for the dissemination in America of factual information about India and her war effort. No formal report has been made of this side of the Agency General's activities though the Government of India are of course kept in touch with them, for departmental use, from time to time. The Honourable Member is referred to the answer given on the 2nd August 1948 in the Council of State to part (a) of the Honourable Raja Yaveraj Dutta Singh's question No. 3.

(c) The basic factual material used by the Agency General is prepared by the Information and Broadcasting Department.

(d) No.

BROADCASTING STATION FOR KARACHI.

83. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) when a broadcasting station in Karachi, the need for which has been emphasised so often in the past, will be installed;

(b) what the nature is of the obstacles in the way of establishing such a station, and what steps, if any, have been taken to overcome them; and

(c) what the present power is of the transmitter intended for Karachi, and over what distance the set is expected to be heard clearly in all seasons, making allowance for the usual bad atmospherics?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). The Government of India are at present engaged in the installation of a high powered station at Delhi for external broadcasts. Besides this, there are other heavy commitments of an important nature connected with the war. The establishment of a Station at Karachi will, therefore, be unavoidably delayed for some time. It is, however, proposed to go ahead with the Karachi project as soon as circumstances permit the Government of India to do so.

(c) The power of the transmitter reserved for Karachi is $\frac{1}{4}$ K. W. It is, however, proposed to remodel it so as to raise its power to 1 K. W., if possible. The range of a transmitter varies with the season of the year and the time of the day. I may, however, add that the reliable range of a $\frac{1}{4}$ K. W. transmitter usually is about 15 miles and of a 1 K. W. about 30 miles.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know what is that 'blessed' time for which the Government of India is awaiting?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I would suggest to my Honourable friend to go to the nearest astrologer.

MEASURES FOR CHECKING INFLATION IN INDIA.

84. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the measures, in detail, adopted for checking inflation in India?

(b) Is gold or silver from South Africa or America under lease-lend being imported as one of the means to arrest inflation and bring down prices?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the negative, do Government propose to consider the desirability of taking such a step without further delay?

(d) Has the "Save and Lend" drive met with effective response? If so, how?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the reply given to part (b) of Mr. Nabi-Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto's question No. 5 on the 26th July last.

I lay on the table a statement giving details of the more recent measures adopted in pursuance of the anti-inflationary policy.

(b) and (c). It is not in the public interest to make known the movements of bullion between this country and any other. I may say, however, that the part which sales of bullion can play in the fight against inflation is not being overlooked.

(d) I am glad to be able to inform the Honourable Member that the "Save and Lend" campaign has already met with a considerable response. Investments in Government loans of all kinds including post-war savings parts have since March last been distinctly encouraging as evidenced by the figures published periodically in the Press. There has been a particularly good response in the field of small savings largely due to the vigorous support given to the campaign by most of the Provincial Governments.

In particular I may mention with appreciation the excellent results achieved in the United Provinces, where a comparatively short but intensive drive yielded investments totalling some 7½ crores.

Anti-inflationary measures.

(1) Provincial Governments were asked to inaugurate small savings drives and many such have been launched. The drive in the United Provinces alone resulted in investments totalling 7½ crores. Drives are proceeding in Madras, the Central Provinces and elsewhere. A scheme for more sustained effort in this direction through the agency of staff paid for by the Centre is at present under consideration by Provincial Governments to whom it was referred.

National Savings Certificates were introduced from the 1st October last. These are unencashable for the first three years but thereafter carry a relatively high rate of interest till maturity. The rate of interest allowed on Post Office Savings Bank Accounts has been raised from the same date.

(2) Provincial Governments were asked to consider the introduction of further taxation measures with a view to reducing the volume of surplus spending power. Action on such lines has already been taken in several Provinces and is under active contemplation in others. The proceeds of such taxation will as a rule be devoted to post-war reconstruction needs.

(3) Government have announced as their policy the progressive introduction of full urban rationing and statutory price control of foodgrains based on a fair return to the cultivator. Provincial Governments have been told to prepare plans forthwith for rationing towns with a population of a lakh or over. Rationing is already functioning in Bombay and Madras cities and is likely to be introduced in Calcutta in December. Price control is being built up first on a provincial and then on a regional basis.

(4) An order under Defence of India Rule 94B, was issued on the 12th August last prohibiting advances against foodgrains unless held by a licensed dealer or producer. On the 6th October, an order was passed freezing stocks of wheat hypothecated to banks in the Punjab and Punjab States as security for loans, with a view to subsequent acquisition.

(5) The control of cotton cloth and yarn prices has been tightened up and ceiling prices lowered.

(6) The control of prices of drugs and medicines is about to be established.

(7) The Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance recently promulgated seeks to keep within reasonable limits the stocks of consumer goods held by dealers and bring down retail prices to a reasonable level. To implement the provisions of the Ordinance inspection staffs are being posted in various localities all over India. Returns of stocks of certain commodities held by dealers has been called for.

(8) Steps are being taken to increase the volume of consumer goods available to the civil population. A quantity of steel has been diverted from war production to the fabrication of simple agricultural implements.

Increased imports of bicycles, drugs and other consumer goods are being arranged. The increased supplies thus made available will be controlled in regard to distribution and price.

(9) The period allowed for spot delivery of gold and silver bullion has been reduced to 2 days in order to eliminate speculation.

(10) *Badli* transactions in Stock Exchanges have been prohibited.

(11) Import restrictions on pearls, emeralds and other precious stones have been relaxed to a certain extent with a view to augmenting available supplies for sale to the public.

(12) The Central Government are subsidising the transport by sea of cotton cloth and yarn by meeting the cost of war risk insurance partly to expedite distribution to consumers and partly to relieve railway congestion which at present is leading to high prices in many areas.

(13) In order to secure the closer co-operation of Indian States in the anti-inflationary drive, I personally addressed the State Representatives on the subject at a meeting presided over by the Crown Representative in September last. Reports of the action since taken by the States are already coming in.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member tell us whether the Funding Loan which has been recently floated is for this purpose?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: All loans floated by the Government have an anti-inflationary value.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will he explain what was exactly at the back of the Honourable Member's mind when he floated this Funding Loan? What was its specific purpose?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It was a loan which, it was expected, would meet the definite investment demand for a longer-period maturity.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Was it in the contemplation of the Honourable Member to get in the small savings by means of this loan?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No, Sir. It was not a loan of that character. The small savings drive is carried out mostly by such means as the national savings certificates, defence savings accounts and such other issues for the small man.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Is the Honourable Member in a position to tell us how far it has succeeded, to what extent it has been subscribed or the response he has received to the Funding Loan?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The subscription is amounted to 20 crores of rupees within a short time.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member with reference to his answer to part (d) of the question with regard to the co-operation that he gets from the Provincial Governments whether a uniform procedure is laid down or being followed by all the Provincial Governments in the matter of measures taken to effect compulsory savings by the people by the Central Government or is it left to the free choice of the Provincial Governments themselves?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It has been found in practice that a uniform procedure prescribed by the Centre is not the best way of getting results and our practice is to discuss the matter with the Provincial Governments and take into account their advice as to the best way to proceed; and so there will be differing features in different provinces. The important thing is to enlist the assistance of the provinces in embarking on the drive in the manner in which they feel we are most likely to get good results.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware of the allegations that have been made that so far as the United Provinces are concerned, a good deal of *Zoolum* has been exercised by the executive officers for the purpose of getting these loans subscribed, and is he also in a position to say whether he has any information as to the extent to which this may have led to the success of the loans in the United Provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It must be recognised that in embarking on a drive and exercising as much influence as one can in order to induce small savings, there is bound to be a certain amount of room for allegations of that kind, but I would suggest to the Honourable Member that if we are entirely to refrain from this effort because of the possibility of such allegations, then we shall indeed be in a serious position.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is the Honourable Member aware that in Madras the Government servants belonging to the lower middle class are compelled to invest a certain proportion of their salaries in these loans and may I know whether such action on the part of the Provincial Government has been dictated by expert advice handed to them by the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I do not think it has been dictated by expert advice given by the Central Government, but I would remind the Honourable Member that it is widely believed both in this and other countries that compulsory savings are justified in circumstances such as the present.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I know if a policy of that kind is compatible with the prices that are now ruling for primary products?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am afraid that would take us into a long argument, but it is arguable that it is precisely a policy like that which may help to reduce the prices for primary products.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member consider the feasibility of giving these Provincial Governments some advice in this matter with the assistance of the experts at his disposal?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, Sir, we have endeavoured to give the Provincial Governments the best advice that we can on this matter.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Is the Honourable Member aware that so far as U. P. is concerned certain quotas were fixed by the authorities determining the amount of loan to be invested, according to the rent or revenue which the zamindar or the tenant was paying, and this quota was realised from him irrespective of the fact whether the tenant or the zamindar has to pay his own debts and therefore the peasant suffered because he could not pay his creditors?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: In fixing the target for a small savings drive in Provinces, it is natural to adopt some criterion on which the efforts can be based and it seems to me that the criteria adopted in the U. P. formed quite a reasonable basis for the effort.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: The Honourable Member has not replied to the other part, whether any circulars have been issued that in case where a zamindar or a tenant has actually got to pay debts to creditors which are borrowed at high rate of interest, then some concession should be shown to such a person before he is made to contribute to these war loans?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I can only say that the policy of the Government is both to encourage repayment of debts by the peasantry as well as to encourage actual investments in Government loans.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: Will the Honourable Member state the amount that has been subscribed as a result of the drive which commenced in March last?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: For exact figures I should require notice. But my impression is that the total amount of lending to Government in every form, large and small, which has taken place since the beginning of the financial year is of the order of 170 crores.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: Can he give an approximation of the increase of that figure over a comparable period preceding it?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, I should say that it was several times larger than what was raised in the same period of the previous year and my impression is it is nearly twice as much as the amount raised in the latter half of the last financial year.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: Will the Honourable Member consider the advisability of issuing instructions that proper representations by zamindars regarding payment of debts should be considered by persons who collect these war loans?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Government of India have impressed and they are prepared to continue to impress on Provincial Governments the need for securing repayment of debts at the present time.

EXPENDITURE ON WAR PUBLICITY.

85. *Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (on behalf of Mr. R. R. Gupta): Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state what amount is being spent on war publicity since the beginning of war, indicating specifically the forms of publicity and the agencies through which the amount is being spent?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: A reply is being prepared and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

SECURITY AND POLITICAL PRISONERS.

86. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to give information in the form of a brief statement regarding security prisoners and also prisoners convicted of offences arising out of the political movement, stating according to Provinces (i) the numbers at present in jails, (ii) numbers of recent releases, (iii) whether the cases of such prisoners were recently reviewed and how, (iv) any recent changes in the treatment given, especially regarding interviews and correspondence, and (v) the general policy of the Government regarding detention and treatment of political prisoners especially of those who have suffered detention on account of the Congress movement?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I place on the table a statement giving, in answer to part (i) of the Honourable Member's question, figures up to the 1st September, the latest date for which they are available, and in answer to part (ii) of the question, figures, also up to the 1st September, of the number of security prisoners released from detention. No information is available as to the number of convicted prisoners released from jail.

As regards part (iii), I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to my reply to question No. 76 put today by Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya.

As regards part (iv), I would refer the Honourable Member to my answer to question No. 70 put by Sardar Mangal Singh.

As regards part (v) it would be impossible for me within the scope of a reply to a question to give a statement of general policy with regard to a matter of this nature. Moreover, that policy was made sufficiently clear in the course of the debate on Mr. Krishnamachari's resolution.

Number of persons undergoing imprisonment or detention in connection with the Congress movement on 1st September, 1943.

Province.	Undergoing imprisonment.	Undergoing detention.	Total.	Security prisoners released.
1. Madras	1458	602	2060	102
2. Bombay	1208	1989	3197	2932
3. Bengal	144	93	237	873
4. U. P.	5997	2673	8670	716
5. Punjab	432	375	807	119
6. Bihar	6001	413	6414	20
7. C. P.	1265	854	2119	2128
8. Assam	476	312	788	12
9. N. W. F. P.	1241	155	1396	341
10. Orissa	743	436	1179	5
11. Sind	106	48	154	140
12. Coorg	4	7	11	17
13. Delhi	205	88	293	35
14. Ajmer	4	28	32	7
15. Baluchistan	..	..	..	..
Total	19284	8073	27357	7447

ADMINISTRATION IN BIHAR OF THE SCHEME FOR CHECKING OF PROFITEERING IN SALT.

87. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to say:

(a) if it is a fact that the Government of India, Finance Department (Central Revenues) in their letter No. 41-Salt/42, dated the 20th October, 1942,

to the Secretary to the Government of Bihar, Commerce Department, promulgated a scheme for checking profiteering in salt and ensuring regular supply of salt;

(b) If it is a fact that under the said scheme the District Magistrates were required to nominate reliable persons or firms to place indents, and to arrange for the distribution of salt in each district;

(c) if it is a fact that, in pursuance of the said scheme of the Government of India, the Government of Bihar in their circular No. 1970-P.C., dated Patna, the 11th/14th November, 1942, addressed to all District Magistrates, stated in paragraph 3:

"In order to work this scheme it will be necessary to select one or two reliable merchants in each district, or in each important district market who may be authorised to place direct orders for salt wagons which will be cleared out of turn and will be free from Sambhar lake 'Orders Profits'. These merchants of firms must be of good repute, well established and experienced in the salt trade"; and

(d) if the Government of India are aware that the Government of Bihar has not administered the scheme either in the spirit of the Government of India letter referred to above or in accordance with their own circular letter quoted above?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: With your permission, Sir, I will reply to questions Nos. 87 and 88 together.

These questions should have been addressed to the Honourable the Food Member.

ADMINISTRATION IN BIHAR OF THE SCHEME FOR CHECKING OF PROFITEERING IN SALT.

88. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to say:

(a) if the Government of India are aware—

(i) that representations from old and reputed firms dealing in salt have been made to the Government of Bihar alleging about the maladministration of the scheme in which new firms have been selected in preference to firms of good repute, well established and experienced in the salt trade;

(ii) that taking advantage of the scheme and authorisation of powers to the District Officials, such officials have acted more in the spirit of distributing favours and patronage than with any regard for justice and fair administration;

(b) if the Government of India have reserved any power of safeguard against the maladministration of the Salt Department by the Provincial Government; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, do Government propose to look into the grievances of the firm that alleges serious charges of maladministration with regard to the selection of firms?

CENSORSHIP ON PUBLICATION OF NEWS ABOUT FAMINE IN BENGAL.

89. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether censorship and "Press Advising" have been resorted to for the purpose of controlling the publication of news or comments in the Press about the famine conditions in the country, and the deaths resulting from starvation in Bengal and other places? If so, what kind of action has been taken in this connection from time to time with reference to the Press in India as well as abroad, and to what extent has the publicity of the aforesaid news and comments, particularly in the Press outside India, been affected thereby?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Except in the case of one Bengal newspaper, on which a precensorship order was served by the Bengal Government, there has been no censorship of news or comment appearing in the Indian Press about famine conditions in the country or deaths resulting from starvation in Bengal and other places. In so far as publicity in the press outside India is concerned, the Government of India have no information either as to its volume

or tone other than that contained in cabled reports to India which have appeared in the Indian Press and which have been read by members of this House.

It is not in the public interest to reveal details of censorship policy.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the Indian Press, will the Honourable Member state whether the practice of the Press Adviser has not been to advise News Agencies informally, sometimes over the telephone, instead of giving written orders in such matters, so that no records might be left?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: He has no power to issue any orders at all. Any advice that he gives is in answer to questions put to him and in answer to representations made to him. He may have given advice voluntarily also when he considers it necessary to News Agencies or the Press, but they are not bound to accept his advice. They are absolutely at liberty to do anything as they please.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that so far as the Associated Press is concerned, it being a subsidised agency, there is a definite understanding, though it may be of an informal character, that all news of a certain kind should be submitted to the Press Adviser for his opinion and that such opinion is invariably expected to be accepted by that agency?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have no information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware that a statement was issued by two ex-Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council in regard to famine conditions in Bengal in September last, and that this statement was supplied to the Associated Press at Delhi, and that as a result of such understanding or advice, material portions were omitted from this statement when the Associated Press sent it out for publication.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: It is for the Associated Press to say why they did it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Am I to take it that the Honourable Member does not keep himself informed as to what is going on in his department?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am fully informed of all that is going on in my department.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware, or has his attention been drawn to this particular fact which appeared in several newspapers? As a matter of fact I may inform the Honourable Member, as he appears to be so ignorant about it, that I sent out letters over my own signature to some of the papers giving the portion of the statement which was omitted by the Associated Press, as stated by me, and these letters were published by them.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I may be ignorant of many things and I plead guilty to ignorance of the letter that was written by Mr. Neogy to the press.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does not the Honourable Member think that in regard to a statement which was issued by two responsible men like Sir Nripendra Sircar and Sir Jagdish Prasad, Government owe a duty to the public as well as to themselves to see that no material portion of such a statement is tampered with in any way by his department?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I deny that it was tampered with by my department.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: As regards the Foreign Press, has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to certain comments which appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* protesting against the censorship that was being exercised on the transmission of news from India regarding the famine conditions in Bengal to the foreign press?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have stated that it is not in the public interest to reveal details of censorship policy.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I do not want the details. I merely want to know whether his attention has been drawn to an article which appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* and in which appeared the following observation:

"The sole and thoroughly immoral justification (namely a justification of this kind of censorship) seems to be the preservation of the Government of India's infallibility in the minds of those who are ultimately responsible for its shortcomings, the British public."

Has the Honourable Member's attention been drawn to that article?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Yes, Sir.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does not that article contain a reference to the procedure adopted by the press censorship authorities in India with regard to the foreign press?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No, Sir.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to instruct his subordinates to issue a correction to that article if it is inaccurate in any detail?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have already said that it will not be in the interest of the public to reveal details of censorship policy. But I may say that such restrictions as have had to be imposed have in no way prevented overseas correspondents from sending objective and factual reports to their papers giving a balanced picture of the situation as it has developed, which is apparent from the cabled reports of the comments in the press outside India.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: What did the Honourable Member mean by "balanced picture"?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Next question.

STOCKS OF FOODGRAINS RELEASED FROM ARMY RESERVES FOR CIVILIANS IN BENGAL.

90. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) With reference to the statement made by Mr. Amery in the House of Commons on the 14th October that some stocks of foodgrains have already been released from Army reserves for the benefit of the civilian population in Bengal, will the War Secretary be pleased to state the quantities of the stocks thus released during different periods and in different areas in Bengal, and what proportions did the stocks thus released roughly bear to the amounts of the Army reserves of foodgrains held in Bengal during the corresponding periods?

(b) What was the organisation for the procurement of foodstuffs for military requirements before this responsibility was undertaken by the Food Department, what were the different kinds of foodstuffs which the said organisation was responsible for procuring, and what were the agencies that procured them in Bengal?

(c) What was the quantity of rice that was procured in Bengal for military requirements, month by month, since January last and what were the average prices paid for it during the said period?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) and (c). These should have been addressed to the Food Department.

(b) Before the war the Director of Contracts, Army Headquarters, was responsible for the procurement of foodstuffs for men and animals of the Defence Services.

The Contracts Directorate was transferred to the Supply Department in December 1939 and continued to carry out these duties in compliance with the Quartermaster General's indents until 1st January 1943, when that portion of the Directorate General of Supply dealing with the procurement of foodstuffs to the Defence Services was transferred to the Food Department.

The types of foodstuffs procured include all grains and grain products and, in addition, such items of processed foodstuffs as are available from indigenous sources.

The only items of importance obtained from Bengal are Shahapara Biscuits and certain quantities of tinned and bottled provisions including chutney, pickles, condiments and a few other minor items. As regards biscuits, wheat products for the manufacture of these were supplied from Defence Services stocks railed direct from the Punjab and were not drawn from the resources of Bengal.

FEEDING OF LABOUR ENGAGED ON MILITARY WORKS IN BENGAL BY MILITARY AUTHORITIES.

91. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) With reference to the Associated Press message, dated New Delhi, the 19th October, 1943, to the effect that arrangements are being made by the Military authorities to relieve the Bengal Government of its

responsibility for feeding labour engaged on military works, will the War Secretary be pleased to make a statement—

(i) fully explaining the arrangements that were hitherto in force between the Military authorities and the Government of Bengal in this matter;

(ii) giving the quantities, month by month, since January last, of the food-grains supplied by the Government of Bengal for this purpose; and

(iii) showing the average prices paid per maund of different kinds of food-grains by the Military authorities to the Government of Bengal during this period, comparing them with the average prices paid by the Government of Bengal for procuring such supplies?

(b) What quantities had to be acquired and maintained by the Government of Bengal, month by month, for carrying out its responsibility in this matter ever since it was undertaken by that Government?

(c) What independent arrangements for the procurement of foodgrains in Bengal will be made hereafter by the Military authorities for feeding labour engaged on military works in that Province?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: This question should have been addressed to the Honourable Member in charge of the Food Department.

MONETARY INFLATION AND RISE IN PRICES IN INDIA.

92. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member been drawn to a recent comment in the *Economist*, London, to the effect that among British Empire Countries, India claims the unenviable distinctions of the greatest monetary inflation and the steepest rise in prices?

(b) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been also drawn to the following reply given by Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons, on the 21st October last, to a suggestion made by an M.P. that inflation had led to hoarding which had made it profitable for people to hold back supplies:—

“Inflation is certainly a contributory cause.”

(c) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement explaining the point of view of the Government of India in this matter, and to state particularly to what extent the position has been influenced by the obligations of the Government to find rupee finance in this country for the purchases made on behalf of the United Kingdom and Allied Nations, for paying the fighting forces of the United Kingdom stationed in this country, for meeting reciprocal Lease-Lend aid expenses and similar other demands relating to the prosecution of the War, or otherwise?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The subject is too large to traverse in reply to a question but I expect to deal with various aspects of it in my next budget speech.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the statement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons ascribing the present condition of distress to inflation to a large extent, do I take it that the Honourable Member does not agree with that opinion?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I can only refer the Honourable Member to some remarks which I made in the course of yesterday's debate. I said then that inflation was an important element in the food problem.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Arising out of the answer to part (a), may I ask if the Honourable Member's Government are likely to be influenced by the suggestions contained in the article of the *Economist* referred to?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That seems to me rather a hypothetical question. I do not agree with the view expressed by the *Economist* in all respects, and I think that it entirely fails to take into account certain extremely important factors in the Indian situation.

DESIRABILITY OF MAKING MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE ALL INDIA RADIO SERVICE.

93. ***Sir F. E. James:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and

Broadcasting be pleased to state:—

(a) whether he is aware—

(i) of the vital importance of All-India Radio in war time involving as it does the distribution of news entertainment and instruction throughout India and neighbouring countries, and the task of counteracting enemy broadcasts and propaganda;

(ii) that the staff of A. I. R. is inadequate for these tasks and, generally speaking, underpaid;

(iii) that in Delhi the staff is not treated as essential for the purpose of accommodation, and that as a result of this and of the transfer of the Studios to Parliament Street in New Delhi not only does the staff suffer inconvenience and hardship, but the work of the Station is seriously affected; and

(iv) that the Department in general and the Controller in particular are handicapped in the selection and remuneration of suitable staff and in the choice of persons for broadcasting programmes by a too rigid application of standards and rules laid down by the Finance Department which are inappropriate to a broadcasting service performing emergent and vital tasks in war time; and

(b) whether he proposes to take immediate steps to ensure that, as in other countries of the United Nations, the work of A. I. R. is accorded by the Government of India the priority and status which its importance to the war effort merits and to remove the obstacles which at present render the more effective use of this service “cabin'd cribb'd and confin'd”?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) (i) Yes.

(ii) Government are satisfied that the All India Radio staff is doing good work in circumstances made very difficult by war conditions. The staff has recently been made a permanent service under Government and its scales of pay revised. The question of strengthening the staff is being examined.

(iii) The question of special accommodation for essential members of the All India Radio staff is under active consideration and plans are being prepared.

(iv) The special needs and circumstances of All India Radio are under constant study by the Department and are represented when necessary to the appropriate authorities.

(b) Government is fully alive to the importance of broadcasting as a war service and has the question of adapting All India Radio service to war conditions under constant review, and I am personally giving anxious consideration to the points raised in the question.

POLICY REGARDING OF ADVERTISEMENTS TO NEWSPAPERS.

94. ***Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state:

(a) the policy of the Central Government in regard to the giving of advertisements to newspapers;

(b) the official designation of the authority who approves or fixes the rates for such advertisements;

(c) the relation of the Central Government with the Media Department of the Creative Publicity Unit, Dalziel, Simla;

(d) the proprietors of the Creative Publicity Unit, Dalziel, Simla, with the date of its formation; and

(e) the amount of the subsidy paid to the Creative Publicity Unit by the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Government's advertisements are given to newspapers whose circulation, advertisement rates and zones of circulation render them satisfactory as a commercial proposition and suitable for the particular advertisements under consideration.

(b) Advertising Consultant to the Government of India.

(c) The Media Department of the Creative Publicity Unit advises Government as to the commercial advertising value of different media, but the choice of newspapers lies with Government.

(d) The Creative Publicity Unit was formed in August 1942.

The proprietors are:—

1. Messrs. L. A. Stronach & Co., (India) Ltd., Ballard Estate, Bombay.
2. Messrs. Adarts Ltd., Bombay.
3. Messrs. J. Walter Thompson Ltd., Bombay.
4. Messrs. Press Syndicate Ltd., Calcutta.
5. Messrs. General Advertising Agency Ltd., Calcutta.
6. Messrs. D. J. Keymer & Co., (India) Ltd., Calcutta.

(e) None.

EXPENDITURE ON GOVERNMENT PUBLICITY.

95. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the amount incurred, on publicity in different forms separately, during the year 1941-1942, 1942-1943 and upto date showing *inter alia* the newspapers and other institutes amongst whom the amount was distributed together with the amount paid to each in each year?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: A reply is being prepared and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

RULES FOR ADMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS ROOM AND FOR SUPPLY OF GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS TO TRADE UNIONS, ETC.

96. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the rules prescribed for:

- (i) the admission to the Government of India Press Room; and
- (ii) the supply of the *Gazette of India* and other Central Government Publications to the institutions such as Trade Unions?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Part (i). I would refer the Honourable Member to the answer given on the 31st March, 1942, to Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani's unstarred question No. 82. Only Press Representatives are admitted to the privileges of the Government of India Press Room. They must be genuine accredited agents representing *bona fide* news agencies, newspapers or periodicals published at an interval of not more than one week.

Part (ii). The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

EXPENDITURE ON THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT.

97. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the amount expended on the National War Front from the date of its organisation to date, and the justification for the same?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The National War Front was founded on the 11th of March, 1942. The expenditure on this organisation during the financial year 1942-43 was Rs. 33,26,295. It is impossible at this stage to state the actual figure of expenditure incurred during the current financial year. A statement of the aims of the National War Front and its achievements has been placed on the table.

A SUMMARY OF THE WORKING OF THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT UP TO THE END OF ITS FIRST YEAR.

GENERAL.

When the Front was founded on March 11th, 1942, its initial objects were to maintain public morale and to make people realise that the war was India's war. As time went on, however, it was realised that the maintenance of morale could not be divorced from activities connected with the practical needs of the people and in many provinces now the tendency is for the Front to develop more and more its practical activities and to make them the focus round which its propaganda can radiate. In a number of provinces, Village Defence Parties have become an important part of the work of the Front and there few sights more inspiring than the keenness of the Village Defence Parties in the Madras Presidency. In other provinces the National War Front has been assisting in matters connected with the food shortage and again in other provinces the maintenance of law and order has been considered as one of the most important activities of the Front. Right at the time of the inauguration of the Front, the Punjab gave the lead in this matter and announced its intention of working largely in practical directions; that lead has now been followed in many provinces.

The Provincial and District organisation of the National War Front has now attained impressive proportions and the expenditure on it in British India alone will amount to about Rs. 45 lakhs in the current year. For the first time there exists in India now a powerful and extensive organisation available for non-political propaganda in the national

interests. It may be that an organisation of this kind can be of the greatest value after the war in the work of reconstruction and nation-building and it is therefore of the utmost importance that the Front should continue to keep itself aloof from party politics of any kind.

The Front may be said to have passed through three phases during the past twelve months. Up to August, 1942 was the period of organisation, then followed a difficult time during which the Front had to stand the strain of the Civil Disobedience Movement, while from the beginning of this year onwards the period has been one of steady growth in both extent and influence and of greater attention to practical activities. There is little room for doubt that in troubled areas it had exercised a steadying influence during the last few months. One hopeful sign is that its critics are on the alert, that a good deal was heard about the Front in recent sittings of the Assembly and that no mistake on the part of the N. W. F. propagandists is allowed to pass unnoticed. The first function of a propaganda organisation is to get its material read and the volume of criticism that comes in from time to time on particular points in our pamphlets, advertisements, etc., leaves no room for doubt that the Front fulfils this function.

THEMES AND CAMPAIGNS.

The objects of the National War Front throughout the year have remained as defined by His Excellency the Viceroy in the following words:

"The object is to do everything possible to help and maintain public morale: that is to say, to strengthen the war resistance of the people, to eradicate all elements to undermine it; and in particular to counteract fifth-column activities of all kinds, including especially all talk, thought, writings and rumours likely to produce a defeatist mentality; to inculcate faith, courage, and endurance; and to consolidate the national will to offer united resistance to Nazism and Fascism in every shape or form, whether within or without the country, until their menace is finally overthrown."

The particular themes presented have, of course, varied from time to time. Chief among them have been the following:

"This is India's War"—"The power of the Axis must be broken"—"Victory lies ahead but we must work for it"—"India's honour must be maintained"—"This is India's industrial opportunity"—"Defend India's ancient culture"—"Suppress rumours for they destroy strength"—"Build India's defence forces to secure victory to-day and to maintain India's freedom hereafter".

Early in the year the principal emphasis was on the theme that an Axis victory would make life intolerable, but of recent months the tendency has been to concentrate on the positive side of the picture and to turn people's minds to the thought of future greatness and prosperity, if the Allies win. This phase of the campaign has been focussed around the slogan "Through Victory to Freedom" and there is evidence that this particular appeal has been to some extent effective. It seems clear that any war propagandist must take the forward view, and deal with the positive advantages to be reaped after victory rather than the evil side of defeat.

In the Punjab a great deal was done by the Front in connection with the Defence Loans Campaign and all over India the National War Front is now giving more attention to a Savings Campaign. It seems obvious that the spiral of rising prices and rising wages must be checked if morale is to be kept up; and so a Savings Campaign is one of the most important functions of the National War Front.

MEETINGS.

Meetings play an ever increasing part in the work of the National War Front. Exact figures as to the number of meetings held are not available but the reports received regarding meetings for the last quarter alone show that they exceed 2,000. The scale on which such meetings are held is illustrated by the following details from certain provincial reports.

Bombay.—300 meetings were held in the month ending 15 January 1943 and it was estimated that the attendance reported for 207 of these meetings was nearly 67,000. In the ensuing months 168 public meetings were held and the estimated attendance reported for 147 of these meetings was about 48,000.

Bihar.—201 meetings were held in the first quarter of 1943 in the rural areas, and in addition to the war, such topics as high prices, shortage of rice, etc., were discussed.

Other provinces report similarly.

Red Cross Week provided an admirable occasion for the holding of meetings in various provinces and in one province 82 meetings were held on "Red Army Day" in conjunction with the Indian Federation of Labour. Melas, fairs and even weddings have all provided opportunities for the holding of meetings.

VILLAGE DEFENCE PARTIES.

These parties in one form or another have been very successfully linked with the National War Front in Bihar, Madras and Assam. A beginning has also been made in the Punjab and on a much smaller scale in Bombay. In some provinces the parties have been used to guard railway lines and elsewhere they are reported to have done good work in preventing dacoities or sabotage.

LITERATURE.

Much literature has been put out; in fact writers are working at high pressure producing all kinds of leaflets, pamphlets, etc. Of all our recent material the item which has aroused public attention most is the pamphlet "Why can't he mind his own business?" which was reproduced very widely in the press and gave rise to a considerable volume of correspondence both in the press and through the post. The theme of this pamphlet was "No one can be a good National War Front worker unless firstly he is a nationalist in the sense of

wanting to see India free, secondly he realises that the war is India's war, and thirdly he is prepared to take the forward view which justifies the use of the word 'Front'. The success of this pamphlet suggests useful lines of approach in future.

ADVERTISING.

Throughout the year advertising has played an important part in the activities of the Front. It is true to say that the National War Front advertising campaigns have received more wide-spread attention than any previous propaganda campaign in this country. The volume of criticism on points of detail makes it abundantly clear that these advertisements are very widely read and the nature of the criticism in some cases makes it clear that the advertisements have got under the skin of even those who are opposed to the activities of the Front.

In recent months we have avoided undue emphasis on Japanese atrocities and dwelt more on the destruction of things precious to India which would result from a Japanese victory. This line of action seems to have been appreciated.

On the mechanical side of the work, the location of the Creative Publicity Unit in Simla and the transfer of the principal Copywriter from that Unit to the direct control of the National War Front Central Organisation have brought about big improvements and the present system is working well. During the year as a whole, faulty translation was perhaps the principal defect in our advertisements. There has been improvement in this respect recently.

ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN.

In some provinces excellent work in this direction has been done—Bihar and Bengal have been particularly active and the experience gained there suggests that this activity should be taken up more widely.

FOOD CAMPAIGN.

During the second half of the year under report, the National War Front took over the running of publicity on behalf of the Food Department of the Central Government. This publicity fell into three categories:

- i. The "Grow More Food" Campaign;
- ii. The "Informative" Campaign;
- iii. The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.

The "Grow More Food" Campaign.—This has on the whole produced very encouraging results. It can of course be argued that rising prices by themselves would have been sufficient to stimulate increased cultivation, but reports from many quarters lead to the conclusion that the success of the movement was at least partly due to the intensified propaganda carried out. In some provinces the main campaign was run by the provincial governments and the part of the National War Front was confined to backing up their efforts. In other provinces, the campaign was mainly a National War Front concern. Particular attention was also given to a "Grow More Vegetables" Campaign. This proved far from an easy campaign to handle, but the results have not been unsatisfactory.

The "Informative" Campaign.—The main purpose of this campaign was to remove the many misconceptions in the public mind as to the cause of the present trouble. In particular, it was designed to make people understand that India in normal times is very nearly self-sufficient in the matter of food and that the loss of imports from Burma had been more than made up for by increased cultivation. Another aspect of this Campaign was that relating to informing the public when more grain came in from abroad. On the whole, this "Informative" Campaign cannot be considered to have been a success. The Campaign itself seems to have been planned and conducted on right lines, but at any rate in some parts of the country the breakdown in the distribution system made it very nearly impossible to convince people that there was in fact sufficient food in India.

The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.—The object of this campaign was to make people regard the hoarder as a genuine public enemy and it was hoped that it would be possible to pillory offenders who had received deterrent sentences. Unfortunately, in many cases of food offences, extremely light sentences were passed. To give undue publicity to this fact would merely have defeated our purpose, and so many of the plans which had been prepared in this connection had to remain unfulfilled. Generally speaking, it has to be admitted that in the food campaign—with the exception of the "Grow More Food" division of it—circumstances were too strong for us.

A fresh campaign is now under preparation, but this will be mainly concerned with supporting rationing schemes in those towns where they are introduced—the "Grow More Food" Campaign will of course be continued.

WAR SERVICES EXHIBITIONS.

The National War Front has also been concerned jointly with the Military authorities in the organisation of War Services Exhibitions in various centres. These Exhibitions have proved most successful. The crowds attracted have been far beyond what was expected and there are reports from many impartial sources to show that the effect produced had been very marked. There is indeed general agreement that this is perhaps one of the most effective of all our methods of propaganda.

PROPAGANDA VANS.

A good deal of attention has been given during the year to propaganda in villages by means of propaganda cinema vans. This method has been fully justified by results and a very considerable extension of it has only been prevented by the extreme difficulty of obtaining the necessary equipments now.

SECTION II—THE PROVINCES.

There is no room here for a detailed report from all provinces; a few superficial words and one or two quotations of interest will be as following.

ASSAM—SURMA VALLEY.

The National War Front has made considerable headway in the Valley and one of the main features of the work in this area has been ceremonial meetings on a large scale. These meetings have been held in several places with addresses by the Premier and there is no doubt that they have been very effective. In one of these gatherings alone, it was estimated that over a lakh of people were present.

ASSAM—ASSAM VALLEY.

The Assam Valley has not been as active as the Surma Valley. Interesting features of the work have been posters which were taken to meetings and explained to audiences. The Provincial Organiser of the Surma Valley has now taken over charge of both the Valleys and there are already signs of improvement.

BENGAL.

The National War Front has taken a considerable step forward in the province. This is due in no small measure to the complete change in the methods of the N. W. F. At one stage the Front was organised on what local authorities described as "subversive lines". This policy has, however, been changed and considerable attention has been given to open and ceremoniously impressive propaganda. Meetings have been held on a considerable scale and in one district 33 public meetings and 147 Group discussions were held in one quarter. Pictorial publicity exhibitions have also been held in various places and attracted much interest. A paid agent has been employed to go round from town to town attending courts and offices singing songs, repeating slogans and distributing pamphlets and leaflets. He is accompanied by sandwich men displaying posters. National War Front workers did a lot of excellent practical help in connection with the organisation of relief to the evacuees who left Calcutta in panic last December.

Special attention was given to rumours at the time of the Japanese air raids, when squads moved about daily listening to rumours obtaining the official reply wherever possible and then contradicting rumours. Valuable work has been done by the District Leader of Birbhum in the matter of kerosene, sugar and rice supplies in his district. A "People's Stores" with four branch shops has already been started in the town. It was a National War Front worker in Chittagong, Kabir Hossain, who first caught hold of the Japanese pilot whose plane was brought down at Chakfirani and prevented him from burning himself alive or making his way out of Chittagong into Akra.

Bengal has had a setback due to the acute food situation. Wherever, possible, the help has and is being given, but the Provincial Organisation has felt, it is working against terrific odds, when the food situation has reached a stage where men's minds can attend to nothing else.

MADRAS.

The work in the Madras Presidency has been described in an excellent pamphlet produced by the Provincial Organiser. The Standard of work in the Madras Presidency is very high and from personal visits, it is obvious that the message of the National War Front has got home even to rural people. During a visit to village primary schools, it was interesting to note that the students were able to give intelligent answers to simple questions about the main features of the war.

The appointment of lady lecturers has been one of the interesting features and it is the first time that propaganda has been carried to the hearths and homes of women in the Presidency:

"These . . . women are kept in the dark as to how the present war is thrust on the British Government. In fact they have wrong ideas about it. When they are told of a lady lecturing to them they come in large groups (sometimes in hundreds) to hear of the war and its causes. Groups of . . . ladies are addressed in houses of some leading men in the localities. They are found to be very eager to hear of the atrocities committed by the Japs in China and Burma and they began to hate them now. Some, in these localities, are under the wrong impression that the Japs (if they occupy India) will distribute about 4 acres of land to each family and thus help the people to live more comfortably when they come, but when these ladies are told of their (Japs') cruel and evil designs on India they seem to change their opinions."

An original idea has been the experiment of making oil lamps which burn vegetable oil or kerosene from salvaged army tins. These lamps which are sold at a very low cost bear the National War Front symbol and initials.

BIHAR.

The Front in Bihar continues to be energetic and it is interesting to note that in the Council of State a few months ago a member from Bihar paid independent tribute to the Front and described the way in which some of its activities were already beginning to change village life.

The introducing of the system of Raksha Dals has proved most successful and useful in guarding railway lines and controlling unruly elements. The two following extracts are of interest:

The district leader for Manbhum reports: "A band of robbers were trying to break through the house of Babu Nanda Rai of Village Nawagarh on the night of 22nd September, 1942. But thanks to the Village Leader and Party, they forthwith hurried to the spot and drove them away".

Again, he says: "The thief was caught red-handed at Tunturi on the 26th December 1942; crimes have really been checked and people are appreciating the activities of the Village Defence Parties".

The counteracting of rumours is an important part of the Front in this province and the following rumours give some ideas of what the Front has to contend with:

- i. The Japanese have attacked Calcutta and are advancing further inland;
- ii. The British aeroplanes cannot fly as high as Japanese ones and then, they only fly when the Japanese planes leave the place;
- iii. Britain has leased out India to America and has therefore ceased to have any interest in the country and American troops and their Ambassador are here to safeguard American interests;

iv. Another current rumour is that small coins are scarce because Indian mints are making coins for Australia;

v. Australia has surrendered to Japan, and again that Adra Junction a rather important junction on the B. N. Ry. would be bombed.

The National War Front can claim to have helped considerably in counteracting with success the many rumours that have been current throughout the province.

CENTRAL PROVINCES.

A. Marathi Districts.—Work in this area suffered badly at the time of the last Civil Disobedience movement, but when the feeling created by the movement died down, progress began to be made.

Village Defence Parties have been formed by the National War Front Organisers. Leaders of selected villages have been given training for a week or two. The Front in this province has been closely concerned with the work in connection with the food problem. It is encouraging to learn that the advertising Campaign has proved successful.

B. Hindi Districts.—In the Hindi districts, many meetings have been held mainly in rural areas and in important towns such as Jubbulpore, Bilaspur and Saugor.

The Publicity vans have been used considerably and film propaganda has proved of much interest.

Considering the difficulties during the first year, it is fair to say that this province has justified itself.

UNITED PROVINCES.

At one time the tendency in this province was to concentrate on written or visual propaganda rather than on meetings, but a change of policy became necessary due to paper shortage. Oral propaganda has been considerably intensified and 100 whole-time workers are now employed as lecturers and organisers.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work in this province is the fact that labour propaganda is being carried on mainly by labour leaders. The success of this propaganda is based chiefly on the establishment of workers' clubs.

PUNJAB.

The Provincial Organiser in the Punjab has developed the system of public meetings to a very high degree. Many districts work out regular monthly programmes covering all tahsils, all arrangements being made in advance. Festivals of all kinds produce a crop of meetings, while others are made to fit in with the touring of the cinema publicity vans. One activity of interest in the Front in the Province of recent months has been in connection with hoarding and the food situation. In one district the N. W. F. collected the necessary cash and grain for the opening of a depot for the sale of cheap flour to the poorest members of the community.

BOMBAY.

Importance has always been attached to meetings in the Bombay Presidency and in one quarter alone over 697 meetings were held. The National War Front made itself responsible for the local arrangements for the Red Cross Week meetings, while in other districts, the district leaders co-operated with the Collectors in this matter. Durbars of village and police officers also provided good scope for National War Front propaganda and even wedding parties were persuaded to interrupt their gaieties to listen to N. W. F. speakers.

A reception was given in honour to the crew of the "H. M. S. Bengal" and members of the crew were encouraged to narrate their remarkable experience of the fight.

The Front has played an important part in the province in dealing with the food situation.

Another feature of interest is the hiring of a stall in an industrial exhibition in Bombay where N. W. F. posters have been exhibited and workers of the Front have given talks on the aims and objects of the Front. A military jamadar was stationed at the stall to give information about the prospects of the fighting services and it is said that a good response has been received.

Another interesting development is the holding of elocution competitions in the districts of Kanara under the auspices of the Front. The subjects for these competitions were in one case "The evil effects of sabotage" and in another case "The dangers of panic". In view of the widespread fondness for oratory in India, this is a method which might perhaps be used effectively in other provinces.

SIND, N. W. F. P., DELHI, AJMER-MERWARA, COORG AND BALUCHISTAN.

In all these provinces the National War Front movement has gone ahead. Meetings, Grow More Food Campaign, Teachers' Training Courses, the editing of a paper or bulletin and cinema vans have all put in work according to the local conditions in each province.

Conditions in Baluchistan are somewhat different from those in other parts of India and the scheme of the National War Front was not found suitable to the province except in urban towns. Work was therefore taken up on the following lines:

"On 15th April the Agent to the Governor General addressed a gathering of selected representatives of important tribes from all parts of Baluchistan including the Kalat, Lasbela and Kharan States at a tea party at the Residency which was also attended by His Highness the Khan of Kalat and senior officials and briefly explained the objects of the National War Front. At this meeting the tribal representatives reaffirmed their whole-hearted association with the cause of the Allied Nations, their unwavering loyalty and determination to continue loyal and active cooperation and gave assurance to further the objects of the National War Front amongst their tribesmen. In rural areas the tribal leaders who enjoy a considerable measure of autonomy in the administration of their affairs on the basis of well recognised tribal responsibility have acted up to their promises, and done good work in keeping their illiterate tribesmen informed of the progress of events, countering wild rumours and anti-British propaganda and generally exercising a stabilising influence."

"In Urban areas the movement is flourishing."

SECTION III—STATES.

It is quite impossible to give any general picture of work in the States for the stages which have been reached very tremendously from State to State. This variety is due not only to the fact that the States did not start at the same time, but also to the fact that some had and some had not publicity or information departments to begin with. It was recognised that work in States would depend largely on personal contact with those who could provide stimulus and ideas, and for this purpose, in addition to the two officers of the Central Organisation, two Regional Officers have been appointed. A very considerable amount of touring has been done by the four officers thus now available and there is evidence that in a number of States the Front is active. There is, however, a great difference between some States who show themselves willing to spend money on war propaganda; and others which seem to think that propaganda can be done for nothing. Speaking generally, it may be said that so far only the surface has been scratched and it would not be true to say yet that we had succeeded in generating any real positive enthusiasm for the war in areas where it did not exist before.

One of the most useful developments has been the tour in Western India of the Kathiawar War Service Exhibition Coach—a large third class coach converted into an exhibition, equipped with loud speaker, 16 mm. projector, gramophone records and looked after by a staff consisting of lecturers, a bard, three musicians and the necessary technical staff. The programmes have been given in Gujerati and it is estimated that during the course of two months, five lakhs of people saw the exhibition. It is to be noted that while the States Branch made the original suggestion, H. H. the Maharaja of Morvi shouldered the main burden and it was in most respects a purely Kathiawar project. In view of the success of the exhibition we propose to do more of this kind of thing.

SECTION IV—WORK AMONG WOMEN BY THE LADY ORGANISER.

This is on a small scale at present. The success of this activity had depended entirely on the individual work and the personality put out by Begum Shah Nawaz. Proposals are under consideration for enlarging the Women's Organisation, as at present more women helpers are essential to take up some of the work from the Lady Organiser. She has visited most of the provinces of India from Assam to Bombay and Karachi to Madras, making contacts and speeches wherever she went both in British India and the Indian States.

The expenditure incurred on the National War Front is shown in the Annexure.

K. T. BEHANAN,

Central Organiser.

ANNEXURE.

Statement showing expenditure incurred during 1942-43 on the working of the National War Front Scheme.

	Rs.
1. N. W. F. Organisation in Provinces.	17,21,005
2. N. W. F. Propaganda Vans.	6,94,838
3. N. W. F. Advertising.	8,45,142
4. N. W. F. Expenditure in Administrations.	64,117
5. Board of Advisers.	986
Total.	33,26,088

Note:—Figures for expenditure for the year 1943-44 are not available as yet.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO NON-MILITARY EMPLOYEES OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

8. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal, other than military forces, that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: This question should have been addressed to the Food Department.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENTS IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

9. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a), (b) and (c). I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply given on the 9th instant to unstarred question No. 6 addressed to the Honourable the Food Member.

SUPPLY OF RATIONS TO FIGHTING FORCES IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

10. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state what the different classes of personnel are of the fighting forces, combatant as well as non-combatant, stationed in Bengal that are entitled to free rations or the supply of essential foodstuffs at concession rates?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement indicating the quantity of rice, wheat (including flour) and other foodgrains that had to be acquired in Bengal, month by month, since January last, for the benefit of such personnel? Through what agencies were such supplies acquired in Bengal, and at what average prices, month by month? What stocks had to be carried by the supplying agencies or any other authorities responsible for maintaining these supplies from time to time in Bengal?

(c) To what extent have the acquisition and maintenance of stocks for supplying the above privileged classes of persons stationed in Bengal with foodgrains, contributed to the creation of scarcity conditions and the prevalence of high prices in Bengal?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) The following classes are entitled to free rations in Bengal:

- (i) All officers and other ranks.
- (ii) All irregular troops who are brought under the command of an army formation.
- (iii) Non-combatants enrolled.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

139

(iv) Civilians paid from the Defence Services estimates who are included in the War Establishment of a unit which has been mobilized.

(v) Labour units for which the issue of Field Service rations may have been specifically sanctioned.

The following class is not entitled to free rations but may obtain rations on payment issue rates:—

Civilians paid from Defence Services Estimates who are not included in the War Establishment of a unit which has been mobilized.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the answer to his unstarred question No. 3 on the 9th November, 1943.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE DEFENCE DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

11. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing supplies for the benefit of these employees, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they had to maintain from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: The Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the reply given on the 9th November, 1943, to his Starred Question No. 55.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to announce that under sub-order (1) of Standing Order 80 of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders the following Honourable Members will form the Committee on Petitions, namely: (1) Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, (2) Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh, (3) Sardar Sant Singh, and (4) Mr. N. M. Joshi.

According to the provision of the same Standing Order the Deputy President will be the Chairman of the Committee.

THE HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION).

PETITIONS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, under Standing Order 78, I have to report that eight petitions as per statement laid on the table have been received relating to the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd March, 1943, by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed.

Petitions relating to the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd March, 1943,

Number of signatures.	District or Town.	Province.
179	Monghyr.	Bihar.
125	Ranigunj.	do.
153	Ranchi.	do.
39	Arrah.	do.
95	Palamau.	do.
62	Saran.	do.
629	Monghyr.	do.
248	Purnea.	do.
Total	1,530	

THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL. (AMENDMENT OF SECTION 100.)

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi (Meerut Division: Muhammadan Rural):
Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, for certain purposes (Amendment of section 100) be continued."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:
"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, for certain purposes (Amendment of section 100) be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE DISSOLUTION OF MUSLIM MARRIAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL. **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi** (Meerut Division: Muhammadan Rural):

Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to amend the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, for certain purposes be continued."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:
"That the Bill to amend the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act, 1939, for certain purposes be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL. (INSERTION OF SECTION 12B.)

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920, for a certain purpose (Insertion of section 12B) be continued."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:
"That the Bill further to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920, for a certain purpose (Insertion of section 12B) be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE MUSLIM KAZIS BILL.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi (Meerut Division: Muhammadan Rural):
Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill to provide for the appointment of persons to the office of Kazi and for performing and keeping a record of marriages and for the appointment of Tribunals for trying and deciding cases of divorce and dissolution of marriage amongst Muslims be continued."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill to provide for the appointment of persons to the office of Kazi and for performing and keeping a record of marriages and for the appointment of Tribunals for trying and deciding cases of divorce and dissolution of marriage amongst Muslims be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi (Meerut Division: Muhammadan Rural):
Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, for certain purposes be continued."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:
"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, for certain purposes be continued."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Khan Bahadur Shalkh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, the Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. H. M. Abdulla, Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt, Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh, Mr. Huseinbhoj A. Lalljee, Mr. Muhammad Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi and the Mover, with instructions to report on the

THE INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL.

first day of the Budget Session, 1944, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Sir, in moving the reference of my Bill to a Select Committee, it is not necessary for me to inflict a long speech on the House. The Bill is extremely brief, and its purport is fully explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. Sub-section (1) of section 209A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act of 1923 provides that if a pilgrim holding a return ticket, owing to failure of the Shipping Company to provide him accommodation on pilgrim ship, is detained at Jedda for a longer period than 25 days, the Shipping Company concerned is bound to pay him by way of compensation Re. 1 per day for each day after the expiry of 25 days. The present Bill seeks to amend this sub-section to provide that in respect of the cabin class pilgrims the compensation shall be increased to Rs. 3 per day.

In the last Session of the Legislative Assembly, on a Government motion, it was decided that the Bill should be circulated for eliciting public opinion. The opinions received, which I trust have been read by the Honourable Members are overwhelmingly in favour of the Bill. The High Court of Madras and the Governments of Madras, Bihar and Orissa, and the Chief Commissioners of Delhi, and Ajmer-Merwara have expressed themselves definitely in favour of the Bill. The Punjab Government does not know its own mind but most of its officers as well as all the religious institutions, including the Provincial Haj Committee, consulted by them have endorsed the provisions of the Bill. Some of the gentlemen consulted have expressed the opinion that the amount of compensation proposed in the case of cabin-passengers is extremely moderate, and that more stringent measures might indeed become necessary, if prompt provision of shipping accommodation for pilgrims returning to India is to be ensured.

Those that have not expressed themselves definitely in favour of the provisions of the Bill may be divided into three well-defined categories. In the first category come those such as the Chief Commissioners of Baluchistan and Coorg and the Government of Central Provinces who have no comments to offer. It is fair to deduce from this that they have nothing to say against the provisions of this Bill. In the second category I would place the Government of the United Provinces and others who do not feel strongly one way or the other about the provisions of the Bill but suggest that such legislation might be postponed till after the war. With all respects I do not find their arguments very convincing. The war is not an excuse for bringing the activities of the Legislative Assembly to a standstill, and when so much more contentious legislation has been enacted during the war years, I do not see why such a simple and innocuous measure, such as the one sponsored by me, should wait until the termination of hostilities. There is also no more force in the suggestion that we should wait until the Government make up their mind to introduce the legislation on the basis of the report of the Special Haj Enquiry conducted by Mr. Rahim. Judging by our experience of the other recommendations made by Mr. Rahim, we will have to wait till doomsday for the necessary legislation to be introduced by the Government of India. The amendment which I have ventured to commend to this House will in no way interfere with any proposals which Government may care to bring forth after the war.

In the third category come those who are in one way or another opposed to the provisions of this Bill. Their number is extremely small and I suggest that their opposition is based on an inadequate appreciation of the correct facts. I cannot over-emphasise the facts that the uniform penalty of one rupee per day for all returning pilgrims delayed at Jedda for over 25 days for want of shipping accommodation is not a charitable relief for poor stranded pilgrims but monetary compensation for the inconvenience caused to them and an inducement to the shipping companies not to be negligent and to provide full shipping facilities as promptly as possible. Therefore, criticism of the Bill based on standard of living or on equality of treatment of pilgrims are not at all relevant. The distinction between cabin or deck class passengers already

[Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha.]

exists and is not introduced by this Bill. It is also pointless to argue that cabin passengers are in a position to maintain themselves at Jedda, for their wealth is no ground for taking away their right to proper compensation. The only relevant consideration is the amount paid by the cabin passengers in comparison with deck pilgrims in the way of fares. Judged by this standard, the compensation of Rs. 3 suggested in the case of cabin passengers is by no means excessive.

Of the two shipping companies mainly concerned with the pilgrim traffic, Messrs. Scindia Steam Navigation Co. are, in principle, not opposed to the provisions of the Bill, but have drawn attention to the difficulties which will no doubt be taken into consideration at the proper time. The opposition of the Moghul Lines Limited is, I submit, based on very flimsy grounds. I have already explained why we cannot and need not wait until the Government undertake a wholesale amendment of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act in pursuance of the Special Haj Enquiry Report. I have also dealt with the argument that the compensation was originally meant only for the benefit of poor pilgrims and I have affirmed that it was and should continue to be compensation pure and simple for pilgrim passengers who through the negligence or the failure of the shipping company had been obliged to prolong their stay at Jedda. The abnormal conditions of the war or the Government's restrictions on shipping are also no reason for not proceeding with the Bill. Under the provisions of section 209A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act the shipping companies can always plead *vis majeure*—as justification for delay. Consequently, they will not be liable to any penalty if their failure to provide shipping accommodation was due to Government restriction on shipping or other causes beyond their control. Claims for compensation under the Act arise only in the case of failure to provide shipping accommodation on account of negligence or mismanagement of the shipping company.

The circulation of the Bill to the public has elicited some very carefully considered opinions in its favour. I would have liked, if I were permitted to quote to you a number of passages which have completely demolished the case of the small minority who are opposed to the Bill. I do not, however, wish to take up any more time of the House and I would content myself with quoting an extract from the very lucid opinion recorded by the Deputy Commissioner, Gurgaon, in the province of the Punjab. In giving his opinion on page 7 of Paper No. I, in para. 2, he says:

"The proviso to section 209-A definitely excludes delays caused from causes other than arising from acts or defaults of the shipping companies. It is therefore to my mind a matter of compensation pure and simple, and in determining compensation the status of the pilgrims and their standard of living, as judged from the manner in which they travel, should be an important factor. If it were a matter of merely alleviating the distress to which the poor and needy pilgrims are put by staying in Jedda longer than they had calculated or made provision for, I do not see why it should have been necessary to exclude the period for which the delay occurs owing to causes not within the control of the shipping companies. The distress would be there all the same. It is to my mind absurd to talk in such matters of discrimination between the poor and the wealthy. Why provide first or second class accommodation on ships? Why should not all pilgrims travel on deck if it is proposed to do away with discrimination between rich and poor? So long as economic conditions are what they are and the society and the laws of the land continue to recognize divisions in the standard of living, it would be necessary to make adjustments in awarding compensation in accordance with such divisions. I am therefore of the opinion that there is no harm in making a distinction in the amount of compensation to be paid to the different classes of pilgrims."

In view of the overwhelming public support I hope that the Government will have no objection in accepting my motion. Sir, I move that the Bill be referred to the Select Committee.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, the Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. H. M. Abdulla, Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt, Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee, Mr. Muhammad Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi and the Mover, with instructions to report on the first day of the Budget Session, 1944, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt (Bombay: European): Sir, I have very little to say which is in addition to the speech I made at the time the circulation motion of this Bill was moved. I gather from what the Honourable the Mover has just said that the Bill is not intended to impose a penalty on the shipping companies. I cannot forecast as to what are likely to be the findings of the Select Committee, but I will say this, it is logical to conclude that if some unknown liability is to be placed on the shipping companies, they will probably protect themselves in some way, and the presumption is that they will do so by raising their fares; and I feel therefore that the Honourable the Mover must have taken that into consideration.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare (Member for Indians Overseas): Sir, I accept the motion.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): I may, I think, usefully imitate the example of my Honourable friend, Mr. Gwilt, by saying that I need not repeat the reasons which I gave in support of this Bill at the time when the circulation motion was debated in this House. I am sure that there is no idea in the mind of either the Honourable the Mover of the motion or anyone else in this House, in any way to penalise the shipping companies who carry pilgrims to Jedda and back to India. The whole idea underlying this measure is that in case of any delay in the repatriation of pilgrims from Jedda which can be rightly attributed to a failure on the part of the shipping companies to perform any of their contractual duties—and in that case alone will the pilgrims be entitled according to their status in life, according to the rate at which they pay the shipping fares, to compensation, calculated at so much per diem on the number of days that they have to spend in waiting. That is the whole idea and that is, I think, fair. Any circumstances in any way excusing or condoning the failure of the shipping company will of course come under section 209A of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act and be taken into consideration and there is no question of penalising the shipping companies at all. With these few words I support the motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1923, be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, the Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Mr. H. M. Abdulla, Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt, Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee, Mr. Muhammad Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi and the Mover, with instructions to report on the first day of the Budget Session, 1944, and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

The motion was adopted.

THE HINDU MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriage between Hindus be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Raja T. Manavedan, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, Mr. Anarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal, Mr. Ananga Mohan Das, Bhai Parma Nand, Pandit Nilakantha Das, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang and the Mover and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

I hope I shall be as fortunate as my Honourable friend, Khan Bahadur Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, whose motion was accepted without any dissentient voice in this Assembly. I hope the Honourable the Law Member's mind is not disturbed by the presence of the Congress Members who are always go-ahead social reformers, because I may tell him definitely that those Members have come here merely to take part in the food debate and lend the House their support to measures sponsored by us, may be Bills, Resolutions or anything else, in defeating the Government where they consider that the action of the Government is anti-national. Their scope being so restricted, my Honourable friend can certainly take things easily. The measure which I wish to be

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

referred to a Select Committee is a very small one. The most operative part of the Bill is clause 2, which reads thus:

"Notwithstanding any custom, rule or interpretation of the Hindu Law, a marriage, which is otherwise valid, shall not be invalid because—

(a) it is between Hindus belonging to the same *gotra* or *pravara*; or

(b) it is between Hindus belonging to the different sub-divisions of the same caste."

Let me, first of all, say this, that I am not in the habit of bringing in measures for which public opinion is not ripe. Since the time I entered this Assembly I have only brought measures for which public opinion was quite ripe. Only to see how we stood in relation to this measure I put a question on the 28th October, 1942, on this subject, that is, *sagotra* marriage. The Honourable the Law Member (who is now in charge of the Department of Information and Broadcasting)—replied that 81 per cent. were in favour of validating *sagotra* marriage. So it will be observed by the House that a large volume of opinion is in favour of this Bill. This opinion is not only that of ordinary members, but of persons who are qualified by their study in law, qualified because of their legal training and by training in the *Shastras*. I will refer to some of these opinions. There is, first of all, the Dharma Nirnayak Mandal. It is a body consisting of well versed *Shastris* who, taking into consideration the circumstances of the country and the needs of the society, from time to time give hints as to what reforms there should be in the social law of the Hindus. I have analysed the opinions received on this Bill. 110 are strongly in favour of the whole Bill and 54 are against the Bill. Out of these 54, 28 are branches of one body called Varnashrama Swarajya Sangh; in other words, those who are in favour of the Bill are 110 and those who are against are 26 plus one, that is, 27. Public opinion which was gathered on this Bill, apart from that which was gathered on the question as issued by the Rau Committee—overwhelming opinion is in favour of this Bill. Legislation is the only remedy. In former days when people allowed things to grow and nobody resorted to courts of law, customs grew overriding the other customs which existed, but in the present days, we cannot have a custom growing because, if there is any incident or any instance, which has departed from the existing law, then immediately the person who considers himself wronged goes to the court and the judges decide according to the law as it exists. In other words, there is no source by which this customary law could be modified. It is therefore incumbent that we must resort to legislation.

Now, Sir, when we are resorting to legislation, it is not possible to have unanimity of opinion. It is not possible to wholly rely on the *Shastric* opinion, because whenever the opinion suits the *shastri*, he may rely on a particular *smriti* but if it does not suit him, then he would throw it overboard. When I made the motion for circulation of the Bill, I relied on a passage which was quoted in Mr. Banerjee's Law of Marriage and Stridan. That passage has been referred to at page 62 of Paper No. IV. This is the Bengal Varnashram Swarajya Sangha which says:

"Mr. Deshmukh contends that marriage in one's own *gotra* is not forbidden, but it is only recommended that marriages should be among different *gotras*. He takes his stand on Manu. III (5) (1)."

Then we have the translation. Now, what does this Varnashram Swarajya Sangha say. It says: 'Manu is not the only law-giver' That means, they have given the go-by to Manu. If we are to be guided by the injunctions and interpretations of the various *smritis*, the social reformers' way is blocked. It is therefore advisable to be guided by public opinion, the opinions of persons who are educated, who know the needs of the society and who have the welfare of the society at heart.

Having made these remarks, let me go on. I have mentioned two disqualifications here. When this Bill was sent for circulation, I received letters from Bengal, from persons who occupy high positions. I do not wish to give their names. They are gazetted officers. They say that in addition to this, there are disqualifications like this, a person from one part of Bengal cannot marry a person residing in the other part of Bengal. In other words, in the

same province, there are sub-divisions which wish to isolate themselves. As a result of this isolation, a small community is reduced to this state that in certain circumstances it may lead to incestuous marriages or the boys and girls in a particular community would never have a chance of getting married during their lives. It is therefore desirable that no caste and no province should isolate itself but always have inter caste marriages and inter provincial marriages. But my Bill is very small and I hope by the support of the House, excluding, of course, the Congressmen, the motion will be carried. (An Honourable Member: "Why exclude the Congress members?") Because I understand that they will not take part in any debate except the debate on food and such measures as they think to be anti-national.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): We are not bothered by that. We will take part in every debate that contributes to the welfare of the country.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I hope by that you include the society also?

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Of course, it does. Country does not mean only houses. It includes all living beings also.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I will just read a few passages from these opinions that we have had. I may mention that I have received support from almost all the provinces of India. Instead of reading all the opinions or the major part of them, in my favour, I start with one particular sub-section first. It is said that marriages among sub-sects of a caste are allowed. They are not illegal.—I have said so in my Statement of Objects and Reasons but now let us see how the matter stands so far as the illiterate persons are concerned, persons who are priest-ridden. The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal of the Benares Cantonment says: This is para. 16:

"The marriage between persons of different sub-castes of the same caste is not so highly objectionable as that between persons of the same *gotra*. But at present, the purity of Raja and Virra, i.e., the Blood and Seed is not observed strictly in all the sub-castes and many new sub-castes have spring up, the people calling themselves to belong to them without really being so. Hence marriage between persons of different sub-castes too cannot be encouraged freely."

What we have to consider is not merely what the case law is. Let us have a law which any person who is ordinarily literate can see for himself—what the law is, so that he may not spend money in getting the opinion of a lawyer as to what the law is. Therefore I am reading some of these passages to show that some persons, and particularly the priests, do think that such marriages between sub-castes of a caste should not be allowed.

I now come to the opinion of the Sri Sankaracharya Mutt Sri Kanchi Nama-Koti Peetam, Kumbakonam which is found on pages 27 and 28. I hope I have given the full titles, because once I was asked to give the names of the persons and the places while referring to the opinions. This is what they say:

"The question of permitting marriages among sub-divisions of the same caste is not one to be dealt with by legislation. The practice of having marriages only within the community or sub-community rests upon *Sishtacharya*. In all the *Smritis*, *Rishis* have given prominent authority to *Sishtacharya*. A Hindu should obey not alone the express texts of the *Shastras* but also be guided by: *Kula Dharma* and *Kulachara*. The significance of these terms is well known to every Hindu. Every Hindu feels bound to practise the rules of *acharya* which have come down in unbroken practice to his family or to the sub-community to which he belongs. All such rules and *acharyas*, which are not contrary to the express *Vidhis* of the *Sruthis* and *Smritis*, have valid and binding authority. Only by adhering to the rule of marrying within the sub-caste, can the principle of caste itself be preserved."

Then, I come to the opinion of Mr. T. E. Satakopachariar, B.A., B.L., Advocate, Tirupapuliyur. I am glad to say many Advocates are on my side. (Interruptions). I suspended my practice long ago and did not resume it. This advocate differs from others and he says:

"The legalising of inter-marriages among sub-castes is also improper and inexpedient as the clear-cut distinctions that now exist will get obliterated and a sort of chaotic pell-mell will be brought into existence which will lead to a great deal of confusion and trouble in religious observances and property-rights also. It cannot be forgotten that the Sub-Castes among the Brahmins are mainly based upon their allegiance to one or other of the different Vedantic Schools of thought such as *Devaita*, *Advaita* and *Visisthadvaita* and if inter-mingling among these groups is permitted much confusion in religious practices and legal rights to religious property will necessarily follow leading to serious results. For

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

these and similar reasons I am emphatically of opinion that this Bill is obnoxious and should be rejected."

This gentleman stands by himself and he has brought in all sorts of religious obstruction and religious property-rights to support his arguments. Anyone who goes through these public opinions will find that the Bar Associations, Advocates individually and Judges individually, have supported my Bill.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: What does the Legal Department of the Government of India say?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: It will have its opportunity to have its say and it will say it. There has been certain confusion on the part of certain persons. They think that by this Bill I was introducing marriage amongst blood relatives. Now, there are very few persons and those are mostly persons who belong to the orthodox class who take objection to my Bill. My Bill is very clear. It says:

"Notwithstanding any custom, rule or interpretation of the Hindu law, a marriage which is otherwise valid shall not be invalid."

Now, for validity it is necessary, according to the law that exists at the present moment, that the marriage should not be amongst the *sapindas*, or blood relations, that it should not be between persons belonging to the same *gotras*. If these conditions are observed, then the marriage shall not be invalid because it is between the same *gotras*. In other words, I am restricting myself only to the same *gotra* marriages. I again wish to make it clear that if a marriage is valid because it is not between the *sapindas* and the rituals are performed, then it shall not be invalid because it is between the same *gotras*.

Now, Sir, let me describe the nature of the Bill. People seem to think that I am making all these people who are religious irreligious and I am forcing them to marry amongst *sagotras*. It is not so; it is a permissive measure. Those orthodox gentlemen, who wish to marry amongst the *binna-gotras*, that is, amongst persons belonging to different *gotras*, are not compelled to marry by this Bill amongst *sagotras*. So, I do not in any way obstruct their observance of the religious injunctions if they wish to observe them. I do not say that persons of the same *gotra* shall marry amongst themselves. If I had laid down a law like this, then it could have been very well said that I was interfering with the religious obligations or religious commands laid down by the Shastras.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What is the meaning of *gotra* according to you?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Please read the book on the subject. You read Banerjee's law on Marriage and Stridhan which is in the Library. I also referred to it in my speech which I made when the Bill was circulated. The word has been freely understood by those persons who have given their opinion. There is a big history behind the definition of *gotra*.

Now, Sir, having said this much, I maintain that this is not an obligatory Bill. It is merely a permissive Bill; it is an enabling Bill; it is a Bill which does not compel an orthodox man to contract a marriage between *sagotras*. Having made this clear, I do not see any reason for opposing this Bill.

Now, I wish to cite one opinion which is on page 12. This gentleman calls himself a Sanatanist and yet he is wholly in favour of this Bill. Rai Bahadur Mehr Chand Khanna, M.L.A., Peshawar (on page 12) says:

"I am in favour of the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriages between Hindus introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly by the Honourable Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh. No doubt it is a measure of social legislation but my considered view is that it has been long overdue. Only those persons can and will say that it is repugnant to Hindu Religion who are neither fully conversant with the Hindu religion nor are at all aware of the difficulties experienced by an average Hindu in such matters. Due to various social disabilities it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a suitable match for a grown up Hindu girl. The sooner these disabilities—legal and social—are removed, the better for the Hindus and more especially for the Sanatanist Hindus. I am a Sanatanist myself and in spite of criticism from certain interested quarters, I boldly take this opportunity to offer my hearty congratulations to the mover of the Bill."

So, it cannot be said that all Sanatanists are against my Bill. There are some who are in favour of this Bill and I have just given a sample of it. In some of the Provinces this injunction not to marry a *Sagotra* is not observed at all. The District Officer, Balasore, says:

"The Bill, as it appears, will only give legal force to a custom said to be already prevalent in Orissa. It seems a necessary statute especially these days when people travel far out of their places of birth and may unwittingly contract marriages with *sagotras* or *sapraras*."

He also establishes the necessity for these marriages. In these days people migrate from one province to another and may marry in that Province. This legislation would legalise such marriages. Otherwise, marriages contracted in a Province where the party has gone, if they afterwards come to know that they belong to the same *gotra*, would be invalidated. He also says that this custom is prevalent in Orissa. I do not see any reason why this should not be followed in other Provinces also. I do not say that if the Bill goes to the Select Committee, an amendment will not be suggested on the lines which the Bar Association, Aska, suggests. The Bar Association, Aska suggests:

"Our Association fully supports the Bill but it proposes the insertion of the word 'only' before the word 'because' at the end of the third line in section 2."

The Bill can certainly be modified when it goes to the Select Committee.

Now, I come to the opinion of the Advocate General of Orissa, Cuttack. I hope the Honourable the Law Member has read this opinion. If he has read it, so much the better. If he has not done so, I hope he will go through it in detail. This opinion deals with the question of *sagotra* marriages and sub-caste marriages in detail. The opinion extends over four pages. He has referred to certain texts and to certain Rishis. After examining all *smritis* carefully, he comes to this conclusion:

"So, the above deduction made by the commentators very clearly shows that the prohibition does not extend so far as to exclude the marriage of all girls who are beyond the *sapindaship* of seventh degree on the father's side and fifth degree on the mother's side, though of the same *gotra* or *pravara* as that of his or her father or mother."

On page 17 of the opinion, he says:

"I may here point out that there is a class of Brahmins in Orissa who are known as 'Galavadra Gotri Brahmins', that is to say, they have all one *gotra* by name 'Balavadra', but had they stuck strictly to the prohibitory rule, they should have been extinct long ago for lack of marriageable girls; but they however carry on their marriages only in conformity with the prohibitory rules in relationship to *sapindaship* and to nothing else, and the *gotra* that they have now adopted is the *gotra* of their respective family priests. But originally or primitively all of them had only one *gotra* and therefore, they were known by the name of their family *gotra*. They are Brahmins of an inferior kind."

From all these, I am of opinion that society does not stand in need of strict observance of this prohibitory rule and legislation validating marriages between *sagotras* and *samana-pravaras* would not only not be inadvisable but would be welcome. The rigidity of the rule has already been smoothened by the Special Marriage Act."

Then there is the opinion of Rao Bahadur K. Raghavendra Rao, Advocate, Coimbatore. He is fully in favour of the Bill. He says:

"I welcome both the clauses of the Bill as they are very essential for the betterment of the Hindu community and it is a wholesome piece of legislation which is not in any way against the science of eugenics. The public opinion of the Hindu community would be behind both the proposed changes in the law."

Regarding clause 2, he says:

"I will take clause 2(b) which is least controversial. There is no legal impediment under the present state of Hindu law from contracting marriages between different sub-divisions of the same caste but in practice, such marriages are very rare. Marriages between an Ayyar and an Ayyangar or a Madhava and an Ayyar or Ayyangar or between a Naidu and Pillai seldom take place though they are of late a few instances."

Now, this has not only been restricted to Brahmins, but it has gone down to non-Brahmins also. He goes on:

"As regards clause 2(a) the contemplated change may not appeal to the extreme orthodox Hindus, who I may say, are infinitesimal. The present law, as it stands definitely prohibits marriages between persons of the same *gotra* or *pravara* and such marriages, if contracted, will be illegal. . . . No less a person than the late Mr. S. Srinivasa Ayyangar the eminent jurist and the author of the revised edition of the Mayne's Hindu Law, had often publicly expressed that this antiquated law must be changed and this prohibition must be done away with. . . . I am of opinion that both clauses 2(a) and (b) are essential and they are desirable pieces of legislation which should be incorporated in the Statute-Book."

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

The Government Pleader, Madras, has also exhaustively dealt with this Bill. Mr. S. Muthia Mudaliar, Vakil, Madras says:

"Probably there may be some meaning in saying that marriages between persons who are close *sagotras* or within 4 or 5 degrees in the male line from the common male ancestor should not take place, but to prohibit marriages between persons on the ground of almost the mythical ancestry of some ancient rishi is not desirable."

And as regards clause 2 he says:

"It is desirable to remove the wrong impression and not to make any innovation."

Then the opinion of the District Magistrate of Poona at page 41 should be

I P. M. read by the Law Member. He understood my Bill properly but those who wished to oppose it had said that they did not know whether this Bill was applicable to marriages between *sapindas*. He says:

"*Sagotra* and *Saprarava* marriages are unobjectionable so long as the rule of *Sapindas* is observed. Mr. Deshmukh's Bill does not interfere with this rule of *Sapindas*."

There is another opinion, that of the Advocates' Association of Western India on page 49 of Paper No. I. It is very exhaustive and refers to the views of eminent jurists and should be gone through by the Law Member before he replies to me. They refer to several *smritis* and *shrutis*. At page 50, for instance, they say:

"In ancient times when the texts were not of such an antiquarian date as they are at present, *Sagotra* relationship may have been very nearly the same as *Sapindaship*. . . . And it can reasonably be supposed that the law-makers of antiquity intended the law to be rigidly applicable to circumstances prevailing at the time the law was enacted or about 500/600 years later. The ancient makers of law can certainly not be imported with the knowledge of circumstances to prevail thousands of years later."

The Law Committee takes the liberty to quote Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar, who has once observed:

"The interdiction of marriage between *Sagotras* can only be regarded as a surviving taboo, based upon no reason or reason which has long since disappeared. This interdiction is a needless and vexatious interference with personal liberty and circumscribes the choice of a bride or bridegroom. . . . The rule of the texts may have been, therefore, laid down on account of the nearness of relationship between the intending spouses."

But they have not given their opinion merely on the ground of the reasonableness or otherwise of the interpretation of Yagnavalka *Smriti* also.

Punjab seems to be wholly in favour; they only suggest the definition or insertion of certain words. I will refer here to the opinion of Pandit Gurdas Ram Dutt, a pleader and President of the Bar Association of Hoshiarpur. Being a Pandit he knows the *Shruties* and *Smritis*, and being a pleader he knows what the needs of the society are.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Question.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: He says:

"I am of opinion that the provisions contained in the Bill do not offend against the mandatory provisions of Hindu Law. It is true that the provisions of the Bill go against certain recommendatory dictates of Hindu Law. It is clear from the text of the Bill that it does not put an end to the restrictions regarding blood relationship between bride and bridegroom. I quite agree with Mr. Deshmukh the mover of the Bill in his interpretation of the words *Sagotra* and *Saprarava*. Regard being had to the changed conditions of Hindu society and the difficulties experienced in the selection of matches for marriage it is desirable that the Bill should be passed into an Act."

Then let me deal with one more point: It is said that those people who are not closely related but belong to the same *gotra*, if they wish to marry there is the Civil Marriage Act open to them. But, as I said in my last speech, it imposes several disabilities, and I mentioned those disabilities. Here it will be found that there are certain lawyers who have also said that the Civil Marriage Act is a way out, but not an honourable one. Therefore, it is not really a reply to my argument to say that though this Bill is desirable, there is a way out and therefore this Bill is not necessary. I have pointed out that there are very few persons who said that as there is a way out why do you want such legislation. Sir, I have laid before the Honourable the Law Member and the Members of the House my arguments in brief and the points which are in favour of the Bill.

I am not against any amendments, and Members know that when a Bill goes to the Select Committee some changes can be made. I hope they will support my Bill.

There is one thing more: Women all over India are in favour of this Bill. There is one argument which is at times advanced, and it is that piecemeal legislation is no good. Well, Sir, it may suit some persons to say so. It is a good handle to postpone any legislation which the Government is unwilling to enact. It is also a very good argument for the Warnasharm-Swaraj-Sang-walas. So far as I am concerned and the majority of Members of this House are concerned, they will say so long as the Bill is not revolutionary it should be passed through. And I say this is not revolutionary. I would like to know where this Bill makes any serious modification in any part of the Hindu Law as regards Law of guardianship or other branches of it. I would be glad to know if this Bill makes such inroads because it is on that plea that I am asked to wait for the whole legislation till codification of the Hindu Law.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may continue after Lunch.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I was dealing with the point about piecemeal legislation. The objection always put before social reformers is that they should wait, and that they cannot have piecemeal legislation. This is rather an absurd argument: if, for instance, a person living in a house finds it is inconvenient and wants to provide some convenience, would it be proper advice for anybody to suggest he should wait till the house comes down or he is in a position to rebuild the house? If he wants to build a little niche in a wall or some little improvement like that, should he wait till the house falls? I think this argument that no legislation which is piecemeal should be introduced is absurd. I can understand if this legislation is such as to revolutionise the whole system of jurisprudence, then it would be very harmful for me to introduce a measure like that. But this is a very small measure, not at all revolutionary and is meant to remove some inconveniences, some hardships which parents find in selecting suitable boys or girls. The argument advanced by the opponents of this Bill is therefore not at all applicable.

I will wind up my speech by making a few observations; that the Bill is permissive. I am not compelling anybody to marriage among *sagotras*. If anything, you are compelling persons who are not *sapindas* to marry outside the *gotras*. If there is compulsion on anybody's part, it is on the part of the Sanatanists whose view I have shown is incorrect and does not suit society today. It is they who compel me to move in a particular ambit and not go out of it. My Bill is permissive and not obligatory; and I do not see any force in the argument that the Sanatanists use against me that I am pulling down the whole edifice of Hindu religion. Whether you take it from the moral or shastraic view, the compulsion is not on my side at all. Of course no social reformer in these days can rely upon the shastras which can be interpreted in different ways. I have already referred to the opinion of one Sankaracharya who when faced with a text of the Manu *Smriti* said "Throw the Manu *Smriti* overboard". So, if any social reformer, in order to meet the needs of society, brings in really useful legislation and reasonable legislation, then it should be supported in the interests of the society.

I have already suggested that the orthodox section was against clause (b) of my Bill about marriages amongst sub-divisions of the same caste. There are persons who say that the law is very clear and by that law is meant only case law, because there is no statutory law—which has held that such marriages are valid; but as long as the year 1936 cases were fought on the ground that marriages between sub-divisions of the same caste are illegal, such cases did

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

come to Courts and I wanted to point out that these gentlemen from Madras, pleaders, held the view that such marriages are unlawful. If a poor man goes to a pleader like that, what would be his advice? That you cannot have a marriage like that. It is for those reasons, in order to make the law clear, and to have a clear guide before everybody, whether he is illiterate or not, that I have been saying that clause (b) is necessary in the Bill.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): It is not necessary to discuss the clauses at this stage.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I was merely saying that because I am anticipating the objection that clause (b) is not necessary because there is the case law. I am not discussing the effect of it. I am merely showing that this provision is necessary. I am therefore expecting support for my motion for referring this Bill to Select Committee. Sir, I move.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): Motion moved:

"That the Bill to remove legal disabilities under Hindu Law in respect of marriage between Hindus be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, Raja T. Mahaveedan, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal, Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam, Bhai Parma Nand, Pandit Nilakantha Das, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang and the Mover and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Mr. Umar Aly Shah (North Madras: Muhammadan): Sir, I oppose this motion.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): The Honourable Member may be allowed to come nearer so that we can hear him better.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): The Honourable Member will come nearer so that all Members may hear him better. (Mr. Umar Aly Shah then came nearer and took a seat behind the Front Bench of the Muslim League Block.)

Mr. Umar Aly Shah: This is purely a Hindu marriage Bill which means religious Bill and there is no necessity for introducing a Bill of this type in this Assembly. There are many castes and creeds and religions. There are several Hindus but there are only a few who know their religion. Please do not mistake me. There are many Sanskrit law books on religious fundamentals but there is no proper interpretation of the same. *Mattha* means interpretation; *Budhir Manushya Dishana, Dhee Pragiashay mushi mathe* (*Amara Simha*). *Amara* says that *Mattha* is a sort of wisdom but not religion. That is a sort of interpretation, there are many schools of thought in religion. But our scholars and our pandits cannot say what is the real name of religion and meaning of religion in Sanskrit term. The Sanskrit language is a very great language in the world, but there are so many books, so many arts, so many sciences. There is literature but that literature is required to be known, there must be research, there must be culture. Hindu religion—it is not a correct name. Hindu is not a correct name. Foreign people came to India. They said Hindus. Hindu is an Arabic word, meaning slave, black, dacoit. Some foreign people came and gave some name in the 8th century when Muhammad Bin Kasim came. He said they were Hindus. Not Sindhus. Sindhis won't say they are Hindus. This is Bharathism, this is Bharatha country. But that is quite a different question. What is the meaning of Hindu law? It means dacoit law, slave law. Foreigners introduced the word Hindus—that they have slave mentality, slavishness and so on. I do not want to go into that sort of political use.

What is the meaning of marriage? Marriage means to serve fundamental duties. There are eight kinds of marriages. Some time ago Dr. Bhagwardas introduced the same Bill. I protested and then it was rejected by Government Members. The same Bill has been introduced now and I do not like this sort of mentality. Brahminism or Bharathism was introduced into India some crores of years ago. There are Vedas, Sastras. I have studied so many things but I cannot say when this Bharathism was established in India. It was said:

"*Chatus Sagara pariantam go bramhanay abhiya servay jannaha Sukhino bhabantoo.*"

It means: This Bharathism is between four oceans. But now there are two oceans, namely, the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. And there are no four oceans now. This Bharathism (Hinduism) has been going on for crores of years. Now, my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, wants to introduce some alterations and reformations in this religion. I do not understand this sort of mentality. He has got foreign culture, foreign language, foreign civilisation and foreign mentality. I say this sort of Bill is not correct and should not be introduced in this House. I know several thousand authorities and interpretations but I did not think that this Bill will come today and I am not ready for this. Manu is not the only law giver, but Parasara is the authoritative law giver for this *Kaliyuga*. *Kalou Parashra Smrutih*. Parasara clearly says:

"*Sagotra ushcha Bivaha uscha—Na kariat mohotopeevu Athkuriyati pramadaiva Priaschitti kurur Jannaha.*"

Sir Gurunath Bewoor and others can understand this. Under no circumstances have you a right to make *sagotra* marriages. *Sagotra* means father's hereditary, not mother's hereditary. *Moha* means *Brahanti*, illusion. But if he does, he should be punished by Government. I can give thousands of similar texts, not one or two:

"*Varnashramam Karmani Natik Kramana Abraveeth. Adhatik Karmanam kuryat Ohandalam Brahmanaha bhavet.*"

Varnashramani means religious functions and you have no right to change, to alter or reform. If it is done by a Brahmin, or non-Brahmin, he becomes a *Chandala*; you cannot say he is a Brahmin. (Interruption.) Mr. Deshmukh does not know his own religion, he has not studied it. He has simply got some reformist views. He mentioned some words. There are many grammatical mistakes in it: *Varna shramasurajiya* is not correct grammatical name.

Surajya means selfish and individual. *Sagotra* means father's hereditary. If a daughter is married as such, that is a very great sin for which there is nothing to compare in this world. As such they cannot perform the *karmas*. There are 16 *karmas* (fundamentals of Bhartism) and it would take a long time to recite them. Honourable Member, Bhajji, talked about it the other day. *Jatak, Vivaha, Seeman*, etc., etc. Therefore, there are 16 *karmas*. They have no right to alter it or to touch it. Urdhparashra says from Gotaum Surti:

"*Sagotrani Bibahani Mahapapayana Bhashitam. Notodhi kar karmani yetussanta mavada.*"

If *Sagotra* (*Sapinda*) marriage occurs that person commits a great sin and therefore has no right to perform any *Karma* (Duty). They have no right to attend the father's ceremony and that sort of function. So, there are many restrictions in Hinduism.

I do not understand why Mr. Govind Deshmukh has introduced this sort of Bill in this Honourable House. There are many great Pandits who can decide this question. This is a political Assembly consisting of elected and nominated members who do not know as much as the Pandits and Maulvis and so we have no right to legislate on this subject here. We know Queen Victoria's Proclamation saying that the British Government do not wish to interfere with the religious customs and usages of any subjects of the Crown. Therefore we ought not to have this sort of Bill in this Honourable House. The case of Muslims and Parsis is different. The other day Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi introduced a divorce Bill. This relates to a custom among Mussalmans. Therefore he wanted a Bill to be passed by this House in regard to changing it but the Hindus have no right to ask this House to change an important feature of Hindu *Sanatana* method of marriage. Therefore, I request Mr. Deshmukh to take back his Bill. We do not want to reform the Hindu marriage law here. What is the meaning of *Sanatana*. It means old. *Adhunik* means new. *Sanatana* means the old customs and usages that have been going on in Hinduism for a very long time. The great Rishis of old knew what was good for society. You have not studied it properly. That is the difficulty. In your speeches you speak of *Dwaita, Advaita* and *Vishishtadwaita*. These are all interpretations of Vedantic principles. These things date back seven hundred years. After Sankaracharya, came Ramanuja who gave a different interpretation. Then came Madhwacharya who gave a third interpretation. These are all in the field of

[Mr. Umar Aly Shah.] philosophy. They have nothing to do with religion or religious functions. Vidayarana said:

"*Trunaaarcha kadi yoga anta—Eshwaray Bhavanti masritaha—Loka atadi Sankhyianta Jeeray Vibhranti masritaha.*"

It means: There are 27 material religions and 27 spiritual religions. These 54 religions may be combined into Hinduism (Bhartism). He gave a big interpretation of the Vijayaranya-Bashya. Go and search them. There are 18 Dharma Shastras (*Ashta Dashanai Shastrani-Dharam roopam Vishati.*) There are so many aspects of Hinduism. Therefore this sort of blood corruption Bill in the name of marriage is not good to be introduced in this House. Therefore I protest against this Bill. The Gita clearly says:

"*Shroyan Swadharmo Vighunaha—Paradharmatoswa—mushtitat—Swadharmaynidhanam. Seragaha paradharmo bhayavaha.*"

"Your own religion may be defective but better than others acting religion (therefore). In our religion you may be inferior it will give salvation, others's religion is dangerous."

This will give very great salvation and *shanti*. The Gita and other literatures are saying 'don't interfere with the old customs'. Hinduism has been in existence for many centuries. Of course I know that Buddha and the great Jain founder, Mahabira came on to reform Bhartism (Hinduism). But they created a new religion altogether. You may say that there are many sub-castes. That is a different thing. There are five aspects of this. They are called: *Gotra, Sutra, Pravara, Shakha and Kula*. You must take all those aspects, and consider them. You must come to know the real worth of Bhartism (Hinduism). Bhartism (Hinduism) consists only of two sects, the Brahmin and the Kshatriya. The Vaisias and the Sudras have no sutras and so on. There are many differences. You must go and search and study them along with these books. Then they will decide what is the real authority to be followed. You read one or two texts only. That is not the correct method to follow. Now, what is the meaning of Sanatana. It means old. You must protect your Sanskrit literature and culture. Don't take this sort of damned wretched and dirty interpretation of Dharma. Dharma means name of Bhartism (Hinduism).

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare (Member for Indians Overseas): What is the meaning of *nidhanam*?

Mr. Umar Aly Shah: It means 'inferior'.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: No. It means 'death'.

Mr. Umar Aly Shah: That is wrong. I can cite the opinion of commentators and I will show you several dictionaries.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): The Honourable Member had better address the Chair.

Mr. Umar Aly Shah: Very well. What is this sort of objection. It is not a good thing. Therefore I oppose this Bill.

Bhai Parma Nand (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, has brought in this Bill as a measure of social reform.

One main difficulty is that the Hindus have mixed up social customs with religion. Every custom that has been in usage, has always got the stamp of religion on it. Therefore, when we think of any measure of social reform, we cannot get rid of the feeling of religion which is attached to it. My Honourable friend, Mr. Umar Aly Shah, has spoken very enthusiastically. He has given authorities from Hindu Shastras as well as his definition of Hinduism. But, what I appreciate most, is the most appropriate question that he has addressed to Mr. Deshmukh. He says that the question of social reform should always be referred to the Hindu Pandits, the learned men. It is none of his business to come before this House and bring such a Bill. He has got no authority to do so.

I would put the same question to Mr. Deshmukh. Has he really consulted the real leaders, the learned men of the Hindu thought and Hindu religion about this measure of social-reform? Marriage is, of course, the foundation of society. The growth of society depends upon the principle of marriage. Without marriage, the human society could not exist. Therefore, whenever we think of

any reforms in the marriage system, we should always see to it that we are not going to break up the whole society by any reform. Our friend, Mr. Deshmukh, said that his Bill is simply permissive; it is not obligatory on anybody to adopt this form of marriage. But my point is that customs are always bound up with certain rules. If you loosen one rule and give permission to people to change it, naturally you loosen the bond of society and are likely to break it up altogether. It is not simply a question of compulsion. You may not compel anybody, but when you make room for such people who are going to violate the custom of the society, you are permitting them to have their own way and thus you are practically weakening the society itself.

Besides I do not understand where is the necessity or need for this reform. Mr. Deshmukh says that it is only to remove certain disabilities from a Hindu who wants to marry among his own *sagotras*. In order to understand why a *sagotra* marriage is not allowed, I would say that principle is based on a peculiar principle of not marrying within certain prohibited degrees. Even in Christianity there are certain degrees which are prohibited for marriage. Similarly, the Hindus have followed that principle. They might have taken it to a very great extreme, but all the same the principle was that marriages within certain degrees should be prohibited. According to this, as the custom grew in strictness, they said that the people who descend from one *gotra* or one common ancestor, should not marry among themselves. That was the principle. This strictness may not suit the present day conditions. But if it is not so suitable, it is the business of the leaders of Hindu thought and religion i.e., those who really have great respect for the Hindu customs, to think of and propose a change in them. As long as the matter is not placed before the leaders of society, it is not fair and proper on our part to come here and suggest such changes. My Honourable friend, Mr. Umar Aly Shah, suggested and I also agree with the suggestion, namely, that my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, should not proceed with this Bill as long as he has not got the sanction of the religious leaders of the society.

Again, I say that any measure of reform must be preceded by a popular demand for it. As far as I can see there appears to be no popular demand for the removal of this disability. So far as I know, there is nobody who is anxious that this disability should be removed. It is quite possible that there is a class of persons who do not care for the social laws of the Hindus and who are so advanced on account of the modern education or the contact with other countries that they want to have more freedom in their marriages. It may be that there is such a class of people of whom I am not aware. All the same, if there are such people, the way is quite open to them. As my friend himself suggested, they can have recourse to the Civil Marriage Act. That Act gives them permission to marry according to their own ideas. Among us there were certain people who wanted to have such a change on account of a change in their religious ideas. The Sikhs, for instance, wanted to perform their marriages according to a fresh awakening in them. So, they went to the Imperial Legislative Council in olden days and got their Anand Marriage Act passed, in order to suit their needs. Similarly, in the eighties of the last century, the Brahmo Samaj would not like the Hindu marriage custom and they wanted to be free so far as marriage was concerned. Naturally, they thought of having a new law for themselves and they got the Civil Marriage Act passed by the Imperial Legislative Council. Quite recently the Arya Samaj did not like restrictions on marriages. They had the perfect right to come before the Assembly because hundreds of marriages were performed by the Arya Samajists not caring for restrictions. They came before this Assembly and had a special law passed for the Arya Samajists with regard to their own marriages. So, if there is any particular class which has got a special leaning and who wish to have more freedom as far as marriage is concerned, they can have recourse to either of these three systems. And if they want something more, they can classify themselves under a separate body and have certain laws passed. But I do not see any reason why a measure should be passed by us for all people who have no concern with it and who do not care even to understand it.

[Bhai Parma Nand.]

Again, Mr. Deshmukh says, there are classes of Hindus who do perform marriages within their *sagotra*, and there are others who do not do so. If that is a fact, as he says, that certain people are allowed to marry within their *sagotras*, and certain others are not, then where is the necessity for enforcing a uniform law on all the people who do not want this change in the system of marriage. Where is the need for bringing in this measure of social reform before this Assembly? As my Honourable friend, Mr. Umar Aly Shah, put it, it is not the business of this Assembly to take up this question of marriages which are mixed up with social customs, and religion and introduce changes in it. We should really approach those people who are the guardians of our social customs, and if they think it necessary that such a change is good for society and the community, it is for them to preach it to people and prepare the ground for this social reform. No kind of social reform will be useful unless the people are prepared to follow it, and as long as there is no demand for it, any reform forced on the people becomes useless. There will be no utility in this reform. There is no use in our spending time of the House in considering such questions which the Hindu society does not want. With these observations, I submit that this measure should not be proceeded with and I think my Honourable friend, Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh, will revise his opinion and drop this measure. With these words, I oppose the motion.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Sir, this Bill wants to remove certain legal disabilities under the Hindu law in respect of marriages between Hindus. The preamble is very wide and I think it should have been restricted to only requiring in what particular direction the Hindu marriage laws should be improved or restricted. As it is, one may think that the Bill is very complex, and the preamble may frighten the orthodox people that something more than what was arrived at by agreement is also being trodden upon. Therefore so far as the preamble is concerned, I submit my Honourable friend has gone beyond the limit to which he should have gone. He might argue that he has defined his object in putting one section to restrict the invalidity or validity amongst *sagotras* or *pravaras*. So far as this is concerned, I will just explain presently that even that is not satisfactory. *Gotra* and *pravara* also have to be explained. The present question is whether we are going to refer the Bill to the Select Committee or not. On that point he will have my full sympathy. But so far as the merits of the measure are concerned, I will hesitate at present to give my blessing until such time as like the other Bill that we had before this House, this Bill also has received full consideration before the Select Committee.

The quasi-Pandit, Mr. Umar Aly Shah, is the only person coming forward and saying that these matters should not be debated in this House, that the Hindu law should not be touched with a pair of tongs in this House. We have heard him. I wish there were present in the House some of the orthodox Members like Babu Baijnath Bajoria. I see Pandit Nilakantha Das present, but he has yet to open his mouth. The question which the House should consider is this, it is a question between orthodox people and the reformers. Should we come in between them? If we agree with the orthodox people that the Hindu law should not be touched, even if the present society considers it stagnant, then we should not take any steps in that direction. We have now to think how far we have proceeded on that question even in this House of leaving Hindu law as it is or of reforming it. We have moved a bit in connection with the Intestate Succession Bill. That went to the Select Committee. There we considered the Pandits' views also. We considered the question whether we should touch the Hindu law or not. That question was thoroughly thrashed out in the Select Committee and we came to the conclusion that we must go ahead with amending the Hindu law. Apart from that, whatever be the view of the Pandits or the view of the reformers, we have to look to the country and the times. We have not to focus our thought at a time which was operating to our ancestors,

to a time when a certain kind of Hindu law was suitable, to a time when everything was going on by dictates of religion. Now, we are in a different atmosphere. We are more or less international people. We have to consider many things, we cannot allow Hindu society to be stagnant. I am all for progression, but with caution. Certain things should not be hurried. Opinions should be called for and every one's view, whatever it be, that of Pandits or no Pandits, reformers or orthodox should be fully considered. It is not because that women say something, we should accept it. We should also consider and give our full view on that point and come to certain conclusions. Of course, the present wave is such that it carries us away absolutely. We are carried away by brilliancies, phantasies and fancies. Formerly we had to think of the other world, but now we have to think of our society. We should not be carried away by things which are simply western. So far as that point is concerned, I may be called orthodox. But I am not orthodox in the sense in which some say, do not touch Hindu law, do not touch anything. I have great respect for my friend, Bhai Parina Nand, when he says that it is a question to be decided by Pandits. All right, let all the Pandits come here and decide. But now it is the legislature which decides these things. Of course, we must pay all respect and reverence to the Pandits' views, but those views also have after all to be considered by us.

Bhai Parma Nand: In the case of the Muslims, it is the Jamait-ul-Ulema that decides such questions. Why should it be different in the case of the Hindus?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Even Pakistan law will have to be considered by this House. Why otherwise they are crying that this House should recognise Pakistan. If they can get it decided by their Ulemas, why should they not do so. They want the help of this House for Pakistan. And they want the help of this Government. Therefore you cannot say that you will not decide but leave it to the Pandits; the Pandits will never agree.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Does Bhai Parma Nand want to be a convert to Islam?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Well, we will be glad to hear the Congress viewpoint also and I congratulate them on their presence here today. I hope even in addition to the food question they will give us their views on this subject. I also want to have the views of Dr. Deshmukh because his views are much wider. He wants divorce and many other things based on his experience of Bombay. We should like to have the Bombay atmosphere also here. As I was saying, I respect the Pandits; and only the other day in the Select Committee we sent for them and also for reformers. They gave us their views; we balanced them and came to certain conclusions.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Why not balance them beforehand?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Because the Mover does not even give an explanation of *gotra*. I will come to the defects in the Bill very soon.

My submission is that Government are not doing the right thing and should reconsider the question. The question whether it should go to the Select Committee or not, and I submit that they should not kill the Bill now but allow it to be considered in the Select Committee. If it is to be thrown out let that be done after you have got the views of the Pandits and those who are competent to give their views. Otherwise you will be killing it at an early age and thus committing murder. We have already moved in the direction of progress. We have the Intestate Succession Bill and that has not been thrown out, and this Bill is intimately connected with that. Here the question raised is about the validity of a certain marriage and the right of inheritance of a wife married under certain conditions. The same question of inheritance is the subject of that Bill also.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Division: Muhammadan Rural): If the same question is raised in the Intestate Bill also, then what is the need for this Bill?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: In that Bill the question is not directly raised. There the question raised is of inheritance but without deciding the question of the validity of a marriage how are you going to decide the question of inheritance? It would have been better if that Bill had dealt with this subject also but the

[Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.]

question of the validity of these marriages must be decided here. I hope my country will excuse me but Sind is committing mistakes in a very wide sphere. Not only are marriages taking place within the 6th and 7th degrees but cousin has married cousin and also marriages have taken place with maternal uncles' daughters. These things are going on in Sind in the name of progress. But in questions of this nature they should have a lead from this House and from the legislature where the subject may be well considered and well treated.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Why not cut the Gordian knot by embracing Islam? You will be free from these difficulties.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I will do it under certain conditions which you will not like. Let us see first what your Pakistan is like. But this is an important question that we are considering. You have committed yourself—and here I am addressing the Government—to its consideration, and it is at a stage where you have again asked for opinions and re-circulation. You will not be losing anything if you take this to the Select Committee. Therefore, I say, take it to the Select Committee, consider it there, do as you have already done in the case of the other Bill, call some Pandits and other gentlemen who can help us in elucidating certain points, and then bring this to the stage at which the other Bill stands. Then take both the Bills together and pass the one which is suitable. If you don't do that, you will not be doing wrong to Mr. Deshmukh only, but you will be doing wrong to those people who want that this question should be further considered.

I submit that there are opinions—I wonder if even Bhai Parmanand has read them all—which say that they do not understand the Bill. We will take them one by one and scrutinize them in the Select Committee. I do not know what is the opinion of the Honourable the Law Member—of course he is bound down by the opinion of his Government, but he can induce the Government and persuade them to bring this Bill to the same stage at which the other Bill stands. Don't nip this in the bud. That would not be right and fair. Just because you are strong you should not defeat the other party. Consider it is what I would suggest.

If the Bill goes before the Select Committee, I will give my views there, whatever they are. I am not one of those who will stand away. That is a reply to satisfy my friend who has put me on the Select Committee. So far as the merits of the Bill are concerned, there are certain suggestions which I will make.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Make those suggestions in the Select Committee.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Yes, I will do so if you will guarantee that and move the Government with all your votes and Congress votes.

Mr. Chairman (Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang): The Honourable Member may proceed with his suggestions.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What I submit is this: At present we are not in possession of all the facts and we do not know what is really wanted by my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. I put him a question: "What do you mean by *gotra*? Is it defined anywhere?". I do not find it defined in the Hindu Law. It has several meanings and there are several interpretations of it, and I will presently tell you what they are. As I have said, I asked him what was the meaning of the word *gotra*. He said: "There are opinions on it." Of course there are, but they are not Pandits and they are not legislators.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): May I know the interpretations—you say they are more than one—of this word, *gotra*?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am telling you what it is. I am not a Pandit. I wish you had spoken first; I wanted to hear myself.

Then, Sir, he has not given the meaning of *pravar*, he has not given the meaning of sub-caste. We understand it, but there is some difference in interpretation there too. So far as *gotra* is concerned, I asked him and he replied: "*Gotra* and *pravar* mean those marriages which take place between the house of a preceptor and that of a disciple; these are invalid according to the Hindu

Law." He further said that by using the words *gotra* and *pravar* he wants to remove that restriction. Perhaps he expects that I am at one with him. No. Customs were different in the olden days; people used to have great respect for the preceptors, and I think it was wise in those days not to have marriages between the families of the preceptor and those of disciples. That stands to reason. But where are those preceptors and disciples now? I do not think Pandit Nilakantha Das will say that that practice of preceptors should be held valid.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: It has nothing to do with it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: You may say so, but here is the meaning which Mr. Deshmukh has given.

So, I say, Sir, that the meanings and interpretations of these words should be made clear. What is *gotra*? I ask my Honourable friend the Law Member? He comes from that part of the country where religion is given great importance and there have been many reformers—good reformers—in Bengal as well. What I understand of this word is 'original ancestors'. I may be absolutely wrong, but that is what some people take it to mean. I want that to be cleared. It is also said that in the word *gotra* comes the *sapinda* and *sagotra*. And they again are divided. Again what is *sapinda* and what is *sagotra*? *Sapinda*, they say, are marriages within certain degrees—there are four degrees—which are illegal. Some section of opinion says that *sapinda* means invalidity beyond certain degrees in the ancestral line

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: *Sapinda* means that?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: It may not; that is why I am asking you to come and help us; otherwise different people will be saying different things and we will all be divided.

Then, *sagotra* means from the same ancestor, however high. Sind is also involved in this and this is the view of the Sind Government, which I will read with your permission:

"The Government of Sind while not opposed to the general principle of the Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill, consider that the Bill, as it stands, is liable to the interpretation that marriages between *sapindas* are also valid, although that does not seem to be the intention of the author. In order that there may not remain any room for doubt, they desire that the Bill should be so amended as to make this point quite clear. This can be done by adding the words "who are not *sapindas*" after the word "*pravar*" occurring in clause 2 (a) of the Bill. They also desire that a new clause may be added to the Bill laying down that a marriage between *sapindas* who are caste Hindus is invalid and the parties to such a marriage should, on conviction, be punished with imprisonment extending to one year or fine or both."

There seems to be a misunderstanding about *sapindia*, *gotra* and *sagotra*, and the place where these difficulties can be explained properly and we can reach some conclusion is the Select Committee. That is what Mr. Deshmukh is striving for and I support him there.

Further on the District Judge of Hyderabad has also given his opinion—he says:

"So far as Sind is concerned this restriction of *Gotra* or *pravar* is not followed."

In other words they do not wait to see whether the husband and wife were connected with some original ancestor of any degree. We have come to a certain degree when we see merely whether the marriage is good or bad. I cannot understand this definition and perhaps if the Law Member gets up and says: "This is the meaning of *sapinda* or *gotra* or *sagotra*", he may succeed; how can I contradict him? But in Select Committee there will be some Pandit like Mr. Mukherjee from Bengal or Mr. Deshpande from Benares, who helped us so much. They will tell us whether the Government's interpretation is right or wrong. Therefore we will be doing wrong to the Mover of the Bill if we shelve the Bill now and do not proceed further with it.

As regards sub-caste, I was also wondering whether any definition of sub-caste is needed or not. In Sind there is no sub-caste at all; they are all castes; but subsequently I became aware that Bhatiyas are a sub-caste—they are Hindus but they call themselves Bhatiyas; formerly they were not intermarrying with

[Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.]

Vaishyas or with any one who was not a Bhatiya, but lately I have seen that a Bhatiya woman was married to a Vaishya. As far as Brahmins are concerned, in the part of Sind where I come from, I do not find Brahmins very strict: perhaps in eating and drinking they may be strict. I cannot say if they are doing it on the sly; but of course in Bengal the Bengalis eat fish, which on our side they will not; but these are questions apart. There are not many sub-castes among the Brahmins in Sind; therefore I say that the Government should consider and reconsider their position. Do not take the Bill away because you feel you are strong today. I must say it is the fault of the Congress members also, because when they were there and joined hands you knew where you were; and I am glad they showed you the other day that you are not going with the opinion of the public. I would therefore appeal to our present Law Member and also to the other Law Member "Hindu law Member"—Sir Sultan Ahmed—who showed us ability of more than a Hindu in that Intestate Bill Select Committee, and also to his other colleagues to allow this Bill to go to the Select Committee.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): I would not have risen but for the fact that during the discussion a tempest was raised in a teapot. The measure is such a small one, such an unimportant one that I thought it might even go unnoticed when the Mover had moved the motion, but it has roused some interest especially when the aid of pandits was invoked in this House. The aid of religion also was brought in. So, I am reminded of a story where in a kingdom the king's maid servant, went to a washerman's house to bring some washed clothes. There she found the washerwoman weeping. So, the maid servant came to the king's palace weeping. The queen asked, why are you weeping. The maid servant replied, the washerwoman was weeping and so I am weeping. The queen also began to weep. When the king saw this and asked the queen, the queen said that she was weeping because the maid servant was weeping. The king then began to weep. The whole kingdom began to weep. The prime minister saw this and asked the king why he was weeping. The king replied that he was weeping because the queen was weeping. When the prime minister asked the queen, the queen said she was weeping because the maid servant was weeping. When the maid servant was asked, she said she was weeping because the washerwoman was weeping. When the washerwoman was asked, she said, "I am weeping because my dear donkey is dead". So that was the cause of the whole kingdom weeping! I do not know why in such things the aid of religion is invoked, the aid of pandits is invoked. Cannot some of us who have suffered at the hands of the pandits legislate ourselves? Why do you want the aid of pandits who made laws in which there were different sets of punishment for the same offence? If a sudra commits a wrong, the punishment is his ear should be chopped off, or his ear should be stuffed. If the same offence is committed by a Brahmin he goes unpunished. Do you want the aid of such pandits? You should consider that you are sitting here as legislators, what the pandits used to do in the days of old you are required to do now. You are as good pandits as those of old, to make laws. In those days you could get pandits and *sastris* who could give a lead in the matter of legislation. They always made laws according to the circumstances of the country. Where the society is living there is always amendment. Even in this House when a law was enacted six months before, you want some amendment in it even within six months. That shows that you are alive and a living people. You can legislate for yourself, you can adapt yourself to the changing circumstances. When you require some change, some progressive step to be taken, why invoke the aid of pandits of 5,000 years before, Yagnyavalka, Parasara and so on. Why should you always look up to them for help. When they made those laws they little knew that circumstances would change. When you enact a law, you require change in it even within a year. Those pandits were all human beings, they were not gods; they were not superhuman beings. Only those who are mentally slavish think that they are superhuman. But even

superhuman beings have got a limitation. You should not always look to them. You should look around yourself, you should look at the condition of society now. If you think that there is need for a change, you bring it about. If you think that the change is not good, do away with it. Make that the only test; don't depend upon the pandits of 5,000 years ago. That is the spirit in which I am pressing before the House this piece of legislation by Mr. Deshmukh.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai has spoken too much. The points which he has raised may well have been raised in the Select Committee itself. He has tried to clarify these words, *sagotra*, etc. I am also in doubt what is a *sagotra*, because these are the words that are playing havoc. Most of us do not know even what *gotras* we belong to. To-day I was enquiring of a friend of mine about his *gotra*. He said he belonged to Vatsa *gotra*, I know among Vatsa there are many brahmins and vaishas, sudra, etc. I am vatsa *gotra*, I do not know whether I am a brahmin or a sudra. I may be called a sudra according to some. So, you see people of different castes may be in one *gotra*. If *sagotra* is a descendant from a common ancestor, persons of different castes become descendants of that one common ancestor. So, it is anomalous to-day this *sagotra* business. Most people do not know, but those who are so much wedded to custom, they are welcome to cling to it. But why stand in the way of others who want this change? It is in this spirit that I place before the House this proposition. You can discuss in the Select Committee whether this change will affect society.

The question of prohibited degrees has been raised. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai has tried to explain what is a *sapinda*. *Sapinda* means those who are entitled to offer *pinda*. Those who are entitled to offer *pinda* cannot marry in certain cases because nearness in the relationship is prohibited for marriage. These things can be discussed in the Select Committee and we can fix some degree of prohibition in that regard amongst *sagotras*. It is absurd in these days to invoke the aid of the pandits. I could have said many more things, if Mr. Lalchand Navalrai had not taken so much time. I whole-heartedly support the motion. My Honourable friend here reminds me of a point. There are castes which marry among *sagotras*. Among Kayasthas the custom is a Srivastava marries only among Srivastavas. In the present days people have begun to marry among their own *sagotras*. I submit that we should be a little cautious in invoking the aid of religion or of pandits.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Do all Srivastavas belong to the same *gotra*?

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: I do not know. This is only what I can tell you. So, a good many meaningless things are there in the Shastras over which

Mr. Umar Aly Shah may beguile your time by delivering discourses 4 P. M. in his leisure time. But so far as I am concerned, I feel we should think about them and we should cautiously apply that in our practical business, because those are obsolete things. Those who have got some attraction or over-attraction for them may cling to them and take pleasure in them but when it concerns the public well-being they should be true to themselves and to society and give a proper lead. With these words, I support the motion for referring the Bill to a Select Committee.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: We are in the midst of an amusing debate. I am reminded of a story: Once a legislator like me went into the villages for some canvassing or other purposes. That village had a temple. Inside the temple there was some stone with some marks of vermilion and the temple was made of unhewn stones. Then the legislator said that such temples and such deities may not attract people. He said 'You must have a temple made of good stones and spend some money. You should decorate it'. Then the priest said 'You are a legislator. You just have a permissive Act saying that all Hindus may visit temples made of unhewn stones.' This Bill seems to be something like that.

From the various speeches, it appears that among 90 per cent of the Hindus, marriages inside the *gotra* and even among sub-castes are going on from immemorial times. I do not know what sub-caste exactly means. That is a very

[Pandit Nilakantha Das]

difficult controversial question and I agree with my friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, that the *gotra* is also very difficult to interpret. Anyway if the *sagotra* marriages are so common, there must be case laws in hundreds where on account of *sagotra* marriages children have been disinherited by the courts. If some such difficulty is put forward, then there is some cause for action to be taken.

It may be that the *sagotra* marriages were enjoined as an ideal to avoid consanguinity, that is blood relation. We are always wanting some reform in the political or economic sphere and if we cannot do anything there, for which we always hanker, then we begin to kick the society and social institutions, for which there is no protection. I should like to know whether in a good number of cases children have been definitely disinherited on account of *sagotra* marriages. I know that marriages among cousins are not allowed according to Hindu law. That may be the Hindu ideal but I know that cousins marry and even in the Dravida country. The exception is provided:—

“*Dakshine Mātulā Kanyā.*”

“Maternal uncle's daughter is bride in the South.”

The maternal uncle's daughter is married and even sister's daughter is married among the Brahmins. (An Honourable Member: “No.”) I know all these things do happen. You know our late friend, Mr. Duraiswami Aiyangar. His son has married to his sister's daughter. I went to his house and I know this personally. (An Honourable Member: “He may belong to the Pandit class.”) Whatever it is, it is a fact. It is permissive. It was the custom among the non-Brahmins in the Dravida country and for over a hundred years or more the Brahmins have taken it up. If that is so, I should like to know definitely if there is any difficulty on account of these marriages. Then only there is a necessity for proposing what you call a reform. I do not know what kind of reform this is.

The Bill proposes three things. One is marriage among the *sagotras*. Another is marriage among sub-castes and the third thing is that such people do not like to marry under the Civil Marriage Act. There is an outlet in the Arya Samaj. If he wants to marry, as he desires, he can go over to the Arya Samaj or Brahma Samaj, or take to civil marriage. He may marry in the same *gotra* or in what he may call sub-caste. Where is the necessity of our passing this law? Then again, a man marries a *sagotra* only when he likes to marry his cousin, or some such near relation. He does not come from Orissa to marry a *sagotra* in Sind. This being the case, if you exclude *sapindas* or near *sagotras*, what is the use of this law? It is useless. It is only for *sapindas* and such other near relationship by blood that *sagotra* marriages might take place in families where it is not allowed. If you exclude *sapindas* you yourself kill your own Bill.

Then how many people are affected? If half a dozen people in India want to marry their *sapinda* or *sagotra*, what is the necessity of this Law. Even if there is a difficulty, let them go to the Arya Samaj where a man can become of any caste. Then, there is the Civil Marriage Act. So, this Bill is really ununderstandable to me.

Then, the question of sub-caste marriage. It is a very difficult proposition. Does he mean to say that the Hindu society consists of four castes only? Can a Marwari Vaishya marry the girl of a Bhatiya Vaisya caste? Is it to be allowed under this Bill? So, it is a very complicated question. Apart from the fact that we may call ourselves reformers, it will perhaps create more complications than already exist even in the proceedings of the law courts. More law suits are bound to crop up. So, why have all these difficulties in the name of reform. What kind of reform is this? I really fail to understand.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

Whenever anything in the nature of a social reform is under consideration, religion is always attacked. But our religion, as I have already said, is guided

by certain norms and ideals. All people are not expected to attain that ideal. Those who want to marry their cousins are quite welcome to do it.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: You have thoroughly misunderstood the whole thing. I have made it clear that *sapindas* are excluded. I have excluded seven degrees on either side, but you have no sense to understand it.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: If you exclude seven degrees then there is no necessity for this legislation. They must know the girl before they marry. That is my contention. Therefore, I say it is not necessary to tamper with the ideal of the society which guides the Hindus and the Hindu religion. It is very difficult to compare the Hindu religion with Christianity or Muhammadanism, because they are not one and the same thing. In Islam and Christianity you have got injunctions by revelation but in Hinduism you have got sayings of wise men which are based on the experience of ages. They are two different things and you should not mix them up. If there is a real necessity, you should make out a case for it. Even in the last Succession Bill, there was no case for a daughter's share. When it was asked whether you have analysed the wills for the last 50 years to find out when property was given to the daughters, there was no reply. Sir, we are not averse to passing laws. We are here to make laws for the good of the society. But where is the case for such a law? Why do you unnecessarily want to disturb the society, the religion and criticise Pandits? I do not understand why you should abuse them. With these words I resume my seat and I hope my friend the Mover of this Bill will act more sensibly.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I regret I must oppose this motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. I wish to make a brief speech but I hope I would be able to give the House convincing reasons for rejecting this motion. Honourable Members are aware that Government have accepted the recommendation made by the Hindu Law Committee for the codification of the Hindu law by stages. Government have also accepted the Committee's proposal that the law of marriage should come next in priority to the law of succession. Honourable Members are also aware that pursuant to that view, the Marriage Bill, prepared by the Hindu Law Committee, was introduced in this House on the 2nd of March, 1943 along with the Succession Bill. Though Government have not found it convenient in existing conditions to proceed further with the Marriage Bill, I do not regard that circumstance as militating against the view which I firmly hold that when we have comprehensive legislation on the anvil, we should not introduce piecemeal legislation.

But, Sir, even if I were not impressed by this general consideration that piecemeal legislation should not be undertaken when comprehensive legislation is on the anvil, I would still oppose the Bill as it does not merit support. The only operative clause in the Bill is clause 2 and it runs in these terms.

“Notwithstanding any custom, rule or interpretation of the Hindu Law, a marriage, which is otherwise valid, shall not be invalid because—

(a) it is between Hindus belonging to the same *gotra* or *pravar*; or

(b) it is between Hindus belonging to the different sub-divisions of the same caste.”

Honourable Members, I think, know that, it is now settled law that a marriage between persons belonging to different sub-divisions of the same primary caste is not invalid. The provision contained in clause 2 (b) is therefore wholly unnecessary. Clause 2 (a) does, however, seek to introduce a change in the existing law, and, Sir, only in view of the fact that Hindu opinion on the merits of the proposal contained therein is sharply divided, I feel I cannot lend the support of Government to this measure. Sir, I am very glad that this motion has been so fully discussed on the floor of the House. We have had many Honourable Members addressing the House on the motion for referring the Bill to the Select Committee and even in the House we find Honourable Members are sharply divided in their opinions. My Honourable friend, Mr. Umar Aly Shah, quoted Sanskrit texts and I hoped that would serve the purpose of encouraging and inducing my Honourable friend, Mr. Govind Deshmukh, to abandon his motion. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai told the

[Sir Asoka Roy.]

House that he did not understand what Mr. Deshmukh's Bill meant, but all the same he said. "let us take the Bill to the Select Committee and there I will try to understand it". I should have thought that if Mr. Deshmukh's Bill was so worded and was so vague that Mr. Lalchand Navalrai a well known Advocate of Sind could not understand it or make any sense out of it, he would have been the first person to oppose the motion for reference of the Bill to the Select Committee. But he said. "let us by all means take it to the Select Committee, we shall call in a number of Pandits, we shall call in a number of legal experts and ask them to examine the Bill and explain it."

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: We will examine you in the Select Committee.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: If the Bill goes to the Select Committee, I shall be the Chairman. May I now refer, Sir, to a very significant fact. The Hindu Law Committee when drafting the Bill on Marriage considered the matter of *sagotra* marriages very carefully and they came to the conclusion that the proper way to deal with the matter would be to leave the law as it is and in clause 4 of their Bill when dealing with the requisites of a sacramental marriage, they proceeded to lay down that a sacramental marriage may be solemnised between any two Hindus upon the following conditions—I will not read all the conditions but only the relevant ones—both the parties must belong to the same caste and if the parties are members of a caste having *gotras* and *pravaras*, they must not belong to the same *gotra* or have a common *pravara*. Now having laid that down, they provided in clause 7, that "no sacramental marriage solemnised after the commencement of this Act shall, after it has been completed, be deemed to be, or ever to have been invalid merely by reason of one or more of the following causes, namely, that the parties belonged to the same *gotra* or had a common *pravara*". In other words, they thought it would be enough to rely on the doctrine of *factum valet* to validate these marriages. But the point I am stressing is that the Committee after having given the most anxious consideration to this matter of marriages between persons belonging to the same *gotra* came to the conclusion that they should not attempt to alter the law in that respect so far as sacramental marriages were concerned. Honourable Members are aware that persons who do wish to marry in the same *gotra* need not go through a sacramental marriage. It is open to them to marry under the Special Marriage Act, if they do not wish to observe the Hindu law rule which prohibits marriages between persons of the same *gotra*. The matter is entirely in their hands. But they have no right to come to the Legislature and say "We will marry in the same *gotra*, and our marriage must be recognised by Hindu law as a proper and valid sacramental marriage". The Hindu Law Committee have provided very thoughtfully for cases where a person has married, perhaps unknowingly, another person belonging to the same *gotra* and the clause 7 lays down that in cases where the marriage has been completed and has been otherwise properly performed, the mere fact that the two persons who solemnized the marriage were persons of the same *gotra* should not invalidate the marriage altogether. That, I submit, Honourable Members of this House would agree is as far as one could go, without unduly interfering with the Hindu law. There was some doubt as to whether a marriage which had already taken place between two persons belonging to the same *gotra* could be held valid under the doctrine of *factum valet*, but in order to put that matter beyond doubt, the Hindu Law Committee thought it proper and necessary to make the provision contained in clause 7 of the Bill.

Sir, I do not wish to inflict a long speech on the House, after this motion has been so fully discussed. I shall conclude by summarising my reasons for asking the House to reject this motion. My reasons are these: piecemeal legislation should not be undertaken when comprehensive legislation is on the anvil, Hindu opinion is sharply divided on the merits of the Bill, the Special Marriage Act is available to those who wish to marry within the same *gotra* and it is not open to them to come to the Legislature and say, "though we have a right to marry under the Special Marriage Act, we insist upon a

sacramental marriage and we want you to change the law for our benefit". Lastly I think controversial legislation of this nature should not be undertaken in existing circumstances. That is all I desire to say.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, the matter has been very much simplified and the Honourable the Law Member has answered Pandit Nilakantha Das and Bhai Parma Nand. Pandit Nilakantha Das said there was no such necessity, people were marrying and there was no complaint. But the voluminous opinion that I cited was of the view that there was need for this legislation. And now I have derived support from the Honourable the Law Member. He has referred to the Marriage Bill that was introduced but God knows when it will be referred to the Select Committee. The section in the Marriage Bill contains the restriction as regards *gotra* but it provides a way out by the application of the doctrine of *factum valet*. They have seen the necessity of this doctrine to validate marriages that take place nowadays. That point is clearly established by what has fallen from the Law Member. Pandit Nilakantha Das said that he saw no need for this legislation because people of the same *gotra* are entering into these marriages and no one goes to court. According to him, I suppose, if a person wants to build a house he need not take any precautions against fire because the house is not yet burnt. I am also surprised that Pandit Nilakantha Das does not know the distinction between *sagotra* and *sapinda*. I said that *sapindas* are excluded and blood relationship (which means *sapindas*) to the 7th degree on the boy's side and 5th degree on the girl's side are excluded from the purview of this Bill. If Pandit Nilakantha had the slightest intelligence to understand the distinction between *sapinda* and *sagotra* he would not have made such a foolish speech. But you cannot expect anything better from such a pandit as my Honourable friend who in a lecture in the Sanskrit College said that the Sanskrit language is not a pure language. Pandits who can go to that extent can say anything but it will not be swallowed by people who know anything about it. So whatever the Pandit said is not worth answering; it is beneath contempt.

Then Mr. Umar Aly Shah is a man learned in Sanskrit literature but when Bhai Parma Nand says that we should take the help of pandits, I have to say it is no use taking the help of any pandit. In my opening speech I said that if I rely on Manu Smriti some one says he does not agree with that but there are other Smritis. If the pandits quarrel among themselves what are we to do. So, for one purpose they will rely on one Smriti and for another purpose they will rely on another. So the Smritis may be left where they are; they are contradictory and the interpretations are conflicting.

I have shown that there is a volume of opinion behind me. It was suggested, however, that they may not be very learned and educated people. In reply to that I mentioned the opinion of the Dharma Nirnayak Mandal of Bombay who said that having regard to the needs of the Hindu Society this prohibition of marriage among *sagotras* should be abolished. That view is found on page 42. It is a body composed of very highly educated people like Professor P. V. Kane who as an authority was consulted by Government on the Hindu Intestate Succession Bill, and also Mr. N. G. Chaphekar and Mahamahopadhyaya Sridhar Sastri Pathak. These gentlemen who are well versed in ancient Shastras have said that this prohibition against *sagotra* marriage should be abolished. Imagine a person living in Kashmir who belongs to the Kashyap *gotra* and another person in Madras having the same *gotra*. They cannot marry although for hundreds and thousands of years they have never seen each other and there may not be one drop of common blood in them, and if they marry the marriage will be considered to be invalid. So the absurdity of the rule is such that no reasonable person can support this. It was all right in those early days when the communities moved in small tribes. As a matter of fact when the Aryas came they came in small tribes. They could not marry in their own tribe. There used to be a few families in one tribe moving from place to place and they evidently wanted to marry persons from other tribes on the grounds of eugenics and may be they thought that they must secure brides as prizes from different tribes. Anyhow, the

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

fact is that thousands of years ago those tribes—though cultured, not nomads, but agriculturists—had these laws and these cannot hold good in these days when the society is not really agricultural. Of course the majority is living on agriculture, but people have to move from place to place in search of service or living of some sort and it is not possible now-a-days to ascertain the *gotras*. Therefore, as pointed out by me from the opinion of one of the persons, in these days it is very necessary to abolish this rule. *Varnashrama dharma* was quoted by my friend, Mr. Umar Ali Shah. It has nothing to do with it. According to *Varna* or *ashram* if a person of that *varna* or *ashram* does not behave according to the rules it may be that Mr. Umar Ali Shah will consider him *chandal*. If you were to take this into consideration, I may say that there is no person who is not a *chandal*. There are very few persons who are behaving according to the dictates of the rules laid down by the old *rishis*. Now-a-days there is only one *Ashram* and that is *Grihastha ashram* and only one *varna*—call it *Vaishya* or *Sudra*. No Hindu acts according to the old rules of conduct laid down by Munis for the Hindus. Sir, as I have already said, a hackneyed argument is advanced that Assembly is not the place for legislation, and yet I find that everybody—even in the matter of social reforms—comes here. In these days new customs cannot be created to over-ride the existing customs. If things contrary to the existing customs are introduced, those affected at once take recourse to the court of law. Therefore no custom can be created; however, suitable it may be to the times. And, therefore, the only hope lies in legislation. I cannot understand the argument of those who come here for legislation for other purposes when they say in a matter like this: "Oh, leave this Hindu society alone".

Now, I come to the arguments advanced by the Honourable the Law Member. He says, this Bill is not necessary first of all because there is already a comprehensive Bill. Well, my blessings are for that Bill, but the trouble is that you do not refer it to the Select Committee. I cannot understand why it should not be referred to the Select Committee and why it is postponed from time to time. The Hindu Intestate Succession Bill is not going to come into force till 1946. So why not refer this Bill to the Select Committee. I have always said, and I repeat it now, if you refer your Marriage Bill to the Select Committee, I would be willing to withdraw mine. If I am able to get an answer to that now, I will withdraw my motion. May be, this is meant to extract from you a confession. Why are you not referring that Bill to the Select Committee? May be, it is a move to get an assurance from the Government that that Bill would be referred to the Select Committee. I do not know whether I can get an answer out of the Government Benches. If there is no answer, then I am not prepared to withdraw this. Of course, I know what the fate of this Bill would be. I know it very well, but I am glad that the public outside this Assembly knows what views are held by different persons and different organisations, and they also know the views of the Government. The women, who have given their wholehearted support to this Bill, will also know how far the Government is prepared to go, and how dilatory procedure the Government follows in moving in social matters. All that I can say is that if you don't refer your own Bill to the Select Committee soon, the social reformer section will begin to think that the sympathy which the Government is showing is merely lip sympathy. They know how the Government has proceeded, and they will find that Government is really slow to move in the matter. If you don't wish to be suspected of any such charges against you, then you must tell me that you wish to refer your own Bill to the Select Committee.

I should have been very glad if I could have some authoritative opinion about this *factum valet* principle. In the case of adoption it has been made applicable, but in the case of marriage it has not been so made, and let me tell you that the sooner you bring your own measure or support my motion, you would be doing a very good service to persons who are in high position—I do not wish to disclose names—but who not having known the law, married amongst the same *gotra* and if I may say so the cry comes very loudly from

THE HINDU MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

165

Bengal—I do not wish to disclose names; but it is from that province that this reform is very much demanded; and it was said that I should press to have this motion carried, or if not, at least discussed on the floor of the House. I wish the Law Member had said something more about this *factum valet* principle in the case of marriage. They would have a little hope, if he could refer to some cases, cases which have come to his notice, that *factum valet* can be made applicable. I know it has been said generally that where the conditions laid down are directory and not mandatory the principle of *factum valet* will apply. But there are some who think that this injunction as regards prohibition of marriages is merely directory and not mandatory. But there seems to be a different interpretation made by different Smriti writers. Therefore, if any authoritative view had come from the Law Member of this Government, that *factum valet* is applicable in such cases, those persons who are anxious that this Bill should be passed, would have been really very glad. As a matter of fact there are men from Bengal and Jubbulpore who have specifically said. . . .

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: May I just interpose for a minute? I do not know if it will satisfy the Honourable the Mover if I were to say, that I shall do whatever is possible to try and have the Rau Committee's Bill on Marriage referred to the Select Committee in the next Session. I cannot commit the Government altogether; but I think it very likely that the marriage Bill will be brought up at the next Session and taken to its next stage. That is all I can say at the moment and I hope that will satisfy the Honourable the Mover, and he will not press his motion.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I am satisfied with the assurance given; and in view of that I beg leave to withdraw this motion. But let me point out that there is a great urgency.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Why did not the Law Member make this statement before? It would have saved a lot of time.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Because the Law Member thought it proper to have this motion debated in the Assembly.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Has the Honourable the Mover the leave of the House to withdraw his motion?

(Voices: "Yes, yes.")

The motion was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 12th November, 1943.

1531 ✓
22.7.44

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Friday, 12th November, 1943

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

MISBEHAVIOUR OF MILITARY TROOPS TOWARDS RAILWAY STAFF AND VENDORS.

98. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:-

(a) whether any instances of misbehaviour by the military troops towards the Railway staff and vendors, while travelling in special or ordinary trains, have been brought to the notice of Government;

(b) if the Honourable Member proposes to lay on the table a statement of incidents referred to in part (a) above which occurred on the various Class I Railways in India from the 1st January to the 31st August, 1943;

(c) if the Honourable Member is aware that on the 12th August last some military people severely beat a vendor at Pad Idan Station on the North Western Railway and threw away the foodstuffs at the stalls and with the hawkers on the platform;

(d) what action was taken by the Railway police or the Railway staff against the military personnel concerned; if none, why;

(e) if Government have imposed any restriction on the arrest of the military personnel for misbehaviour in the Railway premises and for offending the law of the land; if not, why the police and the Railway staff did not take action against the military personnel on the spot; and

(f) if the reply to part (c) be in the affirmative, what steps Government propose to take to prevent the misbehaviour by the military personnel while travelling by rail; if none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) A statement of incidents brought to notice is laid on the table.

(c) I understand no such incident occurred at the station on the date mentioned.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. In view of the reply to part (c), the second portion does not arise.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement of incidents reported to G. H. Q. regarding the misbehaviour of troops at Railway stations.

1. An incident occurred on 23rd June 1943 at Manmad where the train was detained for 42 minutes due to a B. O. R. removing a case of liquor from the platform into his compartment. Efforts to apprehend him led to the Assistant Station Master being assaulted by another B. O. R. The culprits were detained and sent under escort to Deolali and then on to their unit at Ahmednagar. Necessary disciplinary action in the matter has been taken by the O. C. Unit.

2. An incident on 21st July, 1943 near Sealdah Station where 30 I. O. Rs. of an Auxiliary Pioneer Coy. were involved in a disturbance with civilians resulting in one I. O. R. being admitted to hospital. The situation was, however, brought under control in a very short time. The matter was reported direct to the O. C. unit for suitable disciplinary action to be taken against the offenders.

3. A report was received from the Divisional Traffic Manager, G. I. P. Railway, Sholapur to the effect that 16 B. O. Rs. holding a third class soldiers ticket issued on 27th February 1943 ex-Madras to Bombay were detected at Wadi travelling in a 1st class compartment. It is alleged that they refused to travel III class stating that the Station Master, Raichur accommodated them in the 1st class compartment. The Station Master, however, denies having made this statement. Accordingly, a claim for excess charges of fares from Raichur to Wadi were submitted by the Manager.

On receipt of this complaint, enquiries were instituted regarding the whereabouts of these B. O. Rs. and it was ascertained that they have, with one exception, all embarked for the U. K. A copy of the correspondence was therefore, forwarded to the War Office for such action as they consider desirable. All efforts to locate the one remaining B. O. R. have failed and the case has reluctantly had to be considered as closed.

4. A report received from the O. C. 70 Ordnance Mobile Workshop Company, Colombo stated that on 17th March 1943, at Dhanushkodi, an I. O. R. created a disturbance by pulling the alarm signal chain, assaulting passengers, railway staff and the Railway police. The matter was investigated and the accused was found guilty but was said to be of unsound mind at the time he committed these offences. He was transferred to the Indian General Hospital at Bangalore and it was certified that he was temporarily insane at the time of the incident. The question of taking disciplinary action did not, therefore, arise.

5. It was reported by the military authorities at Bombay that on 2nd June 1943 a V. C. O. Cadet was involved in a fracas with Railway officials on Dadar Station and that he sustained slight injuries. The matter was fully investigated and was established as trivial. No disciplinary action was considered necessary.

6. A petition was received from a Mr. P. A. Reddi, Book Stall Agent, Vizianagram stating that on 30th March, 1943 some soldiers rushed his bookstall and stole a number of books costing Rs. 21-2-0 and requesting that this amount be refunded. The petition was passed to the appropriate military authority (H. Q. Southern Army) for direct disposal and the petitioner informed that all correspondence on the subject be addressed direct to that authority.

7. It was reported by the military authorities at Poona that on 1st May 1943 a B. O. R. assaulted the station master and an I. O. R. and threatened them with a dagger. It transpired that this B. O. R. was under observation as a mental case and was being sent to the Mental Hospital, Poona. It was later reported that the case had been explained to the Station Master and the I. O. R. and that they were both satisfied.

8. It was reported that on 7th April 1943 on arrival of the Peshawar Express at Khandwa trouble occurred between I. O. Rs. on the train and the Indian Refreshment Room staff from whom the soldiers were alleged to have obtained food without payment. This resulted in a fracas in which about 30 I. O. Rs. the Railway police and civilians were involved and one I. O. R. was injured and another arrested by the civil police. The personnel concerned are being tried by court-martial.

9. It was reported by the Government of Madras that on 19th March, 1943 a clash occurred at Mailpatti Railway station, North Arcot District between personnel of the 28th Travancore Labour Unit and certain vendors. The labourers are alleged to have bought bottles of aerated water and neither paid for the drinks nor returned the empty bottles. This led to a quarrel which spread to the vendors shops outside the station and also to a nearby village. The case was investigated by the local District Magistrate on whose recommendations the matter was settled by the payment of Rs. 260 as compensation for the damage done.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: The Honourable Member says that the incident did not take place on that date. Has the Honourable Member enquired whether it took place at all at about that time?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has asked a specific question. I made enquiries from the Railway and the reply of the Railway was that the incident did not take place on the date mentioned by the Honourable Member.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If it did not occur on that particular date he might have made enquiries about that time?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No such incident has been reported.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: May I know from the Honourable Member, if the military people do not observe the ordinary rules, and do not obey the station masters? Whether is there any authority which can compel them to obey the station masters?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That question has to be addressed to the appropriate department.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if the Honourable Member has enquired if there is a sufficient number of military police present at the time when the train arrives at the station, to see that no such incidents occur?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That question should also be addressed to the War Department.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member now make enquiries if any such incident took place in July and August?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I will make further enquiries, Sir.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if the railway police is present at the time when the train arrives at the station carrying army people, and whether the railway police is present in sufficient numbers on the railway platform?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That, Sir, is rather a wide question in its application to the circumstances which exist in India.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state whether he has received any complaints either from the general public or from the railway authorities against the military people who hold third class warrants and travel in higher classes causing inconvenience and giving trouble to the ordinary passengers?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: From time to time complaints have arisen and they are taken up with the War Department. I have observed that instructions have frequently been issued by the military authorities in connection with these difficult questions.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is the Honourable Member aware that Government contributes towards the expenses of the police which are maintained at the railway stations, and if he is, will he state whether he takes precautions to see that the requisite number of railway police are present at stations when the trains arrive?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The answer to that question is the same as to the Honourable Member's previous question. There are a very large number of stations but there are a limited number of police, and when a single policeman has to deal with a large number of passengers including military passengers, it is sometimes beyond his capacity to deal with the situation.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next Question.

INTERVIEW OF CANDIDATES FOR THE POST OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT CONTROLLER OF PURCHASE.

99. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state if applicants or candidates for the post of the Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase were interviewed last June and some of them were declared to have been accepted for appointments? If so, is it a fact that they have not been called to join even now after four months?

(b) Who arranged the interview in June, and who were responsible for creating this position? How many Assistant Controllers of Purchase and Deputy Assistant Controllers of Purchase have been appointed during the intervening months, i.e., between the 30th June and the 30th October? If there was no necessity for Deputy Assistant Controllers of Purchase, why were such interviews held?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Sir, the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar has been called to an urgent meeting and he has asked me to answer his question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) The Selection Committee attached to the Main Secretariat of the Department of Supply interviewed some candidates for the posts of Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase and Apprentice Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase on the 26th June, 1943. Certain candidates had been tentatively selected some time earlier. The qualifications of these candidates along with those interviewed on the 26th June, 1943, were reviewed together and 5 candidates for Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase and 9 candidates for the post of Apprentice Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase were placed on the approved list on the 28th July, 1943. Of the candidates interviewed on the 26th June, 1943, two have since been appointed as Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase and one Muslim Apprentice candidate has been offered the post out of turn to make up a communal deficiency.

(b) The interview held on the 26th June, 1943, was arranged by the Officer on Special Duty (Recruitment), Delhi, in the usual way. No candidate for the post of Assistant Controller of Purchase was selected at the June meeting. Between the 30th June and 30th October, 6 approved candidates for the post of Assistant Controller of Purchase and 12 approved candidates for the post of Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase were appointed to vacant posts. Apart from these 12 Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase candidates, 2 Superintendents were promoted to fill up local temporary vacancies.

Candidates for various posts are selected and placed on the approved list from time to time to meet expected requirements. In a temporary War Organization like the Purchase Branch of the Department of Supply, vacancies

do not occur at regular intervals. At present the number of candidates on the approved list is as follows:—

Assistant Controller of Purchase—3.

Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase—4.

Apprentice Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase—17.

Superintendents—17.

Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase candidates are appointed direct to long term vacancies. Apprentice candidates are to be put under training for six months against reserve posts, and their appointment to long term vacancies will depend on their record during the period of training. Superintendents are to be promoted, without regard for seniority, against purely temporary local vacancies. If after officiating on two or three occasions for a total period of about six months, certain Superintendents are found fit for substantive promotion to Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase their claims will be considered along with those of Apprentice candidates who have completed their period of training. The number of candidates on the approved list is not excessive.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Long answers like this ought to be laid on the table.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PROMOTIONS TO SELECTION GRADE ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

100. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that racial discrimination is still maintained by the East Indian Railway in the matter of promotion of staff to the selection grade, and that Europeans and Anglo-Indians are being promoted to the selection grades in contravention of the policies laid down by the General Manager in his Minute Sheet No. AE 2460/3, dated the 30th August, 1940, and by the Chief Mechanical Engineer's Minute Sheet No. ME 86/37, dated the 1st November, 1937, thereby blocking the promotion of Indians?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that according to the Chief Mechanical Engineer's Minute Sheet No. ME 86/37, of the 1st November, 1937, the Shops have been divided into distinct groups and the normal avenue of promotions will be in the groups in which the staff are shown in the Combined Seniority List?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that a selection was held in April last to fill the post of Progress and Planning Superintendent in the Production Group in the Alambagh Shops of the East Indian Railway?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that two Chargemen in the grades of Rs. 270—20—330 (old) and Rs. 200 (new) and one Chargeman in the grade of Rs. 110/150—20—250 (old) and Rs. 100/120—10—180 (new) from the Production Group and one Anglo-Indian from the Draftsman Group who was holding Rs. 250—12—310 (old) and Rs. 200 (new) were called for interview?

(e) Is it or is it not a fact that in the selection mentioned in (c) above, none of the candidates was considered suitable? If so, was any endeavour made to select any other candidate from the Production Group? If not, why not?

(f) Is it or is it not a fact that the Chief Mechanical Engineer, East Indian Railway, selected one Assistant Foreman from the Blacksmith Shop Group for the post of Progress and Planning Superintendent, East Indian Railway Workshop, Alambagh, on his visit to Lucknow in April last? If so, what are the reasons for selecting him for the post of Progress and Planning Superintendent in preference to others of the Production Group?

(g) Is it or is it not a fact that as per General Manager, East Indian Railway circular number M.S. AE2460/3 of the 1st August, 1940, every individual of a particular class should be called for interview for selection posts provided there is nothing against him in his service record?

(h) Is it or is it not a fact that one Anglo Indian who was in the Jig and Tool Drawing Office Group in the Combined Seniority List of the Subordinate Supervising staff and draftsmen of the Mechanical Department since the compilation of the same, has now been placed in the Production Group as Planning Supervisor? If so, was any endeavour made to select any one from the Production Group? If so, how? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) No.

(b); (c) and (d). Yes.

(e) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. The Selection Board considered the claims of other men in the Production Group but found itself unable to recommend any of them.

(f) The answer to the first part is in the negative. The selection of the person referred to was made by the Selection Board. The second part does not arise.

(g) I cannot trace any circular bearing the number quoted issued on 1st August, 1940, but one was issued on 30th August, 1940, in which it was specifically provided that it was not necessary to call everyone in the group for interview if the Selection Board were satisfied from the records that the persons not so called did not possess the qualifications required for the posts in question.

(h) The reply to the first part is in the negative; the other parts do not arise.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: With reference to the answer to part (h) of the question may I know if this gentleman who was promoted belonged to the production group or to the Jig and Tool Drawing Office?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think he belonged to the Jig and Tool Drawing Office group and was promoted to the post on three months probation, after which he asked to be relieved and another officer was appointed, also on trial.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: The other officer who was appointed, does he belong to the production group or some other group?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think, Sir, that he belonged to the production group, but I should require notice of that question.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: So far as part (d) of the question is concerned, will the Honourable Member state how many other persons from the production group were called for interview?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am afraid I shall require notice of that question.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: In reply to part (e) the Honourable Member said that this is not correct that only two persons were invited. Has he collected any information regarding persons who were asked to have interviews in respect of this post—other persons than those who are mentioned here?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My information is that all the possible choices were considered, but the other possible choices were considered to be too junior and inexperienced for selection.

SCALES OF PAY APPLIED TO PERSONS ENTERING RAILWAY SERVICE AS A RESULT OF COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

101. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if a clause has been provided in the new scales of pay for granting an exemption from its imposition to the persons, who entered service as a result of competitive examination or a selection board or committee held before the 16th July, 1931, provided they were not informed before or at the time of the examination that the rates of pay of the services or posts for which they were candidates were under revision?

(b) Has it also been provided by the Government of India that the period of apprenticeship served by their employees is to be counted for reckoning the scale of pay (old or new) on which such apprentice is to be employed on completion of apprenticeship?

(c) If the answers to (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, is the provision for the exemption of persons in the new scales of pay referred to in (a) above, also applicable to persons who:—

(i) merited the appointment as an apprentice on the result of the competitive examination or selection board held prior to the 16th July, 1931, but were called upon to join on a date shortly after the 16th July, 1931; and

(ii) appeared in the competitive examination or selection board held prior to the 16th July, 1931, and were subsequently called upon to join on a date shortly after the 16th July, 1931, to fill in the vacancy caused for the reason

that persons who were originally selected either did not join or had resigned, or were removed from service, or for any other reason?

(d) If the answer to (c) above is in the negative, what are the reasons for formulating such a decision?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The orders in this connection state that a person who was employed as a paid apprentice on 15th July, 1931, should be considered as having been in Government service on that date for the purposes of the Finance Department Resolution No. D/4523-Ex. I/31, dated the 9th July, 1931.

(c), (i) and (ii). Government have not considered the question of the application of their orders to persons in the position described by the Honourable Member as no such case has been referred to them.

(d) Does not arise.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: If I may send some cases of the type I have referred to in this question, will the Honourable Member be pleased to take action?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Certainly, Sir. I will make enquiries. PROMOTION TO SELECTION GRADE OF NON-TECHNICAL HANDS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY (MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT).

102. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that in the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, Alambagh, promotions to the selection grade of the non-technical hands has not been made in accordance with the procedure laid down by the General Manager, and that junior hands were promoted to higher grades, ignoring the claims of many seniors?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that a junior hand has been promoted on the 23rd September 1943 as Yard Master in the grade of Rs. 90—20—250, in the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, Alambagh, ignoring the claims of many seniors and without holding any selection board? If so, why?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that one junior mistry of the Millwright Shop (who has been recently confirmed as mistry) has been promoted in succession vacancy of the employee referred to in (b) above, in the Production Section, ignoring the claims of many seniors and without holding any selection board? If so, why?

(d) Are Government aware that the Chief Mechanical Engineer, East Indian Railway, in his Minute Sheet No. ME967/20A of the 7th May, 1936, informed the Works Manager (Carriage and Wagons), Alambagh, Lucknow, that all the posts in the Production Section were to be filled by the technically trained hands? If so, what are the reasons for promoting the non-technical hand in the Production Section, and ignoring the claims of the seniors of the person referred to in the Production Section as mentioned in (c) above?

(e) Are Government prepared to take action in the matter? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have called for information and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

LACK OF UNIFORMITY IN GRANTING OVERTIME AND NIGHT SHIFT ALLOWANCES ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY (MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT).

103. *Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if it is or is it not a fact that some supervisors of the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, Lillooah, are allowed one day's overtime if they work for five hours on Sundays and holidays; but this privilege is not given in other workshops, such as Charbagh and Alambagh, although all the Workshops are under the one and the same Head?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that the Night Shift Allowance is given to the staff employed in the Mechanical Department, East Indian Railway, Jamalpore, whereas this privilege is not allowed in other Workshops of the same Railway, such as Charbagh and Alambagh, which are under the one and the same Head?

(c) If the answers to parts (a) and (b) above, be in the affirmative, what are the reasons for such differential treatment? Are Government prepared to extend the same privileges to Charbagh and Alambagh Workshops,

and to issue orders to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, to this effect? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The practice in each workshop has grown up with the shop and is of long standing. To examine all the conditions of service in these workshops would require a considerable investigation which is not practicable under existing circumstances.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know the exact reasons for these differences in the various places?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The principal reason is that originally the O. and R. Railway was a different institution from the E. I. Railway, and these differences to a large extent continue once from times prior to the amalgamation of the railways.

SINDHIS AS ASSISTANT DIRECTORS, ETC. IN THE SIND AND BALUCHISTAN POSTAL CIRCLES.

104. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With reference to the reply to part (a) of my unstarred question No. 83, asked on the 29th March, 1943, regarding the residential province particulars of the six Superintendents employed in the Sind and Baluchistan Circle, will the Secretary for Posts and Air please name the persons who are said to be the residents of Sind? Are they originally Sindhis, or have they migrated to Sind? If so, since when?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The officers referred to are Messrs. Ibrahim Ali Khan and Brij-Lal Mehra. They were not originally Sindhis but have acquired right of Sind domicile under the Provincial Government's rules. The exact dates of their migration to Sind are not known but they have been continuously in service in the Sind and Baluchistan Postal Circle since its formation in 1924.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member if these are only temporary superintendents? These two are only acting?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Yes, Sir, they are acting.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if there are six permanent Superintendents and all belong to the Punjab or the U. P. or the other provinces?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Honourable Member has referred to an answer given to him last time by me and at that time, I stated that there are in Sind six Superintendents of Post Offices including Assistant Directors and that one of them is a European, one is a resident of the Delhi Province, two are residents of the Punjab and two are residents of Sind.

PAUCITY OF MUSLIM HEAD CLERKS OR OFFICE SUPERINTENDENTS IN THE OFFICES OF BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY.

105. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is a fact that there is not a single Muslim Head Clerk or Office Superintendent in the offices of the Bengal Nagpur Railway?

(b) Is it a fact that Muslims are rarely promoted to the higher grades, and whenever a Muslim candidate approaches he is refused on the ground of "inefficiency" though there is nothing to prove inefficiency in the service record?

(c) Is it a fact that in the different grades of the Upper Subordinates and clerical staff working under the Deputy Controller of Stores, Bengal Nagpur Railway, Kharagpur, there are only 20 Muslims, whereas there are 340 Hindus, 21 Indian Christians, 5 Anglo-Indians and 16 Europeans?

(d) Why are not Muslim candidates promoted or recruited in the above category of posts in due proportion of percentages given to other communities?

(e) Is it a fact that 99 per cent. of the Muslim employees volunteered their services for the Defence of India Units, and in spite of that claims of the Muslim candidates were ignored for promotion?

(f) Does the Honourable Member propose to look into the matter of the promotion of candidates of the Muslim community in future?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (e). I regret I have no information on these matters of detail concerning a Company-managed Railway.

(f) Government do not interfere in such matters in respect of Company-managed Railways but I shall send the question and answer to the Railway Administration.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the percentage of Christians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans taken together is greater than the percentage of Mussalmans in this country?

Maulvi Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: May I know what is the reason why the Muslims are not promoted in proportion to their number?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: So far as I am aware, the railway in question has gone a very long way to fulfil the Government's request in this respect.

DISCHARGE OF MR. HALDER, OFFICIATING CHIEF CHEMIST AT KANCHRAPARA RAILWAY WORKSHOP.

106. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) why the officiating Chief Chemist, Mr. Halder of the Kanchrapara Railway Workshop, was discharged on 24 hours' notice;

(b) whether it is a fact that Mr. Halder was refused an interview by the Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer when he wanted to know the reason for his discharge;

(c) whether it is a fact that Mr. Halder was denied even the facility of handing over charge of the laboratory;

(d) whether Mr. Halder, who was an Assistant Chemist, discharged his duties faithfully and his name was recommended for the post of the Chief Chemist;

(e) whether it is a fact that the service of Mr. Halder was not spared when he secured a better chance elsewhere;

(f) whether Government propose to effect further retrenchment; and

(g) if the answer to (f) is in the affirmative, whether the authorities will allow the temporary staff to apply for jobs elsewhere?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (g). I have called for information and a reply will be laid on the table of the house in due course.

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS MAINTAINED BY RAILWAYS FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING.

107. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) how many technical schools are maintained by Railways for apprenticeship training;

(b) whether there is an uniform standard of education obtaining in all these institutes; if not, why not; and

(c) whether Government have considered the importance of having an uniform syllabus of studies in all these Railway technical schools, recognised by representative bodies like the Institution of Engineers, India?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to apprentices in the various branches of Engineering. There are two schools which train such apprentices—one on the E. I. Railway and the other on the N. W. Railway—although all State Railways make arrangements for the training of Apprentice Mechanics in their workshops.

(b) Government have no details but the standards adopted cannot differ very much.

(c) These schools and other arrangements made are for the purpose of training apprentices to standards required on the Railways and not for coaching pupils so as to obtain outside qualifications. The training given would, however, enable apprentices to sit for certain examinations conducted by outside institutions like the City and Guilds Institute, if they so wish.

AMALGAMATION OF THE DIBRU SADIYA AND THE JORHAT PROVINCIAL RAILWAYS WITH THE BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.

108. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Dibru Sadiya Railway and the Jorhat Provincial Railway have been amalgamated with the Bengal and Assam Railway;

(b) if the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, whether the arrangement is a permanent one; if so, the amount paid to the owners; and

(c) whether the Standing Finance Committee for Railways was consulted before taking over the Railways; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The Jorhat Provincial Railway is the property of the State. It was formerly worked by a company. Its management has now been taken over by the State and it has been amalgamated with the Bengal and Assam Railway.

The working of the Dibru Sadiya Railway has been entrusted temporarily to the Bengal and Assam Railway to secure unified control over Railway transport in North East India to meet the present emergency. It remains the property of the Assam Trading Company.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

PUNJABI OFFICERS ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY AND ASSAMESE AND BENGALI OFFICERS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

109. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the number of Punjabi officers in the Bengal and Assam Railway and that of the Assamese and Bengali officers in the North Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The information is not readily available and I regret that I cannot undertake to collect it.

EXPENDITURE ON ANGLO-INDIAN AND INDIAN RAILWAY APPRENTICES.

110. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state:

(a) whether he has been able to secure full information regarding the expenses borne by the Government for an Anglo-Indian and an Indian apprentice;

(b) whether he has taken steps to equalise the expenses for all nationalities; if not, why not?

(c) what the policy of Government in this matter is;

(d) whether Government propose to reopen the question of equalising the minimum pay of Indians and Anglo-Indians for Railway posts and telegraph and military services, etc.; if not, why not; and

(e) whether Government realise that the consequences of such invidious racial discrimination will undermine the efficiency of the services in general?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I am not aware that I promised to secure such information, but in reply to the Honourable Member's starred question No. 82 asked on the 15th February, 1943, I furnished information as far as the Bengal and Assam Railway was concerned.

(b) The stipends paid to apprentices are the same for members of all communities. Hostel expenses differ; no action has been taken generally to equalise these, but I shall consider whether anything can be done in this direction.

(c) Government's policy is to treat all its servants alike in the absence of special circumstances necessitating a departure in respect of particular communities or persons.

(d) No.

(e) I am not aware that the fixation of a minimum wage for Anglo-Indians has resulted in loss of efficiency.

PRICE PAID FOR IMPORTED LOCOMOTIVES.

111. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) what price is being paid by the Government of India for locomotives which have been imported since June 1943;

(b) what the difference is in the said price and the pre-war price of the same type of locomotives;

(c) whether the prices of locomotives in the countries from which they have been imported are controlled in those countries; if so, whether the Government

of India have been able to purchase these locomotives at controlled rates in the same manner in which His Majesty's Government and the Allied Governments are purchasing Indian goods in the country at controlled rates;

(d) what programme the Government of India have planned for the manufacture of locomotives in India during the post-war period; and

(e) what practical steps, if any, have already been taken for the early establishment of a locomotive manufacturing industry in this country?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to the information contained in Vol. XX, No. 2 of Proceedings of the Meeting of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, under which at the meeting of 17th July 1943, detailed information was furnished in regard to pre-war contracts and the prices likely to be paid for locomotives ordered from U. S. A. and Canada since the outbreak of the War. The XE type locomotives referred to in para. 2(c) of that Memorandum will, however, be supplied on Lease-Lend.

(c) The locomotives under supply from Canada are against contracts placed by the India Supply Mission on behalf of the Government of India; it is felt that the effect of any controls operating will have been reflected in the contract price which the India Supply Mission has been able to arrange and this is being verified.

(d) and (e). Detailed plans for the conversion of the Kanchrapara Workshops of the B. and A. Railway to make them suitable for locomotive and boiler construction are under preparation; the necessity for a second plant at another site is also under investigation. The programme for the manufacture of locomotives depends upon the receipt and installation of certain special plant which must be imported. The Government are in correspondence with His Majesty's Government in regard to the supply of this plant.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With regard to clause (a) may I know how many locomotives have been actually imported into India since that date?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Since the 17th July?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Since June 1943.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should require notice of that question but a very considerable number of metre gauge locomotives have been imported; a number have been erected and are in use. As regards broad gauge locomotives, the first deliveries have just been received and the locomotives are being erected. From now onwards, we hope to get a steady flow of both.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: If I understood the Honourable Member aright, he said in answer to (e) that some sites had already been purchased or earmarked for factories for the manufacture of locomotives. If that is so, may I ask whether any calculations have been made as to the post-war cost of these locomotives as compared with imported locomotives?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: As regards the first part of the Honourable Member's question, the construction of locomotives at Kanchrapara has, as the Honourable Member, I think, knows, been under consideration for some time and we are now working out the details necessary for modifying the works to make them suitable for locomotive and boiler construction. Plans have been received from the Consulting Engineers and these are under investigation. As regards the second part of his question, I understand what he really wants to know is whether the locomotives to be manufactured in India will cost more than the locomotives now being imported into India.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I mean post-war locomotives.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Does the Honourable Member want to know whether the locomotives to be manufactured in India will cost more than the locomotives to be imported into India in the future after the war?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Yes.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think I can give a categorical answer to that because nobody knows what the price of locomotives

after the war is going to be. But the result of our examination is that, generally speaking, we ought to be able to manufacture locomotives in this country sufficiently cheaply to justify proceeding with the scheme.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The Honourable Member will perhaps recollect that in discussions in this House about the manufacture of locomotives in this country we were always told on behalf of Government that one of the reasons why locomotives were not made in this country in pre-war times was that the cost would be prohibitive as compared to the cost of the imported article?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That, Sir, was the case, I believe, for a number of years, but the recommendation of the last report—I am speaking from memory—was that locomotives, after a period of trial during which no doubt we should have to pay for our experience, could be manufactured at a reasonably economic price.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Are there any specific conditions laid down for the establishment of locomotives industry in different provinces or they can be manufactured in one or two provinces of India only?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No specific conditions have been laid down.

DISABILITIES AND RESTRICTIONS AFFECTING INDIANS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

112. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) if he is aware—

(i) of the disabilities and restrictions from which Indians suffer in the United States of America as regards trade and franchise, etc;

(ii) of the American Exclusion Act and the restrictions it imposes on Indians; and

(iii) that recently the House of Representatives passed and sent to the Senate the Chinese Exclusion Act Repeal Bill; and

(b) if any representations were made through proper channels to have a similar Bill passed or to secure the same rights for Indians as are mentioned in this Bill by some other means?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) (i) and (ii). The Honourable Member no doubt refers to the disabilities which Indians suffer from the application of the Immigration Act of the American Legislature of 1924. The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to my reply to his question No. 39 in the last session of this House.

(iii) The Government of India understand this is so.

(b) The matter is under correspondence with the Agent General for India and his final report is awaited.

THE AMERICAN EXCLUSION ACT AND ITS EFFECT ON INDIANS.

113. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: With reference to my question No. 39 of the 27th July, 1943, regarding the operation of the American Exclusion Act on Indians and his answers to part (c) and (d) of my question; will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) the names of the Bills before Congress to lighten restrictions against the Chinese in connection with which the Agent General had made enquiries about Indians receiving parity of treatment with the Chinese, the nature of such restrictions and the result of the efforts made by the Agent General; and

(b) whether the Chinese Exclusion Act Repeal Bill was one of such Bills; if so, what the basis and nature was of representations made, and what the nature was of the reply given to the Agent General?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). The Government of India are not in possession of the names or exact details of the Bills referred to, but they understand that the common object of this legislation is to lift existing restrictions on Chinese immigration and the acquisition of American citizenship by resident Chinese. The Agent General for India lost no time in

approaching the State Department as to the possibility of parity of treatment for Indian nationals and his final report is awaited.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: With reference to the first part of my question in which I have referred to my question No. 39, the answer was given that the Agent General had made representations in the case of certain Bills. I am now told that the Government is not in a position to name the Bills. May I take it, then, that the last statement was made without any specific information as regards the Bills?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: We did not have the exact names of the Bills nor their details but we knew their purport. We then inquired from the Agent General and he has reported to us that he approached the State Department as to the feasibility of parity of treatment but have not received his final report.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member now make inquiries regarding these Bills, in which the Agent General is said to have made representations as regards the rights of the Indians?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Certainly.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it not a fact that under the Exclusion Act restrictions are being removed from the Chinese but not from Indians?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I do not know the exact position of the Chinese at present because we have not received the final report from the Agent General.

REPEAL OF THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

114. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Honourable Member has been drawn to the repealing by the Congress of the United States of America of the Chinese Exclusion Act, whereby the Chinese residents in the United States of America will be allowed to become American citizens; and

(b) whether the Government of India have taken any steps to impress upon His Majesty's Government to take up with the Government of the United States of America, the question of extending similar status to the Indian residents in the United States of America, in view of the fact that India is also participating in the cause of winning the war, and to secure particularly the repeal of the Immigration Act of 1917 whereby the Indians were excluded from the United States of America?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is referred to my replies to questions Nos. 112 and 113 just asked by Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.

LIABILITY FOR COST OF DOUBLING THE BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY METRE GAUGE LINES FOR MILITARY REASONS.

115. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether the cost of doubling the existing Bengal and Assam Railway Metre Gauge Lines in certain Zones, for which tenders have been recently invited by the Engineer-in-Chief, War Works, Saidpur, is to be borne by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Government?

(b) In how many other instances, in the case of each Railway, have additional lines been or are to be provided primarily for military reasons?

(c) Have the Government of India taken any steps to see that the cost of such expansions is debited to His Majesty's Government and not to the Indian Railways, in view of the fact that they are primarily dictated by requirements of the Allied Military strategy against Japan?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: This question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Finance Member.

INTERVIEWS AND TRAINING OF PUNJABEE CANDIDATES IN PUNJABI LANGUAGE AT WALTON SCHOOL, LAHORE.

116. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that candidates from Punjab presenting themselves before the North Western Railway Subordinate Service Commission for recruitment are interrogated in the Punjabi language?

(b) Is it a fact that their training at the Walton School at Lahore is also carried on in the Punjabi language?

(c) Is it a fact that such recruits on being posted to stations are unable to follow rules and procedure, converse and correspond in English as observed by me at Ruk and other stations?

(d) Do Government propose to have a better standard of efficiency? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). The answer is in the negative.

(c) I am informed that Matriculates trained in the Walton Training School are in a position to understand rules and converse and correspond in English.

(d) Government are satisfied that the recruits, although perhaps not so good as those available during peace time, do not fall below the minimum standard prescribed.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I inform the Honourable Member that personally I have seen at the Ruk station recruits who have been appointed and who cannot speak either English or Sindhi and I could not make myself intelligible to them. Will the Honourable Member enquire about this and find it out for himself?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I can understand what the Honourable Member says but how did the Honourable Member know that the gentlemen could not correspond in English?

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: They came to me personally. Will the Honourable Member at least make an inquiry and give instructions to see that only such people are sent to Sind who can speak either English or Sindhi?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They may have been over-awed by the Honourable Member's presence.

FIXING OF PAY OF THE RETRENCHED STAFF RE-APPOINTED IN THE COMPILATION SECTION, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

117. *Bhai Parma Nand: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to refer to the reply to part (a) and (c) of my starred question No. 207, dated the 18th November, 1941, regarding the fixing of the pay of retrenched staff reappointed in the Compilation Section, North Western Railway, and say why the Railway Board's intention, *vide* paragraph 3 of their original letter No. 1635-E.G., dated the 30th December, 1932, was not made clear in the first instance;

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that the retrenched staff of the Compilation Section after the amalgamation of their Section with the Accounts Department ever since 1932, is a part and parcel of the Accounts Branch, and whatever decision for the grant of old scales of pay was taken in the case of the Accounts reappointed staff, is naturally applicable to their case also? If not, why?

(c) How do they fall under the category of "other cases" mentioned by the Honourable the Railway Member in the concluding part of his reply to my question referred to in part (a)?

(d) Do Government propose to reopen this case also, specially after their confirmation in the old scales of pay following the same broader principle of hardship which had moved the Railway Board to adopt in the case of the same category of men of the same office?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The papers relating to this case have been called for from the railway concerned and when they are examined, a statement will be laid on the table of the House.

NON-RESERVATION OF POSTS FOR SIKHS IN TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

†118. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state whether special reservations have been made for the appointment of Muslims and Anglo-Indians to posts which are to be filled up by the Telegraph Department as a result of the competitive examination to be held in November 1943? If so, why has no reservation been made for Sikhs?

(b) Have any Sikhs been recruited so far through such competitive examinations? If so, what are their numbers?

(c) Is he prepared to take any steps to safeguard the interests of Sikhs? If so, what? If not, why not?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to the examination for recruitment to the Telegraph Engineering Service, Class I. Reservation has been provided for Muslims for recruitment to this service, but not for Anglo-Indians. No separate reservation has been prescribed for Sikhs, because Sikhs with Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and Parsis have been included in 'Other Minorities' for whom there is a reservation of 8½ per cent. Government have not prescribed any reservation separately for Sikhs as such.

(b) Yes. One Mr. D. N. Ramchandani.

(c) As Sikhs have already been included among 'Other Minorities', for whom there is a specific reservation, it is not considered necessary to introduce a separate reservation for Sikhs only.

NON-RESERVATION OF POSTS FOR SIKHS BY THE RAILWAY BOARD.

†119. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether he is aware that as a result of the competitive examination to be held by the Federal Public Service Commission in November, 1943, about 26 appointments will be filled up by the Railway Board under their different Branches and cadres?

(b) Is he further aware that for filling up these vacancies, Government announced that a total of five vacancies were reserved for Muslims, and one for an Anglo-Indian or Domiciled European?

(c) Is it a fact that no posts were reserved either for Sikhs or other minority community men? If so, why?

(d) What safeguards does the Honourable Member propose for looking after the interests of Sikhs who are said to be the back-bone of the Indian Army and are doing so much for the war effort?

(e) Is the Honourable Member prepared to announce now the reservation of a requisite number of vacancies for Sikhs? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) Six of the vacancies are reserved for Muslims and one for Anglo-Indians.

(c) There is no separate reservation for Sikhs in the Superior Railway Services whereas there is a special reservation for Anglo-Indians of 2.5 per cent. of vacancies filled by direct recruitment. This is in accordance with the terms of the Home Department Resolution dated the 1st May 1939.

(d) The interests of Sikhs are protected by the present orders under which 6 per cent. of all vacancies in the Superior Railway Services filled by direct recruitment are reserved for the other minorities, including Sikhs.

(e) No, because it would not be in accordance with existing orders of Government on the subject.

PROMOTIONS MADE IN THE STATISTICAL SECTION OF THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

†120. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state the number of promotions made in the Statistical Section of the Supply Department from among each of the Punchers, Coders and Operators, to the third division and other grades since September, 1942?

(b) Is it a fact that several men who were junior in the list were promoted, and the cases of senior men were overlooked? If so, why?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(c) Have the Home Department issued orders that promotions should be made according to seniority?

(d) Is it a fact that the Honourable Member for Posts and Air speaking in the Council of State, reiterated the policy laid down by the Home Department for promotions to be made according to seniority?

(e) Is the Honourable Member prepared to look into the cases of persons who have suffered in this case? If not, why not?

(f) Is the Honourable Member also prepared to see that in future the orders of the Home Department are not overlooked?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) 21, 9 and 2 respectively. Promotions to the 3rd Division only have been made.

(b) No.

(c) Yes. Presumably the Honourable Member refers to the orders issued by the Home Department in their Office Memorandum No. 23/1/39-Ests.(S), dated the 4th of September, 1942, which lays down the principles for promotion.

(d) Yes.

(e) Does not arise in view of the reply to (b) above.

(f) The principles for promotion laid down by the Home Department are already being observed.

ORDERS ISSUED BY THE OFFICIATING DIRECTOR OF RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE.

†121. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Is the Honourable the Railway Member aware that the Deputy Chief Accounts Officer, North Western Railway, was deputed to officiate as Director of the Railway Clearing Accounts Office, Delhi?

(b) Is he aware that on his arrival in the Railway Clearing Accounts Office he has issued numerous orders which involve the compilation of unnecessary information by the already overworked staff and thereby a great discontentment has already started?

(c) Is it a fact that in one of the orders issued he used the words 'the supervisory staff can be discontinued'? If so, is he authorised to issue such an order?

(d) Is he aware:

(i) that soon after his arrival he openly rebuked at the top of his voice one of the Superintendents of the office in the presence of about 600 men and used the words 'I want to talk to human beings only. . . .'?

(ii) that since his arrival he has been writing letters to the Railway Board with a view to casting reflections on his predecessors; and

(iii) that wherever he has been, his staff has always been disheartened by his treatment and behaviour?

(e) Does he propose to have the matter investigated and see how far such an officer is capable of holding independent charge of an office in preference to a Mohammadan officer who should have been ordinarily promoted in this purely officiating vacancy?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes, the Deputy Chief Accounts Officer (Traffic), N. W. Railway, officiated as Director, Railway Clearing Accounts Office, from 18th June, 1943 to 17th August, 1943.

(b) Office orders were issued from time to time by the officer mentioned against (a) in the ordinary course of his duties. These orders were carried out and the permanent Director has no knowledge of any complaints having been raised. It is considered that these orders did not involve the preparation of unnecessary information.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(c) The quotation is part of a note written by the Director, which reads as follows:

It seems to me that the supervisory staff have no adequate conception of what their duty in this matter and allied matters is. If the blame for mistakes is only of the clerks, then the supervisory staff can as well be discontinued. I wish it to be clearly understood that the Subhead, the Accountant and the Superintendent should see that the work done under their immediate supervision, directions and control is done satisfactorily and that they cannot escape responsibility therefor. These remarks were based on an actual case in which a member of the supervisory staff tried to pass on the whole responsibility to clerks.

(d) (i). Inquiries have been made but no incident of the kind suggested in the question has come to notice.

(d) (ii) and (d) (iii). No.

(e) No. The officiating Director was considered to be the most suitable officer to take charge of the Railway Clearing Accounts Office during the absence of the permanent Director.

PILGRIMAGE TO ARABIA BY LAND ROUTES.

122. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state the number of persons who have applied for permission to perform pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes?

(b) Do Government propose to make satisfactory arrangements for their journey? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) As far as can be ascertained only 31 persons from all parts of India applied for pilgrim passes by the land routes.

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the Press Communiqué issued by Government on the 9th September, 1943, a copy of which is laid on the table.

Press Communiqué.

The Government of India announced on August the 11th that owing to the danger to which pilgrim ships and their passengers would be exposed by enemy action, no arrangements could be made for the Haj pilgrimage this year by sea. Government have consequently been investigating the possibility of pilgrims proceeding by land routes. These may be described as follows:

(i) *Via Iraq.*

(ii) *Via Kuwait and Bahrain.*

(iii) *Via Iran.*

2. The first two routes involve a lengthy sea journey from India up to the Persian Gulf, and are, therefore, open to the same objection as the route *via* Jeddah. Moreover the Government of India have learned from His Majesty's Representatives in Iraq and the Persian Gulf that neither at Baghdad and Zubair nor at Bahrain and Kuwait is there any motor transport available for pilgrims. Thus even if pilgrims reached these places where they would not be welcome unless they brought their own food, it is certain that they would not be able to proceed further by car. Nor can the third route *via* Iran be recommended. Public motor transport services are no longer available in that country; and food is expensive and not always easily obtainable.

3. Any who contemplate travelling in their own cars *via* Iran are reminded that they must obtain an export licence from the Directorate General of Supply, New Delhi and that it is impossible to purchase either spare parts or tyres in any country on the route to the Holy Places. It follows that the smallest breakdown may result in their being unable to complete their journey. The roads are reported to be very rough and the likelihood of breakdowns occurring is very great.

4. The Saudi Arabian Government, who have been consulted in the matter, decline all responsibility with regard to transport for pilgrims travelling overland and will not be able to spare any cars to assist overland pilgrims in case of breakdowns on the long and difficult journey across Arabia.

5. In publishing this information the Government of India are actuated only by a desire to enable intending pilgrims to avoid fruitless expenditure and unnecessary disappointment.

P. GONSALVES,

Assistant Secretary to the Govt. of India, External Affairs Department.

NEW DELHI;
The 9th September 1943.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know the number of pilgrims who have arrived at Bombay and Karachi ports?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have no information.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if the land routes are safe?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have answered that question in part (b).

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

SUPPLY OF STANDARD CLOTH TO RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

12. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) With reference to the reply to my starred question No. 11 asked on the 27th July last, regarding supply of standard cloth to the Railway employees, will the Honourable the Railway Member please state whether the supply of standard cloth to the Railway employees has since been made? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to make a short statement giving particulars of how the supply was made?

(b) Is it a fact that the Railway employees are about a million of people and the cloth to be supplied comes to a yard only for each employee?

(c) Is it proposed to place any restrictions on the supply of 'standard cloth' to the Railway employees? If so, what are those restrictions and why are they being placed?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) All railways have received supplies of Standard Cloth and on some sales have already commenced. As regards the second part, it is not clear what details the Honourable Member requires. The cloth is being sold to railway employees through the grainshop organization.

(b) The latest published figures show that there are about 700,000 employees in State-owned Class I Railways. The million yards of Standard Cloth was only the first instalment; a further ten million yards are being obtained.

(c) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, Standard Cloth can be sold only to employees drawing not more than Rs. 60 p.m. This restriction is placed in conformity with the main idea underlying the scheme of manufacture of Standard Cloth which is to restrict its sale to the poorest class of the community. Railways have also been asked so to regulate sales as to benefit the largest possible number of employees. The cloth will be sold at the retail prices fixed by the Textile Commissioner.

EMPLOYEES DISCHARGED FOR DISCIPLINARY REASONS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

13. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the number of employees discharged from service as a disciplinary measure, in each Division of the North Western Railway, separately, during the financial years 1940-41, 1941-42, 1942-43 and for the half year ending the 30th September 1943?

(b) If there is an increase in 1940-41 figures, is it because of the curtailment of power of Railway officers to inflict temporary reductions on the Railway employees? If so, do Government propose to take any steps to ensure that discharges from service do not substitute reduction declared illegal under the Payment of Wages Act? If not, why not?

(c) If the reply to the first portion of (b) above be in the negative, what then are the causes for increase in discharges of employees from service?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Government regret they cannot undertake to collect this information under present circumstances.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

SECTIONS OF MUNITIONS PRODUCTION SECRETARIAT RUN BY SUPERINTENDENTS AND ASSISTANTS-IN-CHARGE.

14. Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state whether some Sections of the Munitions Production Secretariat are being run by Superintendents, while the rest by Assistants-in-Charge? What is the reason for this arrangement? On what basis was the selection of Superintendents made?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes. This arrangement has been made with due regard to the volume and nature of the work handled by each section. Assistants-in-charge have been posted to the less responsible charges. The selection of Superintendents was made on merit.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE POSTS AND AIR DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

15. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing the supplies for the benefit of these employees, and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they have maintained from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a), (b) and (c). I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the replies given by the Honourable the Food Member to starred question No. 55 and to unstarred question No. 6 on 9th November, 1943.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

16. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Department and employed in Bengal that are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing the supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they have maintained from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given by my Honourable colleague, the Food Member, to starred question No. 55 on the 9th November 1943.

SUPPLY OF FOODGRAINS TO EMPLOYEES OF THE RAILWAY AND WAR TRANSPORT DEPARTMENTS IN BENGAL AT CONCESSION RATES.

17. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railway and War Transport Departments be pleased to state the different classes of employees under the control of his Departments and employed in Bengal that

are in the enjoyment of a concession under which foodgrains are supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices?

(b) What is the total number of such employees, and what quantities of rice, wheat and other foodgrains have been supplied to them at controlled or reduced prices, month by month, since January last?

(c) Who are charged in Bengal with the duty of furnishing the supplies for the benefit of these employees and what is the approximate extent of the stocks that they have maintained from time to time to enable them to discharge their obligation, and through what agencies in Bengal have these stocks been acquired, and at what prices on an average, month by month?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) All Railway servants are at present entitled to obtain foodgrains for themselves and their families from Railway grainshops at concessional rates. Similarly all employees of the Calcutta and Chittagong Port Commissioners and their families are entitled to purchase foodgrains from the Port grainshops at concessional rates and those in the joint office of the Regional Controllers of Priorities, Calcutta, from the E. I. Railway head office grainshop. The ministerial and the inferior staff in the office of the Controller of Coal Distribution also obtain foodgrains at concessional rates for themselves and their families. Railway servants and port employees who have joined the Defence of India units draw free rations from military sources.

(b) The total number of Railway employees in Bengal is estimated at about 1,40,000; port employees number about 17,300 and other civil employees under War Transport Department about 180.

As regards the second part, Government regret they cannot undertake to collect and compile such information under existing circumstances.

(c) The responsibility of ensuring adequate supplies rests with the Provincial Government although, under the existing arrangements, the Railway and Port Administrations have in the first place to secure supplies to the best of their ability. As regards arrangements for supply to employees in the office of the C. C. D., the Honourable Member is referred to the answer under (b) and (c) to his unstarred question No. 6. In regard to the remaining parts of the question, Government regret that they cannot undertake to collect and compile such information under existing circumstances.

RICE, PADDY, ETC., CARRIED TO BENGAL BY DIFFERENT RAILWAYS.

18. Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to make a statement showing, month by month since January last, the quantities of rice, paddy, wheat, wheat flour and other foodgrains, separately, that were carried into Bengal by different Railways, indicating the names of the principal consignees thereof and the places of consignment?

(b) To what extent were the Metre Gauge section of the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway and the Bengal and North Western Railway utilised in conjunction with the Metre Gauge section of the Bengal and Assam Railway for the purpose of transporting the aforesaid foodstuffs direct to the internal centres of consumption in Bengal? Has the aforesaid route been utilised for this purpose to the maximum possible extent?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I place a statement on the table of the information which is readily available. This shows the imports of foodgrains into Bengal (including Calcutta) from the principal trade blocks during the months of April to July 1943 as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year. The names of the principal consignees and places of consignment are not known and could not be collected without an amount of labour and trouble which would be unjustified.

(b) To the maximum feasible extent.

Commodity.	Trade block source.	April.		May.		June.		July.		4 months total.	
		1943.	1942.	1943.	1942.	1943.	1942.	1943.	1942.	1943.	1942.
1. Rice.	N.-W. F. P.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Sind and Baluchistan	1,445	48	2,018	89	8,945	46	3,451	92	...	...
	Punjab and Punjab States	12	...	43	...	19	...	213	247	...	...
2. Paddy.	United Provinces	270	430	2,507	109	15,766	471	17,298	157	...	...
	Behar	1,826	20	4,267	...	5,731	9	3,409	3	...	...
	C. P. and Berar	3,553	498	9,735	200	30,461	532	24,371	490	68,120	1,729
	Totals	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3. Wheat	N.-W. F. P.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Sind and Baluchistan	404	...	1,045	...	188	...	...	...	...	...
	Punjab and Punjab States	10,062	408	4,819	1,440	7,085	11,300	17,532	7,527	...	...
4. Wheat flour	United Provinces	39	14,285	...	4,083	132	313	387	...	...	...
	Behar	42	52	134	244	919	103	1,036	150	...	...
	C. P. and Berar	187	114	140	82	...	20	...	...	...	...
	Totals	10,824	15,398	6,138	5,858	8,324	11,745	19,855	7,077	45,141	40,878
5. Other grains	N.-W. F. P.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Sind and Baluchistan	1,553	80	2,005	601	669	927	...	...	...	...
	Punjab and Punjab States	43	1,200	34	375	4	199	420	454	...	...
6. Other	United Provinces	112	2,272	81	1,493	688	688	1,122	766	...	...
	Behar	...	31	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	C. P. and Berar	1,708	3,583	2,120	2,469	1,301	1,814	1,543	1,268	6,732	9,134
	Totals	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
7. Other	N.-W. F. P.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	Sind and Baluchistan	9,009	124	5,877	76	11,737	166	7,488	166	...	...
	Punjab and Punjab States	11,772	2,455	13,108	2,178	15,755	2,467	11,949	3,148	...	...
8. Other	United Provinces	1,343	5,747	5,140	5,754	7,510	6,110	5,610	8,288	...	...
	Behar	396	294	141	120	226	424	103	399	...	...
	C. P. and Berar	22,520	8,020	24,285	8,187	35,795	9,070	24,786	12,002	107,386	37,879
	GRAND TOTALS	39,086	28,199	42,619	16,756	78,539	23,286	72,450	21,461	232,194	89,702

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION IN CERTAIN POSTAL OFFICES AT LUCKNOW.

19. Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state:

(a) the communal representation, including that of the scheduled castes, in the superior, subordinate and menial grades in the following offices in Lucknow:

- the General Post Office;
- the General Telegraph Office;
- the Post Master General's Office;
- the Office of the Accountant General, Posts and Telegraphs; and
- various Post and Telegraph Offices;

(b) what steps, if any, Government have taken so far to recruit representatives of the scheduled castes in these offices; and

(c) if Government propose to take immediate steps to give the scheduled castes their due share of representation in these offices?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The information is being collected and a reply will be placed on the table of the House in due course.

RECRUITMENT OF STATION MASTERS, GUARDS, ETC., ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY AND COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION THEREIN.

20. Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons recruited as Station Masters, Guards, Ticket Collectors, Clerks, Drivers, Foremen, Loco Inspectors on the East Indian Railway during the years 1939-1943;

(b) how many of them were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Christians and members of the Scheduled Castes; and

(c) if the Railway authorities have been duly instructed to entertain men of the Scheduled Castes for all services (Superior, Subordinate and Menial) in the Railway Departments; if not, if Government propose to issue such instructions now?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). Government regret that they cannot undertake to collect these details under present circumstances.

(c) Railways have been furnished with a copy of Home Department Resolution No. 23/5/42-Ests.(S), dated the 11th August, 1943, and further instructions which may be necessary are under consideration.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION AMONG LEATHER GOODS CONTRACTORS OF THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

21. Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of contracts awarded by the Supply Department for the supply of leather goods of all kinds since the outbreak of the war;

(b) how many of these contracts were awarded to Hindus, Muslims, members of the Scheduled Castes and others;

(c) if Government are aware of the fact that the making of boots, shoes and other leather goods is the traditional calling of the Scheduled Castes; and

(d) if Government propose to award such contracts to the members of the scheduled castes as far as possible?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Approximately 4,700.

(b) It is not possible to furnish this information, as contractors are not classified community-wise in the Books of this Department.

(c) Yes, in so far as Cottage and Small Scale Industries are concerned.

(d) The execution of the large Government orders to definite delivery schedules postulates established capacity and existence of necessary plant and machinery which is generally not available in Cottage and Small Scale Industries. Whenever such capacity is available with firms owned by members of Scheduled Castes or employing workers belonging to Scheduled Castes every effort is made to utilise such capacity, e.g., orders for Army footwear have been placed from time to time with the Harijan Boot Factory, Agra.

PROMOTIONS TO TICKET CHECKING STAFF ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

22. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to the reply to part (iii) of starred question No. 450 of the 13th March, 1934, published at page 276 of the Legislative Assembly Debates for the 18th July, 1934, regarding promotions to the Ticket Checking Staff on the East Indian Railway, and to lay on the table of this House a statement of the promotions made up to date from a lower grade to a higher grade or to a next grade on occurrence of vacancies and in order of seniority of the old Travelling Ticket Inspectors (now designated as Travelling Ticket Examiners) in conformity with the said reply? If no promotions were made, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Government regret that they cannot undertake to collect such information under present circumstances.

ASSISTANCE IN EDUCATION OF CHILDREN OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

23. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to the Railway Board letter No. E37ED37, dated the 5th October, 1937, regarding assistance to Railway employees towards the education of their children, and lay on the table of this House the letter of the Railway Board under which the employees in service prior to the 1st February, 1929, were asked to make a definite election of the revised rules by a date later than the 31st December, 1937?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Government regret they are unable to lay on the table of the House a copy of the document referred to.

INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, re THE STAFF REPORTING SICK.

24. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is or it is not a fact that the Chief Medical Officer, East Indian Railway, has instructed his subordinates not to take on the sick list the staff actually suffering unless and until the staff are bedridden?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that the said instructions have led the staff to have recourse to private Registered Medical Practitioners?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that certificates for sickness and recommendations for leave by these Medical Attendants are accepted subject to the counter-signatures by the Railway Medical Authority? If so, how far is this practice consistent with the practice on the North Western Railway as indicated in the reply given to unstarred question No. 21 asked on the 30th July, 1943?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The reply is in the negative.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Medical certificates from outside practitioners are submitted through the railway doctors who forward them to the competent authority, with their recommendation for their acceptance or rejection, the final decision resting with the competent authority. As regards the second part, Government will consider if any action is necessary to make the practice on the E. I. Railway similar to that on the N. W. Railway.

CENSUS TAKEN BY STATE-MANAGED RAILWAYS OF THE TRAVELLING PUBLIC.

25. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the result of the census taken by the State-managed Railways of the travelling public between the 22nd August, 1943 and the 11th September, 1943?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No complete census was taken by the State-managed railways of the travelling public between 22nd August, 1943, and 11th September, 1943. For the information of the Railway Board certain railways from time to time made limited enquiries from passengers into the reasons which make their journeys necessary.

ACTION TAKEN AGAINST RAILWAY SERVANTS FOR CAUSING OVERCROWDING OF TRAINS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

26. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please lay a statement of the actions taken against the Railway Servants under

Section 102 of the Indian Railways Act, 1890, for causing the overcrowding of Trains on the North Western Railway since August, 1942, and against the travelling public under Sections 109 and 118 of the Railway Act, IX of 1890, for causing the overcrowding and travelling on unauthorised places; if no action has been taken, especially against the Station Superintendent, Delhi, and travelling public between Ghaziabad and Delhi and *vice versa*, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Government do not propose to collect the information asked for in present conditions. Government are, however, greatly concerned at the prevalence of overcrowding and the dangers attached to it and the matter is being discussed in the Central Advisory Council for Railways. As regards action against railway servants under section 102 of the Indian Railways Act, this would only arise if they compel passengers to enter compartments which are already full and this they do not do.

CONFISCATION OF RATIONS OF CERTAIN GORAKHPUR WORKSHOP STAFF ENJOYING WEEKLY REST.

27. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the Workshop Staff of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway at Gorakhpur are allowed to enjoy their weekly rest at their villages;

(b) if it is a fact that they are allowed to carry their rations distributed on the Ration Card by the Railway to their villages for consumption by their family;

(c) if it is a fact that while the staff was travelling with the rations in 2 Down train on Saturday the 18th September, 1943, they were arrested under the Defence of India Act Rules by the Police at the Bhatiani Junction Station and their rations were confiscated and they were badly handled and molested by the local and Railway Police because they had not allowed a Police Constable and his friend to travel with them in the Loco-Special Workmen Carriage; if so, what security and protection the railway has provided for their staff against the recurrence of such incidents; if none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) to (c). Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

RULES FOR OCCUPATION OF RAILWAY QUARTERS AND BUNGALOWS BY SUBORDINATE STAFF ON OUDH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY.

28. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the rules in force on the Oudh and Tirhut Railway governing the occupation of the Railway Quarters and Bungalows by the Subordinate Staff?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Information has been called for from the Railway Administration and will be laid on the table of the House when received.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE DELHI UNIVERSITY COURT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the Assembly that up to 12 Noon on Wednesday, the 10th November, 1943, the time fixed for receiving nominations for the Court of the University of Delhi, five candidates were nominated. One candidate has since withdrawn his candidature, but of the remaining four candidates one candidate is a nominated member of this House and is, therefore, ineligible for election according to the terms of the motion adopted by the Assembly on the 8th November. As the number of remaining candidates is less than the number of vacancies I appoint a further period up to 12 Noon on Saturday, the 13th November, 1943, within which nominations will be received. The election, if necessary, will take place on Tuesday, the 16th and will be held between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M. in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, New Delhi, and will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

THE CENTRAL EXCISE BILL.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I move for leave to introduce a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to central duties of excise.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to central duties of excise."

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I ask the Honourable Member whether he intends to bring the first reading of this Bill before the House during this Session?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My intention is to move for reference of the Bill to a Select Committee which will report for the next Session.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to central duties of excise."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE FOOD DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct 3 non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects in the Department of Food during the remainder of the financial year 1943-44."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct 3 non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects in the Department of Food during the remainder of the financial year 1943-44."

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That for the figure '3' in line two, the figure '15' be substituted."

Sir, in moving this amendment, I have first to call the attention of this House to what happened last Session. In the last Budget Session a demand was made for a Food Advisory Committee. The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed, the Leader of the House, announced that because there was then very little time for the formation of a Committee, the Committee that was formed as Advisory Committee for the Commerce Department should work as the Advisory Committee for the Food Department as well. What I mean to say is that the Food Committee had already come into existence, but the difficulty with regard to that Food Committee was that in spite of all the critical situation that arose in the country, that Food Committee was never consulted, except once, that is three days ago. The Food Department held numerous Conferences, a number of Departmental Committees, such as Policy Committee and so on were held, but still this Food Committee was never called, was never asked for its opinion and advice. The Assembly and its representatives were completely ignored in the matter of this big crisis that faced the country. That is the first thing that I have to say.

Now, the Honourable the Food Member comes to this House and wants to constitute a Committee of three Members from this House; probably he wants two from the other House. Just imagine, Sir, a Committee of three to advise this Government on this question which has become the biggest question in the country. I certainly disagree. I suggest that this Committee should have at least one representative from each Province, and that is why I have suggested the figure '15'. Of course some people say that this figure '15' is ridiculous, that it is too big a number and so on. But my complaint is that Government have not yet realised the seriousness of the food position in the country and that is why they have brought forward the motion suggesting an equally ridiculous number of '3'. As a counterblast, I am suggesting '15'. I also request that this Committee should be effective and its advice should be sought, whenever other conferences or committees are convened. The Members of this Food Advisory Committee should be invited often and consulted. Sir, I move.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO STANDING COMMITTEE FOR FOOD DEPARTMENT. 191

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What about the other amendment? The Honourable Member has got to move it now. He cannot do so later on.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: I do not move the other one.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That for the figure '3' in line two, the figure '15' be substituted."

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I have much sympathy with the amendment which has been moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Essak Sait. Sir, last year, after a good deal of agitation, the Government agreed to have a Food Advisory Committee attached to the Department of Food, but this Committee, as has just been pointed out, never met. The Assembly demanded again and again that this Committee should be consulted very frequently at least once every month. But that was not done. Then, as regards the number of persons to be appointed to this Committee, I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of the view that all the Provinces of India should be represented. Of course, Bengal's troubles are the greatest at the present moment. But there are some other Provinces also which are beginning to feel the pinch and it may be that in future, Madras and Bombay also may be affected.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): Even the Punjab.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: That is a possibility, although not an immediate possibility. God forbid that. Therefore, Sir, the different Provinces should be fully represented on this Committee and it would not be very wrong if a Committee of 15 persons is appointed, ten from this House and five from the Council of State. Then full representation can be secured. I would therefore request my Honourable friend, Mr. Essak Sait, to modify his demand to some extent. I also request the Government to go a little further and agree to ten Members from this House and five from the Council of State instead of three Members from this House and two from the Council of State. I think 15 Members for both Houses should not be an unwieldy number. I think that would be a reasonable distribution. Sir, three Members only from this House is a ridiculously small number and it will never do justice to the great problem that is before us.

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): Sir, everybody, I think, would agree that the problem is a very great one. But I am at a loss to know precisely what part this Committee will play in the hierarchy of Committees which are attached of which will be attached to the Food Department. And I would like the Honourable Member, who must have some clear ideas in his own mind on this subject, to enlighten the House as to what he proposes to do, first, with regard to the existing committees and, secondly, with regard to the committees that have been recommended by the Gregory Report. I find that that report recommended that there should be, in addition to the advisory committee on prices, an expert panel of not more than six drawn from the trade. That would make two committees. Then there is already in existence a central advisory committee concerned with food production. That was originally attached to the Department of Education, Health and Lands. It was then hastily handed over to the new Department of Food, and that Department has, since receiving it, kicked it into the void and it has never been called. Is that committee going to continue to exist?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It has been called.

Sir F. E. James: I am glad to hear that. But there we have already three committees. What is this new committee going to do? Committees of this House which are attached to departments have not had altogether a happy history. Some of them have not been called at all; in regard to one committee which was recently appointed and is now attached to the Department of Information and Broadcasting, it was found by the Member in charge that the members were not adequate for the advice that they were required to give, and so he has made it into an enormous committee of forty. Therefore the individual character of this advisory committee as a committee of this

[Sir F. E. James.]

House is gone and the three members who are elected by this House find themselves surrounded by gentlemen with various degrees of interest, and therefore are not able to give the advice that this House elected them to give. So I should like to know, before proceeding to decide whether we should support the original motion or the amendment that has been moved, what my Honourable friend expects from this committee and what he is going to do with regard to the recommendations now before him for the appointment of other committees drawn from non-official sources but more directly connected with an expert knowledge of the subjects which they have in hand. Then perhaps we shall be able to decide exactly what attitude to take on the motion now before the House.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I entirely agree with the remarks that have come from my Honourable friend, Mr. Essak Sait. This committee was appointed at a time when this House felt the need for it, and it was only last week on a Sunday that we were invited to go through voluminous papers. I think that was very unfair to this House. This is a very important question because I find that Government have constituted committees comprising no less than 25 persons from different provinces to discuss this matter which is as important as any other war matters. And when this House is required to be consulted we are told that they want only three members. Government have one excuse, namely, that they have got representatives from the provinces. Of course so long as they get those official representatives from provinces we have nothing to say; but I think Government have no right to ask the provincial Governments to send non-officials or appoint them themselves when the elected representatives from the provinces are in this House. It is not right and I want to know from Government why they are treating the non-official representatives of the peoples of the provinces in this House in such an unconstitutional manner. If they do not want them why not dissolve this House? Do they honestly prefer non-officials from outside to the elected representatives of the people? I think it fair that in the interest of the provinces they should have their representatives whom they have returned to this House and, therefore, the number of fifteen is quite right considering the importance of the question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I rise to put in a plea that the Government of India should treat the committees of the Legislature with proper respect. Judging from the tendency of the various departments of the Government of India I feel they are not treating the committees of this House with sufficient respect. I had to make that remark during the last Session with regard to a committee attached to another department. The food situation in India has become very bad for some time. Not only in this country has there been agitation and discussion on this subject but it has been discussed in Great Britain and in other countries also. But the Government of India did not think it proper to consult the committee of this Legislature established to give them advice on this subject. I should like the Government of India to consider the committees of this Legislature as of supreme advisory status. They may appoint other expert committees—I am not against that—but the committee of the Legislature should be treated as a committee of supreme importance and position. The Government of India have not done that; they were not right in calling a meeting of the advisory committee so late. They treat the committees of the Legislature as only of formal importance. The committee was called only two or three days back and the work of Government was carried on in the meanwhile. Not only that; the Government of India formulated their policy before consulting the advisory committee. I feel that it is not even in the interest of Government to show scant courtesy to the Legislature and its committees.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt (Bombay: European): Sir, I have very little to say but I should like to put a point of view which is perhaps opposed to that of my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. It is a matter of some surprise that the existing advisory committee on Food was not called until Sunday last, the 7th instant,

but I think I am correct in saying, and the Honourable Member will correct me if I am wrong, that there were six non-official members invited, who represent both Houses of the Legislature but I think only four turned up. I think ten days' notice by telegram was given; why were they not present? I am not opposing this motion but I would ask that if an advisory committee of the House is appointed, and it be of the number of people stated in his motion, as many as possible should turn up to discuss on a matter so important as food.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, it is on more than one occasion that we have heard criticisms of the committees appointed by this House attached to different departments. I am afraid the responsibility for the work carried on by these committees has to be shared both by Government and the House, and if we have had cause of complaint it has been against both Government and this Honourable House. When a committee is appointed on a question of this importance one would expect that this Honourable House, which was given the right of electing members to such a committee, would use their discretion as to the personnel of that committee with some wisdom. My complaint has been that the personnel elected on many committees is not of a character which will satisfy either the general public or even this Honourable House.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: I do not agree with this.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is casting a reflection on the members of such committees.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I am not, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is casting a reflection.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I cast no reflection on anybody.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is casting a reflection on the entire House.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: If I have done that, I apologize to the entire House.

Sir, we must also remember that an important section of this House has chosen to non-cooperate. That must not altogether be forgotten. That also weakens these committees. There are many clever men elected to this House belong to a party that has not been present for a long time

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Many of them are present here now.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I welcome them. I honestly welcome them, and I do trust that they will lend their services to such committees. The fault of Government is that they also do not attach that importance to these committees that they ought to.

An Honourable Member: Is that in order?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Reflection on Government in this House is in order. Reflection on anybody else is not.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member was making a reflection on the entire House.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I have already apologized, Sir.

Now, Sir, I have had occasions to criticize some of these committees. The responsibilities thrown upon their shoulders have been vast

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): What is your suggestion now?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: My suggestion is that we should take great care in future in our choice of personnel at the time of electing these committees. We should see that those nominated by the Government on these committees—when they have a right to nominate—are men who will really serve the purpose for which they are nominated. And I would suggest that no nominated member should be allowed to stand for election, because they are not elected to the House.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: We are as good Members of this House as others.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the nominated Members are as much eligible for election as others.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Just now we had a committee on which a nominated Member offered himself for election and it was found that he was not allowed to stand.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That was in the terms of the motion.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The terms of the motion should be such that nominated Members should not be allowed to be elected.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is at liberty to move an amendment.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I am only expressing an opinion; I have also expressed it before. And then, I say, the committees will function and the Government will attach that importance to these committees which they ought to.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I wish to speak just now on a relevant matter which is connected with the amendment of my friend, Mr. Essak Sait.

We received a pamphlet last night, 11th November 1943. It relates to the food situation in India and recommendation of Food Committees. Somehow we devoted some of our time to studying it because of the fact that many of us were to speak in this House today.

What I find is this: On page 6, paragraph 54, it is said by way of recommendation:

"It is essential that the Provincial and State authorities should set up Advisory Bureaux."

My Honourable friend, Sir F. E. James, in his speech also referred to a non-official committee as recommended in the pamphlets as follows:

"... Advisory Bureaux to which the public can turn for detailed guidance and advice, and that the Rationing Authorities should seek the positive assistance of public-spirited citizens by setting up non-official Advisory Committees."

Sir, this paragraph is a very important one, but I am sorry that the Government did not follow the recommendation of this committee.

At the same time on page 8, paragraph 72, it is stated: "A small standing prices committee..." etc. Government seems to be very much enamoured of the word 'small'. I submit, Sir, that the Government seems to be obsessed with the idea of having small committees only from this House to advise them. These recommendations themselves are a proof of that fact. Therefore, I support the amendment of my Honourable friend.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Sir, I wish only to assure the House that I was most anxious to consult the Legislature on every matter concerning food, and if there was delay in calling a meeting of the Standing Committee in the past it was only because we were busy formulating a new policy. And I must confess that I was not quite sure of the existence of a committee specially for food.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: What a confession!

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: There has been no committee for food; there is no committee today for food, and that is why I took up the matter at once that the Food Department should have a special committee. That is why I move the motion today.

I wish to assure the House that there is no intention on my part to ignore the committee of the Legislature. I consider them 'supreme advisers', as some one has said. In my speech at the opening of the Fourth All-India Food Conference, I made public my intention to associate public opinion with our work. That intention I still hold. But I feel that it is of the highest

importance that whatever other bodies may be set up for the purpose, the Legislature should have its own standing committee for my department, as is the case with other departments. I do not wish to amalgamate this committee with other bodies. I may tell the House that apart from a committee of the Legislature, which I hope will be set up as the result of this motion, I have under active consideration the constitution of a non-official body to act in an advisory capacity of a more general character and representing all important elements of the public opinion. I have also in accordance with the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee

under urgent examination at the moment the constitution of a committee on prices. The Committee also recommended an expert panel of not more than six drawn from the trade whose advice should be taken on appropriate occasions. We are examining whether or not this expert panel should be something separate from the bodies which I have already mentioned or should be formed from the expert members of those bodies. We have on the one hand to keep in touch with public opinion and obtain the necessary expert advice, and on the other to avoid the undue multiplication of committees and bodies of that kind, or the formation of bodies which are unwieldy or in other words unfitted to consider what are technical problems. This is a matter involving very careful planning and thinking out and as we have not yet come to a decision I shall press on with their examination as rapidly as I can. I hope I have explained what my friend, Sir F. E. James, wanted—he is not in the House, I see, now. As regards the amendment moved by Mr. Essak Sait, I regret that Government is unable to accept it; but I would accept Dr. Banerjea's modification of it, if that would be acceptable to the Mover of the amendment.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Yes; if, as I understand, it is ten from this House and five from the Council of State, I accept the modification.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That for the figure '3' in line two, the figure, '10' be substituted."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct 10 non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects in the Department of Food during the remainder of the financial year 1943-44."

The motion was adopted.

ELECTION OF A MEMBER TO THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a member to represent this House on the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, for the period 1944-46 (both years inclusive) in pursuance of the provisions of clause 11 (Secondly) of the scheme for the Administration and Management of the Properties and Funds of the Institute, which was published in the *Gazette of India* with the notification of the Department of Education, Health and Lands No. F. 53-1/37, dated the 2nd December, 1937, as subsequently amended."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a member to represent this House on the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, for the period 1944-46 (both years inclusive) in pursuance of the provisions of clause 11 (Secondly) of the scheme for the Administration and Management of the Properties and Funds of the Institute, which was published in the *Gazette of India* with the notification of the Department of Education, Health and Lands No. F. 53-1/37, dated the 2nd December, 1937, as subsequently amended."

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): May I know from the Honourable the Mover of this motion how many sittings of this Council there have been during the period of last two years?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: This is not exactly a Committee; this is the Council of the Institute; it is not a committee.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I knew that, and I said so.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid I do not know how many times they sat.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I say a word about it, with your permission? The governing body of the Indian Institute of Science consists of 14 persons, of whom one is elected from this House; and this House has from the beginning sent a member to that body. As a rule, three meetings of the governing body are held every year, and our learned friend, Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad, is at the present moment our representative on this governing body.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I wanted information as to how many meetings were held.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Three ordinarily.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot make two speeches. The question is:

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, a member to represent this House on the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, for the period 1944-46 (both years inclusive) in pursuance of the provisions of clause 11 (Secondly) of the scheme for the Administration and Management of the Properties and Funds of the Institute, which was published in the *Gazette of India* with the notification of the Department of Education, Health and Lands No. F. 53-1/37, dated the 2nd December, 1937, as subsequently amended."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I may inform Honourable Members that for the purposes of elections of members to the Standing Committee of the Food Department and on the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, the Notice Office will be open to receive nominations up to 12 Noon on Monday, the 15th November and that the elections, if necessary, will take place on Wednesday, the 17th November, 1943. The elections which will be held between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M. in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, New Delhi, will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.

MOTION RE THE FOOD SITUATION.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the food situation in India be taken into consideration."

I move this motion with a heavy sense of responsibility because I am keenly conscious of the fact that we are to-day in the presence of a tragic calamity affecting a large number of our countrymen. Let me assure the House that the Government of India fully share their anxiety and that nothing which is capable of bringing speedy relief to the distressed people will be left undone.

Sir, I propose to lay before the House as shortly and simply as possible the practical steps which the Government of India have taken in co-operation with the provinces and States to deal with the situation since the House met last.

Our first task was to mobilise the surpluses available within the country and to ensure their speedy despatch to the deficit areas. The revised basic plan which came into operation from the first August aimed at a distribution of 14 lakhs tons of foodgrains to deficit areas within the period of eight months ending in March 1944. During the first three months of its operation, over 6½ lakhs tons of foodgrains have been sent to the deficit areas. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance which we have received from the Department of War Transport and Transport Services in achieving this result. The principal recipients of the quantities have been Bengal with 219,000 tons, Bombay 76,000 tons, Madras 77,000 tons, Travancore and Cochin 46,000 tons, and the Deccan States 6,500 tons. I also acknowledge with gratitude the additional surpluses voluntarily declared by the provinces and States subsequent to the formulation of the revised basic plan, which have amounted to 2,22,000 tons. I mentioned these figures with no sense of complacency; so long as there is anywhere in India a surplus which might have been procured and used for a deficit area but has not been procured I cannot rest content. But I think, Sir, that acknowledgment is due to those who have made, what has been achieved, possible.

On the question of exports I have already announced that exports from India have been stopped with the exception of small quantities required mainly for Indian seamen sailing through the Indian Ocean area and for *bona fide* stores for ships which sail from the Indian ports. In the matter of imports we have continuously pressed upon His Majesty's Government the supreme necessity of importing large quantities of foodgrains from abroad to make up the gaps in our own supply. His Majesty's Government have acceded to this request

and have allocated shipping sufficient to import substantial quantities before the end of the current calendar year. This involved a considerable redistribution of tonnage, a process which takes time, but my latest information is that 41,000 tons of foodgrains have already arrived and far greater quantities are on the way. I would like to acknowledge here the generous offers of assistance which we have received from the Commonwealth—from Australia, from Canada, from South Africa and from New Zealand.

During this time we have continued our efforts to control the rise of prices and secure their return to that reasonable level which is of such fundamental significance to the average consumer. Since the free trade experiment terminated, the power to control both prices and movements of grains which was taken away from the provinces in the eastern region was given back to them. In most cases provinces have re-imposed price control, whether by statutory price or by ceiling price, and have taken steps to regulate movements of grains. These measures have in certain instances resulted in the temporary disappearance of stocks, but there is no doubt that the measures taken have on the whole, operated as a wholesome check on rising prices, and in many cases a fall in the prices has been secured. In Bihar and Assam the market prices are being quoted to-day below the maximum-control prices fixed by the Provincial Governments. In the United Provinces also the market prices have registered a continuous decline, and in the Punjab the wheat markets have recently shown a downward tendency.

Sir, I would now pass on to the other aspects of the situation which have been claiming our urgent attention. While the situation in all the deficit areas, and more particularly in Bombay, parts of Madras, Travancore, Cochin and the Deccan States, and the cyclone-affected areas of Orissa, has been a source of anxiety to us throughout the period, the situation in Bengal has naturally claimed our first attention. I have visited the province myself and seen with my own eyes the extent of the calamity which has fallen upon the unfortunate people of Bengal. They have my fullest sympathy. My most urgent task has been, I felt, to speed up deliveries of foodgrains to that province and to ensure by all the means in my power that the material is in the hands of the Provincial Government to carry out their schemes of relief. We have succeeded to this extent, namely, that the daily average rate of arrival of foodgrains and pulses into Calcutta, as shown by the railway statistics during the period June to October, was over 3,300 tons, as against a daily average of 1,600 tons for the corresponding period of the previous year. I am glad to be able to say to-day that in addition to the amounts which the Provincial Government are now sending out to the districts they have a month's reserve of foodgrains for Calcutta itself. As regards distribution into districts, despatches have during the last month risen from a few hundred tons to a thousand tons a day, in addition to the arrangements which have been made to send from the Punjab direct to the districts a large quantity of wheat products. Arrangements which I shall describe in a moment are now in progress to double this figure, in addition to the arrangements which have been made to send wheat products from the Punjab in substantial quantities direct to the districts without passing through Calcutta.

In this connection, Sir, I must offer my thanks to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for the help which he has given us and is giving in assisting the Provincial Government with officers, staff and troops, to assist them in the difficult task of distribution. A Major General has been lent to organise the bulk movement of food grains from Calcutta to the main depots in the districts and a large number of troops, including a number of motorised units, have been drafted into the area for the sole purpose of co-operating with the authorities in the district in securing onward movement from the depots to the distributing centres at which the hungry people are being fed. In all this work, the army is not only helping to guard the precious foodstuffs, to prevent looting and pilferage, to build necessary temporary storage capacity and guard it during storage but is acting as a very useful source of intelligence and information regarding the needs of the entire area. In addition, Sir, the

[Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava.]

Army authorities are doing all in their power to assist in the onerous task of providing doctors, hospitals and medical relief. The Bengal Government themselves were handicapped first of all by shortage of stocks and then by difficulties of movement and it is hoped, now that these difficulties have so largely been removed, their efforts to open a large number of free kitchens and group feeding centres together with the schemes of rationing which are being developed, for instance, at Dacca and Faridpur, will be able to afford the necessary relief. The House will, I am sure, desire me to acknowledge the encouragement and inspiration which we have received from the visit to Bengal which was paid by His Excellency the Viceroy within a few days of his taking up of his office.

To revert for a moment to the question of supply. The House will recall that H. E. the Governor of Bengal estimated the minimum quantity of food grains necessary for Bengal from outside during the three months October to December at the figure of 250 thousand tons. We immediately planned the despatch of this quantity to Bengal and 82 thousand tons were sent during October. We hope that our arrangements will secure that the figure given by the Governor will be substantially exceeded. We attach the greatest importance to two points in Bengal, namely, the rationing of Calcutta and the procurement of the *aman* crop. Our Rationing Adviser has been down to Bengal on more than one occasion and remained for considerable periods working in close co-operation with the provincial authorities on the gigantic task of preparing a rationing scheme for Calcutta which I hope will very shortly be seen in operation. We have also sent another officer of the Department to collaborate with the Provincial Government in the preparation of their *aman* procurement scheme, the final details of which are now under urgent consideration. Although we have to some extent been unavoidably pre-occupied with the situation in Bengal, we have constantly kept before us the needs of Travancore, Cochin, Bombay, the Deccan States and Madras. I should like to refer particularly to the success of the rationing scheme in Bombay and to the fact that there, as also in the case of Madras, my information is that the population, so far from finding rationing to be some sort of penalty or nuisance, have found it a welcome boon.

Simultaneously with the execution of these short term remedies, we have been concerned with the heavy task of formulating a long term policy on the basis of the recommendations of the Food Grains Policy Committee. I need not here traverse the extensive recommendations which have been made by that Committee. They are well known to the House, as also the fact that we have accepted the report as the basis of our future policy. I trust that this House will agree that we have lost no time in securing the views of the different administrations concerned and in coming to decisions on major points. I feel that the patient and continuous labours of the Committee and the consideration of their recommendations by all concerned has led, for the first time, to the evolution of an All-India policy. The views expressed at the Fourth Food Conference indicated very wide and substantial agreement and I am confident of securing the whole hearted co-operation and support which alone can enable the Centre to secure that the resources of the country are brought to account and are distributed on an equitable basis. I have made it clear, Sir, that I intend to exercise the degree of superintendence and control at every stage which is necessary to secure success and I claim the support of this Legislature in carrying out that intention into effect. Under the revised basic plan, we have to secure as accurate an account as possible of the surpluses and deficits and move the surpluses to the deficit areas. At the Fourth Food Conference the Provinces agreed that the final determination of the surpluses and deficits and the allocation of stocks was to rest with the Centre. For procurement, we decided to rely on the Provincial Government agencies for the simple reason that in the state of emergency in which we find ourselves procurement must be a continuous process and not wait while any country-wide alternative machinery was being devised and put into action.

Sir, as to the prices, we have determined that a statutory price control for all foodgrains all over India is the goal to which we must work, although conditions are such that progress towards it has to be by stages. In our prices policy we have no intention of pushing down prices below a level where they give a fair return to the producer and we intend by every means in our power to protect the producer against undue rise of prices in the commodities which he requires. We intend to remove progressively those price divergencies in different areas which give rise to so much controversy. But we are convinced that control of the prices of foodgrains is an essential factor not only in the feeding of the poor but in the whole economic structure of the country.

I now turn to rationing. Rationing in urban areas, we are persuaded, is an essential factor in the general scheme and the more its benefits become known the more irresistible will be the demand for its expansion.

Lastly, I shall not fail to press continually for the importation of foodgrains in quantities which will ensure the restoration of public confidence and the establishment of reserves which will enable us to deal with emergencies and facilitate effective price control. Our policy on all these points was fully stated at the Food Conference and widely published and I would like to ask this House to endorse that policy. Sir, I am deeply conscious of the necessity of associating non-official public opinion with the work of the food administration throughout the country. The Government of India has impressed upon the Provincial Governments the importance of this and I have given my active consideration in setting up a body at the Centre in an advisory capacity fully representative of non-official public opinion. While we have been concentrating our attention on the question of efficient procurement and distribution of food resources throughout the country, we are fully aware of the paramount importance of increasing those resources by an intensification of the "Grow more food" campaign. My Honourable Colleague, the Member for Education, Health and Lands, has given his personal and constant attention to this matter and the provinces and States are fully alive to the necessity for taking active measures to realise the increased production targets set for them in respect of the coming crops. I will not attempt to prophesy regarding the prospects of the coming *Kharif* crops, but the House will be interested to know that, according to the first All-India rice forecast, the acreage under rice alone has gone up by about four million acres. So far, the condition of the rice and other *Kharif* crops, millets and maize, has been reported good almost without exception throughout the country.

Sir, I have attempted to give the House some picture of the activities of the Department under my charge during the last three months. I cannot be satisfied and shall never be satisfied so long as hunger and distress exist, but I claim that we have been successful in maintaining a steady flow of grains from the surplus to the deficit areas according to pre-arranged programmes. The delivery of grain to most of the deficit areas has enabled them with the assistance of their own efforts to keep the situation under control and in Bengal we are able to show a considerable improvement in the supply position. The export of foodgrains from the country has been stopped and we have secured the definite assurance of substantial quantities of imports from abroad. The provinces and states are constantly improving their procurement machinery and mobilising their food-grain resources for the purpose of domestic consumption and export. Rationing is being widely and increasingly adopted and, above all, we have hammered out and secured agreement to a policy on a common All-India basis. It now remains for India to show that she can be united in carrying out that policy to a success. In the task which lies ahead of me I need all the support and guidance which my colleagues, the Members of this House, can give me. I wish to assure them that their behests will have my first and foremost consideration. A matter of this gravity admits of no party or political considerations. I am sure we are all actuated and inspired by one and the only one consideration, namely, to bring relief to our starving countrymen. To that aim I am devoting myself night and day in all humility and sincerity.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the food situation in India be taken into consideration."

Before the House proceeds further, I should like to know from the Honourable Members whether they desire to have any time-limit for the speeches that are going to be made.

Honourable Members: Yes, Yes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): On the last occasion, the Leaders of Parties were allowed 30 minutes and the other Members 20 minutes each and the Government Member was allowed one hour or more. Will that suit the convenience of the House on this occasion also?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): No, Sir. I would like to propose that the Leaders of Parties should have one hour each and the Movers of amendments half an hour each and the other Members 20 minutes each.

Honourable Members: No, No.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As there is a difference of opinion, I cannot decide. Honourable Members must decide this matter amongst themselves and let me know what is their decision.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, we accept your suggestion.

Some Honourable Members: No, No.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well; then, so far, there will be no time-limit.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Is there any time limit for Movers of Amendments?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There will be no time limit for Movers of Amendments, either. Perhaps the amendments be moved first.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, before the amendments are moved, may I make a suggestion in this regard? If you kindly permit, the amendments may be moved on Monday. The different Parties are trying to arrive at a settlement with regard to amendments, and if some time is given, we shall be ready with our amendments. In the meantime, the debate may proceed.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Then there will be no speeches on any of the amendments.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If that will suit the convenience of Honourable Members generally, I will not stand in the way. But it must be clearly understood that if the amendments are not moved today and if they are moved on Monday, then any Honourable Member who has spoken today will not be able to speak on the amendment again.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Quite right.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know if that would suit Honourable Members generally.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: We want to move our amendment today, and if possible we will arrive at an agreement between the Parties by next Monday. If we arrive at an agreement, then it will be easy to move another amendment to this amendment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If notice of that amendment is given in time, that will be taken up. Does any one wish to move his amendment now?

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury (Assam: Muhammadan): Yes, Sir, I wish to move my amendment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Yes, the Honourable Member may move.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Sir, I move.

"That to the motion, the following be added at the end:
"with a view to set up a Committee of Enquiry of Central Legislature with elected majority to enquire and report on the breakdown of His Majesty's Government in India inasmuch as the Government of India and the Provincial Governments lost their foresight, sense of responsibility and sense of primary duty to protect human life and failed to handle

food situation properly with the result that thousands have already perished for want of food and thousands are still dying for want of food in different parts of the country and specially in Bengal."

Sir, we meet today under very different circumstances. Last time when we debated the food situation in the country, we were only threatened with starvation, but now starvation and death are facing us all over the country. Now, the circumstances have changed. We are losing thousands of our brethren every day. The worst of it is, had these deaths been due to natural causes, one would not have felt so much. This is man-made famine and it has been admitted to be so by all that under the cruel hand of the oppressors many unfortunate people are perishing. It is the duty of the House to pray for the departed souls and I pray that God, in His Infinite Mercy, may grant succour to the departed souls. In the last Food Debate, we brought to the notice of the Government, on the platform and in the Press and in every possible way that death *en bloc* was staring us in the face. We failed to move the Government at that time. The Government were very apathetic. People with human heart felt for these poor people and many went to enquire about the condition in Bengal. Sir Jagadish Prasad, an ex-Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council felt for the people of Bengal and paid a visit to some of the places where people were dying in hundreds. He brought out a memorandum putting forward the results of his investigations during his tour and he invited all the Government officials to go and look at the pitiable condition in which the people of Bengal were dying. Practically no heed was given to his memorandum by the Government. I do not remember to have seen any Government Member going there.

The Honourable Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We had all been there, and the Viceroy also went there.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Our brethren in Bengal were dying in thousands. We sought the help of the Government, but we did not get any appreciable help. The Mayor of Calcutta, in his helplessness, appealed to the British Premier and to the President of the United States and requested them to come to the rescue of Bengal. The President of the United States gave a reply saying that shipping was not available and so he could not help. Our British Premier sent a reply, I am told, but I have not yet seen its contents. At least for a month he did not send any reply. Things went from bad to worse and our people began to die in thousands every day. Last of all, the people had no help; they died in misery without any help from outside. I believe most Members here have read the report of the Honourable Pandit Kunzru who said that he had found people dying like cats and dogs and bodies being eaten up by jackals and vultures and corpses lying about in different parts of the country; and he specially referred to the Contai sub-division of the Midnapore district. At that time, impotent and powerless as we are, we felt ashamed that we could not render any help to the people. The destitute people in Bengal felt they had no friend, no Government, no Viceroy, no Parliament, no Secretary of State and even no King. That was the condition in which our brethren in Bengal have died and are dying *en bloc*. Sir, it is difficult to estimate the total number of people who have perished in Bengal on account of these deaths from starvation. According to the estimate of the Secretary of State it is one thousand per week, but the Honourable the Food Member was doubtful about it as appeared from the reply that he gave to questions in this House the other day. The leading paper *Statesman* made a rough calculation and found that it was not less than 11,000 a week; but neither the Secretary of State nor the *Statesman* represents what is happening in the interior of the country. In the last food debate in the Calcutta Corporation the Mayor gave the figure, and as he is a man of the country and is on the spot his version should be given more credence than that of any one else. According to his estimate Bengal has lost 16 million people through deaths by starvation. It has got only one analogy, the famine of 1866 in which one-fourth of the population perished. In this famine one-fourth of the people has already perished and God knows how many more will perish in the next few months.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That is an entirely wrong estimate.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: It is the Mayor of Calcutta who made that statement.

Mr. Amery is putting all blame on the Provincial Government; he says powers have been delegated to them in connection with the food problems and therefore they themselves are not very much responsible for what is happening. But in 1866 there was no provincial autonomy, no dyarchy; the bureaucracy was then in full power, but even then they could not foresee what was going to happen and could not manage the food problem with the result that a quarter of the population died. Sir, to throw the blame on other shoulders is a very easy thing, but I consider that the blame lies on the bureaucracy and on no one else. It reminds me of what happened in England in 1874 when the report of a suspected death from starvation was reported in a paper known as *Friends of India*. The whole country was in commotion for days and there was an inquiry as to the cause of the suspected death of that one man. Now that a quarter of the people have died, according to the Mayor of Calcutta, there is no move on the part of Britain to ascertain the cause or render any help. It is surprising that the noble race of Britons has stooped so low that they cannot be compared to the people of England in 1874. It seems that they are taking very little interest in Indian affairs now. If the suspected death of one man in 1874 from starvation put the whole country in commotion, is there any reason why the death of so many thousands of people would not move even the Viceroy to pay a visit to the afflicted part of Bengal? Are these the successors of that noble race of Britons? A very low specimen indeed! We heard of a food debate in the House of Commons the other day. There are some 600 members in the House and only 30 or 35 people attended; and the Prime Minister who is always busy in saving the British Empire from liquidation did not have the time to go and attend this food debate. If the Prime Minister were here I would tell him that he has suffered a major defeat in this war on account of what is happening in Bengal and this defeat has shaken the very foundation of the British Empire; I do not know when that foundation will be in order again.

Now, Sir, let us go to the cause of the famine. It must be admitted at the outset that it is not due to nature. In one sentence it may be put like this; Government remained inactive and allowed the prices to rise beyond the purchasing capacity of the people with the result that thousands and lakhs could not procure the money for purchasing food and died accordingly. That is the sum and substance of the whole thing; and I am not alone in this conclusion; even the *Statesman* has come to this conclusion. That is at the root of the whole thing. It is going on even now. As I said in my speech in the last debate, military people go to the market to make purchases. It may be

interesting for the Honourable Members to know that in certain districts a Captain goes to the market with a garland of one hundred-rupee notes put round his neck, and he would pay to rice sellers nothing less than one hundred-rupee notes. Even if the price is 60, or 90 or 10 he would pay a hundred rupee note for that. The result naturally is that the sellers do not sell at lower rates. That is what the labour in Bengal jute factories and in Assam tea estates had to face. They could not get rice at lower price. Even these people had to purchase rice at almost the same price at which rice was sold to the military people. The price went up to Rs. 40 a maund. The wage-earner could not afford to purchase enough to feed himself and his family. The result has been, and here I speak from my own experience, that the middle-class people and wage-earners have been living on one meal a day practically for the last four or five months.

The Central Government allowed the Local Government to put restrictions on sale of rice and paddy, but after trying it for sometime when the Provincial Government almost managed the whole thing in their own way, they at once introduced free trade. That upset the whole arrangement of the Provincial

Government because the price jumped to the level in Bengal, in Assam, in Bihar and in other places.

Talking of the Assam Government, they put a limit on stocks. Under the orders no factory could stock in excess of 20 maunds in reserve. But we find that that order remained on paper only. In the course of six weeks, free trade was removed again, and this again put the local authorities in a very difficult situation. They did not know what to do.

Let us now take the case of Bengal. Their estimated shortage of foodstuffs for six months—from April to September was:—

Rice	4,50,000 tons
Wheat	1,20,000 tons
Millets and maize	2,000 tons.

From the reply of the Honourable the Food Member the other day, we got the following figures of import of foodstuffs into Bengal during the same period—April to September:

Rice	3,90,000 tons.
Wheat and wheat products	1,21,000 tons.
Millets and maize	48,500 tons.

So the deficit was only in rice, that is to say they got 3,90,000 tons of rice against their total deficit of 4,50,000 tons. In wheat and wheat products Bengal received over and above what it needed. And so is the case with regard to millets and maize. May I know then, what happened to all these imports? Where did it go? Where is this excess gone? I do not see any reason, when Government's estimate of deficit was made up from outside, why a single person should have died in Bengal for want of food. That is a question which should be enquired into if any enquiry committee—call it Royal Commission, or whatever you like—is appointed. Who got the benefit of the excess rice, wheat and millets, and why were these commodities not made available to the starving masses? Sir, many ugly rumours are talked about by the people in this connection, but they need not be mentioned here in this House.

Another factor I should like to mention in this connection, which is responsible for this trouble, is that as soon as Burma operations were started, the Government of Bengal seized all the available boats so that they may not fall into the hands of the Japanese. This is one of the reasons why this excess of rice and wheat was not available to the people. As is known to every body, the internal communication of Bengal depends entirely on boats. But, Sir, these boats were seized for fear of their falling into the hands of the enemy, but they have not yet been released. The result is what is happening today. If this boat communication had not been interfered with, I believe, at least some portion of rice, wheat and millets, which the Government of Bengal got from outside, would have reached the hands of the people. I may be excused for saying that in this matter the Government of India and the Government of Bengal are entirely responsible. They did not stress the importance of boat communication to the military authorities. If they had done that, the military authorities would certainly have released boats for internal communication and transport in Bengal.

I come now to the debate in the House of Lords. One or two points are interesting. I will not trouble the House very much. Mr. Amery in the House of Commons admitted that his Government had failed in handling the food situation, but he exonerated himself by saying that his Government had not failed "dishonourably." His failure is responsible for the death of one quarter of the population of Bengal and still he says his failure is not dishonourable. This man has always been false to the salt of his birth country and the less said about him the better.

Mr. Pethick Lawrence, the financial expert of the Labour Party in the House of Commons, opined that he did not agree with Mr. Amery's statement. According to him the Government of India failed to handle the situation when

[Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury.]
the catastrophe occurred. By the Government of India he means the personnel holding appointments at the time both in England and in India. The *Statesman* also said the other day that the outstanding largest factor has been the shameful lack of foresight and planning capacity by India's own Government, Central and Provincial. I repeat it, so that the House may know it themselves—"the outstanding largest factor has been shameful lack of foresight and planning capacity by India's own Government, Central and Provincial." I have some of my best friends on the Treasury Benches: what I have said above is not my own remark. It is the remark of the *Statesman*, a very leading paper; and I think my friends cannot escape the blame thrown on them. The *Statesman* continues further: "A substantial share of the blame for deaths from starvation rests on them."

So my friends on the Treasury Benches must bear a substantial portion of the blame for the starvation deaths in Bengal. That is not only my opinion, but I am quoting the opinion of a very respectable journal, the *Statesman*. It is now established that the Government of India, as defined by Mr. Pethick Lawrence, is responsible for the catastrophe that has happened and is happening in Bengal. The people who are responsible stand very prominent in the Government of India—one is the Secretary of State; another is the Viceroy and the third is the Governor of Bengal. I wish that the spirit of Burke is not dead: I wish that Burkes would spring up in thousands and demand the impeachment of these criminals who are responsible for the death of one-fourth of the population of Bengal

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): One fourth of the population of Bengal—you mean 16 millions have died?

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: I now come to my friends on the Treasury Benches here. A verdict of incompetence has been passed, so far as they are concerned. They are incompetent and they have not got the capacity to handle the food situation in India. I think this verdict will be enforced by the will of the people in this country. I do not see any reason why, in these difficult circumstances, if you are incompetent, you should continue in office: if you are incompetent

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must address the Chair.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: I am surprised that when a verdict like that has been pronounced on them, that they are shamefully lacking in the power of planning and devising means of handling the food situation in these difficult times, what right have they to keep on sitting here and witness the death of the remainder of the famine stricken people of Bengal? I hope that good sense will prevail and they will soon take the right decision.

In the House of Commons debate Mr. Pethick Lawrence put the main cause of the distress in Bengal as due to inflation. According to him the main cause was inflation. I do not see my Honourable friend, Sir Jeremy Raisman, in his seat—he is responsible for this inflation

An Honourable Member: The inflation is here.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: It is not my own words that I am repeating; it is the verdict of a member of the House of Commons; he says that inflation is mainly responsible for what has happened in India, and Mr. Amery admitted it.

Sir John Anderson in winding up the debate made a very funny remark about this: he said that he is a good expert in handling the financial side of the question, but his representative here and the personnel of the Government of India were all gray-haired babies, inexperienced, and so could not handle the situation. They have no experience of handling these things although they have been getting very big salaries. If my friend could have brought to our notice that they have got no experience of handling these matters, we would have doubled their pay and salaries so that they might get accustomed and gain some more experience: we would have even sent them

to a mental hospital to get rid of mental defect and then come back and handle these questions

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the Honourable Member had better address himself to the Resolution.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: Now, Sir I come to the question of remedies. I have spoken so long about what has happened. According to all food experts in America and Britain, the food situation will be acuter in all countries in 1944 and 1945. And what action are we taking to avoid the danger of this coming difficulty? I must say at the outset that the new Viceroy has begun his work in a practical way, and from the manner in which he is moving I hope that he will see that relief reaches the interior of Bengal so that the people may not die of starvation. That is my hope, I personally believe it, because talkers are never workers.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Hear, hear! Talkers are never workers.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: The Honourable the Food Member has mentioned in his speech that under the instructions of the Government of India some Governments have fixed ceiling prices on rice in the hope that everything will be all right. We have our own experience of ceiling prices. The Government of Assam, the Government of Bengal have been fixing the ceiling prices. I have got many friends and relations in Bengal and I learn from them that rice is selling at Rs. 40 per maund even though the Government have fixed the price at Rs. 20. I come from Assam, from the Sylhet district. There the ceiling price is Rs. 22-8-0, but rice is not available for less than Rs. 30 or 32.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The market price in Assam is lower than the ceiling price to-day.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: We approached some of the authorities in that connection and one had the courtesy to tell us, "You either eat rice, or eat order paper, we cannot help".

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Not order paper, but order on paper, because there is no paper, there is paper scarcity.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: That is the situation so far as the ceiling prices are concerned. I find, although my friends are doing their utmost to help, they are still undecided as to what they should do. I find from the conclusions of the Food Committee's report which was handed over to us yesterday—I find that the Government are not yet prepared to do the most satisfactory thing. Conclusion No. 33 says:

"From the standpoint of principle the only completely satisfactory solution would be a Central Government Foodgrains Monopoly. But the problems of staffing, organisation and administration involved are so great and the needs of the situation so pressing, that the necessary time is lacking."

They think there is a solution, but they do not like to work on that solution—why? Because there is no staff, there is no money, there is this excuse, there is that excuse! If I had had anything to do with this, I would not have sacrificed a single life, but I would have spent crores of rupees—not this sort of cowardice, this sort of excuse, no staff, no money, to handle the situation. If you think this is the best solution, act according to it, cost what it may in money. Money cannot be any question in preserving human life. Our friends are still indecisive. In conclusion 37, they say:

"The general objective of all procurement machinery must be to eliminate competitive buying to the greatest practicable extent. This can most easily be achieved by either confining a particular buyer to a particular area, or if the unit of purchase is to be the entire Province or State, using a single buying firm or a syndicate of firms, or a single official buyer."

Here again they are undecided. The distress is so great, so uncommon, so unique; that lakhs of our people have perished and, still the gentlemen who are responsible for averting all these disasters are still undecided as to what to do—whether to do it this way, or that way and they have been holding food conferences one after another. Again,—

"In considering the elimination of competitive buying, the possibility of using transport facilities to ensure priority for official procurement as against buyers on their own account.

[Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury.]

and as a means of controlling competition, has not received the general attention which it deserves."

How to check competitive purchases—they have not yet any definite plans in their mind, and one-fourth of the population have already perished. I ask, when will they come to a decision? When the entire population dies? And for whom will they be here if the entire population dies before they can take any steps?

We have passed one year of distress, and another season is coming now.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Does the Honourable Member wish to conclude his speech now? It is half past one now.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury: I am concluding in a minute. It is a very intricate subject and hence I am taking time. We have paid the penalty of deaths after the last harvest season and this season. The new harvest season is coming, and if my Honourable friends here and those in the provinces cannot control prices, Government measures will have no meaning, Government orders will have no meaning if they cannot check or control the prices when the new harvest is coming, and God alone knows what will happen then. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That to the motion, the following be added at the end:

'with a view to set up a Committee of Enquiry of Central Legislature with elected majority to enquire and report on the breakdown of His Majesty's Government in India inasmuch as the Government of India and the Provincial Governments lost their foresight, sense of responsibility and sense of primary duty to protect human life and failed to handle food situation properly with the result that thousands have already perished for want of food and thousands are still dying for want of food in different parts of the country and specially in Bengal.'"

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, may I just place before you the agreement that has been arrived at between the Party Leaders. It is to the effect that Tuesday should be reserved for Leaders and the Government reply.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot do that. That depends upon the Leaders and the Government. It does not depend upon me.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: This is the agreement . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It has nothing to do with me.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I wish to place it before you. The agreement is that the question hour on Monday and Tuesday be omitted and the replies be printed as usual in the proceedings, that Movers of amendments be allowed 30 minutes and other speakers be allowed 20 minutes each.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim). As regards questions, I don't know that there is general agreement. There may be many Members who may wish to put questions.

Some Honourable Members: There is general agreement.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If that is the agreement arrived at and if Members don't put questions, then the answers will be printed as usual but I cannot omit the question paper. As regards the time-limit, I don't know whether it is desired that the time limit should be imposed from today.

Honourable Members: Yes.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Yes, after the luncheon hour.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Is Tuesday reserved for Leaders alone?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim). It is not reserved. I did not agree with that suggestion, if the Honourable Member had heard me.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Three of the Clock, Mr. Hooseil-bhoy A. Lalljee (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Sir, I beg to move:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

'and having taken into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country.

This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate steps for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into and report *inter alia* on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death-rate resulting therefrom:

- (a) the cause of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organization in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measure adopted by Government;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

Sir, as you have seen, the Resolution recommends two things and I will speak on both those two things separately. With regard to the first portion, I will say that after having listened to the Honourable Member in charge of the Food Department, I think I can say that he has told us the same thing which we heard last year. Mr. N. N. Sarkar gave assurances on the floor of the House that the Government would bring in some kind of relief and he also said that the proposals which were brought forward by the Government were so good as to be fully justified. But today we find that the present Government condemns all those actions which were taken by the previous Members who were in charge of this subject. The controlled price of wheat in 1942 was Rs. 5 per maund. Government found afterwards that because of this controlled price, wheat was going underground and the profiteers were making profit. So, they began to think what to do next. Sir, the Government machinery always moves slowly and generally when the calamity is over, they begin to find out the remedy. The result was that by the time they could devise methods that should be adopted in order to meet those people who were violating the laws and who were selling at higher prices, the condition of the people of the country became very bad and there was lot of suffering in the country. Then they brought another remedy which was to a greater extent responsible for the other greater calamity which followed it and which they themselves admit in the paper which has been supplied to us. They removed the control and began to purchase wheat themselves. They themselves say that the result of it was that wheat began to flow into the market and the prices went up from Rs. 5 to Rs. 12 a maund and the Government had great consolation and was quite happy in purchasing 1,80,000 maunds of wheat. The object of removing the control was simply to enable the Government to purchase wheat at whatever price they could get it. There can be no greater condemnation of the Food Department and the advisers of the Government than this that it resulted in such a great calamity in the country. The result was that instead of getting 8 seers of wheat for a rupee we could get only 3 seers and a little more. The cultivator who had sold all his crops at 8 seers to a rupee came to know that he could not buy wheat for less than Rs. 12 a maund for his seed. The result was that the cultivator refused to sell his wheat this year because the Government did not give him any protection. The price of wheat in the Punjab today is Rs. 12 per maund and in Delhi also the price is the same, but in the United Provinces across the Jumna the price of wheat is only 2½ seers to a rupee. How can you expect a poor man whose income is about Rs. 16 or Rs. 20 a month or a clerk who is getting Rs. 60 a month in your Departments to live when wheat is being sold so dearly? You want a B. A. and an M. A. in your Supply Department and yet you pay him only Rs. 60 a month. Even the typist girls are getting Rs. 125 in other Departments. Then, there is a general rise in the prices of

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

everything else. Good milk costs 8 annas a seer. If a clerk has a child to be fed on milk because the mother is ill, he cannot feed his child because he cannot afford to spend 8 annas a day on milk alone. Then, the price of fuel has gone up. In fact, the price of everything else has gone up.

Major General Wood tried to justify in this House that he was the only person who knew that everything was right and that those of us who were giving advice were absolutely wrong. But today we find that we are right and he was wrong. We foretold that he was doing something which he did not know. He knew nothing about the country. Why did he come to give advice before this House. He did not understand the mentality of the people of this country. He therefore had no business to give advice to people and thus bring calamity to the whole country. I wish Mr. N. R. Sarkar had been here today to face the music and to justify his action as a Member of the Executive Council. His own speeches would have been quoted against him, and he would have been asked to justify his actions by the results that had happened. He was merely playing into the hands of his officers whose one idea was to make purchases on behalf of Government without caring in the least what would happen to the people of the country if no foodstuffs are left for their consumption. Of course, in the Delhi Province, you can get everything at high prices. In my own Province, there are many places where you can get nothing. Everything is concealed. You cannot get medicines at the price you want. Malaria is raging in an epidemic form and hundreds and thousands of people are dying because people have got no money to buy medicines. This is the state of things to which we have been reduced. There may be some big Government servants with high salaries, there may be big contractors who are able to get anything they want. If you go to villages, there may be some contractors who might give some small work for cottage industries, and thus they may feed themselves. But that is not sufficient. In U. P., Government allowed price to rise. They collected six annas more in the rupee from the tenants by way of land revenue. The Government collect this extra money and pay their servants. What about those persons who are not Government servants? They are all suffering. I do not think the Government of India have taken this into consideration. My Honourable friend, Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava, may have taken charge only now. But I consider the Government as a continuous body and this Food Department has existed for the last year and a half and it has done grave wrong to this country. It is therefore necessary to investigate these wrongs with the aid of independent people. We do not want people appointed by the Government. They should be people of character, integrity and impartiality who will be able to decide who is responsible for this food muddle.

Sometime back, I was referring to milk. Any poor man with an income of Rs. 20 or Rs. 25 cannot be expected to give milk to his children. He cannot get even one meal a day on that meagre income. He cannot get vegetables, he cannot get meat, he cannot get cereals. While the poor people are suffering terribly, the richer classes and the Government are sitting tight because they do not care for the poor. The richer classes purchase things at whatever price in the market. Last time, I said that mere controlling of price will not do. You are not able to control the price effectively. If you control the price, then control the commodity also. Take the entire stock and find out in every village how much stock is there. You have got your *patwaris*, your *kanungos*, your Naib tahsildars, your Tahsildars, your sub-Divisional officers and your District Magistrates and a host of other machinery through whom you can get the entire stock in the villages. In my own Province, U. P., it is said that no one can keep more than five maunds of food grains for one family in urban area. But the rural areas are excluded from this prohibition. The result is that the *baniya* goes to the village, purchases all the stock and keeps it there. He brings to the market only just a few cart loads. In my own town, where formerly hundreds of carts with food grains used to come,

now, barely two or three carts arrive and the result is that there is a great rush for purchasing those carts and the prices go up. The price of wheat was as high as two seers a rupee.

That is the condition. You meet in conferences, you discuss and frame rules and regulations. As the proverb goes, while Rome was burning, Nero was fiddling, so while people are dying in thousands for want of foodgrains, you take very slow measures to ease the situation. You are fiddling away your time. You are expected to take immediate action to stop this rot. You do not seem to understand that even if a man is dead on account of your inaction, you are not only guilty, but you commit a sin. It is entirely your responsibility. You are causing his death and the entire responsibility rests on your action, or inaction or wrong action whatever it may be. What I want Government is they must have proper distribution machinery. Mere rationing will not do. My friend may say there is rationing working well in Bombay. But ask the people from Bombay about rationing. They will say though they get food, yet it is adulterated food. Food is mixed up with lots of other things and then sent to control shops. Government have blundered. The Government look to the District Magistrates to work this. The District Magistrate gives the monopoly only to a few flatterers who hang on to the District Magistrate for favours. These favourites of the District Magistrate make speeches condemning the ordinary people and the result is the District Magistrate is pleased and he gives a monopoly of sale in one commodity to each of these flatterers. Some people get monopoly to sell fuel, some sell coal, some sell salt and so on. Then again as regards opening of shops in particular centres, this privilege is given to favourites of some officials. You see this means that some people make a lot of money and put it into their pockets. They do not care for other people, they only look to their own pockets and they do not fear anybody because they are under the protection of the District Magistrate.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): Have you got rationing in U. P.?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: There was once, but thank God, it has been stopped. Only one *chattak* a day was allowed for an adult; I quoted it last time.

My suggestion is that Government should take immediate steps to fix the prices for the next crop, taking into consideration all relevant factors like rent of land, labour, water rates, prices of seed, wages, etc., and keeping for him a margin of 20 or 30 p. c. If the cultivator knows that all his stock will be requisitioned by Government minus his consumption and seed requirements, and that he cannot make any profit by keeping this wheat for the next year, you will be surprised to find that all this stock will come into the market. But at the same time you should not control the price of foodstuffs alone. The producer makes it a grievance and asks why he should sell his stock at a cheaper rate when he purchases everything else at a high rate. I was glad to hear from the Honourable Member that all the other necessities of life were going to be controlled, but those prices must be related to the prices which you are fixing for his commodities. If he sells his wheat at eight seers to a rupee, all the other prices must be at that level.

Now, Sir, we hear some people saying that the whole trouble in Bengal is due to Government's buying up the whole stock in Eastern Bengal and following the scorched earth policy and burning or sinking boats which are real means of transport; another allegation is that the blame rests on the Governor of Bengal who, after the stock was taken away, did not care to see whether anything was left for the poor people and what would happen to them if Japan did not come with food; others again lay the blame on the Huq ministry for this calamity because they clung to office even when they saw the Governor doing wrong and did not resign as honest people should have done; other people say that the calamity came along with the new ministry and they are responsible; some say that it is the Central Government who are responsible and their Transport Member because means of transport were denied;

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

some again blame the Food Department because they say they bungled the whole thing. Now we know that the Commander-in-Chief has taken immediate steps towards transport. When all these different kinds of allegations are made how is the public to know where the real responsibility lay? I say that no committee can properly investigate this matter unless it is beyond the reach and above the influence of any one in this country and is in a position to come to an impartial finding as to the responsibility, whether it is the Government of Bengal or the ministry or the Government of India. The real culprits should be brought out in their report, and for that purpose a Royal Commission is the only competent body. I have given some points to be investigated but that list is not exhaustive and there may be other points to be referred to them, but these should be specially reported upon. Some people asked me why I want immediate steps to be taken about this. My answer is that it is no use appointing a Royal Commission after all the people are dead and no one is left even to give evidence. In that case it will be a post-mortem report, no more of interest than the reports of the Public Accounts Committee. We want to see what relief and redress they can suggest. Of course I know it will take some time and by the time the Commission comes and starts its work the present crisis may be over. The objection from Government will be that if they start that work the attention of the ministry and other people will be diverted from the important work in which they are engaged. But I say it will not be diverted and I hope the crisis will be over by the time the Royal Commission start their work; and people who are now doing important work will be able to place their record before the Commission. I therefore want immediate steps to be taken towards the appointment of this Royal Commission.

Sir, I move.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee): Amendment moved:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

and having taken into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country.

This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate steps for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into and report *inter alia* on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death-rate resulting therefrom:

- (a) the cause of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organization in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measure adopted by Government;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

There is one more amendment in the name of Mr. Neogy. He may move it now.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): If you permit me, I should like to move it formally today and reserve my speech for Monday, or alternatively, I will move it on Monday and speak then.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee): You may move your amendment now so that those who will speak today will be able to dilate on it. You can make your speech on Monday.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Sir, I move:

"That to the Motion the following be added at the end:

and having taken it into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country; and this Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken for the appointment of a Committee, consisting of eminent economists and experienced judges and

administrators and an Accountant-General, under the chairmanship of a Lawyer who has held high judicial office in India, to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death rate resulting therefrom:—

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation, with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of food-grains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations,
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

Mr. Chairman (Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee): Amendment moved:

"That to the Motion the following be added at the end:

and having taken it into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country; and this Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken for the appointment of a Committee, consisting of eminent economists and experienced judges and administrators and an Accountant-General, under the chairmanship of a Lawyer who has held high judicial office in India, to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death rate resulting therefrom:

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation, with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of food-grains, as well as price control that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations,
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban (Sind Jagirdars and Zamindars: Landholders): Sir. The food debate has become a hardy sessional, so to say. Every time this Assembly meets—I am talking of recent times—the subject raises its head. Grievances and difficulties are voiced on one side, and assurances given by Government spokesmen, that all possible has been done, is being done and will continue to be done to improve the deplorable situation existing in certain parts of India—notably where there is acute shortage of foodgrains, famine and destitution.

Certain places in India like Bengal, Madras, Travancore, Cochin, Malabar and parts of Bombay Presidency are in the grip of such a serious situation that the conscience of the people all over the world has been stirred to its depths. The tale of woe—hunger, misery, starvation and death—that one reads in the press and hears from persons who have visited the stricken areas is pathetic indeed. This is not the time for charges and counter-charges, rancour or recrimination, but an opportunity for showing active sympathy and extending utmost succour to all those unfortunate victims of a deepening calamity. A keener appreciation of the magnitude of the catastrophe and a better understanding of the measures taken by Government and other agencies to grapple with the menacing conditions, side by side with an inflexible determination to utilize all possible resources in order early to restore normality, are the prime need of the hour.

That the situation particularly in Bengal is bad enough none doubts. Offers of aid, both financial and material, from different quarters in India and abroad are an eloquent testimony alike to the seriousness of the conditions

[Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban.]

prevailing in that unfortunate province and to the spark of humaneness kindled in the breasts of those to whom the suffering is still remote. In the ameliorative measures taken recently, one strikingly prominent feature, which has rightly evoked admiration and praise all round, is the unique part played by H. E. the new Viceroy, Field-Marshal Lord Wavell, soon after his assumption of that exalted office. Like Haroon-al-Rashid of old, His Lordship, setting aside all conventional and positional considerations, visited *incognito* several of the destitutes, heard their condition from their own lips, saw things for himself, and at once took action designed effectively to relieve the misery and reduce the suffering in that land. This humane touch of His Excellency has roused high hopes that he will not rest content until normal conditions are brought about in that much-afflicted land.

It will be sometime before the results of the measures, instituted at the direction of one who is evidently imbued with a lively sense of responsibility for the welfare of millions of Indians committed to his care and whose heart throbs with feelings for the poverty and misery of the poor and the helpless, become manifest. One can only hope and trust that there will be a growing improvement in the situation in the early future, and that an ample measure of public support and co-operation will be forthcoming for successfully tackling the prevailing unhappy position.

The death rate appears to be appalling. Some put it at 1,000 a week; others believe it to be 50,000; even this figure, alarming as it is, is regarded in some quarters as an under-estimate. It is distressing too to hear that, to save the cost of either burying or burning the dead, the corpses are being thrown into rivers or streams. This would further increase diseases which are already taking a heavy toll of human lives. Government will do well, therefore, to see that the dead bodies are disposed of in either of the two common forms, thereby nipping in the bud another monster of epidemics.

It appears from press reports that something like 200,000 tons of cereals have been sent to Calcutta alone during the 3½ months ending 31st October, 1943. A better system of distribution of foodgrains and ready-made food will doubtless assist in affording relief, and it is to be hoped that both the civil and military authorities in Bengal will execute their plans harmoniously with the one object in view, namely, ending early the present lamentable plight in the second city of the British Empire and its mofussil.

Willing and hearty co-operation of the people and their natural leaders is equally necessary in any scheme evolved to deal with a problem of such large proportions as Bengal specially presents today. I do not think it would be too much to expect the Government to enlist the assistance and services of those leaders who, on account of their political activities find themselves unable to participate in the humanitarian task of relieving the immense suffering by making a generous gesture by releasing such detenus, for a specified period or for this definite purpose if need be. The resultant atmosphere may even pave the way for a resolution of the political deadlock, which in turn may lead to an acceleration of the tempo of war effort and whole-souled co-operation of entire India in the fight against the totalitarian powers, in the west as well as in the east. I am sure this aspect of the question has found an important position in the "mental bag" of His Excellency, the present Viceroy.

It is recognised on all hands that the loss of Burma has added to the deficit of foodgrains in India, and that even in normal times large numbers of the population are on bare subsistence level. The case for imports of cereals into India from abroad and for the ban of any exports from India even to a neighbouring country is, therefore, unassailable when her own people are dying of starvation or badly under-nourished. It is reassuring to learn that the Government of India have arranged for imports of foodgrains to tide over the present difficulties and that already five shiploads have arrived to ease the situation. An indication of the quantity received and how it is disposed of would have been welcome to us, and I trust that members of this Assembly

will be taken into greater confidence by Government in such matters with supply of details also. The enemy is already making too much propaganda about the famine conditions in Bengal and other parts of India, to derive any fresh material to add to his repertory for poisonous distillations, by hearing such particulars.

That imports of foodgrains on an adequate scale should continue from other countries until India is able to feed her own people fully and nourishingly from the yield of her crops is also one of the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, appointed by the Government of India some months back. The home front and the maintenance of the morale of the civilian population are no less important than military operations or the rushing of arms, ammunition and other war materials to the various theatres in which the enemy is, or has to be, engaged. An increasing recognition of this point is in evidence wherever the Bengal tragedy has leapt into prominence, and it need scarcely to emphasise that a continual flow of imports of foodgrains is necessary until India is able to do without it.

This brings me to the question of the "Grow more food" campaign, which was initiated some months ago. The recent debate in the House of Commons has brought out the fact forcibly that the yield per acre in India is dismally low. Even the Government expert, Dr. Aykroyd, himself recently admitted that the campaign has proved a damp squib. Small holdings, primitive methods of cultivation, lack of modern agricultural implements, want of fertilisers are a handicap that requires to be removed early if the drive is to produce a substantial expansion in the outturn. With a bold policy both at the centre and in the provinces and States, a larger acreage can be brought under the plough; and better seed, up-to-date methods of agriculture and larger inducements to the farmer for growing particular crops will all contribute to more food being made available for the people. As the world situation in the matter of foodstuffs for 1944 and for a few years thereafter does not appear to be at all rosy, it is essential that India must plan fully and act expeditiously and energetically so as to be self-reliant and free from the travails and tribulations such as are being witnessed and experienced today.

The importance of milch and draught cattle in the agricultural economy of India cannot be over-rated. It is imperative therefore that the export or slaughter of these animals who work for and sustain us should be stopped altogether. Not only that, but proper attention needs to be paid to their care and well-being, so that this source of nourishment to humanity is maintained at a high pitch to draw upon freely and fully.

Now let me turn to some of the recommendations of the Foodgrains Policy Committee in brief, as to deal with each one of them in detail will take a lot of time, which I should not expect, out of regard for my other colleagues who wish to speak on the subject before us. The Committee recommend that there should be built up a central reserve of 500,000 tons of foodgrains for emergent purposes to send relief to those areas which suffer a temporary breakdown in their normal arrangements or machinery. This is an eminently sound suggestion, and I trust the Government of India will put it into effect by including the quantity in the imports from abroad.

As regards the plan for procuring foodgrains, I should like to stress the importance of avoiding the creation of a monopoly, which, while eliminating competitive buying, dictates its own terms to the agriculturist having the corn to sell, very often to his detriment. A certain optimum figure must be ensured to the farmer for his produce by the Government agency appointed to procure grain, allowing him to keep, if he wishes to, such quantity as he requires for his and his family's use. I do not think it wise to force him to sell all his produce under threat of penalty.

There is no question but that prices of foodgrains should be controlled as much as prices of other articles of everyday use and need. To control the one and not the other is to place an undue burden upon the cultivator, who alone should not be called upon to make sacrifices. Prices of consumer's goods have gone up so unconscionably high that there is urgent need to bring a comprehensive number of these within the pale of a stringent order. I would

[Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban.]

urge the Honourable Member for Commerce and Industries to direct his attention to this point early and effectively.

We have heard about rationing in urban areas. It is in force in some places already. There are favourable and unfavourable reports about the scheme and its working. It will mean a hardship to those of the large class of illiterate labourers and such people, who earn and live for one day, to carry the ration cards, present them at the particular shop and get their quota of 1½ lbs. per day per adult. I hear that in one place where rationing is about to be introduced, some of the ignorant and illiterate labouring class have torn the ration cards with the idea of having nothing to do with what they consider to be a cumbrous and inconvenient system. If rationing is to be worked successfully, a far simpler scheme must be adopted.

In order to inspire confidence in, and to get support from, the public it is obvious that their representatives should be enabled to give advice and guidance by Government enlisting their cooperation on such important questions as food supply prices, movement of grain from one deficit area to another. It seems to be very desirable that if public opinion is sought to be invoked in helping towards the success of any Government scheme for food acquisition, distribution and consumption, it should be respected when expressed. I feel Government are alive to the importance of this aspect and will render it possible to get the cooperation of enthusiastic and earnest representatives of the people by putting them on food advisory committees not only in large towns but also in mofussil places also.

Government have already recognised the need to take anti-inflationary measures to check the soaring prices of various commodities. As a step in this direction I would urge the importation of gold and silver from abroad, which are an attraction to any one, the more so to an agriculturist.

I have very little more to say. In order to keep a close watch on prices of articles it is necessary to have a Central Price Control Committee consisting of some members of both the Houses, of producers and of trade and consumers. I feel sure this suggestion will commend itself to the Government and that such a Committee will be set up early. That body could also be utilised to advise and guide the Food Department of the Government of India on all important matters.

I shall refer to one point before I close. It is this. I did not touch on the events, circumstances and causes which have led to the catastrophe in Bengal. When the situation has improved, it will be desirable to have a Commission to investigate the whole matter and report on the measures to prevent such a heart-rending recurrence. The past needs to be gone into only to draw a lesson for the future.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Chairman, I listened to the speech of the Honourable the Food Member and carefully followed the figures which he was pleased to place before the House. An Honourable Member has characterised the food debate as a hardy annual, a debate which has been going on Session after Session for some time. Lest this debate might take on a purely academic character, I submit that it should be viewed against a realistic background. While we are discussing this question we should have our feet firmly on the ground; we should be able to speak with positive knowledge of how things are shaping at the moment in Bengal.

For over three months now, Bengal has been passing through a famine the like of which is never known in her recorded history. She has been confronted with one of the severest of calamities that could befall a province or a race. When things in Bengal had been heading towards a crisis, public opinion in Bengal was roused and both the Provincial and the Central Governments were implored to take action betimes so that the disaster might be averted. But Governments have their own ways. Instead of allowing the reports of the dangerous food situation developing in Bengal to reach other parts of India, vigorous censorship was imposed and no news could get out of Bengal about

what was happening there and about the acute shortage of food. The Provincial Government never characterised the food scarcity as a famine and the Government of India did no better. For a time, though we carried tales of misery from Bengal to our friends here, we were suspected of exaggeration or of over-drawing the picture. But, Sir, when the *Statesman* of Calcutta took courage in both hands and published pictures of the victims of starvation in Calcutta, then the conscience of this country was roused. It was only then, and not till then, could the outside world know what was happening in Bengal, and the rest of India, and since then, began to take sympathetic interest in the affairs of Bengal. But by that time matters had reached such a stage, that very little could be done. Notwithstanding all that, I must express my deep gratitude to this paper, the *Statesman*, for doing this signal service to my country. After the *Statesman* the Indian press had the courage to follow suit. I do not blame the Indian press because we know how they were rigorously repressed here and in the provinces. They were not at all free, but when the *Statesman* opened the door, things began to come out. Horrible tales of misery, destitution and sufferings of millions of people began to pour in. Here, I hold in my hand a collection of starvation pictures typical of all stages of this terrible process. They vividly represent the harrowing things that have been daily happening in all parts of the Second City of the British Empire. In one picture you find a man, goaded by hunger and in sheer desperation, hanging himself from a tree before the temple of Kalighat. In another you find two shrunken babies in the bosoms of two famished young girls, gasping for food, but all collapsing without having anything to keep them alive. In the third you find a procession of dead men; women and children all departing this world which could not give them the wherewithals, the grains of food for which they had wandered away from their homes. This pageant of dead persons was handed over to the municipality for disposal. After life's fitful fever they all slept well, never to be awakened by anything that the Official Benches might say or the press and the public might clamour about. It is impossible within the short time at my disposal to give an adequate idea of the horrible things that are happening in all parts of the Province. Hundreds of thousands of people have died and many more are through the painful process of death.

I have often asked myself the question, if in the midst of this calamity there is Japanese bombing or an air raid, what is to happen to my country? Sir, Japanese bombing would seem to be a humane deliverance from this prolonged torture of death through which the whole nation is passing. Can you imagine the Second City of the British Empire with her pavements littered with dead bodies, littered with people famished, pining by degrees, not getting a morsel of food? This is the given spectacle that will greet you. Ah! What a shocking sight it is to see—man and dog rummaging the dustbins of the city to find remnants of food on which to live? On many an occasion have man and dog fought for a rejected piece of foodstuff lying on the roadside. Here I have got a press report which says that a boy was carrying on a fight with a dog for a rejected bit of food lying on the wayside. He was so badly mauled in the fight that he had to be removed to a hospital where his condition became precarious. If the dog had finished him, there would not have been any further lingering pain for him to pass through. These are the ways in which famine is stalking the land and levying its toll in all its cruellest forms. Besides, the number of deaths is mounting to such an abnormal height that dead bodies cannot even be disposed of in the usual way.

I have before me a press report where it is stated that dead bodies had to be thrown into the rivers as no arrangements could be made for cremation because of the shortage of fuel and in another press report it is stated that dead bodies in the burning ghats were lying in advanced stages of decomposition and they could not be disposed of for want of fuel. I have in my hands a telegram which I received from the President of the Seva Samity of Faridpur, Dr. Jogendra Nath Maitra, M.Sc., M.B., D.P.H., D.T.M.,

[Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra.]

F.C.S., an eminent physician and a social worker. I shall read one or two sentences from it:

"Condition in Bengal Districts appalling. Bandpur, poorest Bengal District living on charity. Agriculture, Labour, Cattle lost. No foodstuffs. Rice, atea, joar, bajra not available. Arrange medical relief, quinine immediately. Pestilence cholera raging. Dead bodies on roads. Jackals, dogs, vultures devouring and floating on water. Dr. Mazumdar, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Dacca University authorized for relief work. Can explain facts with figures if desired."

This report is so harrowing that one may be tempted to think that it is a piece of fiction but these are facts which are stranger than fiction and are increasingly in evidence in Bengal every day. These cannot be conjured up even by the wildest imagination. And what is the relief that has been given? The supreme call of humanity has been responded to enthusiastically by the philanthropic sections of the people all over the country. We must gratefully acknowledge all that they have done. To mention only a few, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Marwari Relief Society and the Bengal Relief Committee have been doing excellent work. That is all admitted but they cannot touch more than the fringe of the whole problem. I have before me a statement issued by the Government of Bengal, a press note, in which it is stated that they have been feeding in all about 18 lakhs of people every day in their gruel kitchens. Remember that a province of 63 millions has been laid low. Remember also that the cry for food is not confined to the city of Calcutta which has a population of only 3 millions. Hundreds of thousands of families in the country side have come to the end of their financial tethers and finding no other way to feed themselves, have been driven by sheer desperation to come to Calcutta and the District towns in quest of food. In Calcutta, what little official and non-official organisations could do, was done but that was wholly inadequate. Even to day, I see a press report which says that a man and his wife got release from this world by jumping before a running train. Another report says that jackals have been making feast of human lives, that they had been devouring the bodies of people whose life was still not extinct. If these reports came only through me, it might have been thought that I was indulging in exaggeration but, Sir, we have three or four eminent persons who had toured over the affected country and sent reports which have been published in the *Hindustan Times* in Upper India. My esteemed friend and ex-colleague, Mr. Santhanam has contributed a number of articles depicting the picture. My respected friend, the Honourable Mr. Kunzru, whose ability and integrity cannot be challenged by anybody, has given a gruesome picture of the present situation and Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, the President of the All-India Women's Conference, has issued statements on the subject. I will read only one passage from her graphic description which will give you an idea of how women and children fare at present. It is indeed true that in this Bengal crisis, the children have been the worst sufferers. Let me read to the House an extract from the statement made by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit:

"Conditions in Bengal are appalling and defy description. They must be seen to be believed. Men, women and children in the last degree of emaciation pour into the city and district from the villages. Haggard and half-naked women worn out for lack of food carrying rickety babies with dried up limbs and old wrinkled faces are seen. Small children with bloated bellies and ribs, standing out, taunt against their lean and thin legs which can hardly support their weight. There are men in every stage of starvation, walking skeletons most of them. Hour after hour, these poor unfortunates stand patiently holding out their tin mugs for the inadequate dole of 'khichri' or gruel. Many women are unable to come to kitchens as they have lost the few rags they possessed and are entirely naked. The problem of cloth threatens to become almost as acute as the food problem and must be attended to before winter begins."

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

I will not weary the House further with these gruesome details. They have been appearing in the Press from day to day. Now the question is how is this famine situation going to be combated? Let me tell you, Sir, that this is not the kind of famine with which we are familiar. It is entirely different from the ordinary concept of famine. This famine is not due to any natural cause. It

is not really due to any visitation of nature or failure of crop. It is not due to flood, cyclone, drought or excess of rain or to any of those natural causes that bring about famine. This is a purely man-made business. It is an artificial thing and the circumstances which have brought about this disaster have been created by the Provincial Government and the Central Government. I therefore say that the word "famine" has no real application to this case which is nothing but a creation of the Government. When this octopus had been spreading its tentacles over the country, public representatives gave warning of the danger ahead but who was there to take note of it? None. When we talk of this food crisis, we must consider the roles played by the Provincial and the Central Governments in this dire tragedy. How can they absolve themselves of all responsibility in this matter?

What has been the food policy of the Government of India? Well, a policy of masterly inactivity, drift and indecision. In Great Britain, in 1936, three years before the war broke out, they had set up a Ministry of Civil Supplies. They had their food schemes ready. But here, in this country, the British Government did nothing of the kind though they knew that they had to depend on Burma for one and half million tons of rice every year. It was not until Japan came into the war in December 1941 that they thought of creating a Food Department. When was it brought into being? It was perhaps in November 1942 but what happened then? After a short while, the Food Minister resigned about the middle of February and another set of people were taken in. Major General Wood was appointed Director General of Food! After Mr. N. R. Sarker, resigned, no Executive Councillor was appointed to take independent charge of the Food Department. As if it was an ancillary and unimportant subject which did not deserve to form an independent portfolio, it was tacked on to another department. Then came another Food Member. He was given the portfolio with the old staff. The first thing that he thought fit to do as the Food Member to relieve distress was to issue pompous statements and quote figures of production, consumption and stocks of foodstuffs in the country to prove that there was no shortage but surplus. But when there came a counter blast of figures from the economists and public men in the country, he at once called for a truce in the field of statistics. I have before me an Associated Press Report of what the Second Food Member publicly declared in May last.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member has one minute more.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: He emphatically declared that the Government figures were absolutely accurate and that there was no shortage of food. But the first Food Member had said that there was shortage of food to the extent of 4 per cent. which is a direct contradiction of the statement of the second Food Member that there was no shortage at all, rather there was surplus. Then, came the third Food Member with a new staff. So, in the course of nine months we had as many as three Food Members with three staffs. Is that the way to tackle the food problem of a country?

My Honourable friend Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava has given today certain figures of exports of Foodgrains to Bengal in recent months, but they can at best be palliatives. They are inadequate to meet the needs of the situation. The main problem now is how to rush for greater supplies there immediately and how to deal with the future crop. If the Government of India handle the aman crop properly then alone they can save the situation. I hear from the Honourable the Food Member that the Government is actively considering the question of taking measures for its purchase. If they carry on the policy of reckless purchase in the case of the aman crop as well then there may be a mitigation of the situation for the next two or three months, but the famine will again reappear thereafter in a form which will be far more devastating than what we have been passing through now. This is a matter for the most serious consideration of the Government whether they should again embark on a policy of competitive purchase or allow the normal trade channels to adjust themselves and function in accordance with the usual law of demand and supply. We want

[Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra.]

to see that the crop which is going to be harvested towards the end of December is made available through normal trade channels to the people so that their confidence may be restored. But if the Government of Bengal go on tightening up the price control on the one hand and making indefinite and indiscriminate purchases at any price on the other, as I find it to be their policy today, then I am sure the terrible catastrophe will again overwhelm us after some months. The last *Aus* crop was a bumper crop in some parts of Bengal. I can bear personal testimony to it. In my own district of Nadia we had a very good crop. But what happened was that the Government's policy of reckless purchase at any price brought the district to such a position that by 1st of October there was not a grain of rice available in its markets and the Government had decided to purchase 30 lakhs of maunds of rice or paddy from the district which was normally deficit. If that is the kind of policy which is going to be followed in the case of the coming *aman* crop, then I cannot say what is going to happen to us again. For God's sake, let them take their hands off this *Aman* crop.

Then, my Honourable friend gave us figures showing the total quantity of foodstuff so far sent to Bengal. I am grateful to all the provinces for what they have done for Bengal.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member must conclude his speech.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: I, therefore, appeal to the Honourable Member to see that the foodstuffs which is sent to Bengal reaches the Mufassil and the countryside. Whatever has reached Bengal so far has been swallowed up by the City of Calcutta. It has never reached the Mufassil; it has never reached the countryside. The result is that while the Food Member thinks that he has sent enough food, the districts are famished and hundreds of thousands of people are either dying or awaiting their doom. This is not the way to solve the problem. Unless you have a well devised plan of distribution over the whole of the affected area and an efficient and honest machinery to put it into operation, I do not see how the situation can be effectively relieved.

Mr. C. P. Lawson (Bengal: European): Mr. President, Sir, I should explain at the outset that we on this side favour a non-political, fact-finding, inquiry. It seems to me inconceivable that the happenings of the past few months should pass into history without a full and careful inquiry so that the country may learn from experience and guard against the terrible results of a food shortage similar to that which is now being experienced in certain parts of the country. If I do not dwell upon the seriousness of the situation it is because in the short time at my disposal I am anxious rather to consider remedies than to dwell upon catastrophe.

We on this side have more than once drawn attention to the inaccuracy and inadequacy of Indian statistics. Speaking in previous food debates we have emphasised that it is almost impossible for Government to produce a satisfactory policy until they know more or less accurately what stocks of food exist, where they are and what production is likely to be. I have no evidence that matters have improved to any appreciable extent; indeed, the very opening sentences of the conclusions and recommendations of the Food Grains Policy Committee read:

"The present position regarding agricultural statistics relating to production, distribution, export, consumption and stocks is most unsatisfactory. An improvement in the position is not only desirable but essential for the formulation of a successful food policy."

To this I would now add the field of mortality statistics. Many persons of note have visited the famine areas; the press have supplied articles and pictures which can only be described as terrible; we know that starvation and destitution are occurring in many districts on a serious scale. But if we are to be honest there are none of us in this House either upon the Government Benches or elsewhere who can put a figure to the mortality resulting from starvation. I have examined public health statistics such as are published and I have attempted to compare them with the mortality figures now available, but even if the former provide an accurate picture (which I doubt) there is no official figure of current mortality with which I can make a comparison. Thousands of destitutes, for

instance, have been flocking into Calcutta; many are suffering from disease as well as from mal-nutrition, but there is no accurate figure of their numbers and their effect upon the normal death rate of the city is impossible to gauge. Thus, it seems to me that the Government of India and the Provincial Governments are not only working largely in the dark as regards statistics of food supplies, but also as regards statistics of mortality.

I have dealt with the matter of statistics because I find here the greatest need for careful inquiry. The Grains Policy Committee seem to agree in this and it is to my mind essential that some non-political and unbiassed body shall examine the whole matter carefully and make recommendations. This may necessitate drawing attention to certain unpalatable features both in administration and public morals, but if faults are to be eradicated that must first be pointed out beyond all argument. I would emphasise that we have no intention that this enquiry should interfere with or interrupt the steps which are now being taken to deal with the situation. Indeed, the time for the enquiry must be chosen carefully so that consistent with arriving at the earliest possible conclusion, no interruption takes place in the urgent efforts which are being made to remedy the situation. We do not wish officials or public men to be occupied in defending themselves instead of arranging food supplies for the people. One does not put out a fire by making an inquiry into the circumstances responsible for its starting, however necessary it may be to ascertain its causes for future protection. Moreover, it would be idle to pretend at any rate in Bengal there are not political differences which interfere with complete concentration upon the end which we have in view, namely, the adequate feeding of our people. Our main intention on this side in supporting the demand for a non-political enquiry is to supply data for the future. We sincerely hope that the next few months may see the corner turned but it would be dangerous to count upon this. We must establish without doubt the main causes of the present distress and do our best to ensure that similar causes do not reappear. The food situation in the whole world may be disorganised for some years to come and we may still suffer from the impact of unprecedented conditions upon a population of 400 millions—a population moreover which is very largely illiterate.

In this country, the war has brought us face to face with a number of unprecedented situations and it is necessary for us to employ all our imagination and all the experience of other countries to which we have access, to guard against catastrophe. Over 18 months ago, we on this side raised a debate regarding civil defence. I then drew attention to the effect of bombing upon illiterate populations and the civil paralysis which might result. Last Budget Session, we drew attention to a boom in agriculture and advocated an enquiry into the utilisation of such conditions in order to effect permanent benefit. I must admit for myself that I did not think forward to a sufficient extent. I never realised fully the strain that India's fast mounting population placed upon her food supplies and I never asked myself what would happen if what appeared to be agricultural prosperity turned itself into disastrous inflation.

We used the valuable experience of Great Britain in devising air raid precautions and we are now using the same experience in devising the rationing of large cities, but whether such experience coming from a comparatively small and concentrated population of highly educated people can be applied in all cases to India's illiterate millions, I am in some doubt. There are many departures in which U. K. experience will not apply. The experience of the U. S. A. might be useful in some respects since territorially and in population figures, their case is more similar although illiteracy is not prevalent, nor are our trans-Atlantic Allies so close to our enemies. Possibly the case of Russia could provide us with even more useful experience but this does not appear to be readily available. We are therefore bound to do everything we can to solve our own problems and obviously we must waste as little time as possible in getting to grips with them.

To examine the causes from which the present situation arose as indicated by the Food Grains Policy Committee first they place the lack of imports of

[Mr. C. P. Lawson.]

rice from Burma. We have every reason to believe that these have been made up in the rice crop soon to be harvested. Second, there was the cyclone in Midnapore and the crop disease in Western Bengal; God willing, we may not have to suffer these, this year and we hope that the disastrous breaches in the railways will not recur. On the demand side, the main causes as at present put forward appear to cover, first an increase in consumption of rice and next an increase in the retention of rice stocks for various purposes. As regards the increased consumption this is all to the good and crop increases should meet the extra demand, but I am less sanguine regarding the retentive capacity of food producers and dealers. Broadly speaking, if the question is merely one of retentive power, the high prices which have been current for rice supplies should enable those who wish to carry stocks to carry five or six times their normal margin if they so desire . . . I do not propose to dogmatise on the subject of whether there is a wide intention to carry stocks either for profit or for security, but I do say that the danger is there and must be guarded against. During the food debate last Session, my Leader said:

"We do not know what stocks we have at present, but surely, we can make some effort not only to ascertain what new crop we are getting but to keep track and control of it. If this can be done, both Provinces and the Centre will know where they stand and the burden can be distributed fairly if there is a shortage."

He added that the position would not be saved by each Province looking after itself or by each Department of Government working in a separate compartment. I would like once again to emphasise these points. I do not believe that it will be possible to go into thousands of villages or provincial towns and force them to release the food grains which they may be carrying. We must, however, have full knowledge as to what is available and we must do our best by persuasion and by administration to ensure the free flow of the *Aman* crop as soon as it becomes available. Once the free flow starts I believe that it will continue.

There is little doubt in my mind that the absence of consumer goods has been to some extent a factor preventing the free flow of food grains. It is difficult to make any calculation based upon the Bengal crop yield figures which are available, but making allowance for the subsistence consumption of the agricultural population, I calculate that the normal balance of the crop if sold at present rates in Bengal would yield a total return of something like 100 crores of rupees more than normal. If consumer goods are not available and if the sellers have not easy access to investments, it would be reasonable to expect that they would carry their surplus in the form of agricultural produce. They might not even wish to do so, but equally there might be no alternative. An attempt must be made to supply alternatives using imagination and persuasion. I have often thought that while many shiploads of wheat from Australia or Canada may be urgently needed to relieve the immediate situation, one tanker of kerosene oil might result in the release of many shiploads of wheat from the hands of the stockists in this country. A shipload of bicycles might be worth many cargoes of grain. I am sure that these are matters which the Honourable the Finance Member had fully in mind when he spoke the other day regarding the supply of consumer goods for civil consumption. It is a matter which will need careful thought and original thought. We have little or no parallel experience to draw upon. Above all, I would reiterate the need for making use of the present situation to do some permanent good to the agricultural population. We hope one day to hear from the Department of Education, Health and Lands, what steps have been taken since the debate which we sponsored last spring on the subject of improving agricultural conditions. There is now a still greater incentive towards active measures in this respect because there must be now some wealth in the countryside although it may be difficult to gauge exactly where that wealth lies.

I would conclude by pointing to the fact that we have at least now from the Food Grains Policy Committee a clear indication of a policy which has met with the highest common factor of agreement. Let us now make an effort to carry

out this policy with a single purpose and let us be certain that no considerations, political or otherwise, deflect us from the main purpose which is no less than that of saving the lives of our fellow citizens.

I have dealt with matters mainly from the Bengal angle because that is the Province from which I come and which is most affected. Naturally also the rice position has been most prominently in my mind. There are other aspects of the problem with which I hope some of my colleagues may deal later in this debate.

MR. MUHAMMAD AZHAR ALI (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, we listened today with patience to the speech of the Honourable the Food Member and we found platitudes and thanksgiving to others for what they have done in this famine. We were told that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has done this and the Viceroy has done that, but we do not want that; we want to know what the Government of India have been doing. We have been told about committees on food planning and pamphleteering and this thing and that, but these papers and reports will not fill hungry stomachs. I do not want to describe the condition that prevails in Bengal or may prevail in India but I want to ask the Government and the Honourable Members here what they as representatives of the people or as Government have done. It is of course our foremost duty to help Government to the best of our ability but that help is not required by Government.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, it is.

MR. MUHAMMAD AZHAR ALI: That may be only now when the question has been so much agitated. Only after a repeated questions, etc., we were able to get this report of the Foodgrains Committee even; but, as I said, these papers will not feed hungry mouths. I know that on account of the hue and cry raised in the country they are now trying to conciliate the legislature, but we have heard the harrowing story of Bengal from Pandit Maitra and others. The other day I said that the calamity in Bengal may spread in the next few months to the whole of India. May I ask the Food Member how many of us have been taken into these committees? I do not think even one Member here has been taken into the food deliberations of Government. The same is the case in the provinces. This Legislature is absolutely ignored and neglected. The representatives of the people here are prepared to do their bit in their respective provinces but the Provincial Governments never care to seek our assistance; the representatives of the people are not consulted at all.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: But you are supreme.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): This is no time or occasion for irony.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is not irony; you are the supreme authority.

MR. MUHAMMAD AZHAR ALI: But how have you respected that supreme position? I know your past, I do not know what you are going to do in future when things may be more serious. The trouble in India was correctly described by Sir John Anderson in the House of Commons, when he said:

"The trouble arose from the enormous expenditure on goods and services by our own Government, the military authorities and American authorities on the one hand, and a serious curtailment of consumer goods on the other."

Can any one after that deny that the military authorities had sufficient for the army? I am sure Government Members had enough to fill their stomachs; high officials, central and provincial, must have had enough allowance of food. But when we Members of the Assembly come here we find the greatest difficulty in getting our requirements in the shape of fuel, atta, ghee, milk, and so on. And yet the Honourable Member says we are supreme!

That is the position. I would ask the Railway Member whether it is not a fact that the Government of India took away trucks, rails, locomotives, wagons, etc., outside India. At the same time the rates have been increased. Was it in those conditions possible for the Government of India to transfer goods from place to place very easily?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): Yes.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: You may say Yes, but we have heard from the Punjab and also from Bengal that goods could not be transported.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That is not correct now.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: What do you mean by 'now'? Since when? Since yesterday?

An Honourable Member: Since last night.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: You cannot deny this. It is a fact and I hope that the Honourable the Railway Member will bear it in mind. These difficulties may not have been told to him but these are the difficulties which the country is experiencing at present.

Now, Sir, I have to deal with a matter which, I am very sorry to say, many Members of this House have taken for granted. It has been said that the cultivator—the tenant—in India is hoarding simply to prevent people from having their proper nourishment. It has been declared in the British Parliament also, obviously because notes have been sent by the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India. But the fact is that it is wholly incorrect. I challenge this view. I ask those Members who are not villagers to go and see the condition with their own eyes. How can the poor tenant, who lives alongside his cattle under the same roof in a small *chappar* (hut), hoard his grain? It is not possible. They have no silos to put away their harvest, no granaries, nothing. Whatever little they have to keep for themselves and their children is stored in earthenware pots; the rest they have to sell to meet their requirements and to pay the taxes. The moment the cultivator gets his harvest ready, there is the *banya* on his threshold, there is the zamindar's man, and so on.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Now the Government is the *banya*.

Mr. K. S. Gupta (Ganjam cum Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Worse than that.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: He cannot possibly keep back his harvest. He has to go to the market at once to sell his grain and get money in order to pay the *banya* and his rent. Until he has done that, the fellow is dragged by the Tehsil people. I hope my friends from the Punjab, who know the conditions in the villages, will endorse what I have said. My European friends may not know the true conditions of the tenantry in India. They seem to compare the conditions here with what exist in their own country. But the farmers in England are rich, they have got big good houses, they have got granaries, and everything. Not so in India. I ask my friends to tell me where the tenants in India can hoard. I say it is an erroneous idea, and it has somehow entered the minds of the people not only here but even outside India.

Now, the question is: who is the hoarder? The true hoarders is the *banya* who deals in grains, the Government departments and the War Department. This is patent. When His Excellency the Viceroy went to Calcutta he advised that the War Department should come to the help of the Ministry in Bengal. Why? Because the Viceroy knows—and even His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief knows it—that they have hoarded stocks of grains through contractors who purchased on their behalf and made money out of it. It is not the tenant who is making money; he simply has to sell what is over and above his requirements at whatever price he can get. He just has to keep his body and soul together and for that he holds back a little, and if you call it hoarding I am simply surprised that the Government of India, with all its resource, should be so ignorant of that simple fact.

Then, Sir, is it or is it not a fact that in every province, the tenants have been asked to pay their mite towards war loans? Do you consider the Indian peasant to be rich as to subscribe to your war loans. My Honourable friend, Sir Raza Ali, says that he is forced to pay. I think he is right, and I can endorse that from my own experience. There are different ways of collecting subscriptions: *Dangals* (wrestling matches) are held and these poor tenants have

to subscribe to it. I know of a very sad case in Dobari estate in the United Provinces (towards Azamgarh). The proprietor of that estate has died recently. I was informed by him that the Collector of the District wrote to him that he must give up all his produce in the estate. Why? Simply because he was not allowed by the Provincial Government to transport his produce from that district to the district where he lived—there are orders to that effect. So he had to give away his whole produce because he could not transport it. Is that not *zulum*? And that is going on in the whole of this country. You may not be aware of it, but we who are representatives of the people, we who go into the villages, we who know the actual conditions, know it for a fact. What happens then when the grain comes to the market? Mostly at the entrance of towns there are police thanas or Tahsils.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I will just finish, Sir. So when the tenant brings his stuff to the market, the first place where he has to keep it is the thana (police station) or Tahsil and there he has to sell it according to their wishes before the crop actually goes to the market.

Lala Sham Lal (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the Party to which I have the honour to belong, *viz.* the Congress Party has been keeping aloof from the debates in this House for a long time and that was in the belief, as they expressly declared, that to take part in the debates in this House was not only useless, but inconsistent with the dignity and honour of a proud country. Sir, a country that has a proud history in the past and a country that has to come out much prouder still during the course of the present evolution that is going on all over the world these days and when the present tribulation has wiped off the sins of mankind and subsidies.

But that keeping aloof could not be for all time. There could be occasions when the Party had to come back and assert themselves. The present subject under debate, the food crisis in India, is considered to be a subject in which the Party ought to make observations in this House. Therefore, Sir, I rise to make a few observations in the matter, not so much for the use of the Government, whose representatives are sitting opposite, as for the use of my own countrymen, and for the use of the representatives of my countrymen who are sitting on Benches by my side.

It is really heart-rending to hear of the horrible accounts that appear in the papers coming from Bengal and other places in India on account of the numerous deaths that are taking place, due to starvation. It is sad that this should be the state of affairs in a country which is predominantly agricultural, that this should be the state of affairs acuter in a province which is regarded as one of the most fertile provinces in the country. It is sadder still that so many benevolent societies working in India today should have been handicapped in extending their helping hand to the situation in Bengal.

From the long history of food conferences and deliberations given by the then Food Member in the last Session, the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque and supplemented by the future developments of the present Honourable Food Member, it is pretty apparent that the matter of food has been very well before the Government since the start of the war. Notwithstanding that, we see that the food situation in India went on deteriorating day by day till the present crisis. It is unthinkable that so many big brains in the Government of India, in the expanded Council, should not have been able to pre-gauge the coming crisis or that they could not be alive to it. It must be taken that they were conscious of this, but that they too were helpless in the matter for the way in which the Government of India was to be conducted. When they had been deliberating for the last four years, their deliberations in future also can be of little avail under the circumstances.

Sir, it seems to me that the food problem as it has a bearing on India today is not a disease in itself which can be cured outright. To my mind the food crisis, the food shortage and the distress prevailing in the country is one of the

[Lala Sham Lal.]

severe symptoms of a deep-rooted disease in the Government of India, and that deep-rooted disease is the maladministration at the centre all round. Unless the real diagnosis is made, unless the real disease is properly handled and treated, surely the symptoms can never subside. I say that all Government's formulae, basic plans, etc., and all other devices in the Government of India will not help. Unless and until the real disease is properly handled, and treated, the proper solution of the food problem cannot come and I dare say will not come.

Sir, there are so many obnoxious policies prevailing in the Government of India today, all interdependent on each other, none separate from the rest and all having a bearing on the food situation in this country.

In the first place there is the currency policy, so vehemently resented to by the Indian public as a whole. This has much to do with the food problem.

Then we have the transport difficulties. Then we have the control and monopoly policy that are obtaining in the Government of India today and also in the provincial Governments, with all the corruptions that have crept in on account of these policies in the departments.

Then we have the labour difficulties. Then above all, we have the heavy purchases made by the Government of India for military purposes, not only to supply food-stuffs to the Indian forces or for Indian purposes, but to supply food-stuffs to allied countries also, no matter whatever may be the circumstances in which the Indian people may be placed.

These are the circumstances and these are the policies; and the cumulative effect of all these policies has led to the present food crisis in the country. Unless and until all these policies are fully dealt with and are dealt with in a manner which of course goes to the welfare of the people of this country, surely the problem will not be solved. If it has not been solved during the last four years, I dare say it will not be solved in the future, whatever plans may be devised by the Government of India.

I see that it is being stated all round that the war has to be fought. True; the war has to be fought—I do not deny it; and the war has to be carried to a success—there is no doubt about it. But I should say that it is equally true that in this war India has been forced to bear the brunt of it. That being the case, is it not a pity that the brave men of India should be fighting the war abroad so bravely—as everybody admits it—and that their countrymen their kith and kin should be dying of starvation at home? I say that if the matter of this position prevailing in the country, that their relations are dying of starvation at home while they are fighting the war, goes to the soldiers outside and overseas, what would they be feeling about it? Would their hearts be the same as they ought to be otherwise? I should say that allowing the peoples of this country to die of starvation, as of course is the case nowadays and so many speeches are being made about it—then can it be supposed, I ask this Government, whether it is a war measure, whether a war measure which strengthens the hearts of the soldiers fighting abroad, a war measure for which the Government of India is so very eager? I should say that to allow in this way the people of this country dying in the manner as has been stated, they are in a way retarding the war measure itself, for which the Government of India is so very eager. So under these circumstances

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know if the Honourable Member wishes to conclude his speech now.

Lala Sham Lal: I will continue for another ten minutes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Assembly stands adjourned till tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday the 13th November, 1948.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

PRESERVING FOOD FOR EAST AFRICAN FORCES.

123. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state:

(a) if he has to procure food for the East African Forces which arrived in India a few months ago; if so, what the various kinds and quantities of food are that he has to procure; and

(b) if he made any representations to His Majesty's Government to make arrangements for food for these East African Forces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes. Foodstuffs are provided by the Food Department for African troops in this country, of the same kinds and on the same scales as for Indian troops. It is not in the public interest to disclose the quantities.

(b) No, Sir.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I ask why no representations were made in view of the fact that there is scarcity of food in this country? Did not the Honourable Member realise that it was a most opportune moment to make representations?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, Sir. The quantities are very small and it was not worth while.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What are the quantities so that the House may have an idea?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already said that they are small.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The quantities may be small, but we want to have an idea of what the Honourable Member means when he calls it small or big.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it not a fact that the Foodgrains Policy Committee have made a recommendation that a question allied with this one should be taken up for serious consideration with the parties concerned, namely, the question of feeding overseas troops in India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The matter is under consideration. I will go into it further, but as I have stated, the quantities are so small and the troops are doing such useful work here that we thought it was not worth bothering about.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Do I take it that that recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee is not going to be implemented?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No. It is being implemented, but there can be exceptions to every rule.

NOT ALLOWING SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY VESSEL TO CARRY FULL LOAD OF FOOD TO BENGAL FROM KARACHI.

124. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state:

(a) if he is aware that a vessel of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company was berthed in the last fortnight of September, 1948, or in the first week of October, 1948, to carry food to Bengal from Karachi;

(b) whether this steamer was not allowed to carry its full load of rice and foodgrain; if so, why;

(c) whether representations to the Government of India were made by the Company or by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee to be allowed to carry the full load; if so, what reply was given by the Government; and

(d) why the cargo was consigned only to the Director of Civil Supplies, Bengal, and Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, and no bags were allowed to be consigned to Dr. Mookherjee to whom the vessel was offered?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes.

(b), (c) and (d). It is not a fact that the steamer was not allowed to carry its full load of rice and foodgrain. On the contrary, the facts are that the Scindia Company was unwilling to carry foodgrains to Calcutta, which were consigned on Government account, or any foodgrains except free gifts. The value of the shipload of foodgrains would have been about 20 lakhs of rupees, and since that amount was not forthcoming as a free gift, the vessel loaded about 5,000 tons of commercial cargo for Calcutta and other ports, even though the Sind Government offered to fill the ship with foodgrains consigned to the Bengal Government. Representations were received by the Government of India from Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee and instructions were issued to the Sind Government to permit all charitable exports. In accordance with general instructions issued by the Government of India on the subject, all consignments for charitable organisations were to be sent formally to the Director of Civil Supplies, Bengal, on account of the charitable organisation concerned. No representation was received from the Scindia Steam Navigation Company itself.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member explain if his statement is true that the Scindia Company was unwilling to carry food except what happened to be free gift; why it was eventually made to carry food that was supplied by Government and other bodies?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As far as my information goes, the ship carried 1,000 tons consigned by and to the Ramakrishna Mission, and at the last moment took 350 tons of Sind Government's consignment, after it loaded 5,000 tons of commercial cargo.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: It did carry some grain which was free gift. Then it is not true to say, or it is not a correct answer that the Scindias were unwilling to carry food which was free gift?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: They were unwilling to carry in the beginning as I have said, but when they found that they had that much of space left, they carried small quantities of Sind Government's grain.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it not a fact that the Scindia Company had actually made an announcement of free shipping for the benefit of such charitable cargo?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes. It made an announcement, but the quantities were not there. They did not get the free gifts.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But why? I wonder if the Honourable Member has given a definite answer to part (d) of the question. I am afraid I could not catch his answer.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That I will explain quite simply. When I was in Calcutta last September, I arranged with the Bengal Government that all such consignments on behalf of charitable institutions will be sent to the Director of Civil Supplies so that he might pass those on to the charitable organisation concerned. This was done in order to avoid abuse. There were very many Local Governments who were very doubtful, suspicious, and in order to reassure them I arranged that the Director of Civil Supplies will check up so that in case a consignment is sent to a bogus institution it won't be delivered at all to it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Do I take it that, though an exception was made to this particular rule in favour of Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee was presumed to be a bogus institution?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookherjee himself wired to me and I was prepared to make an exception in his favour, but there were no free gifts to fill the ship.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to another statement that the Honourable Member, has made that the Scindia Company refused to carry Government cargo, is the Honourable Member aware that this statement has been contradicted by the Scindia Company in a statement which they issued and also in a letter which they addressed to Sir C. C. Corbett, Regional Commissioner, Area No. 1?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, Sir. My information which comes from the Sind Government is that they refused.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

POSITION CONCERNING NEWS ROLL AND OTHER PAPER.

†125. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state if news roll and other papers for printing had been imported from abroad? If so, is it proposed to release another 20 per cent. of paper reserved for the use of Government, for the use of the public?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that paper is being still sold in the black market at very high rate? If so, what steps has the Honourable Member in view to stop such a black market trade?

(c) What tonnage of paper has been manufactured in India in excess over the normal production of all the paper mills in India? Was that extra production allowed to be sold in the market, or was it monopolised by Government for their use? What was the total tonnage of paper produced month by month in 1942 and up to the 30th September, 1943?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes. The question of releasing a greater percentage of the Indian mill production of paper for non-Government use is at present under the consideration of the Government of India.

(b) Yes. Government have under examination certain measures calculated to ensure a reasonable degree of control over the distribution of paper among non-Government users.

(c) 51,000 tons during the twelve months ending September 1943. The extra production was shared in the same proportion as the rest, namely, 70 per cent. for Government and 30 per cent. for non-Government use. I lay on the table of the House a statement showing the total tonnage of paper produced month by month in 1942 and up to the 30th September 1943.

Statement showing the total tonnage of paper produced by Indian Mills month by month in 1942 and up to the 30th September, 1943.

Month.	Tonnage.	Month.	Tonnage.
April, 1942	7,412	January, 1943	8,750
May, 1942	8,324	February, 1943	8,081
June, 1942	8,459	March, 1943	8,863
July, 1942	8,825	April, 1943	8,906
August, 1942	8,179	May, 1943	8,850
September, 1942	8,145	June, 1943	8,957
October, 1942	8,439	July, 1943	9,040
November, 1942	8,410	August, 1943	8,892
December, 1942	8,925	September, 1943	9,022

EXPENDITURE ON "GROW MORE FOOD" CAMPAIGN.

†126. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state the cost of advertisements for the "Grow More Food" Campaign by the Government of India since its inception up to the 15th October, 1943?

(b) What amount was advanced by the Central Government to the different Provincial Governments for the purpose of growing more food during 1941-1942 and up to the 15th October, 1943?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the plans and methods adopted by each province to grow more food, and how have the amounts advanced by the Central Government to the Provincial Governments been utilised for making the efforts effective?

(d) What acreage of fallow land was made arable, province by province, what crops were produced, and what was the quantity during 1942 and up to the 15th October, 1943?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The expenditure incurred is as follows:

1942 about Rs. 35,000
1943 (up to 15th October 1943) about Rs. 81,200

(b) No grant or loan was sanctioned by the Central Government in 1941-42 but grants totalling Rs. 28 84,000 were made from the Central Cotton Fund in

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

1942-43. The loans and grants sanctioned during the current budget year (1943-44) up to the 15th October amount to,—

	Rs.
Loans	1,33,44,000
Grants from the Cotton Fund to assist the cotton growers to divert lands from short staple cotton to food crops	10,39,000
Grants from Central Revenues	61,15,000

(c) Yes. Every scheme sent up by a Provincial Government is scrutinized and approved by the Government of India before any financial assistance is sanctioned from Central Revenues. The Government of India are kept informed of the progress of such schemes by periodical returns regularly submitted by the Provincial Governments.

(d) Separate figures for fallow lands brought under cultivation are not available, but compared with 1941-42, the area under food crops increased by 80 lakh acres during 1942-43. A statement showing the quantities of principal foodgrains produced during 1942-43 in British Indian Provinces is laid on the table. Definite figures of production for the current budget year are not yet available.

Production of principal foodgrains in British India during 1942-43
(Thousand tons)

Provinces	Rice	Wheat	Jowar	Bajra	Maize	Barley	Gram	Total
Bengal	6,916(a)	53	3	1	39	33	108	7,153
Madras	4,575	(h) 1,031		562	25	(h)	(h)	6,193*
Bihar	3,252(a)	581	19	22	558	416	468	5,316
C. P. & Berar	2,378(b)	521(b)	1,140	29	77	2	183	4,330
United Provinces	1,858(c)	2,742(f)	656	646	941	1,508	1,765	10,116
Assam	1,622(a)			Not available				1,622*
Orissa	1,247(a)	1	8	1	7	(g)	2	1,266
Bombay	1,155(d)	332(f)	1,041	642	35	4	77	3,286
Sind	324(e)	470(e)	128	130	(h)	(h)	(h)	1,052
Punjab	384	4,807(f)	(h)	544	443	273	1,074	7,625*
Coorg	60			Not available				60*
Delhi	(h)	12		Not available				12*
N.-W. F. P.	(h)	325		Not available				325*
Ajmer-Merwara	(h)	7	5	5	8	17	1	43*
Total British India	23,771	9,851	4,031	2,682	2,133	2,253	3,678	48,399*

* Incomplete.

- (a) Including autumn, winter and summer rice.
(b) Including Eastern Agency States, formerly C. P. States.
(c) Including autumn, winter and summer rice and also figures for Rampur State.
(d) Including autumn, and spring rice and also Indian States.
(e) Including Khairpur (Sind).
(f) Including Indian States.
(g) Less than 500 tons.
(h) Not available.

Source.—Final Forecast (Rice & Wheat) Indian Trade Journal. Special enquiries for other crops.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE GREGORY COMMITTEE CONCERNING SUPPLY OF GOODS WHICH THE CULTIVATOR NEEDS.

127. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) if his attention has been drawn to the recommendation of the Gregory Committee as one of the means for procurement of food supply, "that the problem of procurement is thus intimately linked up with the problem of increasing the supply of goods which the cultivator needs";

(b) what efforts Government have made or propose to make to increase this supply of goods; and

(c) the number and nature of goods which Government wish to supply to the cultivators by increasing the manufacture thereof?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). I would draw the Honourable Member's attention to the full statements on the subject of consumer goods which my Honourable Colleague, the Finance Member, and I made in this House the other day.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Has the Honourable Member supplied the number and nature of goods which the Government wish to supply to the cultivator?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: We communicated this to all the Provincial Governments. A list of such consumer goods as ought to be available in larger quantities has just been prepared.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will that be laid on the table of the House?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: If the Honourable Member will put a question I will certainly do it.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: There is hardly time. Will the Honourable Member accept a short notice question?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Honourable Member might put it. PARTS OF INDIA WHERE FAMINE PREVAILS.

128. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) in which parts of India famine conditions prevail at present;
(b) what is the number of deaths due to starvation in various provinces and States;

(c) what measures have been adopted to relieve the distress and suffering caused by such a catastrophe; and

(d) what steps are being taken to prevent a recurrence of a similar situation in future?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) There is serious distress in many districts of Bengal; in parts of the coastal districts of Crissa; in the States of Travancore and Cochin; in the Districts of Bijapur and Dharwar of Bombay Province and in the Deccan States adjoining these districts; and in the Ceded Districts of the Madras Province. There is shortage of foodstuffs in certain other parts of the country as well.

(b) There are at present no reliable figures available. Reports so far received indicate that outside Bengal very few, if any, deaths can be directly attributed to starvation, but deaths have occurred from disease which might have been avoided if the shortage of food had not resulted in malnutrition. Similarly, it is clear from the District Officers' reports that of the high death roll in several districts of Bengal, many are due to disease combined with malnutrition.

(c) and (d). The maximum quantity of foodgrains possible is being despatched to those areas where there is distress and more efficient measures of procurement and distribution are being devised to prevent a recurrence of similar conditions in the future. In addition, imports are being arranged from abroad and steps are being taken to control prices and to introduce rationing.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the position in Orissa is very very serious and that it is deteriorating very fast?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am aware that the position was serious. I would not call it 'very very serious'. But since then relief has been provided and is being provided. I am in close touch with Orissa.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Are there any reports of deaths from starvation from Bihar?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No deaths are reported from Bihar.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GREGORY COMMITTEE CONCERNING SUPPLY OF NECESSARY GOODS AND PRECIOUS METALS TO THE CULTIVATOR.

129. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state:

(a) if he is aware of the following recommendations of the Gregory Committee:

(i) 'the problem of procurement of foodgrain is thus intimately linked up with the problem of increasing the supply of the goods which the cultivator needs'; and

(ii) 'it would be advisable for Government to secure supplies of the precious metals for sale to the cultivator'; and

(b) if he intends to give effect to these recommendations; if so, in what way; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). I am aware of these recommendations and have already brought them to the notice of the departments of the Government of India whose concern it is to implement them.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if any recommendations have been made by the Civil Departments in connection with these subjects and whether plans are ready?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Government of India fully realise the importance of the recommendations. They have accepted the recommendation referred to in (a) (i) and steps are being taken by the Industries and Civil Supplies Department to increase the supply of the goods which the cultivator needs. With the help of the Cotton Cloth and Yarn Control Order and the Cotton Cloth Movement Order, Government have made arrangements for the distribution of cloth throughout the country at reasonable prices. The prices of kerosene oil and matches have been controlled for several months and steps are being taken to ensure suitable distribution of available supplies to the civil population. Steps are also being taken to control the prices and regulate the distribution of drugs and medicines; arrangements are being made to increase the supply of building materials and agricultural implements. Prices and distribution of other less essential commodities are controlled through local orders through the provisions of the Anti-Hoarding and Prevention of Profiteering Ordinance.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Has the Honourable Member realised the urgency of decreasing the inflation in the country. What time does the Honourable Member think his steps will take to mature into the particular result that is desired?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to indicate the time. I know my Honourable Colleagues in these departments have got the matter under active consideration.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is the Honourable Member aware that the cultivator needs very little of the several articles which he has mentioned, such as standard cloth, kerosene, etc. What he needs is iron particularly and such things as are necessary for his agricultural implements.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have mentioned these.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I do not think the Honourable Member has mentioned iron.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: 'Agricultural implements' means iron. The cultivator makes his own agricultural implements.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Besides the agricultural implements, the agriculturist wants tyres for the wheels and so on. Will Government release iron for such purposes, in addition to agricultural implements such as plough, etc.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Much larger quantity of iron is being released now.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if after these recommendations the condition of the cultivator has been better actually?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is difficult to assess but I hope it is improving.

CERTAIN IRREGULARITIES IN THE WORKING OF THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT.

130. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state the number of irregularities detected by the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour, during the years 1939-40 and 1940-41, in the working of the Payment of Wages Act? If there is an increase during the latter year, what steps do Government propose to take besides reporting to Railway administrations concerned to remedy this? If none, why?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please give a reference to the specific provision of the Payment of Wages Act, or rules framed thereunder, sanctioning the course of reporting irregularities to Railway administrations instead of to the authorities set up under Section 15 of the Act?

(c) If there is no such provision, why is not action taken under Section 15(5) of the Payment of Wages Act by Labour Inspectors?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The number of irregularities detected during 1939-40 and 1940-41 were 3,012 and 4,158, respectively, Railway Administrations have recently been directed to take suitable steps to obviate the recurrence of these irregularities. If the irregularities continue to increase, the question of making formal applications under Section 15 of the Act will be considered. Government does not consider it necessary to proceed formally

under the provisions of that Section when satisfactory settlement in the individual cases can be otherwise achieved.

(b) There is no such provision in the Payment of Wages Act or the rules framed thereunder.

(c) The provisions of Section 15 (3) are not mandatory and there is nothing in the Act to prevent an Inspector from making reports to Railway Administrations and getting any claims settled amicably.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Have these Inspectors enough power to make recommendations?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask if these irregularities are found on the Company-managed railways or even on the State-managed railways?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that question. ACTIVITIES OF THE CONCILIATION OFFICER (RAILWAYS).

131. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to refer to his reply to Mr. N. M. Joshi in regard to starred question No. 147 asked by me on the 19th February, 1943, stating that he would consider extending the field of activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways), and state whether any action has been taken in the matter? If so, is it proposed to make a brief statement on the subject?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The question is still under consideration and I am not at present in a position to make any statement.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What is delaying the consideration so much?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I said that the matter is under consideration.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Why is it taking so long?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not think it has taken a long time.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: When will it reach the stage of active consideration?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The stage of consideration is now complete.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Since when has the matter been under consideration?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: For a long time and particularly since the time when Mr. Joshi asked his question.

DEATHS IN BENGAL.

†132. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) the number of deaths in the whole Province of Bengal during the months of August, September and October, 1943, separately; and

(b) the number of deaths during corresponding months of 1940, 1941 and 1942?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The statistics for the months referred to have not yet been received in the office of the Public Health Commissioner from the Director of Public Health, Bengal. The information has been called for and will be laid on the table on receipt.

(b) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement showing the number of deaths in the province of Bengal during the months of August, September and October of 1940, 1941 and 1942.

Year	No. of deaths in the months of		
	August	September	October
1940	81,202	83,940	94,069
1941	81,316	77,217	98,930
1942	82,947	91,934	118,886

PROVINCES HAVING STATUTORY PRICE CONTROL AND CITIES HAVING RATIONING.

†133. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) in which provinces the statutory price control has been introduced so far; and

† Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(b) in what cities rationing has been introduced, and what the general ration per head of *atta*, rice, sugar, etc., is?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Statutory price control has been introduced in Bengal, Bihar, Bombay, Assam, Sind, Orissa and Coorg.

(b) Of cities and towns in British India comprehensive rationing schemes have so far been introduced in Bombay, Poona, Madras, Coimbatore and Quetta.

No uniform scale has been adopted but the general scale of ration is one pound of foodgrains per adult per day. Children between 2 and 12 years get half of this quantity. Certain classes of manual labour get supplementary rations which, in some places, is as much as 50 per cent. of the basic ration. The constituents of the ration vary from place to place.

The scale of ration of sugar ranges between 8 to 12 oz. per head per week.

FOODGRAINS POSITION.

†134. *Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

- how many tons of foodgrains were produced during the last crop;
- how many tons were imported from other provinces;
- what the normal requirement of foodgrains is for the whole of Bengal;
- what amount of foodgrains was exported from Bengal; and
- what the present stocks of foodgrains are?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b), (c) and (d). On the assumption that the Honourable Member is referring to Bengal throughout his question, statements are laid on the table.

(e) The figures are not readily available.

STATEMENT (a).
Estimated Production of Foodgrains in Bengal during 1942-43.

Foodgrain.	In tons.
Rice	6,916 0'0
Millets (Jowar and Bajra)	3,000
Wheat	53,000
Gram	108,000
Barley	33,000
Maize	39,000
Dals	299,000
Ragi	2,000
Total	7,453,000

Source.—All figures except for Rice and Wheat are specially obtained from the Province. Rice and Wheat figures are taken from the Forecasts published by the D. G. C. I. & S., Calcutta.

STATEMENT (b).
Quantities of different foodgrains despatched to Bengal from December 1942 to October (28th) 1943 from other Provinces and States of India.

Period.	Wheat including Products.	Rice.	Gram.	Millets.	(In tons): Total.
December '42 to October '43 (up to 28th)	213,422	243,619	6,756	58,631	522,428

Note.—Gram figures relate to the period April to October, 1943.

STATEMENT (c).
Estimates of requirements of the Bengal Province for 1942-43 on a ration basis.

(A) Population	Adult Population (80% of total population).	Requirements (at the rate of 1 lb. cereals per day per adult head).
60,306,525	48,245,220	7,900,000 tons

(B) Bengal's 'Normal Requirements' of foodgrains (i.e., normal production plus normal net imports).

Rice	8,118,000
Millets (Jowar and Bajra)	3,000
Wheat	291,000
Gram	120,000
Barley	27,000(b)
Maize	24,000(b)
Dals	N. A.
Ragi	N. A.
Total	8,583,000

N.A.=Not available in the absence of trade statistics for these commodities.

(a) Not given. (b) the figure does not include net imports by rail, which is not separately recorded.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

STATEMENT (d).

Showing exports of foodgrains from Bengal from April, 1943 to September, 1944.

	Sea.	Rail.*	Cost. Not available	(In Tons.) Total.
Rice	121	651	Do.	722
Millets		212	Do.	212
Wheat		2,297	Do.	2,297
Gram	535	198	Do.	733
Other sorts	4,843	N.A.	Do.	4,843
TOTAL	5,499	3,358	N.A.	8,857(a)

* Exports by Rail relate to April and May 1943 only.

(a) Incomplete.

ICE FOR MILITARY REQUIREMENTS OUT OF PROVINCIAL RESERVE IN CENTRAL PROVINCES.

135. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state:

(a) if a demand was made for rice for military requirements out of the provincial reserve of rice in the Central Provinces, and that rice was sent out of the province in October 1943; if so, how much; and

(b) if there is a military reserve of food in this province; if so, why there was an inroad on the provincial reserve of rice?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) At the end of July last the Government of Central Provinces were asked to supply certain quantities of rice which were urgently needed for deficit areas and for military requirements, by improving their purchases or, if necessary, by advancing a proportion of the amount required from their reserve. The Central Provinces Government were able to supply the amount required, including about 7,700 tons for the Defence Services in October and without having to encroach upon their reserve.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is the Honourable Member aware that when these different stocks—military reserve or provincial reserve or the Central Reserve—are being built up, every province is told by the Military Department to give a definite quota with that idea. If so, why was the extra demand made upon this province for the provincial reserve?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It was not an extraordinary demand so far as I am aware.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: If the military reserve was there, why was it necessary to make an inroad on the provincial reserve?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It was towards the fulfilment of their anticipated quota.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know in anticipation of whose quota the need had arisen?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Provincial Government had to supply that quantity and they were quite agreeable to give it. The military needed it and so they gave it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS.

136. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Institution of Engineers is an examining body whose diploma of A.M.I.E. is recognised by the Government of India as being equivalent to degree standard in Engineering;

(b) whether the Government (Central or Provincial) financially help this Institution; if so, the amount of aid granted;

(c) whether it is not a fact that the Institution has for its patrons and Honorary Members, Their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors;

(d) whether Government are aware that this Institution has obtained the Royal Charter;

(e) whether it is a fact that sister Institutions in England, *e.g.*, the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, the Institute of Civil Engineers, the Institute of Electrical Engineers, have not yet recognised the examinations conducted by the Institute of Engineers, India; and

(f) if the Government of India propose to move His Majesty's Government to request these British institutions to accord recognition to this Indian Institution?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) The Central Government do not render any financial help to the Institution, but I have no information whether Provincial Governments do so or not.

(c) His Excellency the Viceroy and Provincial Governors are Honorary Members of the Institution.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government have no information.

(f) It is for the Indian Institution itself to raise the question, if necessary. I would, therefore, suggest to my Honourable friend that he addresses that Institution in the matter.

REPRESENTATIONS IN RESPECT OF SLAUGHTER OF YOUNG AND PRIME CATTLE.

137. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) how many representations (and from what institutions) have been received by him in respect of slaughter of young and prime cattle during the last six months; and whether replies were sent to these representations;

(b) if any penalty is provided for the breach of instructions not to purchase prime cattle for slaughter, or not to slaughter prime cattle; if not, how these instructions are enforced; and

(c) if Government propose to introduce such legislation as to effectively prevent the slaughter of prime cattle?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Representations have been received from 38 institutions listed in the statement laid on the table of the House. Not all were received in the Department of Education, Health and Lands but I understand all have been acknowledged.

(b) The Honourable Member is presumably referring to the recommendations made by the Central Food Advisory Council alluded to in the Press Note issued on the 18th November, 1942. The Defence Services have accepted these recommendations and the restrictions on slaughter of prime cattle recommended therein are being enforced by a proper system of inspection. No question of penalty, therefore, arises. So far as the needs of the civil population are concerned the matter is one which primarily concerns the Provincial Governments and their attention has been drawn to the restrictions recommended by the Central Food Advisory Council and they have been requested to take such action as they consider necessary to enforce them as far as practicable.

(c) No.

List of institutions from whom representations have been received regarding the slaughter of prime cattle in India.

1. The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi.
2. The Karachi Indian Merchants' Association, Karachi.
3. The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Desi Beopar Mandal, Lahore.
4. The United Provinces Chamber of Commerce, Cawnpore.
5. The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta.
6. The Marwari Association, Calcutta.
7. The Prem Vegetarian Society, Jandiala Guru, Distt. Amritsar.
8. The Prem Vegetarian Society, Pati (Lahore).
9. The All India Cow Conference Association, Calcutta.
10. The Indian Merchants' Association Chittagong.
11. Shri Vijayanand Jain Swetamber Committee, Gujranwala (Punjab).
12. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha Punjab, Lahore.
13. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Punjab Shahkot (Jullundur).
14. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Punjab Khangah Dogran, District, Sheikhpura.
15. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Nainali, District Meerut, U. P.
16. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Kalabagh, Distt. Mianwali, Punjab.
17. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Bannu, North West Frontier Province.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

18. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Kohat, North West Frontier Province.
19. Shri Atmanand Mahasabha, Patti, Lahore.
20. Shri Mahavir Jain Sabha, Lyallpur.
21. Shri Atmar Singh Jain Sabha, Ambala.
22. Sanatan Dharam Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, Lahore.
23. Shri Atma Nand Jain Sabha, Rupar District, Ambala.
24. Shree Jain Shwetamber Sabha, Multan City.
25. Shri Atma Nanda Jain Sabha, Jhelum, Punjab.
26. Shri Atma Nanda Jain Sabha, Sialkot Punjab.
27. Shri Jain Shwetamber Sabha, Dera Ghazi Khan, Punjab.
28. The Karnatak Chamber of Commerce, Bagalkot.
29. Shri Atma Nand Jain Sabha, Sankhatra, District Sialkot, Punjab.
30. Shri Atma Nand Jain Sabha, Ahmedgarh, Distt. M. Kotla, Punjab.
31. The Jain Reform Society, Ludhiana.
32. Shri Atma Nand Jain Sabha, Patiala.
33. Calcutta Yarn Merchant's Association, Calcutta.
34. All India Marwari Federation, Calcutta.
35. The Indian Merchants' Chamber, Bombay.
36. The Indian Produce Association, Calcutta.
37. The Gau Rakshini Sabha, Ludhiana.
38. Shri Prani Rakshak Sabha, Pipli Bazar, Indore.

SCHEME FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS IN BENGAL.

138. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether any scheme for distribution of foodgrains, particularly in the district towns and rural areas, has yet been drawn up by the Government of Bengal to the satisfaction of the Food Department? If so, what are the principal features of the scheme, and when was it drawn up or enforced?

(b) Is it a fact that Justice Braund, the Regional Food Commissioner, has from time to time addressed the Food Department adversely criticising the Government of Bengal for the absence of any rational scheme for distribution of foodstuffs, besides expressing disagreement with various specific measures adopted by that Government in dealing with the food situation?

(c) With reference to the statement made by the Honourable Member at the Food Conference on the 13th October last to the effect that the Central Government will not hesitate to exercise whatever degree of superintendence and control at every stage as may be necessary, or invoke the use of whatever powers are essential to ensure success, have any directions been given, formally or informally, by the Food Department to the Government of Bengal in the matter, particularly of the maintenance of an adequate supply and satisfactory system of distribution of foodgrains, as well as methods and standards of gratuitous relief in the rural areas, in the exercise of superintendence and control referred to above?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b) and (c). The Government of Bengal have continually under review their arrangements for the distribution within the province of foodgrains (i) from surplus to deficit districts in the province, (ii) from outside the province in Calcutta and the districts (iii) from Calcutta by rail and river, (iv) for urban rationing and (v) for relief purposes. A copy† of the Bengal Government's instructions to District Officers in connection with the latter is placed upon the table. With these arrangements the Government of India, in the Food and War Transport Departments, have been closely associated, and, recently, a senior military officer has been appointed to be Controller of Movements with the Government of Bengal, in which task he is being assisted by military formations in the affected areas working in close touch with District authorities.

Regular reports are received from the Regional Food Commissioner, on all aspects of food administration in the Eastern Region, and suggestions for the improvement of their measures have been conveyed to the Government of Bengal, from time to time by the Government of India.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The Honourable Member has not replied to part (b). I want a definite reply to that part of that question.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have referred to it. We receive regular reports but as many of these reports are confidential, I am sorry I am unable to discuss their contents.

†Not included in these Debates; but a copy has been placed in the Library of the House.—Ed. of D.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Sir, part (b) of the question runs as follows:

"Is it a fact that Justice Braund, the Regional Food Commissioner has, from time to time, addressed the Food Department adversely criticising the Government of Bengal for the absence of any rational scheme for distribution of foodstuffs, besides expressing disagreement with various specific measures adopted by that Government in dealing with the food situation?"

I want an answer to that question.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: He has made constructive suggestions; I would put it like that.

CHARGES re PROFITEERING IN RESPECT OF FOODSTUFFS SUPPLIED TO BENGAL

139. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) With reference to certain charges and counter-charges made by some of the Provincial Governments against each other regarding profiteering in respect of foodstuffs supplied to Bengal, will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a comprehensive statement in respect of each such allegation, explaining the correct position on the basis of such statistical information as may be available?

(b) Was any formal or informal enquiry made on behalf of the Government of India into the aforesaid allegations? If so, what procedure was adopted for such enquiry, and what results were yielded thereby?

(c) What were the average prices paid for rice by the agents of the Government of Bengal, month by month, since August last, to the primary suppliers in the different Indian States in the Central Provinces and Orissa areas as well as in the districts of the Central Provinces, Orissa and Bihar, and what were the prices charged by the said agents to the Government of Bengal in respect of the supplies of the said stocks of rice? How much approximately represented the cost of transport and the agents' profits, separately, in respect of these transactions?

(d) Is it a fact that in several instances the purchases referred to in clause (c) above were made at rates considerably above those prevailing in the localities concerned for the time being? Has any such allegation attracted the notice of Government? Was any enquiry made by any authority into these allegations? If so, with what result?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Certain allegations have been made (a) that Sind Government were making a profit on their export of foodgrains to Bengal by purchasing at controlled rates in Sind and selling at the corresponding Punjab prices, (b) that the United Provinces Government had been charging Rs. 16 per maund f.o.r. Howrah for wheat supplied to Bengal and had also been levying an export permit fee of Rs. 3-2-0 per maund on export of *gur* and Rs. 4-0-0 on export of edible oils, and (c) that the Bengal Government had itself been making a profit on its imports of foodgrains from other Provinces by selling them at prices higher than the prices paid for such imports. As regards Sind, that Government has controlled prices within the Province at a figure which gives the producer a comparatively low return. In order to enable the Province to plan for the future welfare of the producer and in consideration of their successful price control, the Government of India have agreed that, pending the establishment of regional price parities all over India, they may charge for their exports prices higher than the controlled prices in Sind. As regards the United Provinces enquiry has revealed that the allegation was incorrect. In fact the prices charged by the United Provinces vary between Rs. 14-10-0 and Rs. 15-4-0 per maund, including bags f. o. r. station of despatch and the United Provinces Government have stated that there is no element of profit in these prices. Further enquiries are being made regarding edible oils and *gur*.

The results of the enquiry made from Bengal are contained in the Press Note of the 9th of October, a copy of which is placed on the table. Attention is also invited to the Government of India's Resolution of the 2nd of November, 1943, setting up a Committee of enquiry consisting of (1) Honourable Mr. Justice H. B. L. Braund, Regional Commissioner (Food), Eastern Region and (2) Mr. A. L. Cooke, Chief Cost Accounts Officer, Supply Finance Department. A copy of the Resolution is also placed on the table.

(c) and (d). Matter for complete reply to these parts of the question is not available with the Central Government. Enquiry has been made from the Government of Bengal and their reply is awaited.

PRESS NOTE.

Wheat Prices in Bengal—Central Government explains position.

The attention of the Government of India has been drawn to the anxiety prevailing in the two main wheat exporting provinces lest the Government of Bengal may have derived, or should henceforth derive, an undue addition to Provincial Revenues from the sale of wheat exported or to be exported from those provinces to Bengal under arrangements made by the Government of India. The Government of India have accordingly obtained from the Government of Bengal a statement of position which is as follows:—

2. All wheat imported from other provinces under arrangements made by the Government of India is held in Government custody. Since the first of May last wheat is being sold to mills at a fixed price. Consignments received prior to that date were made over to the mills direct at cost price. The mills are allowed to sell their wheat products at ex-mill prices fixed under the Defence of India Rules corresponding to the retail rates for such products, which are also fixed statutorily. The schedule of rates in force from the first May is as follows:—

Period.	Rate for sales of wheat to Mills.	Ex-Mill prices, atta and flour respectively.	Retail prices, atta and flour respectively.
1st May to 1st August	Rs. 15/8/0 per Md.	Rs. 19/0/0 per Md. Rs. 19/0/0 " "	Rs. 20/0/0 per Md. Rs. 20/0/0 " "
1st August to 20th September	Rs. 14/4/0 " "	Rs. 16/8/0 " " Rs. 19/0/0 " "	Rs. 17/8/0 " " Rs. 20/0/0 " "
20th September onwards	Rs. 12/12/0 " "	Rs. 14/0/0 " " Rs. 19/0/0 " "	Rs. 15/0/0 " " Rs. 20/0/0 " "

3. During the four months May to August 1943 inclusive the Bengal Government have derived a gross revenue of Rs. 33-44 lakhs on a turn-over of 19-84 lakhs maunds of imported wheat. This has been derived solely from sales of wheat to mills. The Bengal Government are not concerned in any of the subsequent transactions. In considering this revenue figure it has to be conceded that the Government of Bengal fixed their selling prices of wheat to the mills having regard to a number of estimated charges for handling, storage, delivery, etc., which in view of the poor deliveries of wheat in most of the months in question were never actually incurred. It will be noticed that the Government of Bengal effected a reduction of Rs. 1-4-0 per maund in their sale price of wheat with effect from the 1st August when it became apparent that receipts were accumulating. The price now in force is Rs. 12-12-0 per maund which, regard being had to the f. o. r. prices current in the Punjab and the United Provinces respectively, will represent an actual loss to the Bengal Government. On the footing that the quantities still due under the Basic Plan are exported to Bengal in an even monthly flow, it is estimated that the Bengal Government's loss on sales of imported wheat to mills over the remaining period of the revised Basic Plan will amount to Rs. 40-3 lakhs which after deducting the accumulated revenue of Rs. 33-44 lakhs will leave a net loss to the Bengal Government of Rs. 6-86 lakhs. The Government of India are satisfied that the selling price of wheat now fixed by the Government of Bengal is reasonable.

4. As regards the 'Milling Differential' allowed to the mills the Government of India have decided that the question should be gone into by the Regional Commissioner, Eastern Region, Mr. Justice Braund, with the aid of a Cost Accounts Officer of the Government of India, with a view to ascertaining whether the "Differential" allowed to the mills, and the consequential retail prices to the public are reasonable.

5. The above calculations do not include imported wheat products, which the Government of Bengal have been selling at the statutory prices fixed for ex-mill sales detailed in paragraph 2. The gross revenue received by the Government of Bengal on re-sales of imported wheat products up to the end of August 1943 amounts to Rs. 6-32 lakhs. In regard to this revenue, it would be undesirable and unworkable in practice to fix different sets of wholesale and retail prices for local and imported wheat products. The question of wiping out the accumulated revenue on wheat products is, however, under the active consideration of the Government of Bengal.

FOOD DEPARTMENT;

New Delhi, October 9, 1943.

Government of India, Department of Food, Resolution No. F-10 (1) Secy. 143 New Delhi, the 3rd November, 1943.

The Government of India have had under consideration measures for ensuring that the retail cost of wheat and wheat products sold to the public in Bengal is reasonable and that no undue element of profit is included in those prices. It has been recently announced

publicly that the Government of Bengal have reduced their selling price of wheat to the millers by Rs. 1-4-0, and the Government of India are satisfied that the reduced selling price fixed by the Bengal Government of Rs. 12-12-0 per maund of wheat sold to the flour mills in Calcutta is reasonable.

2. In order to satisfy themselves that there is no excessive element of profit in the prices charged for wheat-products at subsequent stages, the Government of India have decided to appoint a Committee of Inquiry, consisting of (1) Honourable Mr. Justice H. B. L. Braund, Bar-at-Law, Regional Commissioner (Food), Eastern Region, and (2) Mr. A. L. Cooke, Chief Cost Accounts Officer, Supply Finance Department.

3. The terms of reference to the Committee are as follows:—

(I) To enquire

(a) whether the profit accruing to the flour mills from the production and sale at the ex-mill statutory prices of wheat products made from wheat purchased from the Government of Bengal is reasonable, having regard to such variations in output and other conditions as may from time to time arise and, if not, what adjustment ought to be made so as to secure a reasonable rate of profit in the interest of the public and all parties concerned;

(b) whether the profit accruing to retailers in the sale at the statutory retail prices of wheat products purchased from the mills is reasonable.

(II) To make recommendations as to the proportions in which atta, flour and bran should be produced by the mills in Calcutta out of wheat bought from Government, and the respective prices at which they should be sold to the public.

W. H. J. CHRISTIE,

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Are the Government aware that the Bombay Government does not charge any profit on the standard cloth that is being supplied to Sind?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is not my Department, but perhaps it is so.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Is it not a fact that large imports from Sind have been made to Bombay Province as well and the Sind Government have made profits thereon?

(No answer.)

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the answers to parts (c) and (d), may I know whether the attention of the Honourable Member has been drawn to the statement made by the Development Minister of the Punjab, dated October 24, in which among other things he stated that on one occasion, an official agency on behalf of two private firms in Bengal offered prices for rice at Rs. 28 a maund, whereas the local ruling price was Rs. 17 and that this transaction was prohibited by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: My attention was drawn to it and the Food Department advised against it.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member enquired into the circumstances that led the Bengal Agent to offer this high price in spite of the low prices ruling at the time in the Punjab?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It was a private purchase, so far as I know. It was not a purchase on behalf of the Bengal Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It was mentioned that this was purchased by the official agency. I do not know what that means. 'Official agency' on behalf of two private firms?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That was not correctly reported. The purchase was on behalf of two private firms and they chose to pay that price.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member's attention also been drawn to a letter which appeared in the Press some time ago from a Rai Bahadur Retired Deputy Commissioner and a Retired Dewan of one of the Eastern States in which the allegation was made that the price of rice in those States varied between Rs. 8 and Rs. 12 and that considerable purchases were made from these States at these rates, but that the price charged in Bengal about that time represented a profit of about 200 per cent.?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: My attention was not drawn to that particular letter. I do not generally read the correspondence appearing in the newspapers.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member also aware that unlike some other Provinces which pay their Agent a commission on the basis of weight of foodgrains purchased, the Bengal Agent is paid a commission on the basis of price paid and that therefore there may be an inducement on the part of the Bengal Agent not to insist upon a low price being charged by the sellers?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I hope many of these things will be remedied in the future.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: May I ask the Honourable Member whether it is a fact that the Sind Government is negotiating with the Government of India to pay off part of its Sukkur barrage debt out of the profits made on the sale of foodgrains to other Provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That question ought to be addressed to the Honourable the Finance Member.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I will put the question this way. Is it a fact that the Sind Government have made a profit of something like two crores of rupees from the sale of foodgrains to other Provinces which they are now trying to invest in directions known to the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: What the Sind Government told us was that they would use the money which they made on these deals for the good of the cultivator. I am not aware of any specific schemes of the Sind Government.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: May I know whether paying off the Sukkur barrage debt is for the good of the cultivator?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to judge. I never even saw the Sukkur barrage.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The Honourable Member need not have seen the Sukkur barrage to be able to answer this question.

DEATHS DUE TO STARVATION IN BENGAL.

140. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to make a statement, month by month, since January last, giving the number of reported deaths directly or indirectly attributable to starvation in Bengal, in the City of Calcutta and the different districts, separately?

(b) With reference to the statement recently made by Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, to the effect that he had asked the Central Government to furnish him with periodical returns of deaths from starvation, what is the substance of any such returns that may have been supplied to the Secretary of State from time to time? Do the Government of India depend entirely upon the Government of Bengal for supplying information to the Secretary of State on this point? Do the Government of India accept full responsibility for the general accuracy of these statistical statements?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the public impression that no systematic attempt is made, particularly in the rural areas of Bengal, to ascertain the number of deaths directly or indirectly ascribable to starvation, and that the statistical statements that may be issued by official sources represent gross under-statements of the actual situation in this matter?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) A statement is laid on the table showing the total number of deaths reported in Calcutta, week by week from the beginning of this year till 16th October 1943. No information is available as to what proportion of these deaths is directly or indirectly attributable to starvation. Information regarding deaths in the different districts in Bengal outside Calcutta is not available with the Government of India.

(b) The Provincial Government is responsible for the collection of vital statistics. The Government of India have no organisation of their own for the purpose in the Province. Information supplied by the Government of

India to the Secretary of State is based on such approximate estimates as are given from time to time by the Government of Bengal and are described as such.

(c) I am aware that the administrative difficulties in classifying the cause of death and collecting the statistics referred to preclude the possibility of mathematical accuracy.

Weekly total mortality occurring in Calcutta during 1943.		Weekly average during the 5 years from 1938 to 1942 (both inclusive).		Weekly average during the 5 years from 1938 to 1942 (both inclusive).	
Week ending	1943	Week ending	1943	Week ending	1943
2-1-43	571	5-6-43	496	5-6-43	570
9-1-43	534	12-6-43	540	12-6-43	558
16-1-43	446	19-6-43	400	19-6-43	589
23-1-43	488	26-6-43	621	26-6-43	574
30-1-43	458	3-7-43	684	3-7-43	558
6-2-43	518	10-7-43	769	10-7-43	566
13-2-43	548	17-7-43	757	17-7-43	590
20-2-43	475	24-7-43	952	24-7-43	596
27-2-43	490	31-7-43	891	31-7-43	590
6-3-43	532	7-8-43	939	7-8-43	598
13-3-43	461	14-8-43	1,057	14-8-43	586
20-3-43	519	21-8-43	1,129	21-8-43	578
27-3-43	451	28-8-43	1,159	28-8-43	633
3-4-43	473	4-9-43	1,183	4-9-43	591
10-4-43	442	11-9-43	1,292	11-9-43	589
17-4-43	470	18-9-43	1,319	18-9-43	596
24-4-43	501	25-9-43	1,492	25-9-43	577
1-5-43	560	2-10-43	1,636	2-10-43	615
8-5-43	483	9-10-43	1,967	9-10-43	573
15-5-43	524	16-10-43	2,154	16-10-43	588
22-5-43	459	23-10-43	2,155	23-10-43	605
29-5-43	567	30-10-43	2,214	30-10-43	604

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: With reference to part (c), may I ask whether the Honourable Member's attention has been drawn to the statement made by the Honourable Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru that the average death rate due to starvation was 50,000 a week? Is that true?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, Sir, these are all guesses. I can also indulge in a lot of them, but I consider it safer not to do so.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the Honourable Member's statement that he is not in a position to give the proportion of deaths that can be ascribed to starvation, directly or indirectly, has the Honourable Member considered the possibility that deaths which are at present being ascribed to starvation may really be due to heart failure brought on by sudden exuberance of joy while contemplating the benefits of British rule in India?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

INCREASED DEATH RATES IN CALCUTTA AND OTHER DISTRICTS OF BENGAL.

141. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state whether there has been in the City of Calcutta as well as in the districts of Bengal, an abnormal increase in the number of deaths, apart from those which are officially admitted to be due to starvation? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement, indicating the increased death rates in the City of Calcutta as well as in the respective districts of Bengal, comparing them, if possible, with the average figures of the previous quinquennium or any other period? Has any enquiry been made into the causes of this heavy mortality? If not, is it proposed to institute such an enquiry at an early date?

(b) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to an editorial article in the *Statesman*, dated the 20th October last, under the heading "Facts Wanted"? Is it proposed to clarify the position in this connection as invited in the said article?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The vital statistics returns received by the Public Health Commissioner from the Director of Public Health, Bengal, show that

there has been an abnormal increase in mortality in Calcutta. Up to date information regarding mortality from all causes in the districts outside Calcutta has not been received from the Government of Bengal but the mortality figures for cholera show an abnormal increase. A statement giving the figures available for the week ending the 16th October in respect of Calcutta and for the week ending the 3rd October in respect of the Province as a whole, together with the average figures for the corresponding period in the previous five years, is laid on the table. The institution of any special enquiry necessary to ascertain the cause of the abnormal mortality, in so far as it is not disclosed by the vital statistics returns, is primarily a matter for the Provincial Government. No special inquiry as to the cause of the abnormal mortality has been or is proposed to be made by the Central Government.

(b) Government have seen the article in question. The article relates to information published by the Provincial Government and it is for the Provincial Government to issue any explanation which may be necessary.

Statement showing the number of deaths in Calcutta City in the week ending 16th October 1943 and the average number of deaths for the corresponding period in the previous five years.

Disease.	Number of deaths in week ending 16-10-43	Average of previous five years for corresponding period.
1. Cholera	117	3
2. Fevers	114	38
3. Bowel complaints	334	82
4. *Other diseases	1,552	449
5. Total number of deaths due to all causes.	2,154	580

*Note.—Total deaths less deaths from cholera, small-pox, plague, Typhus, cerebrospinal fever, influenza, measles, fevers and bowel complaints.

Total number of deaths from cholera and small pox in the Bengal Presidency in the week ending 3rd October 1943 compared with the average number of deaths due to these diseases in the corresponding period of previous five years.

Disease.	Number of deaths in week ending 3-10-43.	Average of previous five years for corresponding period.
Cholera	3,758	460
Small pox	103	15

NOTE:—Detailed information regarding mortality due to other causes in districts outside Calcutta is not available for any period later than December 1942.

POSSIBILITIES OF UTILISING CERTAIN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TROOP CARRIERS FOR CARRYING AUSTRALIAN WHEAT TO INDIA.

142. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that troop carriers and ships from the United States of America to Australia, which carry troops, munitions and other supplies for the American armies in Australia, return to America via the Indian Ocean, and in most cases carry very little cargo on the return voyage?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, have the Government of India explored the possibility of these ships being made available for carrying Australian Wheat to India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). It is not in the public interest to give the information relating to shipping movements which the Honourable Member has asked for. I can assure the House that I shall neglect no effort to use every opportunity that offers of shipping foodgrains to India. As the Honourable Member is, probably aware, several ship-loads of grains have already arrived in this country from abroad.

EXPENDITURE ON FACILITIES FOR MUSLIM HAJ PILGRIMS.

143. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas be pleased to state the expenditure incurred by Government

for giving facilities to Muslim pilgrims performing the Haj?

(b) Do the provinces with a Muslim majority contribute anything to this expenditure?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Rs. 2,00,000 in 1941-42 and 1,47,000 in 1942-43.

(b) No.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: What is the total amount collected from the pilgrims?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I submit that that question does not arise.

CINCHONA CULTIVATION AND YIELD OF QUININE.

144. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands please state the present total area of land under cinchona cultivation, and the total yield of quinine per year in India?

(b) What was the total area of land under cinchona cultivation in India in 1939, and what is the increase in area of land under cinchona cultivation since the cessation of import of quinine from Java?

(c) Is it the policy of the Government of India to try and make India self-sufficient in the matter of quinine manufacture, having regard to the present experience of severe shortage?

(d) Is it a fact that the Government of Bengal have refused to provide facilities to the private manufacturers of quinine for increasing cinchona cultivation in the country?

(e) Is it not the responsibility of the Central Government to see that all possible efforts are made by the Governments—Central and Provincial—to increase the area under cinchona cultivation? If not, why not?

(f) If the answer to (e) is in the affirmative, what steps have the Government of India taken to increase the cultivation of cinchona in the country?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). The area under cinchona cultivation at present is as follows:

Madras.—3,429 acres, which is 756 acres more than when supplies from Java stopped and 1,358 more than in 1939.

Bengal.—7,200 acres, which is 100 acres more than when supplies from Java stopped and 200 acres more than in 1939. The Bengal Government have also adopted a system of close planting which will give a larger yield per acre. The total average annual yields of quinine are respectively,—

Madras, about 27,000 lbs., and Bengal, 65,000 lbs.

(c) The question what steps should be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present difficulties is a matter which will be considered by the Government of India in the light of conditions likely to prevail after the war and of developments in the production of synthetic anti-malaria drugs.

(d) It is understood that the Government of Bengal refused a request by a commercial concern for the allotment of land for the purposes of cinchona cultivation on the ground that all the suitable land available was required by the Government of Bengal for extension of their own cultivation.

(e) and (f). The Government of India have taken steps to increase the cultivation of cinchona for production of quinine under a short-term method in the Provinces of Bengal and Madras and have undertaken to meet the cost of the scheme.

CONSTRUCTING A LARGE HOTEL FOR INDIAN CLERKS IN NEW DELHI.

145. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether Government have considered the advisability of constructing a large several storeyed building in New Delhi in the form of a big hotel in order to provide lodging and boarding facilities for Indian clerks who are

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

otherwise put to considerable difficulties in obtaining these at present?

(b) Is it a fact that many buildings have been constructed for the accommodation of European single Non-Commissioned Officers, etc., and that these are being run as hostels?

(c) Are Government prepared to provide similar facilities for the Indian single clerks? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Government are considering the possibility of erecting a hostel for clerks.

(b) Yes.

(c) Government have already provided chummies of Orthodox and Un-orthodox types for Indian single clerks and they are considering whether there will be an adequate demand to justify the erection of a hostel.

WANT OF DAIRIES OR COW BYRES IN THE AREA BOUNDED BY IRWIN ROAD, MARKET ROAD AND LADY HARDINGE ROAD IN NEW DELHI.

146. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Education Secretary please state whether it is a fact that there are no dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi?

(b) Are Government aware—

(i) that the residents of this area have either to go very long distances to get their milk supplies or to take the supply given by *gwalas* coming from distant villages;

(ii) that the milk brought by the *gwalas* is generally not of good quality; and

(iii) that their staff residing in the said area are generally unable to get good quality milk?

(c) Have Government ever considered the advisability of constructing cow byres in that area? If so, why have these not been constructed? If it was not considered, are Government prepared to do so now? If not, why not?

(d) Is it a fact that Government have placed a ban upon the keeping of milch cattle in the orthodox types of clerks quarters below classes A and B? If so, are Government prepared to lift this ban for the duration of the war in order to enable the residents of this area, and/or of any other area, to keep milch cattle in their quarters and thus ensure good supply of milk? If not, why not?

(e) Are Government aware—

(i) that very few residents of A and B classes of orthodox quarters to whom permission for keeping milch cattle was given, are availing of this concession; and

(ii) that all residents of C, D and E types of quarters are not likely to keep milch cattle in their quarters, and that the question of localities becoming dirty cannot arise?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes.

(b) Complaints of this nature have been made from time to time.

(c) The question of constructing additional cow byres in certain localities has lately engaged the attention of the New Delhi Municipal Committee but owing to the high cost of construction at the present time and the need for deferring all escapable works the Committee has not so far found itself able to undertake any scheme of this kind.

(d) The keeping of milch cattle is not permitted in the case of C class orthodox quarters and all D and E class quarters. To lift this ban would have undesirable consequences, but the New Delhi Municipal Committee is examining other means of augmenting the milk supply.

(e) (i) and (ii), No.

DELAY IN ATTENDING TO THE COMPLAINTS MADE TO MINTO ROAD AND HAVELOCK SQUARE ENQUIRY OFFICES, NEW DELHI.

147. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether Government are aware that complaints made to the Enquiry Offices at Minto Road and Havelock Square regarding repairs, etc., to

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent

orthodox clerks' quarters in those neighbourhoods are attended to generally after considerable delay?

(b) Are Government aware—

(i) that some of these complaints are not attended to at all; and

(ii) that letters sent on the subject to the Executive Engineer, Construction III Division, or to other authorities in 'B' Division, remain unacknowledged and without any action being taken on them?

(c) Are Government prepared to issue instructions to the authorities concerned to acknowledge all letters sent to them, and to take appropriate action thereon? If not, why not?

(d) Are Government aware—

(i) that a lot of inconvenience is being caused to their tenants by the irregular method adopted by the contractors regarding white-washing, etc.;

(ii) that they send men round to the quarters and the tenants are asked to keep their rooms clear of furniture on a certain day, and then white-washing labour is not sent for several days later; and

(iii) that when white-washing is finished the cleaning of doors and glass panes is not done at once, and the tenants are unable to arrange their houses for several days?

(e) Are Government prepared to take action to redress these grievances of their tenants? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) (i) No.

(ii) Action on letters received by Executive Engineers is taken at once and necessity is not felt of acknowledging all letters.

(c) Yes.

(d) (i), (ii) and (iii). No.

(e) Yes, Government intend issuing instructions to Executive Engineers to make frequent personal inspections.

NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED E TYPE ORTHODOX QUARTERS IN THE OPEN SPACE BETWEEN BAIRD SQUARE EAST AND IRWIN ROAD IN NEW DELHI.

*148. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware that a number of E-type orthodox quarters have been constructed in the open space lying between Baird Square, East and Irwin Road in New Delhi?

(b) Is he aware—

(i) that this area now looks very much like a congested portion of the city, containing small *gallicies* and lanes; and

(ii) that the present officials of the Central Public Works Department have totally ignored the original idea of the layout of New Delhi, and have made the said area very congested?

(c) Is it a fact that it is proposed to construct more E-type orthodox quarters?

(d) Are Government prepared to consider the advisability of constructing new quarters in such a manner that the "Clerks' residential areas" do not become more congested than they are at present, and that provision is made for lawns and open spaces near these quarters?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) (i) and (ii). No.

(c) Yes.

(d) Government have always acted in this manner.

DESIRABILITY OF CLOSING CERTAIN PASSAGES IN HAVELOCK AND BAIRD SQUARES NEW DELHI.

*149. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that all the squares of D-type orthodox clerks' quarters in the D. I. Z Area of New Delhi had their four corners open as passage?

(b) Is it a fact that these passages were closed later?

+Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(c) Was one of the reasons to protect the lawns in front of the quarters in those squares?

(d) Are Government aware—

(i) that in Havelock and Baird Squares, B and C-types of quarters, there are passages after every two quarters except at the corners; and

(ii) that coolies and labourers use these passages regularly, and cross the lawns at different places with the result that the lawns in these two squares are disfigured by foot tracks?

(e) Are Government prepared to have these passages closed and grass relaid on these tracks? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) No.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government will examine the suggestion

GROWING OF MORE VEGETABLES IN ORTHODOX QUARTERS IN NEW DELHI.

*150. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) With reference to the general appeal of Government to grow more food and vegetables, will the Honourable Member for Labour please state whether the Government of India staff living in New Delhi in orthodox type of quarters can grow vegetables in large quantities?

(b) Is it a fact that the courtyards of D-type particularly, and of E, C and B-type orthodox quarters generally, are very small in size, and cannot be used to produce any large quantity of vegetables, etc.?

(c) Are Government prepared to allot some extra land outside their quarters to such members of their orthodox staff who may ask for it for the purpose of growing vegetables, etc., and to have such land duly enclosed? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Vegetables may be grown in small quantities for the domestic consumption of the staff occupying these quarters.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The proposal if accepted would soon result in destruction of lawns. Fencing is expensive and cannot be provided by Government, and it is unlikely that the staff living in these quarters will be able to make adequate use of such extra land.

STOPPAGE OF PILGRIM SHIPS FROM CARRYING PILGRIMS TO THE HEJAZ.

151. ***Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state whether Indian Muslims have been aggrieved by the decision of the Government of India in regard to the stoppage of pilgrim ships from carrying pilgrims to the Hejaz?

(b) Is he aware that Muslims have asked Government to reconsider their decision, and to allow pilgrims to perform the pilgrimage this year?

(c) If the answer to part (b) is in the affirmative, what action have Government taken?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given on the 9th November, 1943, to Nawab Siddique Ali Khan's starred question No. 52.

STOPPAGE OF PILGRIM SHIPS FROM CARRYING PILGRIMS TO THE HEJAZ.

152. ***Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** (a) Has the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas seen the following passage in the speech given by the Honourable the Defence Member on the floor of the Assembly on the 12th August, 1943:—

"Yes, this year if the route becomes safe and the lives of Hajis are not in danger. I give my promise that I shall be the first person to raise this question in the Executive Council and with the Member for Indians Overseas. And there is no question of future?"

+Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(b) Can the Honourable Member inform the House whether he himself or the Honourable the Defence Member has been ascertaining the condition of the sea route from month to month from the 12th August, 1943?

(c) When was the last inquiry made and with what result?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given on the 9th November, 1943, to clauses (c) and (d) of Nawab Siddique Ali Khan's starred question No. 52.

ARRANGING A FAST BOAT FOR HAJ PILGRIMS.

153. ***Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas consider the question of arranging a fast boat for pilgrims even at this late date if the sea route is now safe from enemy danger?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I regret that the reasons for which the proposed pilgrim sailings were cancelled still subsist.

RECOMMENDATIONS *re* NEW *Musafirkhana* AT CALCUTTA.

154. ***Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please refer to recommendation No. 46 of Mr. Rahim's Report regarding the new *musafirkhana* at Calcutta and state if it will be ready for occupation by pilgrims when ships sail from Calcutta for the next pilgrimage; if not, when Government propose to give effect to this recommendation?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Recommendation No. 46 regarding the construction of a *musafirkhana* at Calcutta is still under consideration, in correspondence with the Government of Bengal.

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PILGRIM CAMP, KARACHI.

155. ***Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please refer to recommendation No. 47 of Mr. Rahim's Report and state whether the reconstruction of the Pilgrim Camp, Karachi, has been commenced; if not, when Government propose to complete the whole scheme?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) No. Proceedings under the Land Acquisition Act are being taken to acquire two plots of private land for the expansion of the camp.

(b) I cannot say when the whole scheme will be completed. Government do not propose to undertake construction work until after the war.

CONFERENCE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF PORT HAJ COMMITTEES, ETC.

156. ***Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** (a) Is the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas aware of a Conference of the representatives of the Port Haj Committees, shipping companies and members of the Central Haj Committee held in Bombay in May, 1943, under the chairmanship of the Honourable Mr. G. S. Bozman?

(b) When does he intend to hold the next conference?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) About the middle of December 1943 in Bombay.

MOGUL LINE SHIPS GIVEN TO SHIPPING COMPANIES OF EGYPT FOR CARRYING PILGRIMS TO JEDDA.

157. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) if the steamers of the Mogul Line come within the control of the Government of India for the purpose of requisition;

(b) if the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, did that line give on charter or on hire their steamers to the Shipping Companies of Egypt or any other country for the carriage of pilgrims to Jedda during the last three years, and if it is a fact that such steamers given either on charter or on hire carried over 10,000 pilgrims each way; and

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, whether the steamers thus given on charter or on hire were given with the consent of the Government of India, and, if so, whether such steamers were not required for the trades in which the Mogul Line usually plies or for other requirements of the Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes.

(b) The Mogul Line did not give on charter or hire any of their steamers for the carriage of pilgrims from Egypt to Jedda in 1941, but they did so in 1942 and are again doing so this year. The number of pilgrims carried each way by their steamers was over 10,000 in 1942. It is too early to state the position for this year as the pilgrimage is still in progress.

(c) The steamers were given in 1942 as well as this year with the knowledge of Government. It has generally been the policy of Government to leave the ships on the Indian Register, except where they are required for Government's purposes, to be employed by their owners in their normal trades. The practice of the Mogul Line of lending their ships for the Egyptian pilgrimage dates back to the year 1926. Government allowed the steamers to be made available for this purpose after satisfying themselves that this would not interfere with either their own requirements or the requirements of the trades in which the steamers were normally employed.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Could not these steamers be utilised for carrying grains from Karachi to Calcutta, which was the main business of that Company?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have specifically said that we are perfectly satisfied that the trade in which they would have been employed did not suffer, and other means were taken.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Are Government aware that there is great difficulty for passengers going by steamer from Bombay to Konkan districts and could not Government utilise these steamers which have been lent to the Egyptian Government for carrying passengers from Bombay to the Konkan?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am quite aware of the passenger traffic in that section; but, as I have made clear, these are two ships of the Mogul Line and we took steps to see that the cargo or passengers that would have been carried by these two ships did not suffer in any way.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Then may I take it that there are sufficient ships to carry cargo from Karachi to Calcutta?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is a question for the Honourable Member for War Transport to answer.

ADDITIONAL QUOTA FOR NEWSPRINT GIVEN TO CERTAIN NEWSPAPERS.

158. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) whether additional quota for newsprint has been given to certain newspapers in India for the purpose of circulation amongst non-Indian troops stationed in India; if so, the newspapers to which additional quota has been given; and

(b) whether the request for additional quota came from the newspapers concerned, or whether the recommendation has been made by the military authorities stationed in the areas where these newspapers circulate?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Additional ration of newsprint has been allowed to the following newspapers for printing copies for supply to services personnel, on specific indents from military authorities—

The *Mail*, Madras.

The *Times of India*, Bombay.

The *Illustrated Weekly*, Bombay.

The *Statesman*, Calcutta.

The *Pioneer*, Lucknow.

The *Daily Gazette*, Karachi.

The *Asr-e-Jadid*, Calcutta.

No allowance is made in respect of copies which may be purchased in the ordinary course in the open market by services personnel.

(b) The additional allotment has been made at the request of the Military authorities.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is the Honourable Member aware that responsible officers of the Southern Command have told pressmen that have not asked for any additional quota?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of that.

SUPPLY OF WIRELESS SETS TO THE TRADE AT COST.

159. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) whether Government are supplying wireless sets to the Trade at cost; and

(b) what percentage of profit is allowed to the Trade?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes, cost includes the usual insurance, departmental and other miscellaneous charges.

(b) The trade is allowed to charge to the consumer a price equal to the issue price plus 142.5 per cent. This margin includes the cost of the distribution organisation besides the profit margin. It is understood that the normal trade practice is to allow a profit margin of 200 per cent.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Does the Honourable Member's answer to part (a) with reference to departmental costs include a sum which is equal to 100 per cent. of the landed cost?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of that. We had successive conferences with the trade and the trade satisfied us that in normal times the charge for profit is much more than that. We have tried, therefore, so far as this transaction is concerned, to come to an understanding with them; but I can assure the Honourable Member that this question will be looked into again when subsequent transactions take place.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: That was not my question. What I asked was whether departmental costs were not more or less equal to the landed costs of these wireless sets.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have said that the cost includes departmental costs, insurance and other miscellaneous charges.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: The House would like to know what percentage these charges bear to the landed cost.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I shall require notice of that.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I know whether the departmental charges are intended to include a proportion of the Honourable Member's own salary?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot say that, but there may be money more which can similarly be said.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I know if these sets were obtained through lease-lend agreement and the Governments concerned were not allowed to make any profit on these sets?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Government have not made any profit.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: What do 'departmental cost' mean?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Departmental cost is not profit.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN CIVIL PIONEER FORCE, UNITED PROVINCES.

29. **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of commissioned officers (different ranks) so far recruited in the Civil Pioneer Force, United Provinces;

(b) how many of them are Hindus, Muslims and members of the Scheduled Castes;

(c) how many of these commissioned officers have been promoted to higher ranks;

(d) if any scheduled caste commissioned officer has so far been promoted to the higher rank; and

(e) if the answer to (d) be in the negative, if Government propose to make such promotion now?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) and (b). Twenty-five officers of commissioned rank have been appointed. The ranks and communities of the officers are—

	Muslims.	Scheduled castes.	Others.
Commandants	...	...	2 (One Christian).
Captains	...	...	2 (One Christian).
Lieutenants	...	...	7 (Two Christians).
2nd Lieuts.	4	3	7

(c) Two Commandants and two Captains were appointed in those ranks on first commission. Seven 2nd Lieutenants have been promoted to the posts of Lieutenants.

(d) No.

(e) Promotion to higher rank can only be made within the authorised establishment of those ranks as vacancies become available. Subject to the authority of the Central Government, the power to make promotions is entrusted to the Provincial Government. Except to prevent positive injustice it is not considered desirable to interfere with the discretion of the Provincial Government in this matter, particularly as regards the higher posts. Promotions are regulated by two considerations (1) Efficiency and (2) Seniority. Since efficiency of the Unit must depend on the efficiency of its officers, efficiency must be the basis of promotion. But in cases where efficiency is equal, seniority of service in the Force is also taken into account in making promotions.

COUNTING OF SERVICES OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS IN CIVIL PIONEER FORCE AS WAR SERVICES.

30. **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether the services of the commissioned officers in the Civil Pioneer Force will be counted as war services; if not, why not; and

(b) if the answer to (a) above be in the negative, if Government propose to revise their decision?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, we appealed to the Chair yesterday that in view of the general consensus of opinion that more time may be available for the food debate, the questions on Monday and Tuesday may be dispensed with. Of course, the questions may be put down as starred questions. I find, Sir, that the same feeling exists in the House today, and we appeal to the Chair to accede to our wishes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is no question of appealing to the Chair. It is a question of appealing to the Members of the House. If they all agree that the questions should be dispensed with next Monday and Tuesday, I have no objection.

Some Honourable Members: No, Sir. We don't.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): There are some Members who do not agree.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then the questions will go on.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): May I take it, at any rate, that Leaders of some Parties have agreed and members of those Parties will accept that position.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: So far as my Party is concerned, I agree.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): We have agreed on the point that answers may not be given orally but in writing.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Those who do not want to put any questions need not do so, but without general agreement I cannot lay down that there shall be no questions on those days.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

ARREST OF MR. PARDIWALLA, BARRISTER OF LAHORE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Deshmukh has given notice of his intention to move the adjournment of the business of this Assembly in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister, in Lahore High Court and his removal to an unknown destination thus depriving Jai Prakash Narain of the legal help for which he was engaged.

Why was this gentleman arrested? Under what law was he arrested?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): We do not know, but it must be under the Defence of India Rules.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was he arrested here in Delhi?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: No, Sir. He was arrested in Lahore High Court.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You ought to have mentioned that.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I have mentioned that, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You have said "Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister in Lahore High Court". I suppose the Punjab Government ordered his arrest.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: My information is that he was arrested under the orders of the Government of India. I have in the past pointed out instances on the floor of this House in which though action is taken by the Provincial Government it is done really on the authority of or instructions issued by the Government of India.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Has the Honourable the Home Member got anything to say on this?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): No orders whatever have been issued in this matter by the Government of India, nor has any action been taken under their instructions.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): In view of the statement made by the Home Member that no orders have been issued in this matter by the Government of India, it must be assumed that the Provincial Government is responsible for the order. I therefore rule that the motion is out of order.

ALLEGED INHUMAN TREATMENT TO MR. JAI PRAKASH NARAIN.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next one is also from Mr. Deshmukh. He wishes to move for the adjournment of the business of the Assembly in order to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance namely, the tortures and inhuman treatment to which Jai Prakash Narain is being subjected by Government agents in whose custody he is.

Who are these Government agents, and which Government's agents?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): The arrest was made under the orders of the Government of India. The Government agents are the police as well as the military officers in whose custody he is.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): And what tortures has he been subjected to?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: He is made to sit on ice blocks for a considerable time, he is made to sit in a chair without any back, he is not allowed to sleep, he is not properly fed, and so on.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): How does the Honourable Member know all this?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I know it and, therefore, I have said so.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): May I ask the Honourable Member whether Mr. Jai Prakash Narain was arrested under the orders of the Government of India.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, Mr. Jai Prakash Narain is the prisoner of the Punjab Government, and this adjournment motion is really directed against the Punjab Government and not against the Central Government. We have had no hand in this affair whatever. The matter has already, as I see from a copy of the *Tribune* of Lahore, been before the Punjab Legislature, and has been under discussion there. It is not a matter which concerns this Government at all.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether Mr. Jai Prakash Narain was arrested on the warrant issued by the Government of India or by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: He was arrested because he was a fugitive offender.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Is not justice and humanity the concern of this Government?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is also the concern of the Local Governments. And there is no proof whatever that any sort of inhuman treatment or tortures have been given so far as this gentleman is concerned. Therefore I rule that the motion is out of order.

THE VICTORIA MEMORIAL (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): Sir, I move: "That the Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, 1903, be taken into consideration."

Sir, I need offer very little explanation to this House beyond what has already been stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. The Victoria Memorial Act was passed in 1903, at the time when the Governor General had his residence in Calcutta. It was therefore possible to dispose of the business of the Trustees in the presence of the Governor General on the spot. Since, then, as the House is aware, the Governor General has shifted his residence to Delhi and the practice has grown up by which the business of the Trustees is determined by circulation amongst the members. The object of this short Bill is merely to authorize that practice. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, 1903, be taken into consideration."

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): I have no objection whatever to this Bill which has to do with the Memorial dedicated to the blessed memory of Queen Victoria. But I would like to ask the Honourable Member what is the urgency behind this measure? I understood that it had been the policy of the Government of India during war time that they would not include in their legislative programme measures which either were not directly connected with the prosecution of the war or were not regarded as urgent from the point of view of public interest. Of course the Honourable Member may say: "Well, this is a very small Bill". But that makes no difference. He will recollect the story of a domestic servant who after giving birth to an illegitimate baby said in extenuation that it was only a very small one. The principle is the same, and after all this Bill presumably must have taken up the time, or some of the time, of the over-worked Legislative Department. I should, therefore, like to know why it is so urgent. The position has been the same, as it is at present, since the Government of India removed itself from Calcutta to Delhi—that, I believe, was in 1912 or thereabouts. Ever since that time it has been inconvenient for the Governor General and other Trustees outside Bengal to attend meetings of the Trustees. Apparently the Memorial still stands and the Trustees have been able, all those years, to discharge their duties faithfully. Therefore, why is it that the Honourable Member in the middle of the war on the eve of the greater operations in the East has

[Sir F. E. James.]
introduced this measure? Is it desperately urgent? If not, then why should it be included in the legislative programme?

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Is it a war measure, or not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: It is a war measure in the sense that it is undertaken during the war. I can assure the Honourable Member that it would not have been undertaken had it involved any large expenditure of time. In fact, the irregularity of practice which now obtains in view of the explicit terms of the Victoria Memorial Act has only recently come to notice, and the secretariat labour, at least, that was involved in the matter all took place in the discovery of this fact that there was technically an irregularity about the method by which the business of the Trustees was carried on. And

12 Noon. since that point had already come to notice, there was nothing more to be done except draft this short Bill in order to get the position regularised and in order that there may be no further question about the legality of acts transacted by the Trustees. I think that is a sufficient reply to the point raised.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That the Bill further to amend the Victoria Memorial Act, 1903, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (*Second Amendment*) be taken into consideration."

The provisions of this Bill are fully explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. I would only add that the project was initiated on a representation by the Punjab Government that a deleterious effect was likely to be produced on the morale of the soldier on active service if having received information of a matrimonial offence by or against his wife he had no means of causing a complaint to be lodged. Other Provinces have been consulted and there is general agreement that the proposals are appropriate. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (*Second Amendment*) be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2, 3 and 4 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN TRADE UNIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Labour Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon."

The motion is merely for circulation for the purpose of eliciting public opinion on this measure. That being so, it seems to me unnecessary to take the time of the House to deal in any detailed manner with the provisions which

are embodied in this Bill. It is enough, I think, to tell the House what are the main features of the Bill and what has led Government to undertake this particular piece of legislation.

The Bill has three important features. In the first place, the Bill seeks to compel an employer to recognise a trade union. In the second place, the Bill imposes certain conditions on a trade union in order to make the trade union, if I may say so, worthy of recognition by an employer. The third feature of the Bill is to make non-recognition by an employer of a trade union, which has observed all the conditions prescribed in this measure and which has therefore qualified itself for recognition, an offence which is made punishable by law.

As I said, it is unnecessary to discuss the merits of this measure. The motion is for circulation which obviously means that the provisions embodied in the Bill by the Government at the present stage are only tentative. There is no finality about it, and Government do not propose to make these provisions final unless they have received the opinions of leaders of labour, employers, Provincial Governments and other parties who are concerned in this measure. The Bill may therefore be quite different from what it is now, when Government has applied its mind to the various suggestions that it hopes to receive as a result of circulation.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-official): I hope it will be better.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I hope so from everybody's point of view. All that therefore I propose to say is to tell the House what has led the Government of India to take this responsibility upon its shoulders.

The House will recall that this matter was considered at great length by the Royal Commission on Indian Labour. A great deal of attention was devoted to the question of the recognition of trade unions by employers, and all those Honourable Members who have read the Report of the Royal Commission on Labour will realise what great emphasis the Royal Commission laid on the recognition of trade unions as a measure for the healthy growth of trade unions and for amicable relations between employers and workers. The House will also remember that the Royal Commission at that stage stated that they would very much desire if the recognition was achieved voluntarily by the consent of the employers without any legal obligation upon them. The House will also remember that the Royal Commission reported in 1929,—practically 12 years have elapsed—and there has been no willingness on the part of employers to recognise trade unions voluntarily. Indeed the objections which the employers made before the Royal Commission for opposing the recognition of trade unions are still the objections which the employers are pressing for non-recognition. Consequently the situation has certainly not improved.

As Honourable Members will remember, this question was taken up after 1937 when provincial autonomy came into being, by most of the Provincial Governments which came and took office under the new Act. There were both private measures and measures introduced by the Ministries in order to bring about recognition of trade unions by employers. For instance, in Madras there was a private Bill brought in, there was also a Government measure brought in by the Ministry of the day. In Bombay Government brought in a measure called the Bombay Trade Disputes Act. In C. P. an Act was contemplated and a draft was prepared and the same was done in the province of the U. P. Unfortunately, except in the case of Bombay, the Ministries in other provinces resigned before their projects could assume a statutory character. However, the Government of India, after provincial autonomy had come into existence, had inaugurated a system of collaboration between the centre and the provinces and one of the means adopted for collaboration was to inaugurate what were called Labour Ministers' Conferences. The First Labour Ministers' Conference was held in 1940 when this subject was discussed between the Provincial Governments and the Central Government. It was then decided that there was not enough material before the Conference to come to any definite conclusion on the matter, and the Conference gave instructions to the Central Government that the matter should be referred to the Provincial Governments in

[Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.]

order to elicit opinion from the Provincial Governments as well as leaders of labour and employers and that the material should be placed at the second session of the Labour Ministers' Conference which was proposed to be held in the year 1941. Accordingly the Government of India addressed a letter to the Provincial Governments asking them to collect the opinions of the different parties relating to this measure, and a very large body of opinion was collected by the different Provincial Governments and forwarded to the Central Government with the opinions of the different provinces on them. The whole of this was placed before the Labour Ministers' Conference held in 1941 and the conclusion reached then was that the Central Government should undertake legislation, that that legislation should not be purely provincial, and that draft should be prepared on the basis of the replies that were received from the Provincial Governments and from the various parties which were concerned with this matter. As a result of this the Government of India undertook the task and the present Bill is really the result of the sifting of the information which the Central Government received and the opinions which were expressed by the various parties concerned. This is the origin of the measure. This will explain why, although labour legislation is a provincial subject, the Central Government has come in with this measure.

I do not think that it is necessary for me to say anything further on this measure. As I have said, the proposals are tentative, there is no finality, and there cannot be any finality unless and until we receive opinions on the draft Bill as it stands. All that I say is that it is one of the most important measures which this Legislature has been invited to undertake. It is also a unique measure. Except in the case of the United States and Sweden, recognition of trade unions in other countries has been left to voluntary effort. I hope this will not be a controversial measure. In any case I do not wish to say more than what I have said in view of the fact that I prefer to submit the Bill to public scrutiny before I undertake to make myself responsible for any of the provisions contained in the Bill. Sir, I move:

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon."

Mr. P. J. Griffiths (Assam: European): Mr. President, the motion at present before the House is that this Bill be circulated for eliciting opinion thereon, and we trust that our support of that motion will not be taken to indicate that we regard this as being either a good Bill or a well thought-out Bill or a statesman-like Bill. We are prepared to support circulation because we recognise that this subject is one of the most vital subjects about which India will have to think from now onwards, and we recognise therefore the importance of stimulating public thought and of calling attention to the many pitfalls into which Governments may fall with regard to the question of trade unions and into several of these, we believe, they have already fallen, in drafting this Bill.

The subject is one of paramount importance to the State, to employers and to labour. For every State under modern conditions, it is of importance to encourage the growth of sound labour organisations, organisations which will be strong enough to protect the true interests of labour, organisations which will ensure for them fair pay and decent conditions of living, and organisations which will enable us in this country to avoid those evils of ruthless exploitation of labour by capital, which formed one of the worst blots on English history in the corresponding phase of industrial development. For all these reasons the State is profoundly interested in seeing that sound, strong labour organisations come into being. But the State is equally interested in seeing that those organisations grow up imbued with a due sense of responsibility, that they grow up in such a way that while the workman will demand a fair share, he will not demand an impossible share in the products of the industry, that these unions function in such a way that, just as the employer is not allowed to become a tyrant, so likewise the labourer is not allowed to

become a tyrant. From the point of the State, therefore, nothing can be more important than the balanced healthy development of the trade union movement. When we come to the case of the employer we find that he too is equally interested in this balanced, healthy development. It is not necessary for me, speaking in the year 1943, to say that every wise, intelligent, farsighted employer recognises the advantages of healthy, sound, trade unions. He recognises that it is far easier to deal with one sober body than to deal with several hundreds of several thousands of unthinking, irresponsible individuals. The employer has nothing to gain by the growth of weak trade unions; he has everything to gain by the growth of strong trade unions, provided that with that strength, is coupled soundness. It is, therefore, of importance to the employer, as well as to the State, that legislation regarding trade unions should keep the right balance and the test which we apply to this as to every similar measure will therefore be, is the Bill such as to facilitate the growth of healthy unions and to discourage the growth of unhealthy unions? Is the Bill such that it will tend to improve relations between employers and employees? When we examine the Bill from this angle, I am afraid, we cannot congratulate the Honourable the Labour Member on his achievement. We feel that he began by grasping impulsively at the tempting principle of compulsion, that half way through the Bill his courage failed him so that when he had to consider exactly what he was to compel, he either did not know or could not face the issue and therefore left us without definition, left us in a nebulous state regarding the crucial point of the Bill. That as he went on further towards the end of the Bill he looked round the Treasury Benches and saw the angry faces of those of his colleagues who actually have to handle labour and he said "at all costs I must keep myself from being embroiled in difficulties with these practical employers of labour" and so he put in section 28J, the effect of which is, at any rate for the present, to leave out large classes of labour from the purview of this Bill. I want to consider these three points as briefly as possible one by one.

First, the principle of compulsion with which my Honourable friend starts this Bill so bravely. Do not let us confuse this question of compulsory recognition, with the quite separate question of the desirability of the trade union movement. There is nobody here in this Group—and I imagine there is nobody in this House—who still has to be convinced as to the desirability of the trade union movement; but that conviction must not let us gloss over the main point which is—will the principle of compulsory recognition make for sound trade unionism or not. Compare the position contemplated under this Bill with the position as it exists and has for long existed in Great Britain. I suppose there are very few countries in the world in which trade unions have won more respect, more honour, have ensured for themselves a more definite place as one of the pillars of society than has been the case in Great Britain and I suppose there are very few countries in which the effective practical power of the trade union is greater than it is in that country. But in that country, trade unions have reached their position, not under the shelter of compulsory recognition, but they have reached it because they have had to earn that recognition by their merits. They have had to satisfy employers, and they have had to satisfy the public, firstly that they could be reasonable and see that to any industrial question there are two sides and that there must be give and take between the employers and the employed in settling all these matters. Then they have had to go on and convince employers and the Government, not only that they were reasonable but that they were representative. For after all, it is no use an employer making a settlement with a union, if that settlement is to be rejected afterwards by 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers concerned. The representative character of the unions is an essential element in the path along which they have risen to power and respect in Great Britain. Thirdly, after having satisfied the employer and the public that they were reasonable and representative, they had to go on and prove that they were efficient; that they could collect their funds and pay strike pay at the time of strike, that they were so well organised, that if the employers proved unreasonable, it was possible for these

[Mr. P. J. Griffiths.]

unions to force their will upon the recalcitrant employer. And so, I say that, throughout the course of the last 100 years, unions in England have had to convince the public that they were reasonable, that they were representative and that they were efficient and they have attained their present status in British economic life simply because they succeeded in those three points. There have been phases in their history when they have not succeeded, when they were not reasonable, when they were not representative and not efficient and in those phases employers refused to deal with them. Some unions went wild in the early days and were broken against the refusal of the employers to deal with a union which had not yet proved itself reasonable, representative and efficient. Those unions were broken, but others learnt their lesson from them and their place was taken by unions which, thanks to this past experience, could claim to be so well ordered that they were entitled to be heard as the representatives of the labourers. Note the whole process. There was no question of suddenly forcing on employers recognition of something unformed, undeveloped and unthought out. The process was that the Union showed itself capable of doing a responsible job and then the recognition came inevitably when that stage had been reached. I venture to suggest that if those unions had grown up under the shelter of compulsory recognition, if they had not been under the necessity of becoming reasonable, representative and efficient, you would not have had, as you have in Britain today, a sound and healthy movement, welcomed alike by the State and the general public. It seems to me therefore that in laying down that once a union has been given a certain status the employer must deal with that union, irrespective of the behaviour of that union, irrespective of its sense of responsibility or of whether it represents the workers or not, by laying down a thing like that, you are taking away the greatest incentive which a union could have to put its house in order and to turn itself into a sound and responsible body. I can quite understand the frame of mind of my Honourable friend the Labour Member in dealing with this matter. He is impatient. We all know the sincerity of his desire to improve the lot of labour but we also know that in practical life sincerity and over-zeal very often lead to impatience. My Honourable friend sees this plant, in which he takes so much interest, growing slowly and he says to himself 'I cannot tolerate this slow growth. Something must be done about it. Let me put it in the hot house and do something to force its growth'. Let me remind my Honourable friend that though he may succeed in forcing it to early maturity, the chances are that the plant will be sickly or will turn out to be a monstrosity and in any case will pass away and die. Let the plant stay in the open. Let it contend with the elements and fight for itself. Let me remind my Honourable friend too that trade unions have many enemies.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Employers are one of them.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: In this, as in so many matters you are misinformed as to the views of the employers. Let me tell my Honourable friend that this temporary protection will weaken the unions and their ultimate growth, and increase the power of their enemies to destroy them. As I went through this Bill, I felt, as I said before, that the Honourable the Labour Member had not the courage of his convictions. He started bravely with the principle of compulsion. When he came on to details as to the classes of unions with respect to which compulsory recognition should apply, his courage failed him. He began by laying down certain obvious conditions with which I shall not trouble the House. Then he came to the main point, that a union is not to be recognised unless it is representative. This is a most excellent principle but I wish my Honourable friend had tried to tell us in the Bill roughly what he meant by 'representative unions'. "Representative" is not one of those dictionary words that you can take for granted. Opinions differ from time to time and from place to place as to what is representative. Some people might say that the Honourable Members on the front bench were representative of India, but

it seems to me very unlikely that Honourable Members sitting on the Opposition benches would accept that point of view. It is no use telling me that you will not recognise a Union unless it is representative, unless you give me some idea of what you mean by representative. My Honourable friend knows that, in the many discussions that have taken place during the past few years on this whole question of recognition, the crux of the matter has always been as to how you should define a representative Union. My Honourable friend will remember that that was so in Bombay. He will remember that in every discussion that has taken place this has been one of the main issues. I have looked through this Bill in vain for any sign of what the Honourable Member means when he talks about representative Unions. In other words, the Honourable Member is asking us to make the recognition of something compulsory, but that something is nebulous, indefinite and unknown. But, hope springs eternal in the human breast and my Honourable friend, the prince of optimists finding himself, his Department and the Draftsman, barren of ideas as to how they can define the term 'Representative Union' says to himself, "in a few months' time, when we have to draft the rules, the wells of inspiration will have filled again and we shall know then what we do not know now, what we mean by a representative Union." So, my friend says that the representative Union should be left to be defined in the rules. Sir, quite apart from the merits of this particular Bill, this seems to me a fundamentally unsound principle. Government comes to this House with what we take to be considered proposals. How can we pass judgment on those proposals when we are told, in effect, that the definition upon which the meaning of the whole of this Bill turns will be settled later. I claim as a Member of this House the right to judge Government's legislative proposals in their reasonable entirety and I say that when the Honourable Member takes a point, which is the crucial point of the Bill, and says airily "We will deal with it in the rules", I say that this House is not being treated with proper respect. He is putting us in a position where we cannot express any intelligent opinion on the merits or demerits of the most important part of his Bill. It will not do for my Honourable friend to say that these proposals are not final and they have been just put forward for discussion, that they will go to the country and their Government will re-shape them in the light of the opinions received. Of course, Government will have to consider what the country says, but that does not absolve the Government from the duty of putting before us detailed proposals. We cannot accept the principle that Government can throw on the table of this House something that is half-drafted and half-formed, and say it does not really matter because the public will tell them where they are wrong. In other words, the public will do the work that the Draftsman has not done and then Government will give us a carefully framed and well-thought out Bill. If this Government were a responsible Government, my Honourable friend would not dare to put forward a proposal of that kind, and I say that respect for this House demands that we should be told exactly what is in Government's mind. We should be asked to vote, not on vague and nebulous abstractions, but on specific and concrete proposals. The function and scope of rules is to implement the purpose of a Bill. The definition of a 'representative Union' is part and parcel of the whole purpose of this Bill. With that left out, it is impossible for this House to take a well-considered and reasoned view of the matter. It leaves me with the feeling that the Labour Department wants to do something but does not quite know what it is. We are not blaming them for that, for they have many other pre-occupations, but let them at least wait until they do know what they want to do and then come forward with the specific and concrete proposals.

Then, again, it was not only at this stage in the Bill that my Honourable friend's courage failed. Towards the end of the Bill, I find in clause 28-J what I call his complete collapse, out of fear of his colleagues on the Treasury Bench. His position is different from theirs. He can afford to be a theorist whereas some of them are large-scale employers who have to do the practical

[Mr. P. J. Griffiths.]

job of making labour work. They know that these theories, thought out in the comfortable rooms of the Secretariat, look very differently when they filter down to the places where the work has to be done. I have no access to the secrets of the holy places in which the Members of the Executive Council deliberate, but I can only assume that clause 28-J means that some of the Labour Member's Honourable Colleagues regard this as a dangerous Bill. At the same time, they knew his reputation for pertinacity and they thought that the best method of dealing with the matter was to make an illogical compromise to demand exemption of those large bodies of labour for which they are responsible. Frankly, I do not pretend to understand the logic on which clause 28-J is based. The effect of that clause is to take out of the purview of this Bill, for the present, labour employed by the Crown, labour employed by the Railways and labour employed in major ports. We have not yet heard a word from the Honourable Member as to why these exemptions were considered necessary. Is this Bill intended to promote harmony or friction? If it is intended to promote harmony, then why should not that harmony be vouchsafed to labour in those particular fields of employment? Does the Honourable Member think that this Bill will make for better relations or worse relations between employers and employed? If it will make for better relations, does my Honourable friend think that the relations between employers and employed in major ports, in time of War are of no importance? Frankly on the assumption that this Bill is sound and that Government approve of it, I cannot understand why my Honourable friend, the War Transport Member, could have acquiesced in being deprived of the great protection which this Bill is supposed to afford. I presume that he is just as anxious to preserve harmony amongst Railway labour as my Honourable friend is to preserve that harmony in other fields of labour. But the illogicality inherent in this Bill with the inclusion of clause 28-J, goes much further than this. We are told, in effect, that these provisions must not apply to major ports. They must not apply to railways because there is a war on and we cannot run any risks. But what about the hundreds and hundreds of contractors all over the place who are doing war work? Does my Honourable friend think that the work which is being done by labour contractors on aerodromes is any less important than some of the works that are being done on major ports? If my Honourable friend wants to be logical, or if he feels not quite certain about this Bill and he wants to treat it as an experiment, then he will have to go very much beyond major ports in his exemptions. I say this with the greatest respect for the Honourable Member himself. I accuse not him, but his Department of either confusion of thought or lack of courage in dealing with this matter.

This is not the stage for the discussion of details. At a later stage, we shall have many other points to discuss and many other defects to point out and I, in particular, shall have occasion to point out how the Bill in its present form departs from some of the assurances given by my Honourable friend's predecessors, particularly in regard to plantation labour. But this is not the time for details. Those will be dealt with at a later stage.

I will sum up by saying this, firstly that the Bill itself is bad because it embodies an unsound principle, a principle which will not make for the healthy growth of trade unions. Secondly, the Bill is nebulous, not in a fit state for presentation to this Assembly because it fails to define a representative Union. Thirdly, the Bill bears upon itself the hall mark of confusion of thought and illogicality and exempts, from what is supposed to be a useful and beneficent measure, the most important labour forces at work in this country today. For these reasons, although we are prepared to support the motion for circulation so that public attention may be called to the dangerous channels along which Government's mind is travelling; yet we do so with the firm reservation of our right to oppose or criticise every portion of this Bill at any later stage.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must congratulate my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, on his able speech; although that speech is really in opposition to this Bill. The line of opposition is twofold. One is that the Bill is too bad because it is premature, and secondly that the Bill is bad because it is overdue. I am surprised at the inconsistency of the argument, which I shall presently show could not stand. Before I do so, I wish also to congratulate the Government on their bringing forward this measure. I do hope that Government will get the best assistance from Trade Union organisations in shaping it into an acceptable measure. We have long asked for it, not because we want any hothouse growth as my Honourable friend suggests, but because my Honourable friend and his supporters refused to learn the lessons of a century. Does he want that Indian labour should pass through all those travails and struggles which the British workers passed between 1825 and today? Does he not want to learn any lessons from the experience of one century which has led to the firm establishment of Trade Union Movement in Great Britain? Does he not realise that at the end of 1919, the Governments of all the countries which met together for the Peace Treaty issued a Charter for Labour in which they recognised that the lessons of the past must be understood, appreciated and applied and they laid down in the opening paragraph of the establishment of the International Labour Organisation at Geneva, the lessons which the world had learnt during 100 years of Trade Union movement? My Honourable friend and his supporters are either not acquainted with the Preamble to the establishment of the International Labour Office or they are still not in agreement with it. Otherwise, he would not have propounded the extraordinary principle that Indian labour should go through all those travails which labour in Europe and America has gone through and that we in India should not benefit by it and that the employers should learn no lesson. Does he know what the struggle was? Bitter fights, violence, stoppage of work, exploitation of children of 8 and 10 years of age who were torn from their beds by employers at a very early part of the dawn and made to work till very late in the evening. This is the experience through which western labour has passed and the lesson which they have learnt is laid down in that Chapter or the Preamble to the establishment of the International Labour Organisation at Geneva. I ask my European friends that they should not shut their eyes to the lesson which is embodied in that Preamble and which practically negatives all the precautions which my friend has advised us. The experience has been that Government should take a hand in the matter as a representative of all interests: unless Government take a hand, the bitterness and struggle and stoppage of work will continue. It is therefore more for the benefit of the employers and for the better conduct of industries that this Bill has been brought forward. Of course, the Bill is not a perfect measure; nor is the case that it does not stand in need of any improvement. I shall presently show that there are many features which need improvement.

I wish to make one or two further points regarding the need for this measure. The employers as a whole are not still willing to recognise Trade Unions voluntarily. In spite of all that has happened, the lip homage, that is paid to Trade Unionism on the floor of the House and outside, has no reality behind it. They are at bottom hostile, the recognition which we get is due to the fear they entertain, not to the love which they have for us. They are afraid, but they build their fortifications as strongly as they can, even after they give recognition. There is no will honestly, and straightforwardly to recognise Trade Unions. Even the Government cannot be absolved from blame in this matter. Governments are, after all, employers of labour and they have all the mentality of employers, except that they feel they owe a duty to the public, some explanation, some justification for the wrongs they do to Trade Unions. I have sufficient experience of labour and of Government's attitude towards it. The Royal Commission on Labour which was appointed in 1929 and which reported in 1931 enjoined upon the Government to give increasing recognition without raising artificial pleas of opposition. Although there has since been some slight improvement, I cannot say that the lesson has been learnt. I can speak with greater

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

confidence of railways than I can speak of other industrial labour. I say it has taken us ten years or 12 years of consistent pressure on the Railway Board and even now the success which we have achieved is very very small indeed. People think that railway labour is greatly favoured. I ask them not to believe it. Railway labour, while it is sometimes listened to, is suffering from all the disabilities, from the inherent hostility of the employer to any recognition of the rights of labour. I will give you one instance of the implacable hostility of Government Departments towards labour in another department. I had the privilege of presiding at the all-India Conference of the Posts and Telegraphs Department in 1931. I pointed out in my Presidential speech that the large earnings of the Postal Department were being diverted into other channels and the postal employees were suffering from disabilities both in point of wages and conditions of work.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Mr. K. C. Neogy one of the Panel of Chairmen.)]

I gave figures and I challenged the Department to disprove it. What then happened was this. The Director General of Posts and Telegraphs wrote to the Secretary of this Union to remove Mr. Jamnadas Mehta from the President's office, otherwise recognition of that Union will be withdrawn. This was in 1931.

An Honourable Member: You have changed since then.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: No, I am the same good boy as I used to be. In 1931, the Director General of Posts and Telegraphs threatened the postal union with withdrawal of recognition unless they removed their President. Why? Because he was alleged to have made mis-statements regarding the financial side of the running of the postal department. I am glad to say that the Committee of the Union met together and challenged the Director General to show where Mr. Jamnadas Mehta had made the mis-statements and told him that they could not remove him unless Government showed where the statement was wrong. The Postal Department could not muster up courage to give counter figures—as the Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman could not muster up courage to give counter figures to mine the other day on the denial of services and goods which India had sacrificed during the last four years,—but came out with another order. The order was that unless they removed Mr. Jamnadas Mehta from the Presidency not only would their Union be disrecognised,—if I may use that word,—but that if thereafter any postal employees continued to be members of that Union their services would be dispensed with. That would involve the dismissal of 1 lakh and 10,000 postal people if they did not remove their President. The workers still refused to do that; but Mr. N. M. Joshi and the Director General talked together and came to an understanding that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta should not be dismissed but that no meeting of the Executive Committee should be held during his Presidential regime and that the next conference should be held before the end of one year to elect a new President. Poor Mr. Joshi was faced with the dismissal of 1 lakh and 10,000 employees and he simply did this under compulsion. So I was not dismissed but no meeting was held after this and a new conference was held before the expiry of 12 months and a new President was elected. But the workers avenged themselves by showing their resentment against this treatment by unanimously resolving that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta should go as their delegate to Geneva next time. That was their loyalty to their creed and to their convictions, and that is the attitude of Government towards these trade unions. I do not say that things have remained there; they have slightly improved, and my Honourable friend, Sir Edward Benthall, will not impose a condition that the recognition of the all-India Railwaymen's Federation would be withdrawn unless their President was dismissed. But even so, I do not absolve the Railway Board from the extreme reluctance with which they yield even an inch of ground in favour of trade unions.

The Governments of the provinces are no better. The Bombay Government under the Congress regime brought a measure to recognise trade unions, but it was an attempt to dissolve the trade union movement in the province. It was such a reactionary measure that one would be surprised that such a measure could be described as one for the benefit of trade unions. My Honourable friend, Dr. Ambedkar, opposed it on the floor of the Bombay Legislative Assembly tooth and nail; Mr. Joshi was behind us in opposing it; and I opposed it for a number of days and days until even the President was tired and he introduced martial law methods by sitting from morning till night without interruption, and the Bill was forced through but not without many admissions of its serious defects and without many changes. And this "representative union" to which my Honourable friend referred was one of the bones of contention in that measure of no blessed memory in the Bombay Assembly. It excited the most violent opposition from labour in Bombay and there was a terrific strike in which workers were injured and several were killed by the Congress Government in 1938. I will tell you this. A union was to be called representative only if a very large percentage of the workers in an industry belonged to that union; and if there was a stoppage of work except on the conditions laid down which were impossible, not only would the workers be punished but any one who gave milk to the children of the strikers would be a criminal.

That was the measure of the Congress Government's sympathy for trade unionism in Bombay in 1938. It appears that they had previously obtained the sanction of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for their Bill. Poor Pandit Nehru in the midst of a very busy life did not read it; so he said that as it was for the welfare of labour they could go ahead. When the agitation came to the front the Pandit went through the whole Bill and he wrote on the same lines as the opposition in the Bombay Assembly. By some accident I have got the whole correspondence with me, in which the Pandit goes for the Bombay Government and the Bombay Government goes for the Pandit for having approved of it in advance and later on repudiating it. I can show that correspondence to any inquirer. The Governor of Bombay also was impressed by the intensity of the opposition at every stage to the Bill. I think we took two months in opposing it and but for martial law methods the Bill would not have been passed in 1938. That is only intended to show that Governments are still behind the times.

Sir, there are two more points that I wish to state. I agree with my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, that "representative" is not defined. I thought it was the pressure of the employers which induced the Honourable Member not to define it because I am sure that in whatever he did they would oppose him and say that that is not representative. And from his experience in Bombay where the word "representative" created a lot of trouble he was wise in not defining it now. But that does not mean that we shall allow him to go back over the real object of the Bill by defining "representative" as something impossible, because I will immediately confront him with his speech on the Bombay Bill where "representative union" was defined in a very reactionary manner and he opposed it. So I am sure that when eventually he comes to lick the Bill into shape the word "representative" will be brought within reasonable limits and it will not be made impossible for a union to get recognition on account of the hard conditions. The conditions in the Bombay Act were such impossible conditions that not one single union since 1938 could be recognised under the provisions of that Act. My Honourable friend has learnt the lessons of that Bombay measure and I am sure he will not define "representative" in an impossible manner. I am sure my Honourable friend has not defined it here because whatever he may have said my friends on that side would have opposed it. Therefore I am not at all perturbed by the fact that the word "representative" has not been defined. I am here to see, as far as it lies in my power, that the word "representative" is not made difficult of attainment by us. I am not therefore prepared at this stage to charge the Honourable Member with any designs on us because he has not used the word "representative" more clearly.

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

There is one important flaw in this Bill. It provides that the Union shall be allowed to make representations about matters of common interest. My objection to this is that the words "common interest" are likely to be a pitfall unless my Honourable friend is careful. These two words immediately exclude individual grievances and one of the commonest disputes between the railways and the railway trade unions and other trade unions,—I am also responsible for the Dock Labour Union in Bombay,—is about this "common interest" which has often proved a bone of contention between us. I will not allow this exclusion of individual matters. Very often individual matters are a breach of accepted policy. The matter may refer to one man but it represents a breach of accepted policy. For instance, in railways after a certain number of years a man cannot be discharged unless he is given an opportunity for explaining his conduct; and if he is found to be inefficient on grounds of health he is to be given a softer job but not to be discharged. Still the railway magnates are often guilty of disregarding their own provisions and they have discharged many people who for reasons of health should have been given a softer job because they had committed no fault. If we complain the General Manager says "this is an individual matter", but I maintain that these are questions of accepted policy and the individual grievance is only an illustration of a breach of accepted policy. So I very much request my Honourable friend to remember that when he goes into this matter of "common interest" he will make it clear that the words do not exclude the consideration of a matter of accepted policy.

Lastly, this 28-J to which my Honourable friend referred; there I am in complete agreement with him because I am excluded from the protection of the measure unless 28-J goes. And I entirely echo the ground on which my friend has opposed that clause, because if you exclude the most material and the most essential labour from the benefits of this measure because the war is on, you yourself are not convinced of the usefulness of the measure. I think the objection is cogent and on that ground I will support Mr. Griffiths. Subject to these observations, I support the circulation of the Bill. I assure the Government that labour will do its very best to secure public support to the principles of the Bill, will try its best to improve it during the stages of circulation and after, and it will be possible as a result of a full and prolonged deliberation to pass a measure which will be of real and substantial benefit to the workers and to employers.

Sir, I support.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): No doubt there are great difficulties in the recognition of Unions, particularly in the case of Muslim unions. Sir, I will at once come to the point in view and refer to clause 28D of the Bill, part (c). It is stated:

"(c) that its rules do not provide for the exclusion of members on communal or religious grounds."

It is good, but in case any union is not joined by members of other communities because that union started with a majority of its members belonging to certain communities, it is no fault of that particular union, and on this very ground the Muslim Unions are not given recognition. They do not bar any other community from joining that union, but simply because it is almost composed of members of the Muslim community it is not joined by non-Muslim employees and it is very unfair on the part of particularly the Railways and the Post and Telegraphs Departments not to recognize the Unions organized by the Muslim employees under them. If you look at the figures of the Muslim employees in the Railways—the latest figures available to us are for the year 1941-42—You will find:

Total number of employees in all the Railways	7,57,674
Muslim employees out of this number	1,72,519

Similarly in the case of Posts and Telegraphs Department; the figures for the year 1940-41 are:

Total number of employees excluding extra departmental persons	83,677
Muslim employees out of this number	19,758

From these figures it will be seen that there is a fair number of Muslim employees and if they form their own associations or say unions, recognition should be given. But it is denied.

An Honourable Member: Pakistan.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: There is no question of Pakistan. Why do some Honourable Members resent when the word 'Muslim' is used here; it apparently pinches my friend. It is the misfortune of this country that only the Mussalmans are the targets

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): Why do you get excited? Let them resent.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): Order, order.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I think the provisions of 28D are ambiguous. Part (c) should be made clear, and it should lay down that if any association is not joined by members of other communities then there should not be any bar in its recognition. If Muslim unions are formed and if they do not debar other communities from joining it, I do not think anything should stand in their way of recognition.

An Honourable Member: Why do you call 'Muslim unions'?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am a Muslim and shall remain for ever a Muslim; I have to call myself a Muslim. This is the mentality which forces people to have their own unions. As I was saying, this Bill is going to be circulated for opinion and I think the opinion should be had on the amendment of clause 28D in a way so that the Muslim unions may not be denied their recognition. I have just pointed out that there is a fair number of Muslim employees under the two departments. Similarly in factories also, where there is a fair number of Muslims. If these Muslims, being tired of the hardships and of their failure to get redress of injustices done to them, form their own unions, I think such unions should not be denied recognition. It is said that Muslims can join these so-called national unions and can have their grievances redressed there. The fact is that when Muslim employees raise their voices against injustices done to them, in the first instance it is not heard in such common unions; and in the second place the misfortune is that those voices are not heard because the injustices done to that particular class most often had been done by the members dominating that association. The majority of the members are such that if some of them do any injustice or wrong no grievance can easily be heard. So the Muslim employee generally suffers, and hence they do not like to take part in the common unions. If they do not take part in the common unions, it does not mean that if they form their own unions and air their grievances through that union—that union should not be heard because those unions are denied recognition. This is the right time when we should urge the Government that the Act should be so amended as to give opportunity for the recognition of unions formed by Muslims; and this is a very opportune moment, when fortunately the matter is in the hands of the Honourable Member in charge who knows what are the grievances of Muslims particularly, and of the depressed classes as well.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. K. C. Neogy (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): The House will resume consideration of the motion that the Bill further to amend the Indian Unions Act, 1926, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Like Mr. Griffiths I propose to support the motion that the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon, but at the same time I wish to make it quite clear that I have some criticisms to offer on the Bill and I have not made up my mind yet as to what my final attitude will be towards this measure.

Mr. Griffiths in his speech assured the House that wise and good employers welcome sound, representative and responsible trade unions. He also said that they welcome strong trade unions. If the employers in this country had

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

welcomed the trade union movement then the necessity for this measure would not have arisen at all. The employers in this country not only did not encourage the starting of trade unions but proved themselves hostile towards that movement. It is an elementary right of an employee to discuss the conditions of his employment with his employer either individually or through an organisation. That I consider to be what is called recognition of trade unions. But the employers not only in this country but outside are autocratic, they want to impose the conditions of employment upon their employees without any consultation with the employees. Not only that, but workers generally are anxious to co-operate with the employers in fixing the conditions of service, but the employers who believe in the principle of competition and rivalry have greater faith in struggle. They even struggle with their employees in fixing the conditions of employment of their employees. It is on account of this difference between the workers and the employers that the need for this Bill has arisen. There is one more difference. An employer says that if the employees do not like the conditions they should leave the employment. It is very easy for an employer to say that; although he may suffer some loss if all the employees leave, the employer is not going to starve. But the worker cannot take up that attitude very lightly. He knows that if he gives up his employment it may not be very easy for him after serving in one industry to go to another industry and get employment. Therefore, the employer can easily take up an attitude that he need not discuss the conditions of employment with his employees, but the employees cannot take up that attitude. On account of this reason the tendency on the part of the employers has been to oppose the starting of trade unions. This question was gone into very thoroughly by the Royal Commission on Indian Labour, and the Commission has stated the various reasons given by the employers for not recognising trade unions, and they are summarised in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of this Bill. The House will be surprised to know how unreasonable those excuses have been which have been pleaded by the employers. Some employers oppose the recognition of trade unions on the ground that outsiders are office bearers of the trade union. All the organisations of the employers, at least most of them have got officers who are not members of their organisation. They do not mind employing outsiders as Secretaries of their organisations.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): What sort of organisations?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Take, for instance, the Bombay Millowners' Association. Its Secretary is not a member. They do not mind employing outsiders as their office bearers, but they object to the employees having outsiders as their office bearers. Then Mr. Griffiths said that the unions are not representative.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I never said that. I wanted to know what was meant by a representative union and I said that unions must be representative.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I feel that an employee has a right to form an organisation and every such organisation has a right to represent the views and opinions and the grievances of its members. I hold that the representative character of a trade union does not arise unless that trade union seeks to negotiate an agreement which will be binding upon even non-members. So long as the organisation represents the views of its members and so long as the organisation only seeks to negotiate an agreement on behalf of the members, the question of the representative character of the organisation does not arise at all. The employees may have a small organisation. So long as the organisation represents the views of the members, I feel that the organisation has every right to make representation to the employer and the employer should be bound to accept the representation on behalf of the members. I can understand, again I repeat,-- if the union seeks to make an agreement with the employers on behalf of the whole body of employees, a large number of whom are not members, then alone the representative character of the union has some relevance. I feel, Sir, ordinarily speaking, the conditions of service for all employees are common, and

from that point of view, the representative or unrepresentative character of a union should not really make any difference even though the union may seek to represent the views of the whole body.

I, therefore, feel that the employers in this country are responsible for this Bill. Some of them went much further than insisting upon the union being representative. They want the trade unions not to have any politics. Some of them do not like particular kinds of politics of the trade unions. I do not know whether the Government of India have insisted upon the various organisations of the employers having either no politics or having particular kinds of politics. I do not know why the employers should insist upon the trade unions either having no politics or having only particular kinds of politics but the employers insist upon doing that. I know several employers who have done that. The Bombay Milk Owners Association did not recognise a trade union in Bombay on the ground that the office bearers of that trade union are communists. I know some employers in Cawnpore who did not recognise a union on that ground. I can read to you from the Standing Order of a mill in Madura—"the management will recognise only a union of the workers devoid of any social or political views". I, therefore, feel that the employers in this country had shown hostility towards the trade union movement. It is for that reason the Bill has become necessary. This question of the recognition of trade unions was given great importance, as the Honourable the Labour Member has said, by the Royal Commission on Labour. They felt that not only for the protection of the interests of the workers in this country but generally in the interests of the industry itself, there should be a spirit of co-operation between the employers and the employees and therefore everything should be done to encourage the growth of the trade union movement so that by the method of discussion and argument the differences between the employers and the employees should be resolved and settled. This question of compulsory recognition was also discussed by the Royal Commission. They felt at that time that what is of great importance is not formal recognition but the spirit underlying the recognition. There must be the co-operative spirit between the two parties. There must be a spirit of giving justice to the employees, the spirit of giving fairplay to them.

Therefore the Royal Commission felt, and I agreed with the Royal Commission, that we should not attach great importance to recognition by Legislation or by statute. What the statute and legislation can give is formal recognition. It cannot give the real spirit behind that recognition. At that time the Royal Commission felt that if the Government would insist upon the employers recognising the trade unions not by legislation but by persuasion, the necessity for legislation may not arise and legislation itself really could not give what was of great importance. Although I personally still remain of the opinion which I had expressed in the report of the Royal Commission, with which I agree, I realise that in the trade union movement in this country there is a large section of persons taking part in the movement who feel that although the legislation may give only formal recognition still it is better to have some recognition than to have no recognition. There are many people in this country who have worked in several unions and after conducting the unions for a number of years they find that the unions are still not getting recognition. There is a limit to the patience with which people can work in those organisations. Naturally they feel that although they cannot expect to infuse the proper spirit among the employers by legislation it is better to have legislation. That is the view of the general trade union movement in this country at present. When the Government of India circulated the draft of a Bill last year, the All-India Trade Union Congress welcomed the intention of the Government of India to secure recognition from the employers by legislation. In this Bill the Government of India is empowering the Provincial Governments to secure recognition from the employers to trade unions and the Provincial Government is authorised to appoint a Board of Recognition. The Board of Recognition will consider the conditions which are laid down in this Bill and some other conditions and make recommendations to the

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

Provincial Governments and the Provincial Government is given discretion either to accept the recommendation or not. This Bill also lays down certain conditions. In the first place, I do not understand why the Government of India should provide for the appointment of a Board to go into the question of the fitness of a trade union to be worthy of recognition and then leave it to the Provincial Government to accept the recommendation of the Board or not.

Then, Sir, I would like to say a few words as regards the conditions which Government of India have laid down. They insist that before a union is recommended for recognition the union must be in existence for one year. Such a condition is unnecessary. Then the Government of India have laid down that only a representative union shall be recognised. I have stated my view on this subject. What I have to say on this occasion is this. Under what conditions the union will be regarded as representative is not stated in the Bill. It is left to the rules and it is only after the rules are made that we can say how far this condition can be fulfilled or not, but, Sir, the Government of India does not stop there. The Government of India also has laid down in the Bill that the Provincial Government may lay down any further conditions by rules. We do not know what further conditions will be laid down. Mr. Griffiths did not refer to this. He seems to have confidence in the Government that the Rules will lay down conditions which the employers will accept. Unless we know therefore what are the further conditions which the Local Governments propose to lay down for the recognition of a union, we do not know whether this Bill is likely to be of much use or not. The Government of India also provide that the Board of Recognition may ask for any further information on any points which the Board of Recognition think fit. And if the union is unable to furnish that information, that Union will be regarded as being unfit for recognition. The union will try generally to give to the Board of Recognition whatever information the Union can reasonably be expected to give, but it is wrong to provide that if a union cannot give any information which the Board of Recognition wants, then the Board of Recognition has discretion not to recommend that union for recognition.

Then, Sir, this Bill provides that under certain conditions the recognition of a trade union may be withdrawn. Among other conditions, the Government of India have laid down two further conditions. One of them is that if the members of a trade union take part in an illegal strike, then the recognition of that union shall be withdrawn. Similarly, if the office bearers of the executive of a trade union take part in an illegal strike, on that ground the union's recognition will be withdrawn. I feel that the Government of India seem to believe that the workers in this country are so rash that they very light-heartedly take part in illegal strikes. The workers know very well the consequences of taking part in an illegal strike. They expose themselves to being either fined or, generally speaking, being sent to jail. When they take part in an illegal strike, they do it because there is absolutely no other way of securing justice for them. Therefore, if a Government lays down a condition that if the members of a trade union take part in an illegal strike their recognition shall be withdrawn, I feel that it will have a very harmful effect upon the trade union movement and upon conditions of the working classes in this country. I ask the Honourable the Labour Member to consider what will happen today when under the National Service Ordinance and under the Essential Services Ordinance every strike is illegal if the employees want their conditions to be improved and if the Provincial Governments do not take adequate steps to see that their conditions are improved. I am connected in Bombay with a union which comes under the Essential Services Ordinance. I know about two years ago or a little less than two years ago there was an illegal strike. The workers wanted their conditions to be improved and the Local Government did not improve their conditions and there was an illegal strike. The workers knew the consequences of taking part in an illegal strike. But they took the risk because there was no other way of securing the im-

provement in their conditions or securing even justice to them. I, therefore, feel that this condition will reduce the usefulness of this measure.

Then, Sir, the Government of India provide that recognition of a trade union will be taken away if the office bearers or the executive of that trade union make propaganda which will retard the war effort. Now, Sir, I do not know what propaganda is likely to be considered as retarding the war effort. A trade union generally likes to secure proper conditions of work for the employees and one of the ways in which the trade union likes to improve the conditions of its members is to ask for more wages or sufficient dearness allowance. I do not know whether asking for sufficient dearness allowance will be regarded as retarding the war effort or not, but I know of several cases in which the representatives of workers, the executives of the trade unions and the leaders of workers were sent to jail simply because the workers had gone on strike for securing improvement in their conditions and the Governments thought that the strike in that particular industry was retarding the war effort. A large number of industries in this country are today making production for war and any strike in any of these industries will be regarded as retarding war effort. I, therefore, feel that laying down such a condition in this Bill will reduce the usefulness of this measure.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Jammadas Mehta, has already pointed out that if this Bill puts on the employer the obligation to consider only what are known as common grievances, then the utility of the trade union will greatly suffer.

One more point as regards the duties to be imposed upon trade unions. The Government of India is proposing that if an employer on the representation of the workers once comes to a decision on a point, that point cannot be re-opened again. I do not know whether the Government of India want to stabilise the conditions of employment for all time. I can understand the Government of India saying that if the employer has come to a decision, the same question need not be opened for about a month or so. But if you say that once the employer comes to a decision that point cannot be re-opened, then we have to face stabilisation of conditions in the industry of this country. I do not like that the Government of India should exclude themselves from the operation of this measure. If an obligation is to be placed upon private employers to recognise a union, I do not know why the Government of India should exclude themselves from the operation of this Bill. I do not attribute to the Honourable Member the motive which Mr. Griffiths had attributed to them, but I would like the Government of India to take upon themselves the obligation which they are prepared to place upon others.

There is one more remark which I would like to make. The Government of India is securing for the employees the right of being able to make representations to the employers by means of this measure. I would have liked the Government of India to have gone a little further and provide protection for the workers against victimization to which the employers resort on the ground that the workers belong to a trade union or on the ground of their trade union activity. Such protection is provided in the legislation of this kind in several countries. For instance, the American legislation, the Bombay Trade Disputes Act also enables the worker if he is discharged or dismissed wrongfully to take up this question to an industrial court. I would like the Government of India to provide this protection against victimization to members of the trade union and for taking part in the trade union movement.

One word more. Sir, this Bill has left several important points to the rule-making power of the Provincial Government. I would like the Government of India to consider whether they cannot themselves take decisions and provide in the Bill after it is circulated and opinions are obtained and put in these provisions in the legislation itself. For instance, the Bill provides that representatives of trade unions and the employers will be appointed in accordance with the rules made. Sir, much will depend upon how the representatives are appointed. I have said that the question of the representative character of the trade union shall also depend upon the rules

3 P.M.

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

made. Similarly they have also provided that further conditions laid down will also be according to the rules made. I would like the draft rules made before the legislation is passed so that we can understand whether the measure will be of sufficient use or not. We can judge the character of the measure by seeing the rules. I do not wish to say anything more. I am glad that the Government of India have brought forward this measure and they are circulating it for eliciting public opinion. I hope the Government will benefit by the suggestions made by the trade unions in this country and introduce such changes as are necessary in the interest of the workers so that this Bill might be useful to them and they may wholeheartedly welcome the improved measure.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): Sir, my only excuse in getting up is to deal with certain remarks which were made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Jammadas Mehta. He rather conveyed the impression that of all the Departments of the Government, the Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department was harsher with its unions, and he had a particular word of love or tolerance for the Railway Department. I have been in the Department for over 20 years and have had the pleasure of dealing with Indian Posts and Telegraphs Unions. I think, we in the Posts and Telegraphs are probably one of the first to have recognised Unions. I remember that we had recognised Unions before the last war—the Indian Telegraph Association. One of the reasons why the Government employees are excluded from the provisions of this Bill is probably—I do not pretend to reveal the intention of the Honourable Member in charge of the Bill—because there are well established rules for the recognition of Associations of Government servants. There are rules for the recognition of Associations of Government servants in industrial as also in non-industrial establishments. There are in fact at the present moment a very large number of recognised Trade Unions of Government servants. In the Posts and Telegraphs Department itself, there are 13 All-India Unions which have been recognised. Many of these All-India Unions have their provincial branches, divisional branches and district branches and every one of these has access to the proper officer with whom correspondence is carried on and with whom interviews are given from time to time. The particular instance or incident which Mr. Jammadas Mehta mentioned, I think, requires clarification. He seemed to give the impression that the then Director General and the then Member in charge had a particular objection to Mr. Jammadas Mehta. I do not think that was the case at all. I have here the circular which was then issued by the Director General reproducing the letter written by the Director General to the General Secretary of the Union. A meeting of the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union was held in 1931 and they were rather exciting times, because those were days of retrenchment and pay cuts and I believe the feelings of Government servants were a bit excited. We were also one of the victims of that kind. At that time there was a meeting held and Mr. Jammadas Mehta, as President of the Union, made a speech and also Mr. N. C. Sen Gupta, the then Secretary also made a speech. The Director General referring to the statement made and the article issued by Mr. Jammadas Mehta under the heading "Clarion Call" which was published in one of the Departmental Magazines, said that it was plain that the office bearers of the Union and others were responsible for the issue of most misleading statements to the body of the postal staff and for direct and indirect incitements to the staff to be false to their duties. The circular went on to mention certain statements made therein, that the General Secretary asserted that, whereas the Government held the revisions of pay as responsible for the deficit, the real fact was that there is a surplus of eight crores of rupees which is taken away by the Government for the maintenance of the Army and the Police Department. He represented the Government as maintaining the I. C. S. at the sacrifice of the mail runners, and he stated that the cut in pay was not graded but that the same amount was to be contributed by a postman drawing Rs. 19 per mensem as by the highest paid I. C. S. officer.

The Members of the Retrenchment Committee [including such public men as Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, the Honourable Mr. Basu, Mr. Muhammad (now Sir) Yamin Khan, Mr. F. C. Ammesley, Mr. Amar Nath Dutt, with only one ex-Government servant, Mr. N. V. Raghavan] were represented as being 'men of the Government' and their recommendations belittled accordingly.

Now, Sir, Mr. Jammadas Mehta said that his statements were not challenged. I say, they were challenged. The letter to the General Secretary said:

"The whole of the foregoing statements are manifestly untrue. As regards the accounts of the Department these have been recast and revised on the advice of expert official and unofficial advisers. The suitability of the accounting system and of the principles on which it is based has, as your Union is aware, recently been the subject of an impartial review by an expert Committee presided over by Sir Cowasjee Jehangir and comprising as Members Mr. Gangaram Kaula, officiating Controller of Civil Accounts, and Mr. F. Pearson, late Deputy Comptroller and Accountant General of the General Post Office, London. To represent the presentation of the departmental accounts, in such circumstances, as Mr. N. C. Sen Gupta is reported to have done, as being in effect a device designed to injure a particular stratum of the postal service, and to conceal a real profit designed to benefit other particular services or officials is a scandalous attempt to inflame and mislead the members of the postal staff."

Sir, it was not merely the speech which Mr. Jammadas Mehta or Mr. N. C. Sen Gupta made that caused the action to be taken. The Union issued a referendum to its Members and in this referendum they called upon the members to agree to "no work beyond the hours prescribed by the time test", "no work more than eight hours a day", "attending office with a minimum of dress", and "wearing of a black badge". Mr. Jammadas Mehta in his "Clarion Call" called upon the Members to support the proposal for passive resistance embodied in the referendum.

Sir, after such action was taken by the President of the Union on these lines, it was obviously impossible for the Postal Department or for any Department of the Government of India to support the continued recognition of the Union. Actually what happened was that this letter of the Director General and later on the reply from the General Secretary to which a detailed reply was given were all published in the Director General's general circular and were sent over to every member of the staff, because I believe at that time many people felt including myself that the general body of the staff had really no sympathy with the movement, but it was only a few members who were creating mischief.

Mr. Jammadas Mehta spoke of 1 lakh and 10,000 postal employees. Sir, the number who formed members of this particular Union which is the All-India Postal and R. M. S. Union and excluded therefore the whole of the telegraph and telephone staff could hardly be 1 lakh and 10,000. However, the matter was negotiated; there was a good deal of discussion, and at the intervention of Mr. S. C. Mitra,—not Mr. Joshi,—who was then President of the provincial branch of the Bengal and Assam Association, the matter was finally settled. It is true that the Director General and the Government of India felt that Mr. Jammadas Mehta's presence was a disturbing factor in the Union. It must be remembered that we in this House are accustomed to Mr. Mehta's violent and exaggerated statements and we all take them with a ton of salt; but the members of the Postal Union who are people to whom Mr. Jammadas Mehta is a great leader are more inclined to take his statements exactly as they are and not with any salt at all. And though the Director General then said that he felt that Mr. Mehta's presence was a disturbing factor, he did not insist upon his removal. After Mr. S. C. Mitra had interviewed the Honourable Member, Government agreed that—

"they do not desire to insist upon the complete and unqualified observance of the requirement that no non-officials shall be employed as office-bearers of the Union so long as they can feel satisfied with the general conduct of the Union and in particular so long as they are satisfied as to the character of the influence exercised by non-officials."

It was a very happy ending to an unfortunate incident. Eleven years have mellowed my Honourable friend Mr. Jammadas Mehta and we do not any longer hear the speeches that he used to make in those old days, and I think it is all to the good that Mr. Mehta has come to appreciate that there is another side to all our problems and that employees of Government have a particular

[Sir Gurunath Bewoor.]

responsibility. They are there to render 'public service'; the Government of India have an enormous number of provisions to protect Government servants,—measures which I do not think you will find in any private employment. The Government of India have always considered that well-organised associations of Government servants are a positive help; in fact we look to them to enable us to give to the public an efficient service. To us and to the Unions as well, service before self is the motto. I am all in favour of well-organised associations and it would be entirely wrong to think that the Posts and Telegraphs Department are not encouraging them. On the other hand we welcome well-organised associations of our Government servants.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Sir, I think the House has now got some idea of the difficulties of such legislation as has been brought before us and which it is proposed to circulate for public opinion. And I can prophesy with some certainty that when we get those opinions they will be of a very conflicting nature, and to pick out what is right and what is wrong will be no easy task either for the Honourable Member or for this House. Both points of view have been put before this House, perhaps not very fully; but the House has now some idea that there are two sides to the question. My Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths, very rightly pointed out that the most important factor in all Bills of this kind,—and this is not the first one that many of us have had to consider,—is as to what constitutes the representative character of a trade union. But I may point out that I consider it much more important to define clearly the representative character of a trade union leader in India, for trade unions in all parts of the world are made by their leaders. And if you have a really representative trade union leader, one who is really anxious to serve his people and to look to the interests of the workers, then that trade union will be a representative trade union. But if you get professional trade union leaders who are there not for purposes which are legitimate but which are in my opinion completely illegitimate, then however representative that trade union may be, it will be a source of mischief not only to the employers but much more to the employees.

Sir, Mr. Griffiths talked about trade unionism in England. The important point to remember is that trade unions in England are led by working men of a character of which any country can be proud. John Burns, when I was a boy, was the first trade union leader to enter the House of Commons, and when he came in with a bowler hat instead of a top hat he prided himself on being a working man, a man who had worked with his own hands, a man whose father had done the same, a man who had received the recognition of all his fellow workmen and who had been sent as the first representative of labour to the House of Commons. That is the class of trade union leaders that will make trade unions successful. Sir, I am not casting any reflections. The two gentlemen who sit here are worthy leaders of trade unions, but all trade union leaders in India,—my experience is only confined to Bombay,—are not of the calibre, the sincerity and honesty of purpose and with the consistent record of hard work in the interests of labour, as my Honourable friends Mr. Joshi and Mr. Mehta. And therefore I would beg the House not to believe that all so-called trade union leaders are of the calibre of these two gentlemen, although they may not have been labour workers themselves. I believe my Honourable friend, Mr. Mehta, is an eminent lawyer; he is also interested in trade and commerce but is still a trade union leader. And I believe, as my friend, Sir Gurunath Bewoor, said, in latter years he has mellowed down, as we see him today, and during at least this war, let it be said to his credit, he has led labour aright. Although he is a Barrister-at-Law, although he is a commercial man let us give him credit, that is due to him. About the Honourable friend to my left, Mr. Joshi, whom I have had the pleasure and honour of knowing for about 40 years and with whom I have dealt on more than one occasion, let me tell the Honourable Members in this House that no more honest leader of trade unions exists in India. Of most of the others, the less said the better. That is why I insist that there should be a proper definition as to what a trade union leader should be.

Now, Sir, we have been told that the employers of labour are against trade unions. I can speak with no authority for all parts of India, but I do claim to have had a little experience of the Province of Bombay, a little experience both as an employer of labour, also as a Member of Government in charge of labour during some of the worst strikes we have ever had when my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi came on many an occasion to plead on behalf of labour, in company that was sometimes very doubtful. My mind goes back to those days,—and I remember having warned Mr. Joshi to leave such company or else his independent character would be doubted in the future. But I am glad to say that notwithstanding the company he kept Mr. Joshi remained the dear N. M. Joshi of old. That is why I maintain most firmly that it is the leadership of these unions that we have to guard against. Sir, we have been told that employers of labour are against trade unionism. I do not think Mr. Joshi has been fair to the employers of labour. I have known of instances where employers have tried to start trade unions on proper lines so that they may assist.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Rival trade unions?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: No. Proper trade unions. If my Honourable friend knows a great deal about it, he can speak about it later.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I shall.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I know instances where employers of labour tried to start trade unions on proper lines with leaders who were really interested in labour and who would see that labour gets a fair deal. And I think I can conscientiously echo what Mr. Griffiths said that the accusation that employers of labour are against trade union is not true today. Much water has passed under the bridge since the report of the Royal Commission on Labour and conditions of labour in Bombay have considerably changed since those days and what may have been correct then cannot be said to be true today.

Then, Sir, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta referred to the legislation which was brought forward in the Bombay Legislative Council—mark you, by a Congress Government—which he so strenuously opposed. If it had been done by a Government in which I had been unfortunately a Member, or if it had been a Government in which some of these Honourable Members sitting here had any part, one would have said that there might have been something in Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's vigorous opposition. But I would again repeat that that legislation, which is on the Statute-book today, was introduced by a Congress Government and was pushed through the legislature by methods perhaps unknown to us, but, notwithstanding Mr. Jamnadas's long and persistent and obstructive eloquence the Congress Government with their majority knew how to deal with him by methods which I trust he will never experience again.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: They accepted many amendments.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: At any rate, having accepted some amendments, they pushed through that legislation, and it is on the Statute-book today.

An Honourable Member: What is it about?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Trade Dispute Bill for the Textile industry of Bombay. If my memory serves me aright, one of the objects that tempted the Congress Government to insist on this legislation was to prevent labour trouble in the textile industry in Bombay, because they felt that that great industry was being paralysed by so-called trade union leaders.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Were you in the confidence of the Government at that time?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: It was an open secret. Where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise. If you will keep quiet and listen, you will learn something.

At any rate, it was a fact, repeated in the Legislative Council of Bombay by the Congress Home Member while giving reasons for bringing forward that legislation: It was to prevent unnecessary strikes, and above everything else to give them some peace of mind. I do not maintain that that piece of legis-

[Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.]

lation was perfect, but I do say honestly that if I ever agreed with the Congress Government I did on that occasion. And let it be said to the credit of those members of the Congress Government, who pushed through that Bill that they did it in the interests of their province, in the interests of labour and in the interests of the employers of labour.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: That latter statement is true.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: No wonder there was such opposition from Mr. Jamnadas. He has related to what extent that opposition went, but it also is a very clear illustration as to what we shall be up against when this Bill comes before us after circulation. There is bound to be difference of opinion, and I do hope and pray that this House will take a balanced view in the interests of labour itself, for the interests of both the employers of labour and the employees are identical in maintaining peace and harmony in trade and industry. You must make the measure such that men will not get power and influence in these trade unions for political reasons alone, men who are out to serve some other object, political or otherwise, who can find no method of doing so or attempting to do so unless they take advantage of innocent labour. Prevent that by any legislation you can, and you will be doing a service to this country. Build-up, if you can, a set of real trade union leaders, men who come from the lowest rung of the ladder, men who know inside out the work that has to be done, men who have suffered themselves and realised what the sufferings of the workmen are, and demand remedies for such sufferings. Prevent men from taking a prominent part in trade union matters, men who, to say the least, can be described as despicable because, in order to serve their own ends, they are prepared to see thousands of men and women starving for some length of time without the slightest compunction and without the slightest ability to feed them, and sustain them in their time of trial; and in the end when the labourer has to yield what happens to these so-called leaders? They disappear; they disappear not to be found again for a year or two or more, when they start their nefarious work again. Such men, I am sure, are well known to my friend who sits behind me and my friend to my left, and if both of them will help this House to frame legislation which will prevent such men from getting power they will have done a service to labour and to this country. It is no easy matter but an attempt can be made and is worth making: as my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi said, legislation may not be effective. You may recognise a trade union by law, but very much will depend on the trade union itself. In some parts of the world trade unions get power without legislation; they get power because they deserve it. If a trade union does not deserve it, it will not get power merely because this House chooses to recognise it. It will be a failure. It will do the damage that many trade unions have done and are doing to labour today.

Then Mr. Joshi gave us a most extraordinary comparison. He said that the secretary of the Millowners Association is a paid man.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I said he is an outsider.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Every man in any association, in any trade, in any industry, who does the administrative clerical work, who carries out orders and merely orders, is a paid man.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Why should not the secretary of a trade union be an outsider?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Because the Secretary of a trade union is not merely a clerical or administrative man who carries out the orders of the President. There is a very great difference. I do not object to him being a paid man; there is a very great difference between a man who does the administrative work and carries out orders and the man who gives the orders. The secretary of the Millowners Association, a most qualified man, a man we have had for many many years, Mr. Malorey.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: An outsider!

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: . . . and no better man the Millowners Association ever had—he had to work under a committee and under a chairman.

He guided them perhaps; but final orders were the chairman's and the committee's. There is no objection to the trade unions having paid presidents. By all means let the trade unions pay those officers; there can be no objection. Every man must live and if the president of a trade union devotes his whole time to the work of the trade union it is only right that the trade union should pay him properly and maintain him and his family. There is nothing wrong in it; but where the objection comes in is that the head of the trade union is not a workman himself; he has never been a workman, he becomes the chairman of a trade union for purposes other than to serve the interests of the trade union. Nobody objects to a man being paid. In England all trade union officials are paid by the trade unions. Do they live on air? They are all full time men, paid and paid liberally by the unions; they are returned to the House of Commons at the cost of the Unions; nobody objects to that. What I am objecting to is the class of men that become chairmen or presidents. By all means Mr. Joshi must be paid for the work he does; how can he live otherwise? I would be the first to vote that he should be paid; I am not objecting to that; but I am objecting . . .

Mr. N. M. Joshi: To my being the president!

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: . . . to being the president and taking advantage of trade union funds surreptitiously and not openly; take a salary openly by all means, but do not put your hand into the pockets of the trade union members surreptitiously. That is what I am objecting to. To be an honorary trade union worker and to pilfer funds from its treasury is a criminal act. Take a salary openly by all means. Who objects to that? But to make a comparison between the secretary of the millowners association—why we have even had a paid chairman for years; a distinguished Member of this Honourable House—there is nothing wrong in that. The man is a full time man and he must be given his wage.

There was just one point raised by Mr. Joshi which was of considerable importance. He said that a few labourers or a few working men who might be members of a trade union should have the right to represent the whole of the trade union; and that in his own words, if they represented the views of all the members they should be recognised. Amongst its members there may be 5 per cent. of all labour, they may be only 10 per cent, not very much more; and yet they should be recognised because according to Mr. Joshi they represented the views of labour in that industry. But what is the guarantee that that ten per cent. do represent the views of all? That is the point. The point is that it does not matter who it is, but if he represents the views of all the labour in that industry, he has a right to be heard; but if he merely pretends to represent their views, it is objectionable, and that is what is happening. You have a trade union with 10 per cent. of labour as members. You pretend that it represents the labour; what guarantee is there that it does? The only guarantee is that a large number of the industrial labour are members of that trade union; that can be the only guarantee. That is the point that makes a representative trade union—a large number being members, helping out of their small salaries to support that union. That makes the union representative and that must be provided for in the Bill. It is not easy to define in India what is a representative trade union. Mr. Griffiths well knows perhaps that there are trade unions in India with only 5 per cent. of the whole labour as members, who have clamoured for representation and who have not represented the views of labour, who have misled labour rather than led labour. Therefore, what is a representative union is difficult to define, but in general terms it must have as a minimum a certain percentage of the whole labour as its members. There must be on each occasion a fair unanimity on the point they are fighting, then it becomes a representative trade union.

I do not want to take the time of the House any longer. I will only apologise to my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, for having been indirectly responsible in any way for having him removed from the Presidentship of the Post and Telegraph Union. I was not aware of it; but I can assure him of one thing, that the Committee over which I had the honour to be Chairman worked

[Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.]

for many months, and the conclusions we came to were arrived at by honest conviction. I greatly regret that I should have had even an indirect hand in having my Honourable friend removed.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You were not responsible.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: That is all I have got to say. In conclusion, I would beg that this House do take a real interest in this piece of legislation, and that when it is being considered we shall see a few more occupants or those Benches opposite, that they will not be empty. Where they have all disappeared to-day on an important Bill of this sort I do not know, but when it is before us again, I do express the sincere hope that they will be here to assist us in this most important legislation.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: The provocation of my rising to-day has been furnished by my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. I must say that I was not amused by all that he said. It is not an unexpected exhibition in this House either. My Honourable friend gave this House the benefit of much of nineteenth century wisdom. He told us about what should be done, about what should not be done, what are the right things to do, and his own particular affiliation to that country six thousand miles away made him draw parallels from what has happened in that country. But, Sir, the whole object behind Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's speech is merely to tell us that employers do not trust labour leaders that they are the best custodians of labour interests and that they would have to approve whether a particular individual is the fit person to be a representative labour leader or not. All these things were very good when people looked to benevolent employers in times back, but to-day that does not happen to be true. I am not concerned, Sir, with the fact that he is free with his bouquets of praise of the leadership of my Honourable friends Messrs. Joshi and Jamnadas Mehta, but objects generally on principle to non-workers leading the labour movement. That does not alter facts. I am not concerned either that he condemned the late Congress Government of Bombay roundly, but at the same time he is quite satisfied that they did the right thing by his class what to-day happens is this. Labour wants its right to be recognised. Division cuts across the whole population—those who have and those who have not. Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, if he has got any representative capacity at all represents those that have, and it does not lie in his mouth to speak of the class that is opposed to his own.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Whom do you represent?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I certainly do not represent your class.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: You represent yourself?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I do not feel disposed to respond to Sir Cowasjee Jehangir's jibes, particularly when he did not want other people to interrupt him.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I won't interrupt him again.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: My Honourable friend attempts to be humorous but I cannot see any humour except in his appearance, and I do not propose to take him seriously. There is no denying the fact that many Members of this House represent much larger constituencies than my Honourable friend who chooses to interrupt me. The fact really is that he has come here as an avowed representative of one class, a class which does insist on its right to be preserved. It is understandable, but it nevertheless remains that the arguments that he put forward were nineteenth century arguments and he now rises like a Rip Van Winkle and demands the rights of people who have lost their rights in the eyes of the world.

I have been listening with very great attention and respect to the statements made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. I must say that I agree with his objections to this Bill. This particular amending Bill—a hesitant halting attempt brought forward by the Government of to-day which cannot bring forward a bolder measure because of the very nature of its composition—arouses the criticism of my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. He says that labour leaders should be people who have done some manual work, but employers' Secretaries, Chairmen of employers' Associations need not be

people who have worked. They must be men with money, with a large bank balance and above all plenty of 'Readymoney'. And it would not be proper for a labour organisation to say what should be the nature and type of employers organisations. But my Honourable friend, the representative of employers, will say, such and such a person should be a labour leader; if labour would not come together, no outsider must come and bring them together, to see that justice is done to them to see that they get a living wage. If an outsider comes into the labour movement, in very many cases it happens that people who have come in, have done so because they desire to see justice to be done to labour, he should be forbidden from doing so. I must say here that I am not a labour leader but I have seen scores of instances in my own province where every time there is a strike or an attempted strike it was because the just demand of labour was opposed by employers and these outside leaders saw to it, that justice was done to labour. My Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, mentioned the instance of an employer in Madura refusing recognition to a labour union. And why? Because the employer has got under his thumb another labour union, whose leaders are perhaps extremely docile and he does not want any trouble in his industry. If the definition of a representative trade union is left as it is in this Bill to-day, labour has got to face a great deal of risk. What does it matter whether a union is represented by ten per cent. of the workers or more or less? The workers have got only one voice and one set of views and that is always opposed by the employers. If it be that there is only one worker who constitutes a union, that worker's right to represent labour is much more sacred than the right of any employer to refuse to recognise his representative character. That is why labour interests will look askance at this rather loose definition of representation—leaving the definition open by saying, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed by the Provincial Government and by the Tripartite Board which this amending Bill seeks to create.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

There is also another aspect which my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, touched on, to which I would like to add my support and that is the question of rights of a union to negotiate with the employers. Such rights have been defined in this Bill but some rights have been taken away also. Labour's rights have been limited by the definition. I think the rights of a trade union to negotiate with the employers should be unlimited. I have seen myself that such restriction of rights will only lead to labour unions being completely left to the tender mercies of the employers. I have known an occasion in my province when a union representing 13 to 14 thousand people could not get near the employers and they had to approach the Government which acted as a post office, sending letters from the Union to the employers and from the employers to the union. The net result was that 13 to 14 thousand people were kept locked out for a couple of months and ultimately they had to accept the employers' terms. These rights must be unlimited so far as the approach to the employer is concerned and that is why I feel that the Bill does not really go far enough. It is halting and hesitant and even this Bill, with so many safeguards, would not find acceptance from that interest which my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, represents. I think today, Sir, in any elected legislature there can only be one view. The preponderant majority in an elected legislature can only take one view, that is the view of the workers and not the view of the employers. (An Honourable Member: "Not very much chance"). If they don't then bad luck to them. That is all I can say.

I would like before closing to add my meagre measure of support to what has been said by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. This Bill will have to be examined with a bias in favour of the worker rather than in favour of the employer. The employer has got this safeguard—that there is money which is behind the employer. There is no denying that as politics can be influenced today by the employer so labour unions also can be influenced by the

[Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari.]

employer. The labour unions are every day running the risk of rival labour unions being started or their own leader's loyalty being split and the union disintegrated. That risk is there. A powerful employer can do whatever he likes to do. With this in the background, the amending Bill will have to be shaped and I would like every elected member to bear this in mind, that he is expected to do justice to the man in the street and who happens to be a worker and not an employer.

An Honourable Member: I move that the question be now put.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, the Bill which I have the honour to move for circulation has given rise to controversy. This is, of course, not unexpected. As I said in my opening observations, this Bill is undoubtedly a controversial measure but I also stated in the course of my opening observations that I do not propose to enter into the controversy today and to reply to the various points that have been made. I do not do so in any spirit of discourtesy to Honourable Members who have taken part in this debate and presented their point of view. I assure them that I will bear their points in mind and consider their validity on the occasion when such occasion will arise.

If I rise at this stage, as I said, it is not to reply to the various points that have been made but I do feel that I am bound to meet certain points of criticism which were made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Griffiths. There is one point which he made which, if he will permit me to say so, I think was very unfair. He said that I have brought in a measure which was vague in some way and which contained, if I may use the phrase, empty clauses. His criticism was that I was not justified and that it was unfair on my part to ask the House to consider a Bill which contained such vague and empty clauses. I do not accept that criticism and I do say that it was entirely misconceived and unfounded. I do not admit in the first instance that there are any clauses in this Bill which are vague or that there are any clauses in this Bill which are empty, so empty as not to enable anybody to understand what the Bill aims at. But assuming for a moment that there are certain clauses which are vague and other clauses which require content to be put in I do not think that the criticism was valid. If I asked the House to proceed to enact the measure in the form in which it was presented, I could have understood the point of the criticism but that is not what I am doing. I am asking merely the permission of the House that this Bill, such as it is, may be circulated for the purpose of eliciting further opinion, so that Government may have guidance from such parties as can give guidance and Government in the end may be able to fill in the gaps and make definite what is vague. I therefore submit that there was no point in that criticism which Mr. Griffiths made.

Mr. Griffiths then said that the Bill in his opinion was unsound in principle. Well, that is a matter of opinion. We have heard people on the other side saying that there is a perfectly sound principle in the Bill and that it ought to be embodied in an Act. Therefore I shall not dwell on that point of his criticism.

The second point that he made was that I have somehow not stated what a representative trade union was. Without meaning any offence, if I may say so, he has either not read the clauses of the Bill, or if he has read them he has not understood them. It is perfectly clear from the provisions that are set out in this Bill that there are two principal conditions laid down. One is this—that a trade union before it can be recognised must fulfil certain conditions. The second condition which has been laid down is this—that mere fulfilment of the conditions laid down is not a qualification enough for recognition but that the trade union, in addition to fulfilling these qualifications, will have to undergo the test of a certification by a Board. In fact, if I may say so, the principle of the Bill—the fundamental part of it—is that the representative character of the Union will depend primarily subject to

other conditions on the certificate that a tripartite board, representing Labour, Government and the Employers, will be able to give. My friend then made great play of sub-clause (g) or clause 25D which says: any further conditions that may be prescribed. I cannot understand how Mr. Griffiths could have so completely misunderstood the purport of that clause. The position of the Government is

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: On a point of personal explanation. I did not refer to sub-clause (g) at all.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am very -vorry if I misunderstood the Honourable Member. That is what I took down. What I would like to say is this. The position of the Government is perfectly plain and may be stated, briefly. On the basis of the views that were communicated to us in 1941 and on the basis of the views that were communicated to us from the various organisations representing labour and capital, Government came to the conclusion that the positive conditions which they have laid down ought to be sufficient. But Government does not wish to dogmatise about it and Government does feel that there might be certain conditions which either

the Provincial Government or the employers of labour or capital may find to be necessary to be introduced in this Bill before recognition is granted. It is to make provision for a contingency of that kind that we have introduced these clauses wherever it is stated that further conditions may be prescribed. It is a loophole, it is an opportunity which we have left and designed to take to ourselves the benefit of any advice that we might receive. There is certainly no vagueness and no uncertainty with regard to the provisions of the Bill as to what a representative character means.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: On a point of information. Would you explain to the House the meaning of the new clause 28D, sub-clause (e) "that it is a representative Trade Union"?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It means a Union which has been certified by the Board as a representative Trade Union.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Of their own free will?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Board will make an investigation and that was the point of comment of my friend, Mr. Joshi, who said that the Board is authorised to ask for all sorts of information including the views of the private members.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Is it the intention that the Board shall have some guidance as to what is meant by "representative"?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: We propose to. On that point we would like to have a suggestion from various parties as to what sort of instructions they would like us to give to the Board.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: So, you have a blank mind on the subject.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is not a blank mind; it is an open mind. That is the way I would like to define my position correctly.

Mr. Griffiths as well as other Members who spoke on the Bill said that the Government was not justified or rather, to use their own words, Government was illogical in applying clause 28J by exempting Government undertakings from the operation of this Bill.

Now, Sir, the first point that I would like to make in reply to the contention is that logic is certainly not always life. There are many occasions when illogicality would reduce ourselves to extremism and I do not think any man would prefer extremism to illogicality. Personally myself I think if anything could be said with regard to clause 28J, it could be said that Government is not timid, Government is not illogical; Government is wise and Government is cautious. I think that this clause has been somewhat misunderstood. There is no intention to exempt Government from the provisions of this Bill. All that is said is this that a date will be fixed when the provisions of this Bill will be applied to Government undertakings. Therefore, if there is any discrimination made in favour of the Government, it is not with regard to the application of the Bill but with regard to the date on which it will become applicable to Government.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: Why is that made?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: There may be necessity for it.

Mr. P. J. Griffiths: What is it?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As I said, I do not want to enter into controversy at this stage and as the Secretary of the Posts and Telegraphs Department said, Government feels that, at any rate for the present, the Government Departments who are employers of labour have made sufficient provision for the recognition of their trade unions. And in view of the fact that Government has certainly been far more ready to recognise Trade Unions than private employers, I do not think that the interests of labour will suffer if the date for the application of this Bill is postponed. Sir, I have nothing more to say.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon."

The motion was adopted.

THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to make certain provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by a High Court exercising original criminal jurisdiction, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration."

In principle, this Bill has been warmly welcomed throughout and at this stage I need add no more than invite the attention of the Honourable Members to the changes made by the Select Committee. These are fully explained in the Report and Honourable Members will have seen that the changes made are altogether unobjectionable. The Report of the Select Committee is unanimous and I feel sure that Honourable Members will agree that, in the language of Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, a very satisfactory Bill has come out of the Select Committee. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill to make certain provision for appeals in criminal cases tried by a High Court exercising original criminal jurisdiction, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 8 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Sir, I move that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

[AMENDMENT OF SECTION 503, ETC.]

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration."

Sir, I gave the House a full explanation of the Bill when I moved for its consideration on 29th July last. On that occasion, I readily accepted the amendment moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Essak Sait, for referring the Bill to a Select Committee. Honourable Members will observe from the Report of the Select Committee that the Committee has unanimously approved the Bill with one trivial change. Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, as reported by the Select Committee, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 4 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Sir, I move that the Bill, as amended, be passed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I think I must say a word before this Bill is passed into law. This is a Bill which remained in abeyance for a very long time. It was a useful measure, but there were some objections taken a long time ago and the Bill remained in abeyance. The Bill has now been considered sufficiently and it was considered from all points of view in the Select Committee. I think I should say nothing more except to congratulate the Honourable the Law Member who has come into this office and who has seen this Bill through and the other Bill which has just been passed into law. I congratulate him.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 15th November, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 15th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN:

Mr. Wilfred Howard Kirby, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official);
Mr. Robert Howell Hutchings, C.M.G., C.I.E., M.L.A. (Secretary, Food Department).

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As regards questions in today's list I ought to inform Honourable Members that if any one of them wants that the answers to his questions should be printed and the questions to be treated as unstarred, the proper course for him would be to inform the office that he wants his questions to be treated as unstarred. If any Member who is present in the House says that he will not put his question, that question will be treated as withdrawn and no answer will be printed. I think the best course in the circumstances would be, as some Honourable Members may not have been aware of the practice, to let any Member who wishes to put his question do so. I will therefore call the questions in order and let any Member put his question who wants to do so.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

INDIAN CHRISTIANS SERVING IN THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE.

160. Mr. S. C. Chatterji: Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the total number of Indian Christians of all ranks in His Majesty's Indian Land Forces, the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, separately, in September, 1939, and September, 1943;

(b) the total number of Indian Christian Commissioned Officers in the Indian Land Forces, the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, separately, in September, 1939, and September, 1943;

(c) the total number of Indian Christian non-commissioned officers in the Indian Land Forces, the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force, separately, in September, 1939, and September, 1943; and

(d) the total number of Indian Christian Commissioned Officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks in the Civil Pioneer Force in September, 1939, and September, 1943?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) to (c). The number of Christian Viceroy's Commissioned Officers, Indian Other Ranks and enrolled non-combatants in the Indian Army on the 1st September, 1943, was more than 30 times as great as it was on the 1st January, 1940. It would not be in the public interest to give the actual total on either date.

No figures for Indian Christian officers in the Indian Army, and no figures for Indian Christians of any ranks in the Royal Indian Navy or the Indian Air Force are available, nor could such figures be obtained without an expenditure of time and labour which would be unjustifiable in war-time. The Honourable Member will, however, realize from what I have said that the number of Indian Christians in His Majesty's Indian Forces has enormously increased since the outbreak of war.

(d) This question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Labour Member.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF INDIA IN RESPECT OF OPERATIONS OF THE EAST ASIA COMMAND.

161. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state what India's financial obligations are over the forthcoming operations connected with the East Asia Command against Japan?

(b) Will India be reimbursed if the cost of operations is met from her exchequer?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to my reply to Sardar Mangal Singh's question No. 73 given on the 10th November, 1943.

INDIANS AS STAFF OFFICERS IN GENERAL HEADQUARTERS.

162. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: With reference to my starred question No. 158 about Indians as Staff Officers in different Branches of the General Headquarters, answered on the 3rd August, 1943, will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the details of the percentage 9.81 given in his answer of Indian to British officers employed in the various Branches and Directorates, referred to by me in the question, separately;

(b) the details of the percentage given in his answer of 13 Indian to 100 British officers holding graded staff appointments;

(c) the reasons why there was such a low percentage as 2.23 in 1940 and why the percentage could not be more than 9.81 in spite of the facts that the army has considerably expanded and the staff of the General Headquarters has also increased; and

(d) how many of the percentage of Indians given in (a) and (c) above are Anglo-Indians and non Anglo-Indians; or what the percentage is of Anglo-Indians and non-Anglo-Indians?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) (i) General Staff Branch:—

(1) Military Operations Directorate—2.7 per cent.

(2) Military Intelligence Directorate—3.57 per cent.

(3) Military Training Directorate—2.27 per cent.

(ii) Adjutant General's Branch—14.25 per cent.

(iii) Quartermaster General's Branch—12.5 per cent.

(iv) Master General of the Ordnance Branch—11.76 per cent.

(b) (i) General Staff Branch:

(1) Military Operations Directorate—2.85 per cent.

(2) Military Intelligence Directorate—7.52 per cent.

(3) Military Training Directorate—Nil.

(ii) Adjutant General's Branch—2.45 per cent.

(iii) Quartermaster General's Branch—3.18 per cent.

(iv) Master General of the Ordnance Branch—1.99 per cent.

(c) In 1940 the percentage of Indians was limited by the number of available officers with staff training and the same reason is applicable to-day, though, as the Honourable Member will doubtless notice, the position has considerably improved and will continue to improve as more Indian Staff trained officers become available.

(d) None are Anglo-Indians.

GRANT OF KING'S COMMISSION TO V. C. O's.

163. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: With reference to the answer to my question No. 160 relating to the grant of King's Commissions to V.C.O's., will the War Secretary please state how many of the numbers supplied to me in his reply were Anglo-Indians and Indians, separately?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The information required is not readily available especially with regard to the earlier appointments and the time and labour involved in collecting it would not be justifiable in war-time. It can be said, however, that of the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers granted emergency commissions between the 12th December, 1940, and the 15th July, 1943, not more than three are Anglo-Indians. One is an Anglo-Burman.

PERCENTAGE OF AND QUALIFICATIONS FOR MUSLIM RECRUITMENT IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

164. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi): (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that since the extension of the Central Excises and Salt Revenues North Eastern India, Western Division, the ratio of Muslims to be recruited has been fixed at 50 per cent. in various grades? If not, what is the correct percentage?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that Muslim candidates for appointment to the posts of Inspectors and Upper Grade clerks must be graduates, while Muslim candidates for the posts of Supervisors and clerks must have passed the Matriculation Examination, and no minimum qualification is prescribed for the superior establishment?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that candidates for the posts mentioned in (b) above are selected by the Assistant Collector, Western Division, either directly or are recommended by him to the Collector and that the Collector does not select the candidates directly as a matter of practice?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that generally the Assistant Collector selects the candidates after a short interview? If not, what is the method adopted?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: With your permission Sir, I will reply to questions Nos. 164, 165, 166 and 167 together.

The information has been called for and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR RECRUITMENT OF HINDUS AS LOWER GRADE CLERKS IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

165. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi): (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that the minimum qualifications for a Hindu for appointment as a lower grade clerk is that he must be a graduate?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that many Hindus have been recruited to these posts in the Western Division, Central Excises and Salt Revenues, who are only undergraduates? If not, what are the facts?

MINIMUM QUALIFICATION FOR RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES AS UPPER DIVISION CLERKS IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

166. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi): (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that the B.Com. qualification has been fixed as the minimum qualification for candidates for the Upper Grade in the Western Division, Central Excises and Salt Revenues?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that in other Divisions no such distinction is made between B.Coms. and other graduates? If so, what is the reason for it?

MUSLIM RECRUITMENT IN THE CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION.

167. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi): (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that in the Western Division, Central Excises and Salt Revenues, the ratio fixed for the Muslims is not being kept up from the very beginning as some of the posts reserved for the Muslims have been given to other communities, on the ground of competent Muslims being not available?

(b) What is the number of posts that were available to the Muslims in the Western Division, the number of applications of persons with the prescribed minimum qualifications, and the number of persons actually taken in the Western Division since March, 1943?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that the very low number of Muslim successful candidates is mostly due to the tendency of the selecting authority in finding unnecessary faults with the candidates?

†For answer to this question, see answer to question No. 164.

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that a number of Muslim clerks in the office of the Assistant Collector who had the good fortune of being selected had to resign their post due to harassment by the Assistant Collector and had mentioned this fact in their resignations, copies of which had been sent to the Collector? If not, what are the facts?

(e) In view of the complaints of Muslims do Government propose to consider the advisability of appointing some other authority for the selection of Muslim candidates, and setting up a machinery by which these complaints may be removed?

SPECIAL PRESS ADVISER IN DELHI AND HIS STAFF.

168. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) who the Special Press Adviser is in Delhi; and

(b) the total number of his staff and the number of Muslims thereon?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Lala Savitri Prasad, P.C.S.

(b) The total number of his staff is seven out of which three are Muslims.

DIRECTLY RECRUITED POLICE OFFICERS IN DELHI.

169. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state the total number of Assistant Superintendents of Police, Deputy Superintendents of Police, Sub-Inspectors and Assistant Sub-Inspectors of Police appointed in Delhi by direct recruitment, and the number of Muslims under each category during the last three years?

The Honourable Sir Raginald Maxwell: Assistant Superintendents of Police belong to the Indian Police Service, recruitment to which is made by the Secretary of State for India. Deputy Superintendents of Police, Sub-Inspectors and Assistant Sub-Inspectors serving in Delhi are drawn from the Punjab Cadres, recruitment to which is made by the Punjab Government (in the case of Assistant Sub-Inspectors, by the Range Deputy Inspector General). Residents of Delhi are eligible for these appointments if they possess the requisite qualifications. Information is not readily available as to the number of Muslims recruited under each category during the last three years.

METHOD OF RECRUITMENT OF INCOME TAX OFFICERS.

170. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) how the recruitment for the posts of Income-tax Officers is conducted in the various provinces; and

(b) if Government propose to entrust the recruitment of these officers to the Federal Public Service Commission; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Recruitment to Income-tax Officers' posts is made subject to the approval of the Central Board of Revenue by Commissioners of Income-tax generally by promotion of suitable officers from the subordinate executive service and occasionally by direct recruitment of candidates possessing high academic and technical qualifications.

(b) A scheme for improving the administration of the Income-tax Department is now under the consideration of the Government of India and it is proposed in that connection to recruit officers for the more important posts of Income-tax Officers through the Federal Public Service Commission.

PROPOSALS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF UNITED AND ASSOCIATED NATIONS' STABILIZATION FUND.

171. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether the Government of India received a letter from the United States' Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting the text of the proposals for a United and Associated Nations' Stabilisation Fund? If so, have Government been requested to arrange for any consultation or discussion with the authorities of the United States of America in this matter?

(b) Have the Government of India sent any technical experts to Washington to convey their preliminary reaction to the above-mentioned draft proposals,

and to discuss them with the technical experts of the United States of America?

(c) Have Government otherwise conveyed their views on these proposals to the United States' Secretary of the Treasury, if so, what is the substance of such views?

(d) If the Government of India have sent any technical experts to Washington, what are the names of the personnel selected, and what instructions, if any, have been given to them by Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The answer to the first part of this question is in the affirmative.

As regards the second part, the Government of India were invited to send one or more of their technical experts to Washington to discuss with the technical experts of the United States' Government the possibility of international monetary co-operation along the lines suggested in the draft scheme or along any other lines.

(b) No.

The bilateral talks between experts of various Allied Nations and those of the United States' Government took place in May and June. It was not found possible in the time available between receipt of the draft scheme and the time of the discussions to formulate views and send representatives.

(c) The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. The second part does not therefore arise.

(d) Does not arise.

SUPPLY OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES TO NON-INDIAN FORCES STATIONED IN INDIA

172. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state what arrangements have been made by Government to make supplies available to the non-Indian forces that have been or will be stationed in India consequent upon the establishment of the South-East Asia Command?

(b) To what extent are the requirements of these forces in respect of essential commodities, including food and other daily necessities, to be met through imports from abroad?

(c) To what extent are these supplies to be secured from Indian sources? How are the interests of the civilian consumer likely to be affected by such local supplies?

(d) Are Government prepared to give an assurance that the large bulk of supplies to these forces would, in future, be met by imports, and that under no circumstances, the requirements of these forces would be allowed to compete with the civilian demand for essential commodities in respect of which shortage already exists in the country?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) to (d). The matters raised by my Honourable friend are under the active and careful consideration of the Government of India in consultation with His Majesty's Government. I may assure the Honourable Member that the need for safeguarding the essential requirements of civilian consumers is fully realised.

BANNING PUBLICATION OF BENGAL GOVERNOR'S ORDER AGAINST THE "AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA."

173. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state whether any action has been taken by, or at the instance of, the Chief Press Adviser banning the publication of an order relating to an action taken by the Governor of Bengal against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* requiring that any matter relating to the economic condition in Bengal, the food and supply situation, relief and distress and the civil defence services or organisations, shall, before being published in the said newspaper, be submitted for scrutiny to the Special Press Adviser, Calcutta?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, what are the reasons for the said action taken by or at the instance of the Chief Press Adviser?

(c) Was any Press Advisory Committee consulted in the matter before the action was taken?

(d) In what other instances was action taken prohibiting the publication of an order of this character or comments thereon?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No.

(b), (c) and (d). Do not arise.

STEPS FOR REMOVING SHORTAGE OF SMALL COINS.

174. ***Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member been drawn to the unfortunate incident published in the *Ananda Bazar Patrika* of Calcutta, dated the 30th September, 1943, to the effect that a man of Ranaghat tore a one rupee note to pieces after his repeated failures to get small coins in exchange for the note?

(b) What have Government done up till now to remove the shortage of small coins?

(c) Do Government realise the consequence of such shortage on the mentality of the people regarding the administration of the country?

(d) Do Government admit that they have failed to cope with the situation? If not, what are the new Government proposals for giving relief to the people?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) Government's main efforts have been directed to increasing the output of small coin and securing the most speedy and efficient distribution that existing conditions permit. The average monthly output for January to June this year was 130 million pieces and from July this has been stepped up to nearly 160 million pieces a month. This figure will be further augmented by the output of the new Mint at Lahore which has just started production.

Widespread prosecutions and propaganda have been directed against the hoarders of small coin, and this has had its effect.

(c) Government are aware of the inconvenience and even hardship which have been occasioned by the shortage.

(d) The reply to the first part of this question is in the negative. As regards the second part, as a result of the action which has already been taken, there is a marked improvement in the situation over the greater part of the country, though considerable inconvenience is still being felt in some areas of Northern India. Government are still continuing to make every effort on the lines indicated above to restore the position to normal throughout the whole country as soon as possible.

SELECTION BOARD FOR APPOINTMENTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF ASSAM.

175. ***Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam:** Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the fact that a register is maintained in the office of the Comptroller of Assam for candidates eligible for appointment, and of the existence of a Selection Board to select proper candidates for appointment out of those registered candidates as and when vacancies occur? If so, whether during the time of the present Comptroller of Assam the Selection Board had a free hand in the matter of selection of candidates?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I am making enquiries and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE QUALITY OF ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SECRETARIAT AND ATTACHED OFFICES.

†176. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state whether Government are receiving general complaints against the quality of essential supplies—wheat, rice, fuel—being supplied to the Government of India Secretariat and Attached Office employees under the Essential Supplies Scheme?

(b) Is it a fact that the articles supplied are not according to samples of the articles placed by Government at dealers' shops in order to help Government staff getting genuine stuff?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(c) Is it a fact that when these facts are brought to the notice of the Supervisory Staff employed by Government of India, they show their inability to help the staff in getting stuff of the requisite quality and can only threaten to terminate the contracts of the dealers concerned?

(d) How many such contracts have so far been cancelled?

(e) Are Government aware that generally dealers throw the blame of supply of non-standard quality of stuff on wholesale dealers and the latter on the dealers?

(f) Are Government aware that in certain cases some dealers have stated that the quality of the stuff they were supplying was purchased in the presence of the Supervising Staff who did not interfere despite protests from the dealers?

(g) In order to help in these matters, are Government prepared to vest powers in the members of the Food Supply Committee, comprising representatives of the various Service Associations, to try and dispose of such complaints on the spot by imposing fines up to a certain limit for each offence? If not, what other method do Government propose to adopt to stop the malpractices of retail and/or wholesale dealers?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) There have been some complaints about the qualities of certain commodities supplied under the scheme.

(b) Samples of approved qualities of wheat and rice have been kept at the shops of retail dealers. It is true that the qualities actually supplied have not been in all cases according to those samples.

(c) No.

(d) Two agreements were terminated but for other reasons and not for supplying inferior qualities.

(e) Yes.

(f) No.

(g) No. Suitable action under the agreements executed by them will be taken against those dealers who are found guilty of malpractices. This may consist of forfeiting their security and terminating their agreements.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR RECRUITMENT OF TEMPORARY CLERKS BY MILITARY ACCOUNTS DEPARTMENT.

†177. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state whether the Military Accounts Department has advertised some temporary clerks' posts to be filled under it?

(b) Is it a fact that the qualifications required are a University degree, except for Muslims who should have passed the Intermediate examination? If so, why has this exception been made in the case of Muslims?

(c) Has a similar exception been made in the case of Sikhs? If not, why not?

(d) Is the Honourable Member prepared to consider the advisability of making such an exception in the case of Sikhs? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes. A sufficient number of Muslim graduates were not available and the minimum educational qualifications have therefore been lowered in the case of Muslim candidates for these particular posts.

(c) No. The necessity for a similar relaxation of the normal rule in the case of Sikhs has not so far arisen. There is no quota fixed separately for the Sikh community. The quota (8½ per cent.) for "other minority" communities includes Sikhs. As a sufficient number of graduates from the "other minorities" (including Sikhs) have been generally forthcoming, the question of reducing the minimum educational qualification in their case has not yet arisen.

(d) I propose to have the whole matter further examined.

CLASSIFICATION AS SELECTION POSTS OF POSTS OF PERSONAL ASSISTANTS CARRYING SPECIAL OR PERSONAL PAY IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SECRETARIAT.

†178. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state whether the posts of Personal Assistants to officers, carrying special or

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

personal pay, are classed as 'Selection posts' in the Government of India Secretariat?

(b) Are Government aware that junior men are promoted as Personal Assistants on grounds of "Selection"?

(c) What other channels of promotion are normally open to stenographers except to the posts of Personal Assistants? If none, are Government prepared to consider removing the hardship thus caused to a certain section of their staff? If not, why not?

(d) With reference to his Department's Office Memorandum of September, 1942, and the Honourable Member for Posts and Air's statement in the Council of State in regard to promotion, is it admitted that "selection" generally leads to favouritism and nepotism? If not, why has it been declared that promotion should be given to the man next in seniority, irrespective of caste or religion, if there is nothing against him?

(e) If the answer to the first part of part (d) be in the affirmative, why have the posts of Personal Assistants been classed as "selection posts", especially in view of the fact that there is no other channel of promotion open to stenographers ordinarily?

(f) Will the men so selected take precedence over men who may be otherwise senior to them, for instance, in the case of temporary men, in regard to confirmation, etc.?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Yes.

(b) I have no information regarding any particular cases but there is no objection to a junior man being promoted to a "selection" post on grounds of merit.

(c) Stenographers belong to a separate cadre and the question of their promotion to other posts or of any hardship being caused to them in that connection does not, therefore, arise. The posts of Personal Assistants are also stenographers posts which carry special pay.

(d) Complaints were received that favouritism was sometimes shown in making appointments to "selection" posts. Although these complaints were regarded as generally not justified, it was considered that in order that there might be as little ground as possible for any complaint, appointments to all posts, other than those in which it was administratively necessary to appoint the best candidates available, should be made by seniority, subject to fitness of the candidates concerned. Orders were issued accordingly.

(e) The posts of Personal Assistants are responsible posts and carry special pay. It is considered desirable that they should be filled from the best candidates available. They are therefore classed as "selection" posts.

(f) Seniority among Stenographers is not necessarily affected by selection for the post of Personal Assistant.

REDUCTION OF THE BASIC PAY OF CERTAIN TEMPORARY SUBORDINATES OF THE MILITARY ENGINEERING SERVICE.

†179. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) With reference to the reply to starred question No. 452, dated the 31st March, 1948, is the War Secretary aware that the basic pay of certain temporary subordinates of the Military Engineering Service has been reduced and in certain cases also restricted solely because these individuals were declared medically fit for category 'C' but otherwise efficient in their work?

(b) In view of the reply to the question stated above, does the Honourable Member propose to issue early orders to the Commanding Officers to restore this unauthorised cut in pay?

(c) Does he further propose to consider the desirability of paying compensation to those individuals who have evidently lost their health through devotion to duty and hard work in difficult times? If not, why not?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) and (b). I am not aware of any such cases but if the Honourable Member will give me specific instances, I will have an enquiry made.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

(e) Provision already exists in regulations relating to pensions, gratuities and compensation, for special consideration of cases of individuals who have contracted disabilities attributable to military service.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE TO THE STAFF OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SECRETARIAT AND ATTACHED OFFICES.

†180. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state whether Government are aware that the prices of necessities of life have risen now from 300 to 400 per cent. in Delhi as compared to pre-war prices?

(b) Is it a fact that Government have granted dearness allowance to persons drawing salary up to Rs. 125 or Rs. 135 only?

(c) Is it a fact that the maximum dearness allowance allowed is Rs. 11 per mensem?

(d) Are Government considering the grant of dearness allowance to their staff in the Secretariat and Attached offices upto Rs. 499 monthly salary in reasonable proportion with the rise in prices of necessities of life? If not, why not?

(e) How do Government expect the said Government servants to maintain themselves and their families on their present pay without help from Government?

(f) Are Government aware that a very large number of the said staff are now being forced to borrow money from month to month to meet the abnormally increased expenses?

(g) Are Government prepared to modify their orders against their staff resorting to loans, etc., at least till such time as they finally decide to grant substantial dearness allowance to them? If not, why not?

(h) Is it a fact that their staff in Delhi getting salary up to Rs. 300 monthly are given a form of subsidy on purchases of wheat and rice, which comes to about 25 per cent. of the price ordinarily charged? If so, are Government prepared to increase this subsidy to 50 per cent. applicable to staff getting Rs. 499 monthly? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Government are aware that in some cases prices have risen to 300 per cent. of pre-war levels.

(b) and (c). Government servants in Delhi drawing a salary of Rs. 125 p. m. or less are entitled to dearness allowance, the maximum rate being Rs. 11 p. m. Staff drawing between Rs. 126 and Rs. 135 are given an allowance to bring their salary upto Rs. 136.

(d) to (h). The Government of India, in consultation with Provincial Governments, are considering whether it is necessary in addition to the substantial price concessions now given in areas where conditions are acute, to revise the present rates and pay limits of cash dearness allowance. It is unlikely, however, that Government will decide to raise the pay limit to a figure approaching that mentioned by the Honourable Member. The rate of concession given to the Delhi staff is, in the case of the cheaper kinds of grain consumed by the inferior staff, higher than the 25 per cent. mentioned by the Honourable Member, and is, in the opinion of Government, adequate in view of the prevailing price of foodgrains. It is subject to revision in the event of any substantial change in prices. Government have no reason to believe that a large number of their staff is indebted; nor are they prepared to relax their standing orders regarding the avoidance of indebtedness.

SUBSIDIES TO PRIVATE STUDIOS FOR PRODUCING ENTERTAINMENT PICTURES.

181. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that at the request of the Department three leading studios, one in Calcutta and two in Bombay, have started producing full-length entertainment-cum-instructional pictures, and twelve other studios will start work on similar pictures next month;

(b) the amount hitherto given—and also proposed to be given—to such producers as contribution or subsidy or encouragement; and

(c) the nature and descriptions of such pictures?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes, Sir. According to information available up to date two studios in Calcutta and two in Bombay have already started producing full length entertainment-cum-instructional pictures. About 12 other studios are also likely to start in this or the next month.

(b) Nil.

(c) These pictures will deal with problems created by the war such as hoarding, profiteering, rumour-mongering, rationing, A. R. P., Blood Banks, Grow More Food, recruiting for both civil and technical labour schemes and fighting services, public morale, etc. In addition, subjects like Hindu Muslim unity, education, medical relief are also dealt with.

MASTER AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.

182. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have examined the full implications of clause 7 of the Master Agreement between the United States of America and the United Kingdom, which lays down that the participating countries of like mind should agree "to the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce"; and

(b) whether by reason of the commitment of the United Kingdom to this clause, Great Britain will be precluded from extending preferential tariff to the Indian goods imported into the United Kingdom, and, similarly, whether the United Kingdom will also be precluded from seeking preferential tariff for the British goods imported into India, by way of reciprocity or otherwise?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Commerce Member.

ALLOCATION OF COST OF BUILDING NEW ROADS FOR MILITARY PURPOSES.

183. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether the cost of opening new roads between India and China is being debited to the Indian Exchequer?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, have the Government of India taken steps to impress upon His Majesty's Government that the cost of building such military roads should be borne by Allied Governments, in so far as they are built for the purpose of carrying out the Allied strategic plans against Japan and do not fall within the category of the Defence obligations of India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) No

(b) Does not arise.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF INDIA IN RESPECT OF OPERATIONS OF THE EAST ASIA COMMAND.

184. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) what financial commitments the Government of India have undertaken in regard to the operations of the South-East Asia Command from bases in India; and

(b) whether the Government of India have made any representation to His Majesty's Government that no expenses resulting from the establishment of the South-East Asia Command in this country, and its operations, should be charged to India?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) No.

(b) In view of the answer to part (a) this does not arise.

ALLOCATION OF EXPENDITURE ON TROOPS RAISED IN INDIA FOR OUTSIDE SERVICE.

185. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether the interpretation of the terms of the 1939 Settlement has been varied in any way so as to impose a heavier financial burden

on India in respect of troops meant for operations outside the country than was initially contemplated?

(b) What charges are payable by His Majesty's Government in respect of troops raised in India, but intended for operations outside the country, (i) so long as they remain in this country, and (ii) when they are sent abroad?

(c) What amount of expenses has the Indian Exchequer borne for the maintenance of troops which were sent abroad for the years 1939-40, 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43 up-to-date?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The answer is in the negative.

(b) The cost of troops raised in India specifically for operations abroad is charged to His Majesty's Government, as is their cost when they are sent abroad.

(c) The cost of all troops serving abroad has been borne by His Majesty's Government.

INABILITY OF GHAZIPUR OPIUM FACTORY TO MEET DEMANDS FOR OPIUM ALKALOIDS

186. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state when the Ghazipur Opium Factory is unable to meet adequately the demand of opium alkaloids of the Indian pharmaceutical and chemical industries, why the Government of India are not willing to permit manufacture of opium alkaloids intended for medicinal and scientific purposes by the approved pharmaceutical and chemical industries under proper Government control in this country?

(b) What steps do the Government of India propose to take in view of the failure of the Ghazipur Opium Factory to supply the needs of opium alkaloids of the pharmaceutical and chemical industries of this country? Is it not a fact that even the requirements of the armies for these alkaloids for medicinal needs have been only partially met by the Ghazipur Opium Factory?

(c) Do the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925 and the Drugs Limitation Convention of 1931 prevent the Government of India from allowing the approved private manufacturers to undertake manufacture of these alkaloids under proper Government supervision? If so, how do the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom, being the signatories of these International Conventions, allow private pharmaceutical and chemical industries the facilities to manufacture opium alkaloids?

(d) Are Government aware that Australia—a signatory of the above International Conventions,—has of late allowed a private manufacturing concern to undertake manufacture of opium alkaloids?

(e) While the opium alkaloids, particularly Morphine, Codeine, Heroin, etc., and their salts have well-recognised unique medicinal properties and are indispensable for the manufacture of various patents by the Indian Pharmaceutical and Chemical Industries which are essential civilian commodities, why should Government treat the subject as a matter of excise policy only?

(f) When Government are successfully controlling traffic, distribution and consumption of opium through the ordinary and often poorly educated licenced dealers, do they apprehend illicit traffic in these drugs if the approved Pharmaceutical and Chemical Industries were allowed to undertake manufacture of opium alkaloids under proper Government supervision? If so, why will it not be possible for the Government to control the same?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) to (f). The Geneva Conventions do not prevent the Government of India or any signatory country from allowing private manufacture of dangerous drugs in their territories. Private manufacture is, however, not allowed in India because Government have a factory of their own at Ghazipur for the manufacture of these alkaloids and it is desirable in the larger interests of the country that manufacture of such drugs should be restricted to as few manufacturing centres as possible. The Ghazipur Factory is ordinarily able to meet the entire peace-time requirement but demands created by the war have thrown a tremendous strain upon the factory. Production has, in addition, been materially reduced as a result of the August disturbances last year, and it is with considerable difficulty that

the factory has been able to meet Army requirements in full as also a part of the civilian demand. Arrangements have, however, now been made for increasing the civilian quota and when the new factory installed at Ghazipur for the purpose is in full working order early next year, it is hoped to meet the entire requirements of the trade. The fact that these alkaloids have unique medicinal properties is no reason why Government should not take every precaution against abuse having regard to the immense potentialities for evil which these drugs possess.

FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION RE SALE OF PRECIOUS METALS TO THE CULTIVATOR.

187. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) whether the Foodgrains Policy Committee has recommended selling of precious metals, and particularly gold, to the farmers in this country; and

(b) if so, how Government propose to implement the recommendation?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to my reply to Mr. G. V. Deshmukh's question No. 81 on the 10th November.

SALARIES OF APPELLATE COMMISSIONERS AND APPELLATE TRIBUNALS UNDER INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT.

188. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) the names and salaries of persons appointed as Appellate Commissioners and Appellate Tribunals under the Income-tax Department; and

(b) the total number of officers recruited during 1941-42 and 1942-43 under (i) the Income-tax Department, and (ii) the Central Excise and Salt Department in various circles, and the number of Muslims therein?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) A statement giving the information asked for is laid on the table of the House.

(b) The information asked for is not readily available and its collection would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable in war time.

List showing the Names of Appellate Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax and their salaries.

S. No.	Name	Salary per mensem.
		Rs.
1.	Mr. Ramaswamy Iyengar	1,500
2.	" T. Arumukha Mudaliar	1,500
3.	" P. B. Srinivasachari	1,500
4.	" R. A. Narayana Ayyangar	1,100
5.	" S. M. A. Uraizee	1,500
		S. Pay
6.	" M. P. Kapadia	250
		1,500
		S. pay
		250
7.	" D. S. Tanavde	1,300
8.	" C. A. Entee	1,100
9.	" A. N. NeSurkar	1,400
10.	R. S. K. P. Mukerji	1,200
		S.P.
		250
11.	Mr. M. Ahmed	1,000
12.	" H. C Choudhury	1,000
13.	" W. A. Hardie	1,400
14.	" K. C. Avasia	1,300
15.	" B. M. Pandit	1,300
16.	" B. L. Vaish	1,300
17.	" B. K. Mukerji	1,300
18.	" Asanand Kumar	1,500
19.	" K. C. Khanna	1,500
20.	" Dalip Singh	1,500
21.	" Parmanand Jain	1,500
22.	" H. M. Pattanaik	1,300
23.	" P. K. Sen-Gupta	1,500
24.	" D. Shambu Dayal	1,500

RE-ARREST OF MR. JAIPRAKASH NARAIN.

189. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Sgt. Jaiprakash Narain has been re-arrested;

(b) whether he is incarcerated in the Lahore Fort and is denied the ordinary amenities needed for human sustenance; and

(c) whether Government intend bringing him up for trial in a court of law?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Yes.

(b) It would not be in the public interest for me to disclose his present place of confinement. He is not denied the ordinary amenities needed for human sustenance. In any case these matters are the concern of the Provincial Government.

(c) I am not prepared at this stage to disclose Government's intentions in this matter.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know if the Government of India have anything to do with the arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, Sir. They have nothing to do with his arrest. With regard to his trial, that is a matter for the Provincial Governments who have cases against him.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is he being tried, or likely to be tried, for any offence committed by him in an area for which the Central Government is responsible?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have already stated in answering to part (c) that I am not prepared to disclose Government's intentions in this matter.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether Mr. Jaiprakash Narain was not a detenu in Bihar on a warrant issued by the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, Sir. The warrant was issued by the Government of Bombay.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Could the Honourable Member tell us whether Mr. Jaiprakash Narain is given any of the inhumanities complained of in this House the other day?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Nothing has been said to substantiate those allegations which are entirely denied.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Arising out of the reply given by the Honourable Member that Mr. Jaiprakash Narain is given ordinary amenities, may I know what amenities have been afforded to him?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Ordinary amenities.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member say what the amenities are, so that we may know as a fact that he is getting what is needed for his sustenance?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I understand from the reply given in the Punjab Assembly that he is being treated as a Class I Security Prisoner.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Is he allowed interviews?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Interviews are not allowed to the Security Prisoners in the Punjab as I informed the Honourable Member the other day.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: In view of the fact that he is no longer a security prisoner, is he being allowed facilities for legal advice?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: He is a security prisoner and security prisoners are allowed to obtain legal advice.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I know where a security prisoner absconds and is re-arrested under the ordinary law, does he still continue to be a security prisoner?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The original warrant against him has never been cancelled.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member whether Mr. Jaiprakash Narain can write and receive letters?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I understand that to be the practice in the Punjab. I have no actual information in this case.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I ask one more question?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

IMPROVING OF TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

190. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) what steps have been taken by Government following the discussion in this House on the resolution for the better treatment of political prisoners; to implement the assurances contained in the Honourable the Home Member's reply to the debate;

(b) whether the Central Government have framed a new set of regulations for the treatment of political prisoners who are detained by their orders; and

(c) whether the Government of India have addressed the Provincial Governments on the matter; if so, with what result?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) and (c). As a result of the debate on the Honourable Member's resolution in the last session, the Government of India addressed Provincial Governments, laying down certain further principles in regard to the treatment of security prisoners. The results were described in my reply to Sardar Mangal Singh's question No. 70 on November 10th.

(b) No.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if his attention has been drawn to the press note published in the *Hindustan Times* this morning which says that the Government of India are considering the question of revising detention rules, and that they propose to detain, under Rule 26, only for six months, and they are setting up Revision Boards for considering the question of further detention of these people?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: My attention has only just been drawn to the paragraph in question which appears to have been published without any authority.

PERSONS ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN DELHI UNDER RULES 26 AND 129 OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES, ETC.

191. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons arrested and detained under Rule 26 and Rule 129 of the Defence of India Rules from Delhi, since the 9th August, 1942, up to the 15th October, 1943; and

(b) the number of persons convicted under Defence Rules in connection with the 'Disturbances' and under the Criminal Procedure Code, since the 9th August, 1942, up to the 15th October, 1943, for political offences, and whether they are being treated as political prisoners or not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) 164 persons were arrested under Defence Rule 129 during the period mentioned by the Honourable Member. Out of this total, 73 persons were subsequently detained under Defence Rule 26, the remaining 91 being detained under Defence Rule 129 for varying periods not exceeding two months. In addition, 32 persons were arrested and detained at once under Defence Rule 26.

(b) The number of persons convicted under the Defence of India Rules in connection with the disturbances during the period mentioned was 66. Convictions during this period under all laws other than the Defence of India Rules totalled 543. As I have frequently pointed out Government do not recognize the term "political prisoners". Such of these persons as were convicted of offences not involving violence have been classified as 'Civil Disturbances Prisoners 1942', a special class created for them by the Punjab Government. Such as were convicted of offences involving violence

are; however, treated as ordinary convicted prisoners and have been classified accordingly.

PERSONS ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN DELHI UNDER RULES 26 AND 129 OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES, ETC.

192. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all persons detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules by the Delhi Administration are kept in the Punjab Jails and the nearest jail they are kept in is Ferozepore, which is over two hundred miles from Delhi;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Ferozepur Camp Jail is designed to keep 'C' Class prisoners; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there are no covered baths and covered latrines there, and that the detenus are put to much inconvenience on that account; if so, whether Government propose to take any action in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) All security prisoners detained by orders made under D. R. 26 by the Chief Commissioner are transferred to the Punjab to a jail to be determined by the Inspector-General of Prisons. Such prisoners as are detained for reasons connected with the Congress movement are transferred to the Ferozepore District Jail.

(b) and (c). I have no information.

PERSONS ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN DELHI UNDER RULES 26 AND 129 OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES, ETC.

193. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that only six or seven persons arrested and detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules by the Delhi Administration after the 9th August, 1942, were classified as Class I Security Prisoners and the rest as Class II Security Prisoners;

(b) whether it is a fact that so long as they remained in the District Jail, Delhi, they were treated as Security Prisoners and allowed all the privileges of Security Prisoners;

(c) whether it is a fact that soon after their transfer to the Punjab Jails all such privileges were withdrawn, and since then they are being treated as Civil Disobedience detenus; if so, why;

(d) whether this fact was brought to the notice of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, by some of them soon after their privileges were withdrawn in September, 1942; if so, what action, if any was taken thereupon;

(e) whether the Delhi Government wrote to the Punjab Government to accord to them the treatment they were entitled to as Security Prisoners Class I and II; if not, why not; and

(f) whether the action Government propose to take in the matter now is to set right the grievances of the detenus?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) No.

(b) Security prisoners detained in the Delhi District Jail are treated in accordance with the Central Government Security Prisoners Order, 1942, and instructions issued thereunder from time to time.

(c) As I have told the House on previous occasions, Central Government security prisoners detained in Provinces are treated according to the rules current in that Province. There are certain differences of detail between the treatment accorded under the Central Government Security Prisoners Order and the Punjab Government's rules, but I am satisfied that the treatment in matters of principle is substantially the same.

(d) Yes. The Chief Commissioner informed the prisoners that their conditions of detention were to be determined by the Punjab Government.

(e) No, for the reasons already explained.

(f) I do not admit that there are legitimate grievances.

PERSONS ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN DELHI UNDER RULES 26 AND 129 OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES, ETC.

194. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that all persons detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules and treated as Class I Security Prisoners in the Delhi Jail are entitled to—

- (i) interviews once a fortnight and to receive and write four letters a week;
- (ii) books and newspapers and writing materials;
- (iii) furniture, viz., one table, one chair, one cupboard and one stool;
- (iv) monthly maintenance and clothing allowance of Rs. 20 and family allowance according to the status and number of dependents;
- (v) indoor and outdoor games at Government expense; and
- (vi) supplement their food up to Rs. 10 per mensem through the jail contractors and receive supplementary diet from home and friends?

(b) If the answers to (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) be in the affirmative, is it a fact that Security Prisoners belonging to Delhi and now detained in the Punjab Jails are denied all the privileges? If so, what are the reasons for the same, and what action, if any, Government propose to take in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I take it that the Honourable Member is referring to the treatment of security prisoners in general and not to Congress Security Prisoners, in regard to whom, as I have frequently explained, there are certain differences of treatment.

(a) The information required by the Honourable Member is as follows:

(i) Yes; they are, however, allowed to receive not four but eight letters per week.

(ii) Yes

(iii) Yes, except that instead of the stool referred to by the Honourable Member, a bed is provided.

(iv) and (vi) They are allowed to receive funds not exceeding Rs. 20 per mensem to supplement the amenities of life in the jail. Family allowances are not granted automatically and each application for such an allowance is considered on its merits;

(v) Games are allowed.

(b) No. The Punjab practice is substantially the same. The second part of the question does not arise.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: As there is difference of treatment given to ordinary security prisoners and the Congress security prisoners, will the Honourable Member explain in which respect the Congress security prisoners are at a disadvantage?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I gave that information to the House in answer to Mr. Krishnamachari's Resolution at the last Session. For instance, the Congress security prisoners are allowed to write and receive fewer letters per week and they are allowed interviews less frequently. I think these are the only material points of difference.

PERSONS ARRESTED AND DETAINED IN DELHI UNDER RULES 26 AND 129 OF THE DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES, ETC.

195. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Delhi detenues under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules kept in Punjab Jails are not allowed to read any newspapers published in Delhi except the *Statesman*, despite the fact that the *Hindustan Times*, the *Daily Tej* and *Vir Arjuna* are allowed to the detenues in the District Jail, Delhi; and

(b) whether it is a fact that a written request was made by Lala Deshbandhu Gupta for permission to get the *Hindustan Times*, the *Tej* and some British and American periodicals, including *The Nation* and *Statesman*, *Time*, *Unity* and *Foreign Affairs*, at his own cost was rejected; if so, if Government propose to grant the necessary permission for the same now; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) and (b). I have no information on these matters which are for the Punjab Government. All I know is that the Punjab Government do allow newspapers.

UNSTARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER

NEW APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING.

31. **Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon:** Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that new appointments of Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Administration Officer (Film Section), Film Publicity Officer, and American Relations Officer have been created in the Information Department;

(b) whether it is a fact that all non-Muslims have been appointed or promoted to these posts;

(c) whether it is a fact that Muslims were available in the Department, but were not given a chance of promotion;

(d) whether the recruitment to appointments referred to in (a) above is the responsibility of the Member-in-Charge; and

(e) whether the appointments referred to in (b) above are directly made by the Secretary of the War Department?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Yes, except that there is no post in the Information and Broadcasting Department with the designation of 'American Relations Officer'.

(b) No.

(c) Appointments to the posts in question were made by promotion except in the case of one which was made by transfer. No Muslim has been superseded.

(d) Appointments to posts of Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary and Assistant Secretary are made by the Governor General-in-Council. The appointments to other posts are made by the Secretary in the Department with the approval of the Member-in-Charge.

(e) No.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi (Secretary, War Department): Sir, I would like to make a statement with your permission. I much regret that in reply to a supplementary question on Question No. 64 asked by my Honourable friend, Sir F. E. James, on the 10th November, 1943, I made a statement which on further examination is found incorrect. I stated that the dependents of personnel of the Indian Army and Indian unattached list who are under the rule-making control of the Secretary of State have a right of appeal to the appeal tribunals in the United Kingdom. The correct position is that there is no such right of appeal. The question whether a provision should be made for appeal is, however, under consideration.

DECLARATIONS OF EXEMPTION AND NOTIFICATION UNDER THE REGISTRATION OF FOREIGNERS ACT

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of the following Declarations of Exemption and Notification:

(i) No. 1/35/43-Poll. (E), dated the 4th August, 1943;

(ii) No. 1/36/43-Poll. (E), dated the 2nd September, 1943;

(iii) No. 1/37/43-Poll. (E), dated the 25th August, 1943;

(iv) No. 1/38/43-Poll. (E), dated the 3rd September, 1943;

(v) No. 1/40/43-Poll. (E), dated the 21st September, 1943;

(vi) No. 1/43/43-Poll. (E), dated the 12th October, 1943;

(vii) No. 1/44/43-Poll. (E), dated the 12th October, 1943;

(viii) No. 6577-S/43-Poll. (E), dated the 3rd October, 1943;

(ix) No. 1/47/43-Poll. (E), dated the 19th October, 1943;

(x) No. 1/48/43-Poll. (E), dated the 22nd October, 1943;

(xi) No. 1/50/43-Poll. (E), dated the 29th October, 1943; and

(xii) Notification No. 1/30/43-Poll. (E), dated the 20th September, 1943.

DECLARATIONS OF EXEMPTION.

No. 1/33/43-Political (E), Simla, the 4th August, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, the following United States Senators who are on a visit to India:

Messrs. Henry Cabot Lodge, A. B. Chandler, Richard B. Russell, Ralph O. Brewster, and James M. Mead.

No. 1/36/43-Political (E), Simla, the 2nd September, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to:

1. Mr. John Fischer, special assistant to the Personal Representative of the President of the U. S. A.;
2. Mr. Eric Beecroft, special assistant to Mr. Fischer;
3. Mr. Chico Henry Schneider, Chief Mining Specialist of U. S. A. at Calcutta;
4. Mr. Paul Block, U. S. Office of War Information; and
5. Mr. McCune, Principal Procurement Officer of U. S. A. in India,

so long as they remain in their present posts.

No. 1/37/43-Political (E), Simla, the 25th August, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) Dr. Carl Contalle; | (6) Dr. Eric Mamlock; |
| (2) Dr. Herbert Baer; | (7) Dr. Victor Taubenfligel; |
| (3) Dr. Walter Fremdmann; | (8) Dr. Franz Kriegel; |
| (4) Dr. David Yanco; | (9) Dr. Samuel Moise Flato; and |
| (5) Dr. Frederick Kisch; | (10) Dr. Alexander Volokhina, |

now serving as medical officers under the United States Armed Forces in India so long as they remain in their present posts.

No. 1/38/43-Political (E), Simla, the 3rd September, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Mr. Thomas Jefferson Lavis, a member of the United States Lend-Lease Mission to India, so long as he remains in his present post.

No. 1/40/43-Political (E), Simla, the 21st September, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to:

- (1) Mr. Edward Harold Sweeney, Superintending Engineer for the United States War Shipping Administration at Bombay.
- (2) Messrs. David W. Graham and Theodore Frutkoff, employees of the United States Office of War Information at New Delhi,
- (3) Mr. Sheldon T. Mills, Secretary to the American Mission at New Delhi, and
- (4) Mr. Tell Carrol Schreiber, Assistant Representative of the Overseas Operations Branch of the United States Office of War Information at New Delhi,

so long as they remain employed in their present posts.

No. 1/43/43-Political (E), Simla, the 12th October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Messrs. Francis B. Rogers and Victor C. Rankin, Assistant Representatives of the Overseas Operations Branch of the United States Office of War Information so long as they remain employed in their present posts.

No. 1/44/43-Political (E), Simla, the 12th October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Mr. Harold Mrazek, Assistant Representative of the United States Office of War Information, so long as he remains in that post.

FOREIGNERS ACT

No. 6577-S/43-Political (E), Simla, the 3rd October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to:

1. Dr. Soong, the Chinese Foreign Minister.
2. Mr. T. A. Soong.
3. Brigadier General Tsai.
4. Five officials of the party of Dr. Soong.
5. A valet.

B. L. PANDEY,
Under Secretary.

No. 1/47/43-Political (E), Simla, the 19th October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Mr. Minard Hamilton, Representative of the United States Office of Economic Warfare, for so long as he remains in that post.

No. 1/48/43-Political (E), Simla, the 22nd October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Mr. James Daniels, a member of the staff of the U. S. Office of War Information, for so long as he remains in that post.

No. 1/50/43-Political (E), Simla, the 29th October, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to declare that the provisions of the Registration of Foreigners Rules, 1939, except rule 8 and such of the provisions of rules 4, 14, 15 and 16 as apply to, or in relation to, passengers and visitors who are not foreigners, shall not apply to, or in relation to, Mr. George W. Small, clerk at the United States Consulate at Karachi, for so long as he remains in that post.

A. W. LOVATT,
Under Secretary.

NOTIFICATION.

No. 1/30/43-Political (E), New Delhi, the 20th September, 1943.—In exercise of the powers conferred by section 6 of the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939 (XVI of 1939), the Central Government is pleased to direct that the following further amendment shall be made in the Declarations, published with the Notification of the Government of India in the Home Department No. 1/30/43-Political (E), dated the 7th July, 1943, namely:

In clause (i), after the words "issued", the words "or on behalf of" shall be inserted.

H. J. FRAMPTON,
Joint Secretary.

MOTION RE THE FOOD SITUATION—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume further consideration of the motion regarding food situation in India.

Lala Sham Lal (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I spoke last as to how the situation in Bengal was affecting war measures.

Now Sir, we have a 'Grow More Food' campaign inaugurated for some time. As to this campaign the Honourable the present Food Member has made up a case and repeated the matter again. It is an admitted fact that this campaign has not so far made any improvements in food cultivation in any appreciable degree. I think it ought to have been like that. There are no cattle available for cultivation—the very means of cultivation. The average value of a bullock has gone seven times higher than normal. The daily wages of a plough have risen from Rs. 1/8/- to Rs. 9/8/- per day. Cultivation has gone beyond the means of an ordinary peasant. Sir, in my own part of the country I have seen myself women having been yoked to plough instead of bullocks while throwing seeds. During the last Session, Government were asked as to how many cattle were being slaughtered daily to supply beef to military, but they refused to declare the number of cattle slaughtered daily, on security reasons. If such is the state of affairs, how then is the cry for "Grow More Food" going ever to succeed?

[Lala Sham Lal.]

In case the few observations that I have made be found correct and agreeable, then with due respect to the seniority and high thinking of my colleagues here, I will say earnestly, "Friends, do not waste any more time now. There is no use putting or indulging in questions and answers. The answers are not forthcoming satisfactorily; in many cases the information is not supplied on grounds of public policy or on the grounds of security. There is no use harping upon one calamity or the other. The calamities must go on increasing under the circumstances that India is faced with today. If there is a calamity in one direction today, there will be another calamity in another direction tomorrow. It may be possible that the Government may apply some anodyne for your satisfaction to some afflictions, but that will only be a very temporary affair; otherwise by way of reaction surely the misfortunes will grow stronger and stronger". The whole fabric of the Government at the centre, it seems to me, apparently has been unhinged. It is, therefore, necessary now to lose no time to bring this administration back to its centre. With the administration having been unhinged at the centre, I should say the administration in the provinces also has become unhinged. Therefore, to my mind, it is now necessary and in my considered opinion there is no way out except to have a popular national Government at the centre, a government representing all shades of political opinion, a government responsible to the people for the welfare of the country, and a government over which the people of this country may have the fullest control. Therefore, I ask all my Honourable colleagues here to compose all their differences, to come to an amicable settlement. It is not expected that this Government will come to your aid or do anything which may bring about a common understanding. It is now left for you alone to do it and to make a concerted demand for a popular national Government pointed out by me. It is that popular and national Government alone that can solve all your difficulties, including the food crisis in the country today. As far as I think, the political situation in the country requires that a joint and concerted demand should be made. Friends, you represent 400 millions of the people of this country. If you choose to make a combined and concerted demand in order to save your country and your countrymen from further disasters, then I do not think that your demand can be turned down in any case. Under these circumstances, I therefore suggest to my Honourable friends to cease making parties, to cease indulging in a tug of war for party strengthening, and then composing all their differences through this Assembly, a determination be made that a national Government is the only need of the hour and this determination of yours may be carried to His Majesty's Government in England through His Excellency the Viceroy, and you will see how the situation of India is corrected in all directions, including the food situation. People are not affected by your parties at all. Mark you please, that many of your high thinkers are now doing penance for you behind the bars. Mark you please, that they are doing so, so that you may become capable to discern clearly what is needful for the good of your country. Your delays in the matter are reducing your country more and more.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): All that is outside the scope of the motion before the House. The motion before the House is that the food situation of the country be considered. You cannot bring in all sorts of political and constitutional matters.

Lala Sham Lal: Sir, the food situation is intimately connected with

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There may be a remote connection.

Lala Sham Lal: All right; I bow to your ruling. Then if you cannot do this thing, then of course nature will have its way; Kali's ways are mysterious and not always visible all at once. Nature will set things right in her own way. Of course nature will not care for your methods of remedying this situation by this device or that and quite unmindful of your bewailing.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Lala Sham Lal: A couple of minutes more?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot allow that. There are a number of speakers yet to speak.

I find that Mr. Neogy has moved his amendment; but he has not made his speech; I think he had better make his speech now.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): With regard to the other amendments, I suggest that they may be moved formally and the Members may take their chance later, so that all the amendments may be before the House.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Yes; that may be done.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

'and having done so this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and other parts of India and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the situation including the stoppage of further inflation of currency; this Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee consisting of fourteen with eight elected members of the Assembly, four elected members of the Council of State and one Accountant General with the Chief Justice of the Federal Court as Chairman be appointed to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the economic distress prevailing in the country:

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of foodgrains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present distress on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

'and having done so this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and other parts of India and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the situation including the stoppage of further inflation of currency; this Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee consisting of fourteen with eight elected members of the Assembly, four elected members of the Council of State and one Accountant General with the Chief Justice of the Federal Court as Chairman be appointed to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the economic distress prevailing in the country:

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of foodgrains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present distress on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I have an amendment to this amendment which has been moved by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta; Sir, I move:

"That in the amendment by Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta for the words 'younger generation' occurring in clause (f) the word 'people' be substituted."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But it has not been circulated to Members.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I have given copies to the Whips of the Parties. I received notice of this amendment only on Saturday night. I have given notice exactly in time. I came here at 10-30 A.M. today.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But it has not been circulated to Members. If he had given notice in time, it would have been circulated.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: But it was circulated, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member had taken the earliest opportunity to give notice to the office that he wished to move this amendment, it could have been circulated.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I came to the office this morning at 10-30 A.M. and there was nobody, and at 10-35 A.M. I handed over the notice to Mr. Robinson.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As it is a harmless sort of amendment, I think it might be moved. Very well. Amendment moved:

"That in the amendment by Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta for the words 'younger generation' occurring in clause (f) the word 'people' be substituted."

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Santhal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:
'and having considered the appalling condition prevailing all over the country this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a Committee consisting of the officials and non-officials to enquire into the matter with a view to suggest measures for guarding against the recurrence of such catastrophe in future and also with a view to the possibility of affording immediate and effective relief to the suffering people by adopting the following remedial measures:

- (a) opening of free gruel kitchens in the worst affected parts;
- (b) opening of public orphanages;
- (c) opening of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto in important towns and stopping beggary;
- (d) assuming of control over the public hotels meant for the proletariat class and regulating and fixing reasonable rates thereof;
- (e) centralising the control of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto and financing them from government money and funds from public charity; and
- (f) controlling all public and charitable funds and authorising only responsible bodies to collect funds for the purpose."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:
'and having considered the appalling condition prevailing all over the country this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a Committee consisting of the officials and non-officials to enquire into the matter with a view to suggest measures for guarding against the recurrence of such catastrophe in future and also with a view to the possibility of affording immediate and effective relief to the suffering people by adopting the following remedial measures:

- (a) opening of free gruel kitchens in the worst affected parts;
- (b) opening of public orphanages;
- (c) opening of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto in important towns and stopping beggary;
- (d) assuming of control over the public hotels meant for the proletariat class and regulating and fixing reasonable rates thereof;
- (e) centralising the control of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto and financing them from government money and funds from public charity; and
- (f) controlling all public and charitable funds and authorising only responsible bodies to collect funds for the purpose."

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I have got an amendment to Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal's amendment that clause (f) of his amendment be omitted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The next amendment is in the name of Pandit Shambhudayal Misra. The first part of it wishes to indict Lord Linlithgow, Mr. Amery and Sir John Herbert. He is apparently not aware that he cannot do anything like that under the rules and standing orders of this House. As regards the second part, that is evidently beyond the scope of the motion. I hold that this amendment is not in order.

Pandit Shambhudayal Misra (Central Provinces Hindu Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): May I be allowed to say a few words?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have considered the matter and that is my ruling.

Pandit Shambhudayal Misra: That is only a recommendation . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: I move:

"That in the amendment moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan after the words 'Royal Commission' the following be inserted:
'composed of independent and impartial persons, majority of whom shall be Indians commanding the confidence of the peoples of India'."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That in the amendment moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan after the words 'Royal Commission' the following be inserted:
'composed of independent and impartial persons, majority of whom shall be Indians commanding the confidence of the peoples of India'."

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, I have an amendment to this amendment. I move:

"That in the proposed amendment by Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait and others to Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan's amendment for all the words beginning with the words 'composed of' and ending with the words 'peoples of India' the following be substituted:
'composed of elected members of the Assembly and the Council of State with a Judge of the Federal Court as Chairman'."

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Amendment moved:

"That in the proposed amendment by Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait and others to Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan's amendment for all the words beginning with the words 'composed of' and ending with the words 'peoples of India' the following be substituted:
'composed of elected members of the Assembly and the Council of State with a Judge of the Federal Court as Chairman'."

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): The calamity which has befallen my unfortunate province at the present moment is in a sense unparalleled in the history of human civilisation. Starvation, death, pestilence, have been known to follow in the wake of victorious tyrants overrunning foreign territory. In the present instance, however, this gigantic tragedy is being enacted while a well established Government is functioning in the country. If we consider the acts of omission and commission of which Government have been guilty in their attempt to prevent the outbreak of this famine or to deal with it adequately, we cannot help thinking that this famine is primarily a State industry, and to my mind in certain of its aspects it bears the hall-mark of a genuine British manufacture.

I recall with disappointment and sorrow the debate that took place in this House three months ago when we had the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque as the Member in charge of this Department. I say I recall that debate with disappointment and sorrow because on that occasion we tried to rouse the Government to the necessity of taking prompt action for the prevention of a tragedy that was fast overtaking my province. I remember with disappointment and sorrow the attitude that was taken up by Sir Azizul Huque as the mouthpiece of an incompetent and callous Government in parrying all our suggestions and questions seeking information about the actual state of affairs in the country. At that moment in a mood of frustration Sir Azizul Huque sought solace in Tagore's poetry. Lord Linlithgow was busy packing his trunks. A friend of the bovine species, he perhaps would have been more interested had it been a case of cattle epidemic in Bengal. Or was it because a sense of constitutional chastity prevented him from visiting Bengal in those days?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member knows that he cannot reflect on the conduct of the Governor General.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But he is no longer the Governor General.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That makes no difference. It is the holder of the office.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The plea has been raised that this famine has been aggravated, or at least its treatment has been made difficult, because of the division of responsibility between the Central Government and the provinces. If it is a question of the policy of repression, somebody has got to press the button at New Delhi and the whole country can be set ablaze; and the policy that is enforced throughout India, irrespective of the existence of a ministry or not in any province, is carried out faithfully in every detail throughout the

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

length and breadth of the country. This Government has specialised in the enforcement of law and order of the Maxwellian variety. If, however, it is a question of preserving human life and providing food for the people, well, then comes the rub. Well, then let the Azizuls fight the Fazluls and the Srivastavas the Suhrawardies, so that our friends in England can establish beyond the shadow of a doubt the incapacity of all Indians for self-government.

Sir, the debates that took place recently in the Houses of Parliament have been a great eye opener to us. The official spokesman mentioned all the facts except the real ones, that could be held responsible for this unheard of famine. Mr. Leopold Amery threw up his hands in holy horror, while contemplating the increase in India's population during the last census. I have in front of me certain statistics which I have taken some pains to study and from which I find that whereas during the last three centuries and odd the British population has increased more than 8 times, the Indian population has not increased more than four times. Moreover, if we were to take, say, about a period of 50 years prior to the last census, the total increment in India is found to be about 39 per cent. whereas the increment in the United States of America for that half century stood at 186 per cent., in Japan 74 per cent., Great Britain 54 per cent., Italy 46.8 per cent., Switzerland 43.5 per cent., Germany 42.2 per cent. as against India's 39 per cent. If we regard for a moment the progress of population in Great Britain and Wales, and if particularly we examine that census decade 1871 to 1881, during which Leopold Amery was vouchsafed to an expectant world to fulfil his Heaven-appointed mission of presiding over the India Office in his dotage, we find that the increase of population was 14.36 per cent. in England and Wales. We are not aware that Mr. Amery protested against this phenomenon either before or after his birth. Nor are we aware that England and Wales was swept by a devastating famine as a consequence of this phenomenon. Sir, is it the case of the British Government that India is no longer in a position to maintain a larger population? If that be their case, let us examine it a little further. Two speakers in the Houses of Parliament pointed out the very low outturn per acre of foodgrains in India. I am not going to trouble the House with the percentages. Taking rice, I find that in the case of the province of Bengal, in regard to which we have the benefit of an authoritative commission, the Land Revenue Commission of 1940, which was presided over by Sir Francis Floud, it has been recorded that the outturn of paddy per acre has not progressed since the days of Emperor Akbar. If anything, it has gone down. Now, Sir, the Commission compares the yield in respect of rice of the various rice producing countries and points out particularly with reference to Japan, that although in Japan where the same problems of over-population and uneconomic holdings exist, the yield is at least three times as much as that of Bengal and in China it is more than double. I wonder if the British Government wants to take that as a credit and as a proof of the success of their trusteeship of India. Admittedly a very large proportion of the Indian population has always been on the margin of starvation. Indeed it has been pointed out by many writers in the past that very many thousands and hundreds of thousands of the people really live in a state of semi-starvation even in normal times. When therefore India got embroiled in a total war, was it not expected of our trustees to take some care to ensure a sufficient supply of foodstuffs for India's population? Mr. Amery says that precautions were taken soon after the fall of Singapore. I think Singapore fell about the middle of February, 1942. Burma soil had already been invaded on the 9th December, and what were the precautions taken? The only constructive programme to which the Government can point in this connection is the starting of the 'Grow More Food' campaign, which was inaugurated as "early" as the 7th April, 1942, Burma soil having been invaded on the 9th December, that is to say, about four months earlier. Moreover, what was the attitude of the Government of India

in regard to the question of increasing the rice acreage in Bengal? Just before Burma was invaded, the Government of Bengal was persuaded by the Government of India to insist upon an enlarged acreage under jute in view of problematic orders from America and other parts of the world. In spite of the opposition of the representatives of Jute growers on a statutory body, the jute growers were compelled to undertake double the acreage of what they were prepared to agree to, and this insistence went on till the 24th March, when the Government of India permitted the Government of Bengal to order a reduction in view of the developments of the war. It had already become too late and there could be no remedy of the situation. The result was that the area under rice underwent a shrinkage. The area under rice in Bengal in the year 1942/43 was 7 lakhs of acres less than in the year 1941/42; and this decrease in the acreage has partly to be ascribed to this policy of the Central Government in encouraging a larger acreage under jute than the jute growers themselves wanted. Then, Sir, exports continued to the Mid-East and Africa; and it cannot be said that so far as the export policy is concerned, the Provincial Government had any say. Indeed, it is on record that the Ministers protested on more than one occasion against the policy of export in which the Government had indulged, but to no effect. The Government of Bengal really meant Sir John Herbert in those days—and the Ministers kept on protesting, but to no effect. In the Gregory Committee report a fantastic assumption has been made that the high prices of foodgrains really encouraged the producers to gorge themselves with food. A more fantastic suggestion cannot be made, and its hollowness has been exposed in the note appended to that report by the present Minister of Agriculture for Bengal, where he points out that not more than 10 per cent. of the agricultural population, perhaps he was speaking exclusively of Bengal, could be said to have anything like any surplus. The rest either had to depend upon subsidiary occupations, because of the uneconomic sizes of their holdings, or they just barely maintained themselves with the produce of their fields. The Floud Commission also made a recommendation that a very large proportion of the cultivators really do not possess economic holdings. They pointed out that 29 per cent. of the total population of Bengal represented landless agricultural labour, and that of the rest barely one-fifth has just sufficient land for maintenance. Two-fifths are cultivators of extremely small holdings. While these factors have been conveniently ignored by the authorities in England in the course of the debate that took place in the Houses of Parliament, as also in this House by the Honourable Member in charge. An undue emphasis has been placed on hoarding. I entirely agree that hoarding has to a very large extent been responsible for the present famine, but hoarding on whose part? As pointed out by the Minister of Agriculture in Bengal, not more than 10 per cent. of the agriculturists could possibly be suspected of hoarding anything like, say, considerable amounts which could make any impression on the markets.

One of the factors which went to contribute towards this famine was referred to in the House of Lords by Lord Huntington when he said that grain bought for the army and army reserves must also be a contributory cause. This has not been referred to by any other speaker. Now, Sir, a good deal of discussion has taken place in the Gregory Committee as regards this point. We find a laboured apologia in the report to indicate that, after all, the army feeds the Indians who otherwise have to be fed by the country and, although the standard of consumption in the case of soldiers may be higher than the standard of consumption in their homes, the difference between the two standards cannot be very considerable; and although the army is expected to hold reserves, the reserves are not at the present moment held up to the mark. But, Sir, there is one point which has got to be remembered in this connection. Though quantities do matter, it is not so much the quantities, as the simultaneous withdrawal of foodstuffs from the market by different competing parties, that matter. In the present instance, the Government of India is responsible for very large purchases made on behalf of the Army, as well as considerable

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

purchases made for the benefit of the civilian Departments, of which the Railways perhaps take the lead. It is admitted that all the Departments of the Government of India and all the Departments of the Government of Bengal, had to be supplied with rations at concession rates, though the details of this privilege vary from Department to Department. In some cases, the entire families of the employees are entitled to be supplied with rations at concession rates. In other cases, perhaps the individual employees alone are so entitled. But, then, the fact remains that very large purchases had to be made by Government for the purpose of carrying out this obligation. That meant withdrawal of large quantities of grains from the market simultaneously with the purchases made on behalf of the Army. Add to this the demands made.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member's time is up.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): It was agreed, Sir, the other day that the Movers of amendments would get 30 minutes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I see the Honourable Member has moved an amendment. He can then speak for half an hour.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: This fact is amply illustrated by a very recent publication on behalf of the Government of Bengal in which it is pointed out that from the 1st of March to 31st of August 1943 the total quantity of foodgrains received on Government account, including purchases by Government agents from outside Bengal and purchases on Government account within the province itself, amounted to 65·3 lakhs of maunds. Out of this, these different Departments which enjoyed certain priorities, the industrial concerns, the essential services and so on, took away 22 lakhs of maunds, that is to say, more than one-third of the total quantity that was available to the Government of Bengal. The despatches to the districts amounted to 16½ lakhs of maunds. That is to say, out of a total of 65 odd lakhs of maunds, the districts which represent 6 crores of population, got 16½ lakhs of maunds. Is it, then, any matter of wonder that the distress was so acute and so tragic in its effects in the interior of the province? I find that only five days ago, a Dooars planter, evidently an honest Briton, writing to the *Statesman* said the following:

"What is wanted is the restarting of a free movement of rice and paddy to local bazaars throughout Bengal. This will happen if large industrial concerns require again to lay in stocks to safeguard their labour and they will only be carrying on the vicious circle of the bazaar. This must not be allowed to continue."

Sir, we had another honest Briton in the Council of State, Mr. Parker, admitting that he had hoarded large stocks of food, though for the benefit of his employees. Hundreds of Parkers all over Bengal contributed to the misery of the population by resorting to this procedure for the purpose of safeguarding their own interests.

An Honourable Member: The others are not so honest as to confess.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I expect Sir Henry Richardson to get up and explain the part that was taken by his friends in this particular matter. Nowhere else can such a thing be imagined. There was a mad rush for securing grains, and it is referred to in the Gregory report as a scramble for supplies at ever increasing prices which they say had diminished supplies procurable. Who was responsible for this scramble? Let Sir Henry Richardson answer. Between Government and the employers of labour, those who are understood to be engaged in essential industries (and the very touch of the white hand seems to endow any industry with the character of an essential industry), the scramble went on, and was to a very large extent responsible for the famine which we are discussing. What did the Central Government do? According to a statement made in this House, till 29th May 1943, there was no statutory authority given to the Provincial Governments to require employers of labour

to submit returns of the stocks that they held for distribution to their employees, nor to take out a licence for the maintenance of such stocks. Am I very wrong when I say that the Central Government is itself responsible for encouraging employers of labour in this murderous enterprise of theirs? At no time in the history of India the cleavage between the Government and the people had been brought out so clearly. Here was the Government supported by the capitalists whose needs must be satisfied at all costs, if necessary, at the sacrifice of humble lives. Nobody was there to enquire as to what was happening to the people—six crores of people in the Province of Bengal. This attitude was very forcibly expressed by a British executive officer in one of the Eastern Bengal districts when he pointed out that the life of a pack mule belonging to the military transport department was more valuable, and deserved to be preserved with greater care, than the life of people who were not helping in the war effort. That truly represented the attitude of a section of the permanent officials in this country, and that also led to the tragedy that we are witnessing today.

Sir, I have very little time at my disposal to deal with the other points that come to my mind. Sir, the cup of my humiliation is full to the brim. I have under the rules of procedure of this House to word my amendment as a recommendation to those very people who, I think, are responsible for the misfortunes of my countrymen. But, Sir, I feel that I am pleading at the bar of history—history that is not propaganda, history that is truthful, history that is fair and just to the weak and the oppressed, and I have no doubt about the verdict of that history.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh (Member for Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I as a Member of this very incompetent and callous Government, may say that I just paid a flying visit to some parts of Bengal. To speak with confidence concerning the rural conditions in Bengal would need a prolonged stay. I can give you only my passing impressions. I can claim that these impressions are not without some validity. I have been familiar with similar conditions elsewhere.

Bengal has been passing through a terrible ordeal of both body and mind. I have been asking myself the question: why Bengal suddenly found itself faced with famine? Bengal had managed to subsist for years and conditions to all appearances were normal.

In 1933, General Megaw, after a careful enquiry into certain Public health aspects of village life in India struck a note of warning when he said:

"The outlook for the future is gloomy to a degree, not only for the masses of the people who must face an intensified struggle for bare subsistence, but also for the upper classes whose incomes depend on the production of a surplus crop."

Taking India as a whole, he said that 39 per cent. of the people were well-nourished, 41 per cent., poorly nourished and 20 per cent. very badly nourished.

An Honourable Member: What is the distinction between poorly nourished and badly nourished.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I suppose 'poorly nourished' means under nourished, and 'badly nourished' means not properly nourished at all.

This was said in 1933 and the conditions have not greatly changed since this was written. The fact is that India has been suffering from chronic poverty. Even in normal times, Bengal produces only 19·6 ounces of grain per adult against 24 ounces per adult estimated to be the minimum nutritional requirement. The position in Bengal was aggravated by the shortage of rice harvest in 1942-43 owing to damage by cyclone and insect pests. The situation in the province was not made easier by an attempt to bring the laws of supply and demand which act sub-consciously under conscious control and the provincial barriers which suddenly sprang up impeding normal streams of supply. The corn dealers who carry stocks in normal times, faced with the uncertainties of a controlled market, now carry no stocks. Villages were emptied of supplies and the landless agricultural labour was stranded. The village drudge trudged to the towns in the hope of getting some food. The towns had neither

[Sir Jogendra Singh.]

the reserves nor the organisation to meet the situation. The precariously balanced economy of Bengal was thus put out of gear by factors over which the Province lost control. New problems arose which could not be readily resolved.

The impression I formed was that the clouds are lifting. Since about a month ago grain from outside Bengal is now not only flowing into Calcutta but into the remote towns in a steady stream. The charities organised by people in Calcutta and outside towns have done a great deal to succour and to save. At Dacca I found a voluntary organisation at work which has much to commend itself. The citizens of Dacca of all communities have formed a central food committee. This central food committee has formed mohalla committees. The authorities hand over foodstuffs as they become available, to the central food committee and this committee distributes to mohallas and committees who in their turn distribute it to their consumers. The central committee charges a small commission for the supplies it gives to the mohalla committees for retail sale. Out of this profit it runs free kitchens which feed a few thousands. It has also started cheap canteens which have become very popular. These cheap canteens provide four *chapatis*, *dal* and vegetables for one anna. I tried these myself and found them good.

Then a rich harvest of rice would soon be ready for the scythe. Those who are ready to work will find their way into the rice fields and those who are too weak to work and the orphans will need care and nursing for some time to come. Indeed orphans will need care and protection for many years till they grow up. I would, however, remind the House that this 26 million acres of early and late rice give less than half an acre per head on 60 million people of Bengal. The normal yield of rice per acre in Bengal is about 1,000 pounds only. This is the grim fact of this situation, and till food production can be increased to meet all the demands the situation would remain just as it was in 1933. It will go to normal but that normal does not mean that the population is getting what it should get—a good standard of living.

Thanks to the Honourable the Finance Member we have not been idle. Our "Grow More Food" campaign has succeeded during 1942-43 in increasing the area under food crops by 80 lakh acres, and our target during the current year is to increase it to 120 lakh acres. Up to 15th October, 1943, we have given financial assistance amounting to 133 lakhs in loans, over 61 lakhs in grants from the Central revenues and nearly 10½ lakhs from the Cotton Fund—I am glad to say that 62 lakhs in loans and 13 lakhs in grants have gone to Bengal. This financial assistance has been sanctioned for initiating various schemes which are expected to produce quick results. Among irrigation schemes, two schemes of irrigation by tube-wells have been sanctioned, one for 200 tube-wells in U. P. and another for 73 tube-wells in Bihar, which would command an area of 60,000 acres in U. P. and 22,800 acres in Bihar, respectively. These areas have been diverted from cash crops to food crops and would revert to cash crops as the cultivator is losing over the change. The cultivator must be assured of a square deal if we want to ensure the success of the "Grow More Food" campaign and have consumer goods available to meet the needs of himself and of his family. There is no ground for a complacent attitude. The disease of poverty and under-production is of long standing. It will need consistent effort continued for long years to improve conditions.

I am a new comer to this House. I wonder if this House has ever taken any abiding interest in the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, Sir John Russell's admirable recommendations, Dr. Wright's report on Animal Husbandry and the Banking Inquiry Committee's report which gave estimates of agricultural debt. The need of the moment is to take a warning from the present, to plan for increasing production for the future, providing for paying employment for surplus village population and to raise generally the living standards of the agricultural producer as well as urban labour. Planning

requires grasping of the complex conditions from a number of key positions from which a complete design can be produced.

The problem may be placed under four heads: Land, Economics, Social, Political.

Land improvement implies the lightening of the burden of debt which the agriculturists carry, to bring the land tax within the modern canons of taxation, to provide cheap agricultural credit, a knowledge of better seeds and the method of improved animal husbandry, of co-operation and of farming generally. It needs bringing science to the help of the villagers, to extend the responsibility of our colleges and universities beyond their academic walls to fields and farms.

Economics imply provision of money for developing new lands, to convert barren areas into fruitful fields by irrigation, to cover areas that lie waste with grass and trees, to raise the price of agricultural produce which determines agricultural wage, so that our vast population may have some purchasing power creating a new demand for goods and services leading to expansion of industries, to provide employment for our population which remains unproductive.

On the social side it needs a programme for rural and urban reconstruction, training for applying modern scientific discoveries. In the words of a poet, our fleet-footed friends have captured the *Mahmal*, while we sit spell-bound by the piping of the piper of the caravan. The force of human engine has been assessed at 2,000 kilogram calories *per capita* per day, while science in countries which are now in the forefront has increased the capacity per day to 1½ lakh kilograms *per capita* per day. The lag in scientific technique will have to be made up if we are to take our place with the other countries of the world.

Some planning on the agricultural side was carried out in the Punjab and it is as a result of this that the Punjab is able to provide a surplus for other provinces and has made an unrivalled contribution in men, money and material, and her wheat has found its way not only to Bengal but to many war fronts and at rates which compare favourably with the prices of other food-grains. The Punjab has made the interest of the producers its paramount concern and has been rewarded by the contentment of the countryside even in these fateful days.

You may well ask, what is the policy and programme of my department? It is true that I am in command of Education, Health and Lands, but it is none the less true that my command does not wield the sceptre of authority. Agriculture, Education and Health are primarily the concern of the provinces. Indeed it seems to have become a tradition, nay, it is the constitutional position that beyond offering occasional advice the Centre has no direct responsibility in these fruitful fields. I must confess that I am not satisfied with this. If India is to resolve the economic deadlock it must have centralised direction, centralised finance and decentralised activities. I feel that unless we at the Centre guide the emergent forces which are racing in full blast in all countries of the world, we would fail entirely in advancing the economic interests of this vast continent. Society cannot be rationed as a factory. It can only live by pooling its resources, by financing boldly agriculture and industry and by harmonising collective and individual cultures, sub-consciously acting as if bound by social contact, to promote and protect, with common force, the goods of each associate. The strategy of the future must aim at production of food and goods. We are worried about the increased circulation of money. We ought to worry more about increasing the production of goods.

I have deliberately dwelt on conditions which govern life and labour. We must apply our minds to the problems of the chronic disease of poverty which is haunting our villages and towns. Of enquiries, reports, and recommendations there is no end. What we need is action. Our discussions bear no fruit and will be gone with the wind unless we plan boldly and carry out the plans with courage to make a better future for the generations to come.

[Sir Jogendra Singh.]

Mr. Churchill has given the lead. Let us resolve to provide food, work and homes for all.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Not for us.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: The battle of land and the battle against poverty should be fought now and continued till victory is won. (Interruption.) I can assure you that this Government is resolved now to fight poverty and to raise the standard of living both in the villages and towns.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Good sense is dawning on this Government now.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I call 'this Government' because it is largely Indianised and is resolved to do its best.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I ask the Honourable Member what is the production for 1942-43 from his 'Grow More Food' campaign?

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Three and a half million tons.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): May I know whom does the Honourable Member represent? Nobody. Please do not lecture to us about your representative character.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, I have already moved the amendment which stood in my name, and I shall presently explain why my amendment should be carried. In the meantime I wish to express my satisfaction that at long last the Government have come to a right conclusion and have accepted a really right food policy. It has been a very belated performance, but at last they have reached a really right policy to get over this food crisis

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: What is that?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: What it embodied in the Gregory Committee Report which the Honourable Member has accepted on behalf of the Government, which recommends statutory control of prices, vigorous drive against profiteers, no matter who they are, and so on. I am very glad that that policy has at last been accepted and even now—even at this late hour—if it is honestly pursued without any but or if, it will relieve the unfortunate distress that has been stalking the land for nearly two years. (Interruption.) I only say 'if'. It is not such a big 'if' as I will explain just now. I find that there is no reference to the immediate present or immediate future in my Honourable friend, Sir Jogendra Singh's speech. He has been talking to us of a beautiful future vision when the standard of life will be raised and he has his poetic dream of something which is yet to come.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: From the corpses of the dead.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: For the present I am not concerned with that dream but I am concerned with the terrible realities

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): But he is concerned with his four chapatis.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: The drift of policy about which I will use the mildest word that the Government has been guilty of criminal neglect. It is the mildest word that I can use. The mildest words which I can use for the policy of the Government for the last four years are 'criminal negligence' and even more 'criminal self-complacency'. But I am not indulging in recriminations. I am more concerned with the immediate future and I assure Government that it is because I want to help them that I am saying all this. The problem is too tragic. The situation does not admit of these personal bickerings, but of the promptest and the quickest remedy vigorously pursued. I am not quite sure whether the Government are still going to pursue the policy which they have announced. If they do, we shall even now forget what has happened in the past. Dreary processions of one Food Member after another, one Food Member comes and one goes, experts come, committees come, reports come, pompous promises were made on the floor of this House by General Wood, Admiral Steel, Air-Marshal Iron, but nothing is done to relieve the poor people who are dying.

I want something real from day to day, from moment to moment. But still my Honourable friends on the Treasury Benches want us to sympathize with their difficulties and not to redress the difficulties of 40 crores of people. They have no apology for the past; they are still telling us that they have done their best when the whole world says that they could not have done worse. Let them keep this in mind that if they were in a free country, all these Honourable Members will be driven into an exile from which they will not return until their next birth.

An Honourable Member: It is fiction.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: But what do I find the Indian Members to be? They are simply departmental heads. I am shocked that not one single Indian Member has raised his voice against the policy of the last four years of deplorable self-complacency and criminal negligence. Indian Members of the Executive Council must act like members of a Cabinet, and not departmental heads. The past Food policy shows that they simply attended to their departments, did their best, made their mild protests in the Executive Council and left everything to those who control the policy.

An Honourable Member: Question.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: That is unfortunately the impression that I have got. I have tried in all places wherever my voice was heard. In fact, I asked one Food Member to get me the food or to get out. I said, "get out". I don't think there is any milder word for you who have starved 40 crores of people and who are still complacent and who want us to appreciate only your difficulties. What is the difficulty that you know about? 40 crores of people going without food, thousands of people forming queues at food shops. And then because they have some kind of rationing in Bombay, there is no end of boasting this Bombay rationing. Remember that in Bombay the solution achieved is only of distribution and of nothing else. It is a mistake to boost Bombay. I come from Bombay and I know the conditions there. It is of course right to compliment the Government of Bombay and their officers who have done their very best for distribution, but don't think you have much to envy us in the matter of prices, and unless the problem is solved both ways, distribution and prices, there is no meaning even in rationing in Bombay. I tell you that the prices in Bombay today are what black market prices were this time last year; and the food is often adulterated with dust and stone, and we have to pay for mud at wheat prices. That is the position in Bombay. You have read of rats gnawing at the dead body of a woman, not merely in Bengal where it is so common, but in Bombay, which has been boosted out of all proportion everywhere, even in the House of Commons. I say as a Bombay man that what they have solved is the distribution question; the prices question remains absolutely unsolved. Therefore I ask the Government that they should not have any complacency about this matter; they should pursue with vigour the measures they have initiated, with courage and persistence, and they should not care for anybody who comes in the way. If the Punjab zemindars come in the way, they must be taught their places; if the Government of Sind is profiteering at the expense of the starving masses, that Government must be pulled down

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Under the orders of the Central Government.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Yes; there are ample powers; they have not been used. I asked for a food dictator months ago. What do I see now? The Sind Government making a profit of 2 crores or even some say 3 crores—I received a letter yesterday only—a gentleman who was a highly placed Government servant but who has now retired says it is three crores; and this Government to whom I am paying a subsidy for the last 8 years of one crore and 5 lakhs a year, this Sind Government which is living on my charity for the last 8 years to the extent of one crore and five lakhs a year and which is going to live on my charity for another forty years because of this Sukkur barrage, this Government has the ingratitude, the inhumanity of starving my people unless they pay these fancy prices for what stuff it exports to Bombay and to other places. What

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

mercy are you going to show them? You are not touching the Punjab zemindar or the Sind Government. My friend Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad mentioned in his speech the other day that 95 per cent. of the people of the Punjab are against this policy of the zemindars; and I am glad to find that his voice has been echoed in the *Tribune* which condemns without reservation this complacency of the Punjab Government and their incipient revolt against the policy of control. I say, control them properly; shackle them if need be; force them to behave properly.

But unless the Government are also clear that the real causes of this misery are also attacked, they will only land themselves in a blind alley. That real cause is inflation. Let Government remember what they have done during the last four years. That inflation is at the bottom, and it is the biggest and the most essential and the most decisive cause of the present crisis. It was early in 1942 that my humble voice was raised at a public meeting over which I was presiding, that inflation was not coming in the future—it had already come. Thereafter Professor Vakil followed with a series of lectures against inflation. Then there is the *Economist* of London, one of the best known financial papers—I cannot help reading what the *Economist* has to say about the policy of this Government: it calls it "crude inflationary finance". That is not enough; it goes further and condemns them roundly. I could not condemn them as effectively as the editor of the *Economist* has done; but unfortunately my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, does not still lay the same emphasis on inflation as he should. First he ridiculed and pooh-poohed it; then he employed hirelings to write in favour of his policy. These hirelings were writing in April, that wheat is flowing into Bengal. They are being picked up from some native state, one of them a foreigner, to write in support of his inflationary policy. The Honourable the Finance Member did everything in his power to confuse the issue by talking of workers, in their thousands—getting high wages and about their "fictitious" purchasing power; but it never occurred to him that it is the inflationary policy which is the decisive and the real cause of this great catastrophe prevalent in the country. In my humble way, I tried to work out what in terms of human misery this country had suffered as a result of his policy; it caused me many sleepless hours and when I reached my conclusion. I tell you that I could not get sleep till 3 A.M. After such patient labour I presented him some statistics the other day and asked him to correct me if I was wrong, or he could give his own figures. What did he do? With incredible levity, which cannot be excused, he began by pouring ridicule on the statistics of the miseries of the poor of this country. Let him come out with his own reasoning; otherwise for a finance minister of this country to pour ridicule over the miseries of hundred millions of people worked out in statistics is to my mind a performance which nobody will envy him. I am willing to be corrected; but I maintain that after careful consideration I reached a figure of 50,000 crores of goods and services—for a margin of error I reduced this to 18,000. That shows how moderate a man I am. But instead of studying those figures my friend went on ridiculing them. That complacency must go.

I would also request the Honourable the Commerce Member not to be so full of optimism as he is. He is a fighter like me; I like a man who fights and therefore I like his fighting figure whenever he comes and speaks to us; but let him fight on the side of right. Let him not fight as an official. Let me tell him that when 27,00 million yards of cloth were found to be hoarded, the hoarders were not punished for profiteering or hoarding but they were given three months more time to rob the poor; and he wants me to thank him for it and says that he will not follow me. He need not follow me. I do not expect him to do so; but I ask of him to remember the two ladies in Bengal who went to buy cloth—*saris*—for Rs. 4, the pre-war price, and were told they had to pay Rs. 14 and then they went home and committed suicide. I want him to remember those sisters of his and mine, of whom there must be many who are

suffering nudity today on account of his "success" of his control of prices of cloth.

Regarding the control of prices, I want to say that that will be the crux of the whole question. The only Member of Government, who was not a Food Member at that time, who can claim credit for having initiated a right policy is the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar. Late in 1941 it was he who wanted to fix the price at Rs. 4-8-0 a maund of wheat; but he did not get the support of his own Executive Councillors; and then things have run riot until wheat cannot be had even for Rs. 15 sometimes or Rs. 12 a maund and even worse. If his policy had been adhered to in 1941 we could never have come to this unfortunate crisis.

There is one other point on which I want to say how sad I am that in this country, at this very critical time my own countrymen have played a most discreditable part. The zemindars and capitalists have bled, starved and fleeced their own countrymen with a callousness and soullessness which make me feel that there is nothing glorious in "Nationalism". The Punjab starves Bengal

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): Question.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Question

Sardar Mangal Singh: I will give you figures.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You can give them in your own time. It is admitted now, my friend—the Punjab starves Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Admitted by whom?

(Interruption by Sardar Mangal Singh.)

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You can say in your own time. I am simply saying that this is the information on which I am speaking.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): They have done more to Bengal than any other province.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If you go on in that style, I will expose you further (Interruption.) I say, you can have your say when you have time. I maintain that the Landlords of the Punjab have become the greatest parasites.

An Honourable Member: It is a lie.

Sardar Mangal Singh: It is a white lie.

An Honourable Member: It is a black lie.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: No doubt you have given wheat for money. I won't pursue this, but this shows the difficulties of the Honourable the Food Member—what forces he has to meet.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Hear, hear.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: This shows that even in his own Executive Council a just and humane man—my Honourable friend, Sir Jogendra Singh—a quiet man, a recluse and a philosopher—he thinks that the Punjab has played a noble part. History will speak. But I am sad that my own countrymen are playing an ignoble part. When the existence of inflation was admitted by 20 eminent economists, these capitalists in Delhi and Bombay were talking of commodity inflation and all that bunkum. I am sorry they could get hireling writers who call themselves economists, to re-echo that absolute bunkum. Mr. Pethick Lawrence is as great an economist as any Liberal or Tory statesman, and our own 20 brilliant economists who are not hirelings of any capitalists have said with the greatest emphasis what wrong inflation has done. But what did our big merchants do? They say, there is no inflation, let us get more profit. And they are responsible for getting bloated wealth in their pockets by starving, bleeding and even killing the masses of this country. It is not merely the Government that are responsible. I acquit Government of any deliberate desire to starve. Where they have failed is that they have not got at the right policy; it is not intentional. But as for the zemindars and the capitalists, there is the intentional policy of making as much money as they can out of the miseries of the people of this country. Therefore, my indignation against these profiteers, even though they are my own countrymen, is ten times greater than my indigna-

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

tion against this Government. I find the press in India, to a large extent, only attacks this problem politically and condemns the Government's food policy on political grounds. If the press had real sympathy for the starving people they would have stormed the houses of these capitalists and profiteers. I do not find any condemnation of the profiteers or hoarders. The Government behave as if the capitalists are their spiritual brethren, the press also behave as if the capitalists were their spiritual brethren, and as between the Government and the press the profiteer has got the paradise to-day. I want that public opinion should awake up. The pressmen—these poor fellows—they write what their proprietors force them to do. They know that this is wrong, but they write for what is called this wretched belly. They write what they do not believe in. They tell me, I can produce them if their job is certain for the rest of their life. I can produce them here and make them swear God's own truth that it is these proprietors who are compelling them to write such nonsense when the profiteers and the hoarders are there. But, unfortunately for the masses there is no friend. This condemnation of the Government's food policy in the press, so long as it does not condemn and ferret out the profiteer and the hoarder, is purely political, and I attach no importance to it because it is not sincere. But at the same time, the condemnation is true, and the Government must not forget that for a moment.

Lastly, I will say, I do not want to go into the bickerings about the past. I am prepared to forget them. I want that the Government with the co-operation of this House which the Honourable Member has sought, with such conciliatory spirit in his speech—I am sorry that his speech is ridiculed on political grounds, the contents of it are not appreciated. The contents of that speech are exactly on the lines of the Gregory Committee's report and if he does not pursue that policy I will blame him. But the policy which the Gregory Committee announced and which he has accepted, which the Government has accepted, I say, is correct, and if anybody ridicules you he is an enemy as much of yours as of the masses. It is not an easy thing for you to pursue that policy. In your own Council there may be people who may be against you. The Provincial Governments may be against you. The reputation of the Civil Service is against you, the infallibility of the foreign bureaucracy is against you, the lethargy of the human nature is against you. There are many other things which are against you, and in the meantime, 40 crores of people do not know where to get their next meal and three crores of children are growing without any milk. It is an ignoble thing that our younger generation should grow without milk. Milk is getting scarcer and scarcer every day, and my friend pictures a vision of the future in which we shall have an idyllic state of things, when to-day all we see is devastation, desolation, starvation, nudity and death! Let my Honourable friend apply his mind, let the Government apply their mind to the present situation. The future will take care of itself. I am not concerned with the future now; I am concerned with the present. And unless they do so, the Indian Members of the Government will go down in history as simply puppets who stuck to their jobs. In face of inflationary finance by the Government, in face of an absolute complacency on the part of the higher powers, they must stand out. If they all combine and tell the powers that be, "Look here, no Indian shall starve", things will not be like this. In the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay you can have your seven courses. Nobody prevents,—who prevents it? What do I find on the Bombay race course? Bookmakers and gamblers in their thousands get whatever refreshments they want, though they may not want any. They are simply drowning their sorrows in a cup of tea. That is what they do. Why do Government carry on races now? If one thing should be made illegal to-day it is racing. But they enjoy themselves. Life goes on merrily in India from the bureaucratic point of view as if there was no war, no starvation, no destitution. I only wish that the drive which His Excellency

the Viceroy has undertaken,—for which all credit to him—will not be a short-lived thing, because I cannot imagine a greater hurdle against him—his own Government—which does not know its own mind from one day to another. I absolve them from all deliberateness, I do not absolve them from negligence and carelessness; and I blame them for their absolute failure, and I only wish that they now retrieve with vigour and courage, a policy, a course of conduct which has brought us to this pass. Otherwise, India without having been invaded, will present a picture far more ghastly than even Poland, Yugo-Slavia and other invaded countries. Do you find anything more gruesome, has it ever occurred,—200, 500, 600, 1,000 people dying, people struggling with dogs and mice for a morsel of food from the dustbins, mothers abandoning children, husbands abandoning their wives, the whole social fabric breaking down, and you sit down here in your complacency and ask me to give you credit! I ask you to understand the difficulties of the people, and unless you want to conceal the folly and stupidity of the last four years they should agree to my amendment. I do not want Royal Commissions. Since the Simon Commission, I have lost all inferiority complex. I do not want any Royal Commission any more. I want the elected representatives of the people, people who are in daily touch with the lives which people live, elected from the members of this House and the next. (An Honourable Member: How many reports do you want?) This will be the report of the people. Unless you are interested in starving the people, you will join me and if I am interested in not starving the people, I shall join you. I assure you that to me the poorest Indian, of whatever caste or creed, has always been and will always be my next-of-kin. Therefore I assure you that I shall report as justly as it may be, if I am elected, of which I am not sure. But what I want is ten elected people. Then there is the Federal Court Chief Justice who is the biggest judicial authority, who will impartially go into the situation and give us a report. I do not want scapegoats. I do not want to hang anybody, just as they threaten to hang Hitler when he meets them next. All that I want is that responsibility should be shown where it is and people who have starved the masses for four years should no longer live with a reputation for infallibility which they have always cloaked their failures with. That is the reason why I am asking for the Chief Justice of the Federal Court. He is a man whose impartiality nobody can doubt. His capacity cannot be doubted and if these 12 elected members, these 12 apostles, if they apply their honest minds guided by an Accountant General and the Chief Justice of the Federal Court, we need not fear the verdict of that body. They will enquire, not with a view to find scapegoats but solely with a view to lay the responsibility where it is and to seek guidance for the future.

Sir, I have done. I implore my Honourable friends on the Government Benches to forgive me if I have spoken a strong word. I ask every other Honourable Member to forgive me if I have spoken a strong word. I want, just as any one else in this country, that this war should be won but you are losing the war by pursuing the policy which you have done, by the complacency that you have shown. You have thrown us to the wolves of hunger which are much worse than the Japs or the Germans. For the cloth that I am wearing today I used to pay 12 annas or 14 annas per yard in pre-war days. After my friend Sir Azizul Huque inaugurated his policy of cheapness, I have paid Rs. 3-12.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Why don't you purchase cloth at 10 annas, which is still available.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only one minute.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am finishing. I say this is the position which has got to be retrieved. I commend my amendment to the House.

Sardar Mangal Singh: We are debating the food problem under the shadow of a great national catastrophe. Thousands and thousands of our countrymen are dying of starvation. Here is a Government of India which sits complacently

[Sardar Mangal Singh.]

and I am sorry that the speeches from the Treasury Benches do not come up to the requirements of the situation. I heard with attention the speech of the Honourable the Food Member the other day but I must say that his speech was disappointing. While he showered compliments on his colleagues to his left and to his right, especially to the Honourable the Railway Member, there was nothing which could be called a constructive contribution to the solution of the acute food problem that is now before the country. He sits there with the privileges of an accused person denying the charges that are brought forward against him but he does not make any statement himself. When he is asked what are the starvation figures of deaths in Bengal, he says that the Bengal Government does not know. When he is asked what are the production figures, he does not know anything. When he is asked what foundation there is for the statements made by the Secretary of State in the British Parliament about the Indian food situation, he says he does not know. He has not even read the White Paper issued by the British Government and then he says that the British Government might have learnt the facts from sources other than the Government of India. I put a question the other day as to what foundation there is for statements made in the British Parliament that the Punjab zamindars are withholding foodgrains from Bengal. He confessed his complete ignorance. He says he did not know what was the foundation for those statements. I asked again what was the foundation for other fantastic statements made by Mr. Amery the other day in the British Parliament. He could not say anything. The Government of India is groping in the dark. They do not know their own mind. They have no reliable data before them.

When they feel puzzled, they send a telegram to Mr. Amery: "Please send one more expert." The expert comes here. He juggles with his figures. He produces a report. The Government does not know what to do. These experts from Britain are trained in the methods of price control in Britain. England is a small country with a highly educated people. They have got their own national government in which they have complete confidence. The conditions in England are entirely different from the conditions in this country. This is a country of 400 millions, the great majority of whom are illiterate. It is a big agricultural country where the sources of food cannot be controlled. In England you can control either, at the factory or at the port. In India, you cannot control the foodgrains which are produced all over the country. Unless you can control the commodity you want to requisition, you cannot introduce price control. If you introduce price control, the moment the Ordinance is issued from the Secretariat, that commodity will disappear from the markets. Under the very nose of the Government of India, *gur* disappeared from the markets of Delhi last year, as soon as the Ordinance was issued. The next day when it was withdrawn, *gur* came on the markets of Delhi again. What is the position of cloth control in this country. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has not said a word about the soaring prices of cloth from Bombay. He was very unjust to the Punjab zamindars. I am very much against profiteering and hoarding. Profiteers and hoarders must be punished along with the Members of the Government of India. My Honourable friend said that the present Indian Members of the Government should be sent to exile. Why should they not be tried for murder and sentenced to starvation to death. That would be the most appropriate punishment. My point is that if you want to issue orders about price control, you must be sure that you can enforce them. What is the guarantee? Last year, when you introduced price control in the Punjab, you fixed the price of wheat at Rs. 5 per maund. Where was the wheat? Even the Government Departments, the Military Department purchased wheat in the Punjab at Rs. 7 or Rs. 8 a maund, instead of Rs. 5. The Military Department entered into the black market; they were forced to do so. Where is the guarantee for the price control all over the country for which Mr. Jamnadas Mehta pleaded? He might have read some books on price control printed in England and he wants

J.P. M.

to force those theories on this country, the conditions of which are entirely different. I submit that so far as the Punjab is concerned, there seems to be a misapprehension all over the country. In the British Parliament also statements have been made which are obviously based upon wrong telegrams which are being sent weekly by my Honourable friend, the Food Member. What is the position? I agree with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta when he says that hoarders and profiteers must be punished. I support him in that statement. But the question is who are the hoarders and who are the profiteers?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: The Government knows that.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Government knows nothing. I would like to know whether the Punjab zamindar is a hoarder or a profiteer.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: The *Tribune* says that he is.

Sardar Mangal Singh: The *Tribune* man is from Madras and he writes something for his belly and how can you rely on his statements? Now, what are the figures? In this wheat year the arrivals in the Punjab Mandis of wheat are 425,700 tons as compared with 371,000 tons last year. Now, what are the Government purchases? In May 1943, the Punjab agents purchased on behalf of the Government of India 195,000 tons of wheat. How much of it was transported? I would invite the attention of this Honourable House to study these figures. The Punjab Government purchased nearly two lakhs of tons of wheat for Bengal. How much of it was transported to Bengal? Only 16,000 tons. The remaining wheat, 180,000 tons, remained undespached and it was lying in different godowns and on different railway platforms. I challenge the Honourable the Railway Member to prove that these figures are wrong. My Honourable friend the Food Member complimented the Railway Member for the quick despatch of foodgrains to Bengal. But what is the Punjab story and what happened in the month of June?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): So, it is a story?

Sardar Mangal Singh: It is a right story; it is not a fiction.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: What about Sir Chhotu Ram?

Sardar Mangal Singh: I am coming to him. Now, Sir, in May the Punjab Government purchased about 2 lakhs of tons of wheat and only 16,000 tons of it was sent to Bengal. Now, what happened in June? In June the Punjab Government purchased 42,000 tons and only 67,000 tons were despatched at the end of June, 158,000 tons remained undespached. At the end of July 141,000 tons of wheat remained undespached at the stations. Again, at the end of September, there remained 63,000 tons of wheat still undespached from the railway stations of the Punjab. Now, Sir, may I ask the Honourable the Food Member and the Honourable the Railway Member who is withholding the grains from Bengal? Whether it is the Punjab Government or the Railway Member himself or the Government of India who are withholding this grain? I may inform the Honourable the Railway Member why he does not get the wagons. All the Departments of the Government of India from top to bottom are thoroughly corrupt. My Honourable friend cannot get the wagons whereas the ordinary trader can get the wagons from the Railways. Why? Because there is no one on behalf of the Railway Member to pay the tip to the railway Babu. The real difficulty is this. If you send someone to tip the Babu, you will get the railway wagon. But if you issue instructions, nobody will care for them. The railway Babu will care for his tips.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: May I ask the Honourable Member where all this wheat he talks about is now?

Sardar Mangal Singh: It is still lying on the platforms of railway stations and in the godowns.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: May I inform the Honourable Member that all that wheat has been moved to Bengal?

Sardar Mangal Singh: The Government of India has obviously awakened now. This being the position, I would inform my Honourable friend

[Sardar Mangal Singh.]

Mr. Jamnadas Mehta that the Punjab zamindar is neither hoarding nor profiteering. That he is not hoarding, I have proved. And he is not profiteering.

Now, what is the position? The Punjab grower sells wheat at roundabout Rs. 10 per maund. Sometimes he may sell 4 annas this way or that way. Now, what was the price of *atta* and wheat in Bengal? When you purchased wheat at Rs. 10-4 per maund from the Punjab, the *atta* was being sold at Rs. 20 per maund in Bengal. I am quoting the official price; I am not quoting the black market price. May I ask the Honourable the Food Member or my Honourable friends of the European Group why there is so much difference in the price. There is a difference of about Rs. 10 per maund. The railway freight is only Rs. 1-6. Including the overhead charges, the price of *atta* should not be more than Rs. 14 per maund in Bengal.

An Honourable Member: Not even that.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Yes, not even that. May I ask who is profiteering somewhere? Who is taking away this Rs. 10 per maund because neither the Bengal consumer is being benefited nor the Punjab grower?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Quite clearly, it is the Punjab zamindar.

Sardar Mangal Singh: How?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Let us argue this point outside.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Why not argue it out here?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I do not want to fight with you here. I shall do so outside.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I ask when the Punjab grower was selling his wheat at a lower price than the United Provinces zamindar by Rs. 3 a maund, who was the profiteer? It was either the European miller or the Bengal Government or even the Government of India. I charge here the Government of India that they had been making profit at the expense of the Punjab grower. I charge the Bengal Government that they had been making profit at the expense of the Punjab grower. I charge the European millers in Calcutta that they had been making profits at the expense of the Bengal consumer and the Punjab grower. Why don't you catch these people?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I agree with you about the profiteer.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Thank you. Now Sir, I leave the profiteers and consumers and growers. What is the position in the country? My Honourable friends have given notice of amendments asking for a Royal Commission and Committees. I would beg of them not to fall in the trap because this Royal Commission is a trap. What will be the report of this Royal Commission? The first recommendation would be that the transfer of power to Indians was a mistake. That, I am sure, would be the first recommendation. The second recommendation would be that they will condemn Indianisation. They will say: "Look here, the Bengal civilian was sitting back in his chair, not sure of the support of the Ministry in his actions." That would be the line of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. I beg of the Secretary of the Muslim League Party and my Honourable friend the Leader of the Nationalist Party to drop the proposal of the Royal Commission. We do not want commissions and committees. We had plenty of them. We do not want experts. We want food straightaway here and now. That is the question before the House. If you cannot give food, the only other way is that my friends on Treasury Benches should get out and make room for others who can handle the situation properly. You have failed and you will go down in history—those Indian Members especially will go down in history as people who let down their country at a critical time. That would be the verdict of history. You may shake your head or you may not shake your head, but that would be the verdict of history.

What are the causes. Government are issuing Ordinances, creating black markets and all those things. That is no solution. The real problem is that this country has a vast population and this vast population has no confidence in the present Government. That is the reason why orders issued by the Government are not carried out even by the Government servants. There is

corruption all along under the very nose of Government of India. It is impossible to remove it with the present policy of the Government of India. You will fail, because during the last century and a half of the British rule, you have encouraged all undesirable elements in the public life of the country. That is the real crux of the problem. You have suppressed desirable and better elements in the country. You have encouraged only those people who have no self-respect and who regard themselves as very inferior people. So, Sir, this is the result. There may be direct causes for the Bengal famine, such as no rice from Burma, cyclone, etc., but the real cause is the long exploitation of the masses by the British Government. You have reduced the masses to bare starvation and they cannot put up any power of resistance when the calamity comes. The British Government is really the culprit, they are really responsible for this famine. God knows next year how many other Provinces may be caught in the grip of famine. If you want to earnestly settle this question, the only possible solution is to take the leaders of the country into confidence, get their help and I am sure if Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah put their heads together, these two leaders can deliver the goods and they can solve all questions.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Question.

Sardar Mangal Singh: You may question. But if the Government of India refuse the co-operation of the people, if the Government of India treat with contempt the offers of co-operation of the people of India in fighting the Axis countries, then the responsibility for this muddle, political as well as famine muddle, will be solely on the shoulders of the British Government. I would beg of my Honourable friends the elected Members of this House not to be caught in any trap, but come to a straightforward decision and let the Government of India be held responsible. If the Government of India really seek the co-operation of the people, I am sure this food problem—which is not a political problem—can be solved and the leaders of the country will be willing to offer their hand of co-operation for solving this problem and thus save our dying countrymen.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Sir Abdur Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca *cum* Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, before I proceed to fix the responsibility for this man-made famine I should like to give a reply to my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh. He is not here now but I wanted him to hear this. I represent the Dacca-*cum*-Mymensingh constituency in this House. When he was giving us his experience of Dacca, the four *chapatis* that he had in one of these cheap canteens that Government run there, he forgot that that canteen merely is not all that the Dacca people want. You cannot get rice in Dacca for even Rs. 200 a maund; even now rice is not available in Dacca town and the Dacca district, even at Rs. 80 a maund. And my Honourable friend said that everything is o. k., that rice was flowing in and he saw an abundance of rice in Dacca. My constituency will take me to task if I do not enter a protest against what he said about the situation in Dacca.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): Sir, with due respect, the Honourable Member said that foodgrains were flowing in from other provinces, not rice.

Sir Abdur Halim Ghuznavi: My Honourable friend perhaps did not hear him. He distinctly said that it was his experience that foodgrains included rice. I do not know if the Honourable Member wants to differentiate between rice and wheat I am speaking about the rice famine.

Sir, the responsibility for this man-made famine in Bengal rests, firstly, on Sir John Herbert for the manner in which he carried out the denial policy in April, 1942; and secondly, with Lord Linlithgow's Government for not taking

[Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.]

any steps whatsoever to prevent food shortage which was inevitable owing to enormous military purchases and continued exports of rice from India. After the declaration of war in 1939, more particularly after the fall of Malaya and Burma when the rice position became critical, nothing was done even then; and lastly, after the creation of the Department of Food on the 2nd December 1942 the department had no Member for three critical months commencing from the resignation of Mr. Sircar. Chaos prevailed in that department in those three months and Secretaries were making wild statements. Major-General Wood made a statement in Bengal that rice would be flowing in within a month and the month he mentioned was April, 1943. He again made a statement at the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce that every arrangement had been made to see that there was no shortage of foodstuff in the deficit provinces. Now, Sir, Lord Linlithgow's Government did not take a census of the food position nor did they ever endeavour to get accurate statistics of the food position in the provinces.

The Bengal trouble started with an unfortunate denial policy, rice removal policy. Sir John Herbert ignoring his Ministers and the ministry ordered the Joint Secretary of the Commerce Department to remove the surplus rice within a fortnight from three surplus districts in Bengal. When he got enraged he ordered the Joint Secretary to remove the rice within 24 hours. The removal of rice from these surplus districts coupled with the removal of the boats and the other means of conveyance like bicycles, etc., was responsible for the complete loss of confidence in the Government and was further accentuated by reports from evacuees from Burma and Malaya when they described their experiences of a like nature. All these led to a complete breakdown of the trade channel and the rural economy of the areas immediately concerned and also of the other areas when this news began to spread. It must be said to the credit of Mr. Fazlul Haq that in a letter addressed to the Governor on the 2nd August, 1942, he made this picture absolutely clear to him. In that historic letter he, with the courage of his convictions, told the Governor:

"There is first of all the case of your mandate to the Joint Secretary in April last in the matter of the rice removal policy. In a matter of such vital importance affecting the question of the food-stuffs of the people, you should have called an emergent meeting of the Cabinet and discussed with your Ministers the best means of carrying out the wishes of the military authorities and of the Central Government, but you did nothing of the kind. The Joint Secretary says that when he was arranging to carry out your orders, you grew impatient and gave him definite directions to arrange for the removal of excess rice from 3 districts within 24 hours. The result has been a dismal failure so far as this particular policy is concerned."

He then says:

"At the present moment (i.e., in August, 1942), we are faced with the rice famine in Bengal mainly in consequence of an uncalled for interference on your part, and of hasty action on the part of the Joint Secretary."

He further proceeds:

"Then I come to the boat removal policy. The most outstanding instance of blunder which has been committed by the permanent officials... (not the ministry), apparently with your knowledge and concurrence, has been the case of the prevention of boats from going out into the Bay of Bengal for the purpose of cultivation of the lands in the various islands lying at the mouth of the Delta."

That was another blunder on the part of the Governor: To destroy the boats which used to do all the sowing of rice in those islands. And then as a result of destruction of these boats there was fuel wood shortage. 4 million tons of fuel wood used to be carried by these boats, and that was denied to Bengal. People had to depend on coal only; no fuel was available. The military authorities intended that the boats may not fall into the hands of the enemy, but here instead of keeping them away from the hands of the enemy by removing them to a safer distance, he destroyed thousands and thousands of boats. And those were the boats which used to go into the islands for sowing rice and other things, and which used to carry fuel wood. That is the reason why we are facing famine in Bengal.

Sir, speaking on the food debate on the 9th August 1943, my Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque referred to the Food Conference which was held on

the 14th of December, 1942. He was not the Food Member then; Sir N. R. Sarker was the Member. He quoted from the proceedings of that conference, and incidentally I may say that not a single copy of the proceedings of that conference has been placed in the Library so far.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: The Honourable the Food Member assured us that he would endeavour to make a copy available to us.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings (Secretary, Food Department): Sir, copies are being made. The proceedings were never printed; there are no printed copies available. So I was under the unfortunate necessity of having them typed out and cyclostyled or of sending the proceedings to Simla to be printed. I hope they will be available very shortly.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: After the food debate is over.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: As soon as I can get them.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: My Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, quoted the following from those proceedings:

"The rice position was therefore discussed by the Conference, and this Conference was attended among others not only by the official representatives of the Government of Bengal but also by the then Chief Minister of the Province, namely Mr. Fazlul Haq. As regards rice, the statement on behalf of Bengal was as follows (I have got this quotation from the proceedings of the Assembly debates. He said that Mr. Fazlul Haq stated):

"We do not require for the next few months any rice even though we are in deficit'."

That is the line he quotes from his speech, but he does not quote the second sentence which I have got from Mr. Fazlul Haq. He said:

"Provided you do not export any rice from Bengal and provided you give us sufficient wheat for our consumption. And it is then and then alone that I shall be able to pull through for the next few months."

What is the sin that he has committed if he said that. You did not stop your exports, and you did not give us the wheat that you promised to do, and that is the reason of the famine. Why do you hold Mr. Fazlul Haq responsible for this situation?

Then, Sir, bear in mind that he said this on the 14th of December 1942. How could he realize then about the denial policy which was later carried out by Sir John Herbert—removal of excess rice from those districts.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): Was it after December?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: It was in April 1943.

An Honourable Member: No, that is wrong.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Yes; I beg your pardon.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Who is blaming Mr. Fazlul Haq? Why should he be defended?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I am not defending him at all.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque, referred to the frantic telegram of Mr. Fazlul Haq. He said:

"I am at least happy that he (Mr. Fazlul Haq), has become frantic to send the telegram now. I ask my Honourable friend to find out, when did Mr. Fazlul Haq, realize—I should not have used his name—when did the late Chief Minister of Bengal realize that there was famine condition in Bengal in 1942? Was it in August, 1942, as my friend says today? Will he get an answer from him as to why is it that in January, 1943, when the Government of India wrote to the Government of Bengal that there was a great shortage for civilian consumption."

The Government of India wrote to the Government of Bengal—shortage of civilian consumption; shortage of potatoes, shortage of onions, shortage of cabbages, shortage of cauliflowers. Is this an answer? When did this arise? It did not arise in August 1942. The letter to the Governor is clear on that point; but all this blame is foisted on him for shortage of other things, the civil food supply shortage.

Now, my Honourable friend Sir Azizul Huque has said so much about him; now let me quote Sir Azizul Huque himself. What did he say in Krishnagar in May 1943?

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I shall conclude in two minutes. Sir Azizul Huque, the Commerce Member of the Government of India in reply to the address of welcome by the Krishnagar municipality stressed the absolute accuracy of the figures recently published by Government regarding rice, and maintained that Bengal was not yet deficit in rice. Not content with saying that, he continues: he strongly hoped that there would be a substantial reduction in the price of rice within a week. The week commenced from the 15th May; and he asked the people to muster hope and courage and shed panicky despair. This is what he said in May 1943—that abundance of rice will be available and the market will go down. But what happened? The price of rice in May was 18 rupees and it is forty rupees a maund today and even at that price it is not available in Dacca.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member will conclude his speech now.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I will now come to the last page. The Honourable Members here invariably tell us that we criticise and that we never make any constructive suggestions. That is the grievance. They say "Give us the constructive suggestions and see whether we carry them out or not." I gave you a constructive suggestion but you did not carry it out; I give you a constructive suggestion today and I shall wait and see whether you carry it out or not. You, Sir, in your speech on behalf of the Bengal people gave a constructive suggestion: I have read that again today; if those constructive suggestions which you gave to this House and to the Member in charge had been carried out this present famine condition would not have prevailed in Bengal. I have no time to read them out, but I will ask the Honourable the Food Member to whom I must say we Bengalis are grateful for taking up the food question and going to Bengal the following day as soon as possible to visit and see the Bengal position for himself—we have no grievance against you, but we have this grievance that as you are the Member for Food, will you please read page 550 of the Assembly Debates—the constructive suggestion which the Deputy President had given the House which, if you will carry it out, will save suffering Bengal. I shall give the substance.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member must conclude now.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I will not take more than a minute. The remedy is this, that food grains for Calcutta, Howrah and other industrial areas should be made available for imports from abroad and from other surplus provinces, and the Government of India should be responsible for such supplies. This is my first suggestion.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): I am afraid the Honourable Member must stop now.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Half a minute only, Sir. The distribution should be taken out from the hands of the Provincial Government and should be made and adjusted through the military authorities or the Government of India. The *Aman* crop—that is our danger. The *Aman* crop should not be disturbed as far as practicable, so that it may circulate freely through the normal trade channels and feed the people of the district towns and the rural areas.

Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan (Burdwan and Presidency Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it has been said that the present famine in India is a man-made famine. I agree. But the question is who are those men that made this famine?

An Honourable Member: With the permission of the Chair, he may come down nearer and speak.

(The Honourable Member moved down to the front bench and continued his speech.)

Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan: Who are those that by their acts of omission and commission have caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of their fellow men? The object of this Motion is to find out those guilty

men and expose them to the gaze of the world, to the contempt and condemnation of the world.

Attempts have been made in England and in this country to lay the blame for this food crisis at the doors of provincial autonomy. The British die-hards clutched at this as an argument and an excuse for the perpetuation of British rule in India. They say, "Self-Government in the provinces has resulted in this huge toll of lives. Full self-government would mean that Indians would kill themselves off in record time." Now, Sir, whatever may be the faults of Indians, whatever may be their shortcomings, who can deny that the responsibility for this man-made famine ultimately rests with the British Government and their agents in India? It is no argument at all to say, that there are only a few handful of Britishers in India. All the key posts are held by Britishers and it is sheer brazenfaced opportunism to make scapegoats of Indian self-government. If the Indian ministries went wrong, why did not Governors intervene and stop the rot? If the Governors went wrong, why did not the Governor General pull them up? And if the Government of India went wrong, what did the Secretary of State do? It is because Indian lives are involved in this crisis, all the responsible people went to sleep without lifting their little finger to save the lives of these unfortunate Indians.

Now, Sir, let me turn to the scene in India itself. The Government of India is said to have a majority of Indian Members. How have these Indian Members discharged their duty to their countrymen? Some months ago when the life of a single man was at stake, three Indian Members vanished from the Government Benches. But now, hundreds of thousands of their own people are dying of forced starvation, and when the whole country is stunned by the groans of the dying and the dead, our Indian Members are sitting opposite cool as cucumbers! What have they done in terms of achievement to justify their calling themselves the Government of the country? So far as I can see, they have only brought about the deaths of countless numbers of their own countrymen. Their delay of two years in setting up even a Food Department is a crime of the very first order. Having set up the Food Department, they went on from one blunder to another. They tried to feed the country by statistics and Mr. N. R. Sarker declared that the food position in the country was statistically sound, that there was only 4 per cent. shortage. Did the Government even then realise that these unfortunate 4 per cent. meant hundred per cent. starvation and death? When the Government introduced the control price for wheat, the small stocks that were available promptly disappeared. People clamoured for food, but the Government gave them wood—Major General Wood. This gentleman withdrew price control and embarked on some experiments of his own. The disastrous effects of his introduction of free trade in the eastern zone are too well known to need repetition. Markets became chaotic and prices soared high. Major General Wood also dallied in statistics and declared that far from there being any shortage in Bengal, there was actually a surplus of 285,000 tons.

3 P.M. But independent calculations which took account of exports and also the cessation of imports conclusively established that the deficit was in the region of 1,813,000 tons.

When the theory of "no shortage" was thus exploded, Government then resorted to another explanation. They blamed the poor peasant for hoarding. Big posters were put up calling upon the people to outcast the hoarder. An anti-hoarding drive was ushered in with a fanfare of trumpets, but no drive was undertaken against the Government itself which was the biggest hoarder and the biggest purchaser, reckless of prices. In spite of loud warnings from the public, the Government merrily allowed exports overseas. From the outbreak of war right down to July 1943, it was the declared policy of the Government of India to export food to Ceylon, to the Indian troops fighting abroad and also to the Middle East and other Empire countries. The part played by the United Kingdom Commercial Corporation in depleting the country not only of its food resources but also of other consumption goods cannot be overlooked in this connection. The activities of the U. K. C. C. have been sought to be made

[Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan.]

public by questions put in this House but the Government have not placed full information yet before us about this Corporation. But according to the Chairman of the U. K. C. C. himself, it was the prompt shipments of Indian wheat that spared Persia the horrors of famine early in 1941. I am not against India giving help to other countries. But I want the House to imagine what this huge export trade carried on by U. K. C. C. meant in terms of self-denial to this country. And, yet, in this grave peril for Indians all over the country, where is the U. K. C. C.? Could not the U. K. C. C. use its immense influence with the British Government and secure shipping space for the transport of grains from Africa, America and Australia?

What did the Government of India do here? The "Grow, More Food" campaign was inaugurated and agricultural exhibitions were held. The virtues of tomatoes and cauliflowers were much advertised. But what can the poor illiterate peasant do who has not got the wherewithal to keep body and soul together? Even the Royal Commission on Agriculture admitted that the standard of fertility was of a very low standard. In rice, the Indian average is 750 to 900 lbs. per acre as compared to America's 1,500 lbs., Egypt's 2,000 lbs., Japan's 2,300 lbs. and Italy's 3,000 lbs. I ask, Sir, whether the Government have got any clear policy at all in this matter of cultivation?

It was said in the House of Commons recently that the famine in India to-day is merely one of famine in money and not in grains. The price of food grains has reached a point which is beyond the reach of the masses. In the words of the London *Economist*, India has reached the crudest inflationary finance.

Now, turning to my own Province, Bengal, it is the worst sufferer now. My own district of Barisal has been known to be the granary of Bengal, and yet the misery of the people knows no bounds. Thousands of them have already died of starvation. More are dying every day. The tragedy started with the "Denial Policy" that led to the removal of rice from many parts of my district and it was heightened by the confiscation of boats used by the people for reaching their fields and carrying their paddy. Later, a reckless policy was followed at the instance of Government for large scale purchase of local stocks at unreasonably high prices. Rice was selling formerly at Rs. 5 a maund and it has now reached Rs. 60 a maund, and at this rate too it is not obtainable. The Government agents are giving advance to cultivators for *aman* crops. The cultivators are helpless and they have to give up the crops for fear of being forfeited on some pretext or another. It is high time that the Government put a stop to this disastrous policy. So far as my district is concerned, I must pay my thanks to the Muslim Chamber of Commerce which has been doing much useful work in giving relief to the distressed people there. The Chamber has opened free kitchens for distribution of gruel and milk to the distressed.

As regards the other parts of Bengal, the distress is equally pitiable. The prices of food grains have risen in some places to 1,000 per cent. The price of pulses has gone up. The diet of the ordinary man has become starchy and unbalanced. At this rate, I am afraid it will devitalise the coming generation of the people. When people here are suffering, experts are brought out from abroad on high salaries. After thousands have paid with their lives, a report is brought out by Sir Theodore Gregory. The net result of the recommendations of this report will be a multiplication of the ranks of the bureaucratic army. My complaint against our economic experts is that they have not drawn the attention of their employers in good time to the great catastrophe to which we were heading. As long ago as 1933, the then Director General of the Indian Medical Service gave a warning which went unheeded. The population has been increasing at the rate of 5 millions a year, but the area under cultivation has been stationary for the past many years. According to the best authority, our food production has been falling short by 12 per cent. Have the economic experts pondered over these ominous facts and have they warned the Government? If not, they have failed in their duty.

The object of this amendment is to institute an enquiry and to bring to light these and other correlated matters. Who have failed and why have they failed? Who were responsible for allowing the crisis to develop? Who permitted the foodstuffs to be exported? Who were at the back of the U. K. C. C., which denuded this country of its foodstuffs? Why was it that both price control and free trade failed? Have not the Government themselves violated their own control orders by giving secret instructions to their purchasing agents to purchase articles at more than the control rates? On Saturday last, in answer to a supplementary question put by my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, the Food Member admitted that there were attempts on the part of some purchasing agents to give more than local ruling price for rice. Who were the authors of that unheard of policy of denying foodstuffs and also boats from whole districts and yet not removing the people to other districts where foodstuffs could be had? What has become of the huge quantities of rice that were removed? Have they been exported or destroyed? The Honourable Sir Azizul Huque gave numerous instances during the last session of determined obstruction to the Central Government policy. Who are those responsible for this policy? I can go on multiplying questions by the hundreds which have all to be investigated by an impartial body and satisfactory answers arrived at.

In conclusion, I wish to say that I support the demand for the enquiry so that the perpetrators of the dark deeds may be dragged into full light of day, so that they may serve as an example and a warning to all such polemical heroes in this land and elsewhere, so that they may be outcast from civilisation and from humanity. The other day an Honourable Member remarked that even congenital idiots could not have mismanaged the affairs in a worse way. We, Sir, may tolerate fools, but we cannot tolerate knaves.

Before I conclude, I must ask the Government to be careful about the *aman* crop. The future of Bengal depends mainly on this crop. If it is mishandled by the Government, if it is captured and cornered by them, then there is no hope for Bengal. The Government must not purchase this *aman* crop but leave it to the trade with some safeguards. They must feed Calcutta from the imports of food grains from other provinces and from overseas, and by Calcutta I mean also its neighbouring industrial areas. The whole of the *aman* crop should be made available to the rest of the province outside Calcutta through the ordinary trade channels and not through Government agencies which miserably failed in the past. If the people of Bengal are yet to get a chance to survive, they must be allowed to draw upon this *aman* crop without any interference from the Government.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): I move: "That at the end of the motion the following be added . . ."

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Is it an amendment that the Honourable Member is moving?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): When was notice given?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: It was given only this morning.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Then the Honourable Member had better not move it.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Then I can make a speech on the main motion and the amendments before the House.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Certainly, the Honourable Member can.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: After hearing the two long speeches of the two Honourable Members of the Food Department successively and after reading the report of the Food Department on the food situation, I am astonished at the limited and narrow view they have taken on the whole about the anguishing problem of widespread starvation not only in Bengal but in other parts of the country as well. Too much stress seems to have been laid on the

[Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty.]

Bengal famine or Bengal starvation because of the wide publicity given lately to Bengal in the Press and on the platform, while similar things are occurring in some parts of Southern India, that is the Madras Province, and particularly in the States of Travancore and Cochin, not to speak of Malabar. If the situation is as has been described by the Government communiques and the speeches of the Honourable Members of the Government and they have to be taken as the correct diagnosis of the existing situation, it is this, that India is normally a deficit country in foodgrains, that the deficiency has hitherto been met by imports from Burma, that on the outbreak of hostilities with Japan we lost about a million and a half tons of rice that should have come to India. Added to this deficit, there was the necessity of export of some limited quantity of foodgrains to countries outside India for the purpose of the defence services and we had also to supply some quantity of rice for the Indian population in Ceylon and therefore it was that the acuteness of the shortage of foodgrains has come to be felt in several parts of India. According to their own estimate, this has resulted in a deficit of 2½ million tons of foodgrains as against a normal production of 52 million tons of foodgrains. The shortage works out to, more or less, 4 per cent. of the total production. That is all the deficit during this year. It is difficult to believe that this small deficit of 4 per cent. would alone have created the havoc which we are witnessing in all parts of the country. It is therefore a very narrow view to take to say that the shortage of foodgrains alone was responsible for the devastating starvation that is going on all around us. There must be other causes which have got to be looked into and have been deliberately passed over.

So far as Bengal is concerned, even if we base our arguments on the limited sphere which the Honourable the Food Member has conveniently taken to be the cause of the famine, enough has been said of the way in which the whole thing has been bungled from the very beginning. It is said that there were large purchases on behalf of the Military, on behalf of the big industrialists and by the profiteers, the railway employees and so on and so forth. Those who hoarded stocks of foodgrains for the purpose of feeding their workers have been criticised rather out of proportion. I should have thought there was enough justification for the industrialists and big employers of labour to be forewarned of the possible acute shortage of foodgrains in their province and to stock reasonable quantities for the purpose of feeding the workers and the labourers employed by them, especially as they had no assurance from the Local Government that steps would be taken to bring in supplies, to regulate supplies and to ensure a continuous supply of rice or foodgrains; but if in their anxiety for self-preservation they had exceeded the reasonable limits of storage of foodgrains, surely they were as blameworthy as any other private person who hoarded stocks of foodgrains for the purpose of making more money. The fact seems to be that these persons have exceeded reasonable limits under the auspices of the local Government and hoarded large stocks of foodgrains at the expense of the common man and later on when the Government realised that the man in the street is not able to get his food articles, they did not take any steps to de-hoard stocks from these persons. As has been stated on the floor of the House, there was neither any action taken by the Local Government nor there was any direction from the Central Government to the Provincial Government to find out exactly what were the stock balances in the hands of these industrialists or big employers or the profiteers. Surely, it cannot be said that this Government or the Bengal Government was so weak or so inefficient and so unworthy of the trust placed in them by the people that they would not be able to unearth the stocks of these grains. (An Honourable Member: "They were not able to do it in Madras".) They were and there is no hoarding there. Latterly what happened was. There was more fight between the ministry and the Governor and bickerings between the Central Government and the Provincial Government than food grains in that part of the country. It is impossible to conceive that in a city like Calcutta there should be people

dying of starvation from day to day in scores, if not in hundreds. All this cannot be explained away by saying that it was due to the four per cent. shortage of foodgrains, that is apparent from the statistics supplied by the Government themselves. Therefore the reason must be something else than this mere shortage. In the steps that are proposed to be taken either in the shape of recommendations of the Food Policy Committee or in the Resolutions of the Government on those recommendations, I do not see any solution offered for the immediate tackling of this perplexing predicament. They seem to be going on in the same old groove of facilitating despatch of supplies to deficit areas and their distribution. A million and 40 thousand tons of foodgrains have gone to Bengal and they say yet I have heard one of the representatives from Bengal saying that even this quantity is not available to the ordinary man and that even this quantity is finding its way into holes. I suppose there are many Black Holes in Calcutta besides the one we have read of.

Now, Sir, what steps the Government have taken to see that the supplies which they are inducing the Honourable Member for Railways to send are actually reaching the consumer? The inactivity and hesitation are visible in one of the sentences of this report which reads that rationing in Calcutta is a gigantic affair. Well, Sir, when this statement is made, I can understand the efficiency and the ability of this Government. I should be under-rating the ability, the intelligence and the cleverness of the Government and the Government Members if they should consider rationing in the city of Calcutta to be a gigantic affair. May I say that the city of Madras which has perhaps less abler men than those sitting on the Treasury Benches here has been able to effect it. And Madras is not a mean city. It has got a population of 11 lakhs of people; probably Calcutta has got a population of two millions of people.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): Greater Calcutta has a population of four millions.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Even if the population is four millions, it is not an impossible task to ration out what stuff you are getting into Calcutta. I can understand that there would be some difficulty with regard to the villages and the rural parts even though they also have got to be managed somehow. If, however, you are unable to manage, then take the whole of this House into your confidence and convert the present Session of the House into a Committee. We will be able to offer our suggestions and we will ourselves go to Calcutta at our own expense to see that the rationing is done properly. If the Government is of the opinion that rationing alone is the possible and sensible solution for ensuring equal supplies of rice and other commodities to the people, then it ought to be resorted to in as early a time as possible.

Now, Sir, one thing that strikes me in the enumeration of deaths which are occurring not only in Calcutta but in other parts of the country is this that all these deaths are taking place only amongst the poorer classes and the destitutes. If the shortage of foodgrains was really a reason, why should I not see some middle class and richer people dying? I, therefore, conclude, apart from other reasons, that it is more the lack of purchasing power that is responsible for so many deaths in that city and elsewhere.

Now, how does this lack of purchasing power come in? We have got enough money. In fact, our currency has increased from 299 crores to 780 crores. Economists were clamouring that we are having lot of money. The Honourable the Finance Member came to our rescue in his own way by withdrawing this money and not by gathering it and spreading it over the whole country in order that the poorer man might get a portion of the money. But he has taken the criticism of the economists at its face value against the so-called inflation and has taken steps to withdraw the money and practically succeeded in withdrawing a lot of money from the people. It is not intended that he should sit tight over the collected money. He has got to inaugurate schemes in order that that money would reach the person who has not got the

[Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty.]

money and whose purchasing power has been curtailed on account of the rise of prices occasioned by the very inflation. He must see that the starving people whether they are in Calcutta and other parts of the country are given the purchasing power in order to find the requirements which they can get under the existing conditions of shortage. That is not to be. In fact, the Honourable the Food Member is making himself a scapegoat of all this criticism, whereas both this criticism and the guilt of the whole of the starvation and the deaths ought to be ascribed to his other colleagues, namely, the Honourable the Home Member and the Honourable the Finance Member. The Honourable the Home Member should be charged in the sense that he has clapped all the political leaders in jail and would not take the public into his confidence and would not allow them to work for the good of the country and the Honourable the Finance Member because of the financial policy which he has inaugurated albeit at the direction of Home Government. Now, I am sure whatever may be the plans that have been accepted and proposed to apply by the Food Department they would only be an external treatment for this symptom. The disease cannot be attacked that way. The disease can only be attacked if the Honourable the Finance Member makes up his mind that it should be tackled, tackled in the sense that he must put a purchasing power in the hands of the poor people. Is he in a position now to say, owing to this inflation of currency, that the purchasing power of most of the people has increased? I know there are some military contractors, some industrialists and some big combines of manufacturers who have got more money than they can manage, but what about the 90 per cent. of the population?

An Honourable Member: 99 per cent.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty: Is there not any means of helping the poor to tide over this calamity? How long can you go on giving the wrong twist that the present calamity is due to shortage of foodstuffs? Rushing of foodstuffs to those big cities and asking people to buy without money will add to their misery. Are you going to make bricks without straw? If that is so, the Honourable the Food Member would be justified in accepting all these criticisms and in accepting the responsibility for this sorry state of affairs. Otherwise, he must tackle the Honourable the Finance Member and the whole Government to change the financial policy and to see that something substantial is returned for the exported goods to the account of United Kingdom in order that you may improve the purchasing power of the people without which, I am sure, the situation will be considerably deteriorated, more to the danger of the Government and of the people concerned.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt (Bombay: European): Sir, I commence by expressing my appreciation of the work of the Foodgrains Policy Committee and particularly that of its Chairman. The volume of its endeavour and the speed with which it was achieved and the comprehensiveness of its report call for the highest praise.

India, Sir, as a whole, is today faced with a food crisis and Bengal in the midst of a tragedy, the more deplorable because it might have been, in a large measure, avoided, and the more tragic because thousands of souls are starving in a country of plenty—at any rate plenty judged by war standards.

India, as the Foodgrains Committee rightly says, has suffered practically none of the ravages of the war; from the ravages of nature she certainly has, but even taking into account the damage done by the Bengal cyclone of last year and the loss of Burma rice imports, there is still sufficient grain in the country to feed the population on rationed standards, if procurement were not presenting such a problem and if India could be encouraged to operate as a single economic unit.

As things are, grain is now being brought to India in ships, most urgently required for the war, for the shortening of the suffering of millions of people outside India. The process is virtually one of pouring grain into a granary.

Grain is being purchased from countries, whose emergency laws are such, that to profiteer in its sale, would result in the most dire penalties to the seller. Whatever may be the other considerations, and I am aware of them, grain is being shipped to India to provide for Government in large measure, a stock pile with which to fight the activities of the profiteer. It is being landed in India at prices substantially less than those at which the wheat producing Provinces of this country are prepared to sell their large surpluses to the Central Government. In what other country of the world could these conditions exist today?

I would ask those who are deliberately holding up supplies of grain for higher prices, to ask themselves whether they have seriously considered the implications of what they do, for unless there is a rapid change in the attitude of some of the 'surplus' Provinces, and National co-operation to assist towards procurement, the future must hold the most serious of consequences for the Nation—consequences from which India may take a generation to recover. I would remind the House that, as the Honourable the Finance Member stated on Tuesday last, Food forms the very basis upon which the economic structure of the country is built.

The end of the war in Europe may be nearer than many of us realise, and when the Axis occupied countries are liberated, there will be a vast number of people, numbers running comparable with a half of the population of India, indeed, likely to be even more, who are not only hungry, but bordering on complete starvation. They will need to be fed, and ships not required to continue the war against Japan must be used to carry food to them. Can India, under such circumstances, expect the rest of the United Nations to permit the process of pouring grain into her granary to continue?

I would appeal to every Member of this House, to every section of the population, to strive to avoid permitting the state of Bengal degenerating into a political issue, to which there has been a tendency. I hope, Sir, I shall not be misunderstood in an appeal to the Press, and particularly to the *Statesman* to whom I pay tribute for the stand they have taken in directing attention to the ravages of the Bengal famine, not to allow their original commendable policy to become sensationalism, the repercussion of which may be the alarming of many, and encouraging hoarding. I would respectfully suggest for the consideration of the Press that in the future they give space to what is right in the rationed areas, as they have done in the past to what is wrong in Bengal, and vigorously to drive home Lord Woolton's famous dictum—"the profit motive must be taken out of the people's food".

Bengal is news of the most tragic nature, because little there seems to be right, but as the report of the Foodgrains Committee correctly says, Bombay and Madras and other cities have ceased to be news. Rationing of food and good administration have prevented the enactment in those Cities of the grim scenes of Bengal, and though they would be the last to seek publicity, I would take this opportunity of paying tribute to Mr. Knight and Mr. Gorawala of the Province which it is my privilege to represent, and to their team of efficient and enthusiastic colleagues. To them is due the credit that the distribution of food in Bombay City, the second largest in India, runs as smoothly as it does, particularly when it is remembered that in March of this year, its stock of food was little better than Calcutta's. The spirit of confidence that rationing has produced, has been bought at the extremely reasonable figure of one rupee per head of population, for that is the annual cost of administering it.

Now, Sir, I should like to reply to my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta who I am sorry to see is not in the House. He attacked the Bombay rationing scheme, and particularly the quality of grain sold under it. I would like to tell the House that the coolies employed by my company, my own personal servants, my co-Directors, myself and my staff eat sugar and grain all purchased from precisely the same source. I have nothing to complain of and so far as I am aware neither have any of the other parties I have mentioned, at any rate not since the initial difficulties were overcome, and

[Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt.]

you can imagine, Sir, the difficulties in rationing $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions to 2 millions of people are considerable.

Now, Sir, I would ask that none of the grain being imported by the Central Government be supplied by them to any Province which has not shown their *bona fides* in introducing an efficient measure of food control or rationing. It is not an adequate answer for the Central Government to say that if it takes the precaution of handing that grain over to a Provincial Administration, there the responsibility of the Central Government ends. Only two Provincial Governments, Bombay and Madras, have a comprehensive rationing scheme, and only two States, namely, Travancore and Cochin.

Bombay proved before they introduced rationing that grain sold in Government shops merely gave it an official *entre* to the black market, for there never can be, except on a ration basis, control over the people who make their purchases from Government retail grain establishments, or even retailers controlled by Government.

Unless, therefore, supplies of wheat imported from Australia are sold only to those Provinces who have a fully comprehensive ration scheme or show sufficient *bona fides* of introducing them in such areas as they are workable, the needs of the sons of the people of India now prisoners of war in Japanese hands and the millions of people in Axis bondage will have once again provided ships further to encourage black markets in India and their process of deliverance will be so much the longer delayed.

Those who have not given the problem thought, seem to regard rationing as a penalty, and it is perhaps only natural that those who live in surplus Provinces should be opposed to it. It is difficult for them to understand that rationing may save them too from being hungry, or to perceive it as even remotely possible that an unscrupulous 'corner' in the market may leave them virtually a deficit province. I submit, Sir, that as things are in some of the surplus Provinces at the moment, such an eventuality is not outside the bounds of possibility.

Bombay and Madras and other rationed areas, as I have already said are no longer the news, because they are rationed but had they not been, the appalling conditions of Bengal would inevitably have extended to them, and they too might now be equally firmly held in the grip of famine.

Time does not permit me to make more than a brief reference to the Note on rationing written by Mr. Kirby, whom I am very pleased to see in the House. His Note is in answer to the question "why should food rationing be inaugurated in a 'surplus' Province?". As the House knows, Mr. Kirby is the Adviser upon rationing to the Government of India, and a great authority on his subject. He was in charge of the food supplies and rationing administration of London from 1939 and until last year, which period included the worst of the blitz.

I understand that he is going to speak on rationing, and I venture to suggest that the House will hear much of interest from him, but I would ask the Honourable the Food Member that Mr. Kirby's note to which I have referred, shall be given to every Member of the House before the end of the Session.

Efficient rationing, however, must obviously be based upon a sufficiency of procurement.

In dealing with a man, whatever be his status in life, to convince him that what he is doing is anti-social and calculated to cause suffering to his fellowmen, there can only be but the shortest limit in appealing to his reason. When that limit is reached, there is justification for the most drastic steps to be taken against him.

May I ask of any Honourable Member in the Treasury Benches to tell me whether any one in this country received a heavy sentence for a food offence since war began? If not, has no man within the country been guilty of such an offence?

I appreciate only too well the difficulty facing Government in the matter of procurement, but I hope that they will be as harsh, as he is deserving, with

any man who attempts to obstruct them by word or deed in their endeavours to procure grain. Of one thing I am certain; if they follow that policy they will be surprised at the weight of public opinion that will support them. The food emergency within the country, Sir, will not be of short duration, to promote confidence in the cultivator, therefore, must be the immediate desideratum towards the procurement of his crops. To gain his confidence, however, something must be offered to him for the future, and I submit, Sir, in addition to the suggestions made by the Foodgrains Policy Committee, in addition to those that were made by my colleague Mr. Lawson and as a long-term policy, the establishment of Government buying agencies throughout the rural areas.

Many years ago South Africa was faced with a food problem, not as serious as that confronting India at the moment, but serious enough. The cultivator was the poorest of the poor; the individual who bought his grain had him perpetually in his debt. The price at which that country's grain was sold in international markets was vastly different from the price at which the middleman purchased from the cultivator. As a long-term plan South Africa established Government purchasing agencies in rural areas and encouraged the cultivator to bring his grain to them. An immediate deposit price was paid to him and when the grain was eventually sold by Government in the world's markets, but for a small commission, the balance of the price at which it was sold was paid directly to the cultivator. It is an extremely short-sighted policy when dealing with the food of a country for any man to say, "Do nothing to prevent the cultivator making hay while the sun shines"; and the truth of this statement, I submit, is evidenced by the suffering of Bengal today, except that at the present moment there is no evidence to show that the cultivator is getting his full share of the greatly increased price of grain.

I would further suggest that food in every sense of the word should become the responsibility of the Food Department of the Central Government. I would also suggest that any senior appointment made to any of the provincial food administrations be so made by the Public Services Commission. Also that within the Food Department there be an agricultural department and that during the war all agricultural responsibilities be removed from the Department of Education, Health and Lands. I sincerely hope that those in charge of that department will not regard what I have said as a reflection upon them. That is the last motive I have in mind; but food has become such a serious question and as Agriculture is the parent of food, I consider that they should be under the same responsibility. If Agriculture is too vast a subject for the Food Department, my suggestion is that it should be a separate portfolio.

Before I close I will make an appeal to the more fortunate people in this country, to my own countrymen. I would ask them to eat no more rice until the war is finished. It may seem a trivial amount, but in the aggregate it is probably substantial. Recently in a weekly paper there was an account of an Indian wedding to which seven thousand guests were invited. No doubt most of them ate their fill. How many of the poor could have been fed by the food that was consumed at that *tamasha*! The Government of Bombay issued an order prohibiting any entertainment at which food was served to consist of more than fifty people. They have had to amend that order because it was found that more than one ostensible host was entertaining at the same function and increasing the guests to hundreds. I will not enlarge on the mentality of people who were responsible for that second order being made necessary.

In the finality I would urge the imperativeness of forward planning. Are Government more than satisfied with their plan for a year ahead? Are they satisfied with their plan for five years ahead, and is there a five years' plan? For unless such planning exists the future can only consist of one piece of panic legislation after another.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Sir, not very long ago the world used to look upon India as a land of smiling fields, bumper harvests, flowing with milk and honey. Those were days when we had no railways, no speedy modes of transport, no electricity, no buses, no motors, nothing whatever. Then we had

[Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.]

to depend not upon mechanical contrivances but upon ourselves. When famine visited this country occasionally from time to time there was nothing to arrest the march and the depredations of the scarcity spectre. One such visitation was the famine of Bengal in 1770. Thousands of people died of starvation then; but in the long history of this country there is no parallel to be found to the terrible calamity that has overtaken Bengal these days. We find thousands of people starving to death before our eyes; we find human corpses and human beings still living being devoured by vultures and jackals; we find that owing to the dearth of fuel funeral pyres cannot be lighted and Hindus have to bury their dead bodies under the ground; and we find before our eyes dead bodies floating in the streams. This is the condition of a province the population of which is 6 crores; and although millions and millions of tons of foodgrains have been sent to Calcutta and elsewhere in the mofussil, the rate of deaths does not seem to decrease. The other day I asked a question on the floor of this House whether the attention of the Food Member was drawn to a statement made by the Honourable Pundit Kunzru that 50,000 people were dying of starvation every week in Bengal; and the reply was that these are guesses and he could make similar guesses but it is better that these guesses should not be made. Pundit Kunzru's statement has now been confirmed by that of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherji who said that 50,000 people were dying of starvation in Bengal every week. So a Government which does not know the actual number of people dying of starvation can surely be charged with lack of sympathy for the life of people in this country. The first and foremost cause of this terrible state of affairs is the lack of sympathy on the part of British Imperialism and the British system of Government with life as it actually is in this country. I remember a statement made by the *London Times* many years ago when the Persian question was before the public that the entire realm of Persia was not worth the bones of a single British Grenadier. I thought that those days were gone for ever. But when this morning Mr. Neogy told us that a military officer in these days was heard saying that the life of a mule is more precious than the life of an average civilian in this country, so far as the successful prosecution of the war is concerned, I thought that those days perhaps are again upon us. So I only hope and trust that this is only the expression of a single individual or a number of individuals and the whole British nation is not of the same mind. And especially the gentlemen who are sitting opposite us do not hold the same view. They have told us that they were trying to fight Indian poverty and bury it in some dark corner of the black market.

They speak of control: Control of foodstuffs, control of commodities, control of prices and some other controls. Perhaps a time may come when seeing that these controls are of no avail there will be another control from the Government and that control will be birth-control, because then alone numbers of the people of this country will be reduced to a normal condition from the point of view of the British Government and then they won't require any measure to fight this starvation.

Sardar Mangal Singh: What about the black market?

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Black markets will remain so long as no definite steps are taken by the Indian Government to fight these high soaring prices and as long as the Finance Minister will remain obdurate in the matter of currency policy; so long as that is the state of affairs, there is no hope for this country.

Sir, they were referring to the Punjab. I come from the Punjab and you will be amazed to hear that although we are a surplus province, yet in that surplus province the rate of *atta* is 3½ seers to a rupee. Sugar cannot be had for love or money. The prices of commodities have shot up and anything that we could get for four annas formerly, cannot be had for one rupee today. The purchasing power of the money has been reduced; a rupee is worth four annas. And you talk of growing more food. Why should people grow more food? Why should people of the Punjab grow more food? I tell you about

the people of the Punjab: They are a set of peasant proprietors, their average holdings not above five acres per head, and they have to live upon it and if they gain anything by producing wheat they lose it by spending it on sugar, on cloth and on other commodities which they require. So when you talk of controlling prices and you threaten the provinces with dire consequences in the event of their refusing to abide by the decision of the Imperial Government, I tell you that you will have to make an exception in the case of the Punjab so far as control of prices is concerned, because in the Punjab we find that whenever there is a control the commodity, of which control has been proclaimed, disappears suddenly—God knows where. You will have to control wheat throughout the Punjab by going to every hamlet where it is stored in small quantities and still you will not find yourself able to control the situation. The Government of India in the Food Department have issued a memorandum—God knows how they managed to commit themselves, and I am surprised to find that no Member of this House has drawn the attention of Government to a certain passage in this memorandum. In that passage the Government has condemned itself. It reads thus:

"The marketable surplus of foodgrains produced in India consist, by and large, of the small margins of production over consumption of 50 to 55 million cultivators who normally live on a very meagre standard of nutrition. Any increase in their money income tends to result in increased consumption and proportionate decrease in the marketable surplus."

What are the implications of this statement? The implications are firstly, that the average Indian peasant does not get a square meal from year's end to year's end, and secondly, if surplus foodgrains are to come to the market at all in appreciable quantities, the income of the producer must not be allowed to increase, because the producer would then consume more and leave very little to come to the market. So the Government is interested in keeping the producer poor, poor to the verge of starvation. Who is the hoarder then, and who is the profiteer? The cultivator in the Punjab earns only as much as it is sufficient to feed himself and something beyond that which goes to the market. If he earns more by way of profit, that is spent upon himself and very little is left for the big stock-holders, big profiteers and the middlemen and others.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

I should like again to emphasise that the Punjab's firm resolve not to allow control must be listened to and must be heard with respect. The Punjab, as has been rightly pointed out, is the sword arm of the Empire. Twenty million of Indians are now shedding their life blood on battle fields, and of these 20 millions the majority have come out of the Punjab.

An Honourable Member: It is not 20 millions; it is 2 millions.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: I have always differed in many questions from Chaudhari Sir Chottu Ram, but I am with him when he declares from the floor of the Punjab Assembly that if the Government forced their hands they will have no option but to resign and when they resign, I will see how the Government manages to carry things to their liking.

Then, Sir, I would like to say something about transport. When we Mussalmans called upon the British Government to provide us with one or two ships to take our pilgrims from Bombay to Jeddah, the Government said they were afraid of the action of the enemy and they were afraid for the lives of the pilgrims, which they held too sacred to be exposed to this danger, and therefore there was going to be no pilgrimage this year. Mr. Amery had not yet come to his proper mood, all that he had to say was 'Let us prosecute the war successfully and after the war is over we will see what we can do about the people of Bengal'. So he glibly pointed out that as there was no shipping accommodation owing to the necessities and exigencies of the war wheat from Canada or Australia could not be imported. But recently we find that six ships have been provided. Where did they come out of? Out of some mysterious hole? These ships coming to India, reaching the shores of India, unloading their cargo where did they come from? If they can come now, why did not they come earlier? If they had come earlier,

[Maulana Zafar Ali Khan.]

thousands of lives might have been saved. But you did not look at it from that point of view. Let me remind the Honourable the Railway Member, although he is not as much to blame as his predecessor was, still, a certain amount of blame attaches to him. Under the basic system the Punjab offered millions of tons of wheat to the Government, and a proportion of that was set apart for Bengal. From the figures given by my friend, Sardar Mangal Singh, you will have found that a large proportion of this stock which was held for the benefit of Bengal was not transported at all. Who is to blame for that?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Where is it?

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: It was transported late.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: You did not transport it; it was still lying there.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Where was it in July and August? That is the point. Now you have taken it away and there are no stocks.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has already had his speech.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: So, the best thing is that you should not pose as Popes of Rome and that you are infallible. The worst blunder that the Government commits is that it looks upon itself as sacrosanct; it does not believe in anybody calling it liable to err, because they are not human! Are you inhuman? You are all Popes of Rome who looks upon himself as infallible. So, if you repose confidence in us and we repose confidence in you, we are prepared to co-operate with you in the successful prosecution of the war. We are as much interested in the success of the British victory and the victory of the Allies as you yourself are; we are all against Nazis, we are all against the Japanese; we are all against Italians. We are all interested in seeing that you succeed. When that is so, why should you not place confidence in us? That want of confidence is at the bottom of the whole trouble. That trouble should go; and whenever you commit a blunder, accept it and acknowledge it, and we will respect you; but unfortunately you do not.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Your predecessor, Sir, gave ten minutes more to Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. W. H. Kirby (Government of India; Nominated Official): Sir, more than one Honourable Member this afternoon has mentioned rationing; and I should like to say a few words about that subject. But before giving an outline of the principles of a food rationing scheme, I should like to mention an incident that occurred last week which will illustrate the necessity for being precise and accurate when dealing in all matters relating to food. This incident relates to the quite unnecessary apprehension that exists amongst certain large sections of the people that rationing is a form of punishment, if not of something much worse. I was discussing last week the Bengal food position with an Indian grain merchant of long experience, who also was a Bengal Government purchasing agent for the recently marketed *Aus* crop.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: What is his name, please?

Mr. W. H. Kirby: He said in reply to my question as to how he viewed rationing in Calcutta "Please do not ration us. If you do, you will kill us." The explanation of this startling statement was that since the people will be kept down to a ration of foodgrains of say, one pound per person per day the Government had not got the stocks, and therefore would not give the people anything like that amount; therefore there was nothing else for them but to starve. Sir, we shall not introduce rationing without first having the requisite stocks and reserves; consequently such erroneous ideas as those just mentioned will vanish as soon as the public see that in fact rationing means that their food supply is assured and under the rationing schemes properly organised they will get their food easily.

But such a statement of apprehension as the one I have just quoted is a significant indication that it is necessary to educate the public mind on rationing, and it is in this that the leaders of the people and particularly Members of this House can assist the Department of Food. Perhaps the words 'food control' would be a better designation than rationing, and more quickly convey confidence, which must be the foundation of all operations connected with the feeding of the people. Before the Ministry of Food in England inaugurated individual card rationing in the early days of 1940, there was an initial period of strict food control, during which time the people realized that a competent well organized administration was undertaking the vital task of ensuring that the people would be properly fed and that the supply and price of the essential foods would be firmly controlled.

But directly the pressure of events started to interfere with supply and prices, full scale rationing was inaugurated which resulted in complete restoration of the temporarily lost confidence. One of the first, and best examples in India of the benefits of food control and rationing to the people can be found in Bombay, as has already been mentioned, where today no one feels any apprehension whatsoever as to where his food is coming from, nor that the prices will fluctuate largely from day to day. In the Army, the word rations has a very definite meaning of guaranteed feeding. Why then, must the civilian be made to believe by unthinking persons that rationing means starvation, instead of salvation?

The Department of Food has for many months past been advising the Provincial Governments and the States on all matters relating to food control, whilst in August and September, of this year, the Department in collaboration with the Bombay Government inaugurated a series of conferences and lectures on food control and rationing. In the short space of time at my disposal, it is not possible to deal adequately with the complicated subject of food control and rationing; but a summary of the salient points can be stated as follows:

The object of food rationing is not primarily to reduce consumption, but to distribute short supplies in an equitable manner. When supplies are ample and assured, as in surplus Provinces and States, the control of consumption is necessary for the effective mobilisation of resources for war purposes; but when supplies are short and irregular, a closely controlled rationing scheme is even more necessary to ensure fair distribution to everybody. Food rationing must go hand in hand with price control. No price control can withstand, unaided, the pressure of increasing demand on dwindling supplies, and it must be accompanied by quantitative controls over demand and supply. Equally, rationing requires price control, since, no matter how widespread rationing is, it will not ensure equitable distribution among all income groups unless prices are low enough to enable every one to buy the quantity of their ration to which every one is entitled.

Food rationing schemes should in their policy and detail be as far as possible uniform. Their smooth operation depends on the degree to which they are co-ordinated with related policies, more especially controls over production, supply, price and income. This cannot be operated in watertight compartments. There is seldom any justification for local variation in rationing schemes. It is more efficient, more intelligible, and less wasteful for a uniform system, prepared and supervised by expert administrators, to be adopted throughout the country. Food rationing should be comprehensive. It is seldom possible to introduce food rationing of any particular article in short supply because once control and rationing of an essential food article is established then everybody tries to rush and buy up a similar kind of article. All rationing must have legal sanctions which will give necessary powers dealing with enumeration etc., which is a very vast task, and it is one of the great difficulties encountered when rationing a large and congested area. Besides legal sanctions for enumeration and entering into peoples' houses, there is

[Mr. W. H. Kirby.]

legal sanction required in connection with all the other administrative control. These must be rigorously enforced and it is advisable to have a special staff for dealing with that purpose.

Sir, I should like to emphasise the point that, although it is necessary to have a special legal staff for enforcing such rationing orders, it should not be necessary to look upon such a legal staff and inspectors as some kind of *inter gestapo*, because many of the poor people do offend against rationing laws simply out of ignorance. It is necessary to associate the public and the trade with rationing administration. Local Food Advisory Councils or Food Control Committees should be set up, having as members representatives of the trade, transport and distribution, and hotel and catering experts, and welfare workers, etc. The functions of these Committees should be advisory and not executive. We heard to-day from an Honourable Member about Dacca. Dacca in Bengal, has a population of 235,000. The whole of the rationing scheme, distribution, looking after the welfare of destitutes, is entirely in the hands of voluntary workers who are doing a splendid job of work and are not costing the Bengal Government anything more than the bare necessities for ordinary administration. The distribution of foodstuffs by rationing must be carefully co-ordinated with the supply position, and its planning supported by an accurate statistical balance sheet adjusted day by day. We must, when dealing with the people in their millions, know exactly, as a banker must know exactly what cash there is in his strong rooms,—we must have an exact balance sheet of what we have got in stock, what is going out, what is being purchased, what has been arriving, and what we have in reserve. Both in supply and in distribution, wholesale and retail traders should be used, under Government license, and supervision, to carry out the operations as Government agents. In those cases where this is not possible—because some traders will not obey the rules, there is no alternative but that the Government must take supreme charge and open up their own Government distribution centres and shops, and if necessary, become their own agents. Please do not think I am saying anything against the trade,—traders are the ordinary real avenues for distribution. One or two Members have mentioned this afternoon, that Government have only to impose a price control order for the goods to disappear. Sir, there is only one person who makes those goods disappear;—it is not Government, it is not consumer, but it is the trader. The strength of the supply position in relation to a rationing organisation is the maintenance of reserve stocks of the essential rationed foods. These reserves or “buffer” stocks can be accumulated gradually and “turned over” in order to prevent deterioration.

Certain authorities have stated that we cannot bring in rationing because we have not bought up six months or a year's supply. Sir, it is never necessary for an organised administration running a rationing scheme to have more than one month's supply, and in fact, if investigations could be made, it would be discovered that in the ordinary course of business it is seldom that in an ordinary unrationed area the trader has anything like one month's stock at the back of him.

As regards propaganda and publicity, this is a very essential point of any food control and rationing scheme. As an Honourable Member has said this afternoon, food is “news”. The good-will of the press can be of immense value in the administration of food rationing. Daily advertisements, which, of course, should be paid for, in the local newspapers are recommended, with a distinctive layout and a constant position in the paper,—people in their own papers will look for a certain sign on any day at the same place, so that they may know exactly what is happening about their food. In addition to the press, there are many other ways well known to those specialising in publicity, such as films, wireless, loud speaker vans. All these aids to disseminating correct news are used by all the large areas now administering rationing schemes.

When a country is in the midst of a serious crisis—as India now is in relation to food—it is illogical that, through no fault of their own, the population of certain provinces and States are at starvation level, whilst others are surrounded by ample food. Besides being illogical, such a state is anti-social, non-ethical and a possible breeding ground of civil discontent. The inauguration of a rationing scheme enables the authority to calculate with mathematical accuracy the exact requirements of the staple foods for the population, and is in a position to give a true statement that will show how such surplus foodstuff can be released for deficit areas. Since the population of all large cities, especially those situated on the coastline, are unable to grow food, but are usually occupied in manufacturing the material needs of the countryside, each set of the community is helpless without the aid of the other, and therefore they are definite partners in the whole of the economic structure. To the objection raised by some authorities in connection with the inauguration of a complicated piece of administrative machine and the necessity to engage a large staff, the answer is, the more employment that can be given to a country's citizens the better for every one concerned, provided, of course, that elementary economics are observed. On the other hand, as was mentioned just now about Dacca, it is possible to run a food control scheme on a voluntary administrative machinery of a town as large as Dacca with its 235,000 inhabitants. Since food rationing instils confidence into the people, the Authority is the sole judge of the amount it is prepared to pay for securing such confidence, and an efficiently run food control scheme. As an Honourable Member mentioned a little while ago, the cost of such confidence to the people of Bombay amounts only to one rupee per person per year. Provided the Authority has the requisite skilled staff and the right outlook, no difficulty should be encountered in devising an efficient rationing scheme to meet the extent of the particular problem. Each city has its own particular problem. Several authorities, I know, have installed their own training scheme for their own clerks because they realise that the staff selected for dealing with the people must be of that calibre, who are prepared to almost dedicate their lives to the people. When an efficient food control scheme is in operation, it is not only the population which feels a sense of security and confidence but it is the Authority itself, because it is the possessor of an instrument, of a machine, that can be made to cover several other forms of consumer goods control other than food.

Sir, it is reasonable to assume, as has been stated, that since the eyes of the world are now focussed on India and India's food situation, the amount of practical help in the form of shipments of grain will be governed by the amount of efficient food control organisation initiated and maintained by the Provinces and States. The United Nations could not have possibly carried on their war effort, as they have done, without rationing, whether it is rationing of foodstuffs or clothing or the luxuries of life, in fact the real regimentation of all the people. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that the United Nations will judge the food control administration of India by the food control schemes inaugurated or neglected. The inauguration of food control and food rationing in time of war might conceivably mark the beginning in this country of a new era of nutritional feeding. A great deal has still to be done in the way of looking after the feeding of children. It might mark the beginning of a new era of equitable distribution and also of a new type of trading and of course a more satisfactory price structure for every one concerned, not only the consumer but also the producer.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. W. H. Kirby: In conclusion, I will end with a claim for the endorsement of a policy of rationing by the House and an appeal to all Members for their aid and co-operation in making a success of this policy throughout India and thus restore confidence and good will without which so little can be done.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I promise not to repeat anything that has been said upto now and thus save the time of this Honourable House. It is no use trying to stress the point of Bengal's misery and Bengal's condition. It is known to everybody and Bengal has the sympathy of the rest of India.

I would like first to draw the attention of my Honourable friend, the Food Member, and his Secretary to a portion of the note that has been circulated to us. They try to show a deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons throughout India but I regret I am unable to follow the figures. They show that ordinarily India produces $51\frac{1}{2}$ million tons a year and that in the year 1942-43, that is the year ending March 1943, India's production was 52.1, thus giving India .6 million more tons than is usual. Having started with that premise, they go to show how the deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons is made up. They give us the deficit due to the loss of Burma. Burma supplied India with a million and a half tons of rice. They show us that 650 thousand tons is required for defence services and 300 thousand tons is exported. The *pluses* and the *minuses* give about $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons deficit, but may I point out to them that they have begun with two items which are common both to the last year and the year 1942-43. The Defence services were supplied with foodgrains in 1941-42. Exports were more than 300 thousand tons in 1941-42. Both these factors being common to the two years, they should not be taken into consideration in making up their deficit and the deficit they have shown is therefore larger by at least a million tons than it ought to be according to their own figures. Now, Sir, I would like an explanation why is it necessary to show a deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ million tons, while according to their own figures it should be at the most $1\frac{1}{2}$ million or less. The only factor which has to be taken into consideration in comparing these two years is the loss of Burma. That is $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons. Against that they have got a surplus of .6 million. Then I was surprised to hear the Honourable Member in charge this morning say that the 'Grow More Food' campaign had yielded $3\frac{1}{2}$ million tons. Where has that disappeared to? Where is that in your calculation? It is proverbial that statistics always prove the wrong thing. In this case, certainly the statistics put up by the Government are very faulty. The only conclusion we can come to is that there is a very big allowance made by the Government for the black market. They are fairly certain that a large quantity is going there and consciously or unconsciously they are making an allowance for it, or it may be that the figures are drawn up from facts supplied to them by the provinces. The provinces have been asked to give figures. That we do know. The result of the figures supplied to the Government of India by the provinces, may be, shows a deficit on the whole of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions. And instead of telling us that those figures come from the provinces or the Provincial Governments, they have tried to show us this deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions in this rather illogical method. Let us take it for granted that this deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions is arrived at from figures supplied by the provinces: so much surplus, so much deficit, the total being a deficit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions. If the figure of production for 1942-43 of 52.1 millions is correct, then all I can say is that the provinces have been most conservative in the figures they have supplied and that is but human nature. After all, when one is responsible for the feeding of a province, one is liable to be a little more conservative than one would otherwise be, but to be so conservative as this gives a very wrong impression and leads us to wrong conclusions. If my deductions are correct, then the only conclusion I can draw is that there is a very big black market in India, that there is a considerable amount of grain hidden which Government have not been able to detect and that it is the duty of the Central Government to see that the Provincial Governments find this food which is most probably not in the hands of the agriculturist and which is certainly not in the hands of the consumer. There are certain consumers who may have got a couple of months' stock, but they are very few and their number is negligible. That stock is somewhere and it must be with the merchants. It is the duty of the Provincial Governments to find that stock because these figures show that there is that stock and it is the duty of the Central Government to insist upon Provincial Governments finding it out to enable the people to get at it.

Now, Sir, there is another passage in this report which, in my opinion, is most interesting. I will read it. This is how it runs:

"Unless conditions are such that the cultivator has no incentive to hold back his supplies such as the constant increase in commodity prices resulting from monetary expansion and unless the distributive machinery is prepared to play its own part fairly and well under the controlled scheme, it is clear that there is no alternative but requisitioning on a very large scale directly from the cultivators, a course which is fraught with serious political risks."

Now, Sir, I personally have come to the conclusion from what little I have seen and learnt in my own province that the only method of procurement that will succeed in India is to take the grain from the cultivator in the fields and not to let it pass into any other hands. I am told in this report that in doing this there are political risks. I am not quite able to follow what those political risks are. I do not for a minute contend that the agriculturist should not be given by Government a fair and equitable price for the grain which they may procure from him. He should be given a really good profit. And let me remind this Honourable House that those few lucky agriculturists who have lands today and who are getting the profits from those lands are paying the same taxation as they were paying before. Of course, I do not include in this category the thousands of agricultural labourers. Taxation on all other products has gone up by leaps and bounds but the taxation on the profits from lands, which the very few in this country enjoy, has not increased. Therefore, I plead that grain should be bought by Government agency—I do not mean the Central Government agency but the Provincial Government agency—and it should be bought direct from the agriculturist in the fields at a reasonable and good profit. I am asking for nothing that would bring about any political risks.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): It is impossible.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I do not see why it is impossible. We have our land-revenue officers. I do not know about Bengal because there is Permanent Settlement there, but I do know about the province of Bombay where we have our land revenue officers who are capable of buying at a fair and equitable rate grain from the agriculturist. Nothing is easy; everything is difficult. There are many complications in what I suggest and I am fully aware of them. But that is the only equitable way in which grain can be procured for the common good of all. That is the second point I desire to stress and I do hope that the Central Government will bring this point to the attention of Provincial Governments who are reluctant to adopt these measures. They may be reluctant today but by next year they may have again learnt their lesson, a lesson from which the teeming millions will suffer. Procurement is the most important thing. So, procurement at a fair rate is the second point. Again, I will emphasise the point that the agriculturist must be given a proper profit.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: But how do you decide to determine it?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: That is not difficult. The taxation has not gone up. That factor is even. It can be done by revenue officers. I know there is one danger: The revenue officers value the crop and the land revenue is periodically settled on those reports. Surely, with proper supervision it can be decided as to what the agriculturist should get in the first instance. Once you have got the grain in that way, there will be some other difficulties. For instance, there will be the difficulties of storing and I am fully alive to them. But I can see no other way out. I hope that at least my province of Bombay will adopt it and again show the way how procurement can be done in the interests of all.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: It must be in the interests of the agriculturist.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Yes, in the interests of the agriculturist as well. After all, the interest of the consumer is also to be borne in mind.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: And the agriculturist is also a consumer.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Everybody's interest should be borne in mind. The agriculturist must be given a good profit and even after giving him a good profit by my method, it will be found that the consumer will get his grain at a cheaper rate than he is getting it today.

[Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.]

But there are many obstacles and one of the main obstacles in the way is the honesty of petty Government officials who deal directly with the agriculturists. I fully realise the danger. I have had personal experience of that class of officials, many of them are honest, many of them on very small salaries are serving the Government and the people from generation to generation, but there are very often exceptions to the rule and these few exceptions may ruin the whole scheme. I am fully aware of that. But I am not going into all these details as I have said before. There are objections and difficulties to all schemes.

An Honourable Member: It is all right on paper.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I would urge that others have carried out the scheme successfully. I can give instances where it has been carried out successfully.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Has the Honourable Member ever seen a field or a crop?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: If the Honourable Member expects that everybody is as ignorant about subjects with which he is not personally connected, as he himself is, then he is very much mistaken. I have had something to do with the Land Revenue Department of my Province and I have had something to do with the agriculturist and I maintain that what I have suggested is the only method which will in the end be found efficacious. These are the two main points to which I wish to draw the attention of the House.

I was very glad to hear from Mr. Kirby the principle laid down that, in rationing, there must at least be a month's stock. I was under the impression that after coming to this country, he had come to the conclusion that rationing under any circumstances was the best thing to do. I am really glad to find that he has come to the conclusion that, while working the ration system, if you run short at any time, you will cause considerable amount of suspicion, unrest, etc., which will make the rationing scheme a failure. Therefore, the principle must be laid down that in all rationing schemes there must be at least a month's stock and also the likelihood of maintaining these stocks.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): He said you must have a balance sheet of food grains.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The balance sheet is all right when you have got money. Now, Mr. President, that is a principle which I was very glad to hear him enunciate and I endorse, as many of us have done in this House, that rationing is the only equitable method of distributing food. Why is it that it is opposed? It is opposed mainly from fear that it may be a complete failure, that is to say, you may run short of food altogether and nobody will get anything at all. It is also opposed by those people who can afford to buy food at any price.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Rationing in big cities or in the villages?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: I am not talking of villages. Let us begin with big cities with a population of a lakh of people and then we can go on to villages. Rationing is opposed by those who can afford to buy things at any price because under rationing they will only get a certain quantity and not be allowed to buy as they like, large quantities because they have got a fat purse. That is one of the apprehensions. That is the class of people who are most vocal. That is the conclusion I have come to from the experience in my own city.

I have nothing further to say except I hope and trust that the Central Government will see to it that distribution takes place in an equitable manner at least in Bengal, but that if it does not, they will exercise their authority as a Central Government to see at least in those Provinces, the lower officials or the merchants do not attempt to take advantage of the sufferings of the people for their own ends. If that prevails in Bengal or continues to prevail in Bengal, then God help Bengal and consequently God help the whole of India because the failure in Bengal will surely affect the other parts of India next year, and there will be shortage every where. It will be the duty of the Central Government to see that this distribution is carried out equitably and fairly, and if they fail in that, they will have failed in their duty.

Rao Bahaqur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): A debate on Food in India very rightly opens a wide area of discussion and it is possible for Honourable Members of this House to make many suggestions and offer many criticisms to the Government which might rightly be said to be not wide of the mark. I sincerely believe that for the present it would be not necessary for us to go into the causes of our present crisis, though a study of the causes might indicate to us the lines on which our situation regarding food can be bettered or improved in the future. I believe, Sir, that primary responsibility for the provision of food during the war is that of His Majesty's Government. It is well known, as I have already mentioned before, that food has never been and never was the concern of any Government either provincial or central in India. I do not suppose the fault is only of the British Government in India. Even the predecessors of the British Government in India have never tackled this question of feeding the populations of India; so much so that it will be right for any Honourable Member to make the observation that the food economy of India was always unstable and not strong and it was liable to be seriously upset at any strain which has been brought upon it, such for instance, as by war. If we feel the food crisis so keenly today it is because the social economy of India has been affected by the strain of this modern war.

Whatever position India occupies in the British Empire or in the constitutional status amongst the other parts of the British Empire, the fact remains that India is today on a war basis on account of the responsibility that has been imposed upon her by the British Government. It was the British Government that declared war against Germany; consequently India had to declare war, and it is my contention that those who took this responsibility to declare war have also to bear the responsibility of finding the food supply for the civilian population of India. They have not done so either because they thought there was no necessity for it or because they thought that the Government of India had both the capacity and the competency to do so. However, the results do not seem to justify their expectations. It is indeed hard luck that it was not possible either for the British Government or for the Government of India to conceive of a position in India which would be followed by the conquest on the east. They never for once imagined that it was possible for a country like Japan—after all an eastern nation—to advance so rapidly against the forces of the Allies or against the Britishers. Otherwise I should certainly feel that the Government of India and the British Government would have made a provision for all this trouble. We find that long before the war started, in spite of the fact that the Englishman is supposed to drift or stumble into success, in England steps have been taken to see that sufficient stocks of food are built up to pass through this crisis of war. Even though it was easier in the case of the English food structure to do it the fact remains that neither the British Government nor the Government of India have ever done any such thing like that in India. And in this respect I do not blame even the Government of India. In normal times and in peace times whatever initiative the Government of India may have had and whatever powers they may have, certainly during this war such initiative has been assumed and taken away from them by His Majesty's Government; so that in every circumstance practically they have to look to His Majesty's Government for advice, guidance and instruction. And I think in this particular case of lack of food for the civilian population of India I should personally blame His Majesty's Government.

With these remarks I should now like to refer to the subject of a Royal Commission or the subject of an inquiry. I am not a believer, even though I hear that the Leaders of the Parties and the Parties themselves have agreed or are likely to agree upon a common amendment on this question of Royal Commission. I feel that such Commission will be useful only at a later stage. But at the present moment I sincerely think that it is of no use at all unless that Royal Commission comes as a sort of relief society or, in Mr. Jinnah's happy phrase, as a fire brigade to put down the fire which is now raging in

[Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

Bengal. But if it is a matter of inquiring into the food situation of India as a whole, I do not think that a Royal Commission need come now. And there is another point about this Royal Commission coming at the present moment. If they come now they are likely to upset what little plans the Government of India or the Government of Bengal have devised, so far as the Bengal famine is concerned, to relieve the distress. So I do not feel quite enthusiastic about this Royal Commission. But if it is the wish of the House that there should be a Royal Commission I have no objection to it at all.

Sir, I am to place before the House the suggestion that during the period of the war the Government of India should have the responsibility for food, that food actually must become a Central responsibility, and if it is necessary that an amendment of the Government of India Act should be made to confer upon the Government of India such powers as would make food a Central responsibility, I would even ask the Government of India to address the Secretary of State to have the Government of India Act amended in that way; because, in my opinion and in the opinion of the Association of which I happen to be the President and which has passed a Resolution to this effect, unless food is made a Central responsibility it will not be possible for the Government of India to enforce such of the measures as they have now in view for the solution of this problem. So I would suggest that the Government of India should immediately be vested with the responsibility for food and the food administration throughout India. We find very unfortunately indeed that the provinces have sought to exercise at a wrong moment such power and independence of the Government of India that they seem to possess in their provincial autonomy. I wish the provinces would seriously realise the necessity for cooperating with the Government of India in such measures as they have taken.

With regard to rationing I wish to say that so far as Madras city and other cities in the Madras province are concerned, rationing has really gone a great deal to improve the situation and to restore the confidence of the public in the matter of food supply. I happen to be a member of the Madras Provincial Food Council and I know that the Government of Madras, because of the early steps it took to see that sufficient stock was kept in hand, found it possible to have the rationing system introduced there.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: There is no such Food Council in Bengal.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj: We know that rationing has been a great success. Indeed there are certain difficulties in the matter of rationing. In Madras, as my Honourable friend, Mr. Venkatachalam Chetty, will agree, much of the stock that was meant for the City was actually in the hands of the wholesale dealers and much of the rice went underground, and for a long time the Madras Government were not able to tackle them; but on a certain day they stopped all the licenses of these wholesale dealers and they purchased all the stock that was necessary for the city of Madras through their grain purchase officers in the districts. And when they actually got this stock and distributed in the city by this rationing system they found that all their calculations were wrong, that actually speaking, the Madras city had to have a much lesser quantity than their anticipations went, and consequently whatever excess there was went over to the villages. And the Madras Government did another thing. In spite of a deputation that was taken by the wholesale dealers that this ban on the licenses of the wholesale dealers or, as our friends would like to say, the normal channel of trade should be given up, the Madras Government declined to accede to their request and said that for a period of one year, at any rate, they would not remove this ban on the licenses of wholesale dealers. So I will say that rationing has been a success in the city of Madras. And I personally think that the Government of India should take early steps to see that it is introduced in all provinces, irrespective of the fact whether it is a deficit area or a surplus area.

There is one other matter which I should like to mention in connection with the food situation. Actually we have had many arguments today but very

few suggestions which will go to relieve the situation. The food situation, according to me, is due to two factors; one is that there is shortage of food and the other is that there is maldistribution. Shortage of food may be due to the wrath of God or due to the avarice of man. Whatever it is, the fact is that today we are facing a shortage of food and if it has been due to an act of God the Government of India can escape the responsibility; but if it is due to maldistribution I can only impress on the House that it is the responsibility of Government to set right that maldistribution. And if necessary they should take all

5 P.M. powers that are possible to set right this maldistribution, and, as it has been suggested by me, if it is further necessary that the Parliament should be approached for amendment of the Government of India Act to confer upon them these powers, they must do that also.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 16th November, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 16th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. Yeshwant Narayan Sukhthankar, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official):

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

TICKETS ISSUED FROM DELHI FOR DELHI-AMBALA SECTION RAILWAY STATIONS.

196. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that the number of tickets issued from Delhi for stations situated on the main line towards Ambala are more than the seating accommodation in such trains, especially the Third, Inter, and Second classes? If not, what are the average figures for the months of June 1939 and June 1943?

(b) Is it a fact that owing to lack of sitting accommodation passengers have to stand in the compartment and outside?

(c) Have any passengers been injured or killed by falling down from the running trains in India during the period from 1st July, 1942 to the 30th June, 1943? If so, what are the figures for individual Railways?

(d) Has any compensation been paid to the relatives of the victims referred to in (c) above? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I am aware that there is overcrowding in certain trains. The information asked for as regards the number of tickets issued and the seating accommodation provided for stations situated on the main line towards Ambala is not readily available.

(b) No. It is open to passengers who have taken tickets at a station, but who for want of room in the train cannot commence their journey, to apply to the Station Master who will refund the fare in full, provided the ticket is given up within 3 hours after the departure of the train. Reference is invited in this connection to rule 57 1 (i) of the Indian Railway Conference Association Coaching Tariff, No. 14, which is in the library of the House.

(c) Cases have been reported of passengers being injured or killed by falling down from the running trains during recent months. Railways keep a regular record of all accidents due to passengers falling or jumping out of carriages during the running of trains. The statement for the year 1942-43 will be shortly available and this will be placed on the table of the House.

(d) No compensation is payable by Railways to the relatives of those killed or injured unless such accidents are the direct result of negligence on the part of Railways. Travelling outside carriages is an unauthorised form of travel and those who insist on adopting that form of travel must be prepared to take the consequences. I would refer the Honourable Member, in this connection, to my answer to question No. 191 in the Legislative Assembly on 4th August, 1943.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if there is overcrowding on almost all the trains or only on a few trains, as the Honourable Member thinks?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It varies considerably.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I also know that it is the railway servants and the policemen who travel on the footboards and it is they who set the example to others and that they should be stopped first from travelling on the footboards?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has expressed an opinion.

STATIONS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY HAVING EUROPEAN INSTITUTES FOR EMPLOYEES.

197. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the names of the stations on the North

Western Railway where there are European Institutes for employees with the number of Members on the rolls of each of them on the 31st March, 1943?

(b) Is it a fact that the European Institute at Jind had only four members on its rolls on the 30th June last? If so, why is an Institute allowed to be maintained for such a small number of staff?

(c) What is the minimum membership which entitles an Institute to function as such? If no such limit has been fixed, is it proposed to fix some? If not, why not?

(d) What monetary and other aid by way of the rental value of the free housing accommodation, etc., was given by the North Western Railway Administration during the financial year 1942-43 to (i) the European Institutes, and (ii) the Indian Institutes?

(e) Is the aid given to the Railway Employees Institutes on racial considerations? If not, what are the other considerations?

(f) Is it proposed to give aid to the various Institutes on the number of members or to apportion the same in proportion to the number of the European and Indian employees on the Railway? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I lay a statement on the table of the House.

(b) No, the number was six. The question of closing this Institute which has been in existence for many years is under consideration.

(c) No limit of membership has been laid down. It is not proposed to lay down any limit but each case will be considered on its merits.

(d) (i). The rental value of European Institutes was during 1942-43 nearly Rs. 42,000.

(ii) The rental value of Indian Institutes was during 1942-43 nearly Rs. 17,000 and a grant of Rs. 1,920 was made for meeting the rent of one non-railway building used as an Institute.

(e) No; the requirements of each Institute for performing their functions are the only consideration.

(f) On the North Western Railway the Headquarters Staff Benefit Fund Committee allots funds to the Divisional Committees on a *per capita* basis and the latter distribute the funds according to the needs of each institute. It is not proposed to make any change in this procedure.

Statement.

Name of the European Institute.	No. of members on the rolls of each Institute on 31st March, 1943.	Name of the European Institute.	No. of members on the rolls of each Institute on 31st March, 1943.
Delhi	52	Sukkur	27
Jind	6	Burt (Lahore)	226
Saharanpur	64	Quetta	46
Ambala Cantt.	28	Sibi	17
Kalka	17	Mach	7
Ghaziabad	15	Khanewal	22
Bhatinda	27	Multan Cantt.	18
Ferozepur Cantt.	23	Rawalpindi	66
Bahawalnagar	10	Peshawar Cantt.	15
Karachi Cantt.	97	Malakwal	13
Kotri	36	Moghalpura	155
Rohri	38		

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: In view of the fact that Indians and Europeans sit at table together nowadays, why should there be separate institutes for Indians and Europeans and why should Government spend money on these separate institutes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The answer to that is found in the reply to part (f).

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask in view of the fact that in course of time circumstances have changed and the need for separate European institutes is now

disappearing, will the Honourable Member institute an inquiry and find out whether these separate institutes are necessary and if at least some of them can now be converted into joint institutes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I think I am correct in saying that such inquiries are taking place constantly on the different railways.

HARASSMENT OF RAILWAY STAFF BY POLICE.

198. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Railways been drawn to articles appearing in the *Railway Herald* of Karachi, dated the 30th August and 6th September, 1943, regarding harassment of railway staff by police? If so, does he propose to make a statement on the various incidents quoted therein stating what steps Government propose to take to relieve the railway staff from the police harassment and malpractices? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The answer to the second part is in the negative but the matter is under inter-departmental investigation.

EQUALISING OF SCALES OF PAY OF GRADE V, EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

199. ***Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state, if it is or it is not a fact that the scale of pay of grade V, East Indian Railway, prior to 1928 was Rs. 33-4-87, and that the new scales of pay were introduced in 1923 and 1934, which were Rs. 28-3-52 and Rs. 30-3-45/5-60, respectively?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that the new rates were introduced on the ground of cheapness of commodities and for reducing operating costs?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that for the last four years there has been a considerable increase in the Railway earnings and in the prices of commodities and the new scales of pay are not sufficient for the incumbents?

(d) Is it or is it not a fact that the entrants in service after 1934, are a little better off than their seniors who entered service after 1923?

(e) In view of the present conditions and unequal treatment to the staff serving in the same grade, do Government propose to consider the advisability of reducing the old scale of pay and making it the same for all the staff?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). Yes.

(c) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the inadequacy under present conditions of the wages of certain classes of Railway employees has been recognized and is the reason for the grant of a dearness allowance.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government have at present no intention of reducing old scales of pay.

TONGA STAND AT ROORKEE RAILWAY STATION.

200. ***Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is or it is not a fact that there was a Tonga Stand at the Roorkee Railway Station prior to 1924?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that in 1924 it was converted into a Third Class Waiting Shed, and that the Railway authorities held out a promise to construct a new Tonga Stand in 1926? If not, what are the real facts?

(c) Is it or is it not a fact that ever since then great inconvenience has been felt by the public for want of a Tonga Stand, specially in view of the increase in traffic due to Roorkee being headquarters of the Sub-Division and an important military centre with the Civil Engineering College, United Provinces Government Workshop, Offices of the Hydro-electric Department and other offices, and being the Railway Station of Piran Kalyar Mela and representations for a Tonga Stand have been made to the authorities by the public?

(d) In view of these considerations, do Government propose to consider the advisability of constructing a Tonga Stand, and removing this grievance of the public?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a); (b) and (c). The information asked for is not readily available and its collection would involve an amount of time and labour that would not be justifiable in war time.

(d) As Railway Administrations are competent to deal with such matters, a copy of the Honourable Member's question will be sent to the General Manager, East Indian Railway, for consideration.

YUGOSLAV DIE-CASTING EXPERT EMPLOYED AT KANCHRAPARA WORKSHOP.

201. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) for how many months the Yugoslav Die-casting Expert was employed in the Kanchrapara Shops;

(b) whether that expert has made any dies for die-casting; if so, for what items; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the negative, why this man was employed at all?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) For less than a month.

(b) No, but he was consulted from time to time on die-casting.

(c) He was employed on the preparation of jigs and fixtures.

CHINESE WORKMEN IN KANCHRAPARA WORKSHOP.

202. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Chinese workmen in the Kanchrapara Workshop;

(b) whether these Chinese workmen enjoy a higher rate of wages and get a special train to convey them from Calcutta to Kanchrapara; and

(c) whether the period of the up and down journeys is counted as overtime in their case?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) 704.

(b) Yes.

(c) No.

ASSISTANT OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT APPOINTED AS ASSISTANT SECRETARY IN THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SUPPLY.

203. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: Will the Honourable Member for the Supply Department please state:

(a) if it is a fact that an Assistant of the Political Department with a pay of Rs. 350 was appointed as Assistant Secretary in the Directorate General of Supply in 1941;

(b) if it is a fact that he was reverted to his substantive appointment for delaying many important cases involving loss to Government; and

(c) if it is proposed to re-employ him in the Salvage Directorate as Assistant Director on Rs. 1,000; if so, why?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Apparently the Honourable Member is referring to the appointment of Mr. S. Narayanswami, who was previously employed in the Political Department. He was officiating as a Superintendent in his parent Department and was employed as a Superintendent in the Eastern Group Supply Council on a salary of Rs. 720 per month, just before his appointment as Assistant Secretary in the Directorate General of Supply.

(b) Orders for his reversion to his substantive appointment were passed for delaying a number of cases. These delays did not involve any loss to Government.

(c) He has been appointed as Assistant Director, Salvage, at Bombay on a salary of Rs. 800 per month. It was decided after full consideration of the case that it was not necessary to revert him to his parent Department.

BENGALI AND MADRASSI OFFICERS IN THE RAILWAY RATES TRIBUNAL OFFICE, CALCUTTA, AND ASSAMESE AND BENGALI OFFICERS IN THE MADRAS AND SOUTHERN MAHRATTA AND SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAYS.

204. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Railway Member be pleased to state the number of Bengali and Madras officers in the Railway

Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and the number of Assamese and Bengali officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The information asked for is not available and I regret that I cannot undertake to compile it.

TRIAL OF TICKETLESS TRAVELLERS BY A RETIRED MAGISTRATE IN THE SIND AREA OF NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

205. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if it is a fact that a retired Magistrate has recently been appointed in the Sind Area of the North Western Railway to try cases of people on the spot, who are alleged to have been found travelling without ticket?

(b) Is it a fact that none of such persons has been dealt with under section 113 of the Indian Railways Act, but all of them are challaned under section 112, and is it the Magistrate's conception that all persons having no ticket come under section 112?

(c) If the reply to part (b) above be in the negative, does the Honourable Member propose to lay a statement on the table of the House showing the number of passengers dealt with under sections 112 and 113, separately, since the appointment of the Magistrate?

(d) Is this Magistrate paid by the Railway or the Provincial Government of Sind?

(e) Is it a fact that the fines inflicted by the Magistrate are too heavy?

(f) Do Government propose to issue instructions to the Railway Magistrate pointing out the difference between sections 112 and 113, and asking him to record his reasons for the differences? If not, why not?

(g) Will the Honourable Member please refer to the Honourable Sir Andrew Clow's speech in the final stage of the Indian Railways Amendment Bill, published on page 1059 of the Legislative Assembly Debate for Wednesday, the 5th March, 1941, wherein an assurance was given that the administrative machinery would be improved so that there was little possibility of abuse to the public? What improvements have been achieved in this direction?

(h) Is it a fact that the passengers experience much inconvenience in obtaining tickets owing to late opening of ticket windows at stations, and guards refusing to issue certificates to travellers who are unable to obtain tickets in time? What steps do Government propose to take to enquire into and to remedy this state of affairs?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). Information is not available, nor do I propose to call for it. Framing of charges under the appropriate section of the Indian Railways Act is a matter for the Magistrates concerned and not for Railways.

(d) The expenditure involved is borne by the Provincial Government of Sind.

(e) I am not prepared to pass an opinion on the judicial findings of a Magistrate.

(f) No, it is not for the Railway Department to issue instructions to Magistrates.

(g) By Railways securing the agreement of Provincial Governments to the appointment of Special Magistrates, an improvement of the administrative machinery is secured. The early disposal of cases of ticketless travel, made possible by the appointment of Special Magistrates, causes as little inconvenience as practicable to the public, and ensures an increased measure of protection against ticketless travel.

(h) I would suggest to the Honourable Member to bring up specific instances of late opening of ticket windows and the failure of the guards to issue certificates to the notice of the Local Advisory Committee for Karachi, of which the Honourable Member is a member. I should, however, add that the increase in the number of passengers and the reduction in the number of trains, unfortunately necessary, has necessitated a regulation in the hours of opening of ticket windows and has probably prevented the guards of trains from complying with the request for the issue of certificates to the full extent of the demand by passengers.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: Has the railway any control over these magistrates?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: May I also know if the Honourable Member will give the policy of the railway, which was announced in the House by the Honourable Member's predecessor to the effect that magistrates will be asked to act according to certain policies and not according to their own inclinations?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I am not aware what policy the Honourable Member refers to.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: I have mentioned in my question what the policy is: will the Honourable Member send him a copy of the debate in this House in which that policy was laid down, that there will be a great distinction between 112 and 113, which he is discarding altogether?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; I am not prepared to give any such undertaking without further consideration.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: May I know if the Honourable Member wants that he should act autocratically as he likes to the detriment of the public?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have no doubt he is doing his duty.

MALTREATMENT OF CERTAIN MUCCADAMS AT QUETTA STATION BY ANTI-CORRUPTION DEPARTMENT.

203. ***Mr. Lalchand Navarai:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state if certain Muccadams working on the Quetta Station were maltreated and beaten during the recent investigation by the people of the Anti-corruption Department?

(b) What steps have Government taken in that connection? If none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The information available to Government is that no Muccadams working at Quetta were maltreated during the investigation by the anti-corruption staff.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. Lalchand Navarai: Were any muccadams examined by the Anti-Corruption Committee?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I have not the file with me. I think they were, but there was no maltreatment.

FACILITIES FOR PILGRIMAGE TO ARABIA BY LAND ROUTES.

237. * **Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** Will the Leader of the House kindly state what kinds of facilities have been provided for Indian pilgrims who have been denied the use of pilgrim ships but are keen to go to holy places in Hedjaz by land routes?

The Honourable Sir Saitan Ahmed: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the *Press Communiqué* issued by Government on the 9th September, 1943, a copy of which is laid on the table.

Press Communiqué.

The Government of India announced on August the 11th that owing to the danger to which pilgrim ships and their passengers would be exposed by enemy action, no arrangements could be made for the Haj pilgrimage this year by sea. Government have consequently been investigating the possibility of pilgrims proceeding by land routes. These may be described as follows:

(1) Via Iraq.

(2) Via Kuwait and Bahrain.

(3) Via Iran.

2. The first two routes involve a lengthy sea journey from India up the Persian Gulf, and are therefore open to the same objection as the route via Jeddah. Moreover the Government of India have learned from His Majesty's Representatives in Iraq and the Persian Gulf that neither at Baghdad and Zubair nor at Bahrain and Kuwait is there any motor transport available for pilgrims. Thus even if pilgrims reached these places where they would not be welcome unless they brought their own food, it is certain that they would not be able to proceed further by car. Nor can the third route via Iran be recommended. Public motor transport services are no longer available in that country; and food is expensive and not always easily obtainable.

3. Any who contemplate travelling in their own cars via Iran are reminded that they must obtain an export licence from the Directorate General of Supply, New Delhi and that it is impossible to purchase either spare parts or tyres in any country on the route to the Holy places. It follows that the smallest breakdown may result in their being

unable to complete their journey. The roads are reported to be very rough and the likelihood of breakdowns occurring is very great.

4. The Saudi Arabian Government, who have been consulted in the matter, decline all responsibility with regard to transport for pilgrims travelling overland and will not be able to spare any cars to assist overland pilgrims in case of breakdowns on the long and difficult journey across Arabia.

5. In publishing this information the Government of India are actuated only by a desire to enable intending pilgrims to avoid fruitless expenditure and unnecessary disappointment.

NEW DELHI; I. S. GONSALVES,
The 9th September, 1943. Asstt. Secy. to the Govt. of India, External Affairs Department.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is it possible for us to know whether any arrangement is possible and by what time it will be completed?

The Honourable Sir Saitan Ahmed: It is not possible.

IMPORT OF AMERICAN PLANTS FOR MANUFACTURING SULPHURIC ACID.

208. ***Mr. H. M. Abdullah:** Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) if it is a fact that four plants are being imported from the United States of America under the Lease-Lend arrangement for the manufacture of sulphuric acid;

(b) the names of the firms on whose behalf the plants are being imported; and

(c) how much advance money has been paid by those firms?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Government have asked for 4 contact type sulphuric acid plants on Lease-Lend. The demand has not yet been agreed to by Lease-Lend authorities in the United States of America.

(b) These plants are not being sought on behalf of any particular firm. There are numerous applicants. Allocation would be considered if and when it is known that plants will be received.

(c) This question does not arise.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: May I know from the Honourable Member when these plants are arriving and when the shipping arrangement will be complete?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I do not know whether the plants are arriving at all. We have not yet received the approval of the Lease-Lend authorities for the supply of these plants.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable Member consider the claims of Muslim firms, if any?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: They will not only be pleased but they will have to consider the claims of every one.

METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

209. ***Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) the functions, constitution and the personnel of the Meteorological Committee; and

(b) the time when the term of office of its present members expires?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) and (b). The Honourable Member is apparently referring to the Meteorological Co-ordination Committee. This is an inter-Departmental Committee constituted informally for the purpose of securing co-ordination between the Air Force Meteorological Organisation and the Civil Meteorological Organisation and facilitate quick decisions. The Director General of Observatories is the Chairman, and the members are—the Chief Meteorological Officer, Air Headquarters, the Superintending Meteorologist, and the Meteorologist acting as Liaison Officer, the last named being the Secretary of the Committee. Representatives of the Army, the Navy and the United States of America Air Force are invited to attend the Committee as

and when necessary, according to the subjects discussed. There is no term of office prescribed for the members.

MOTOR VEHICLES SUPPLIED TO THE TRADE FOR SALE TO PUBLIC.

210. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member for War Transport please state:

(a) whether the motor vehicles supplied to the Trade for sale to the members of the public who satisfy the test of essentiality are supplied at cost; and

(b) the percentage of profit that is allowed to the Trade on such transactions?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) Chassis for transport vehicles are delivered to dealers at approximately cost price, plus a small remuneration to distributors.

(b) The dealer receives a commission at a flat rate of Rs. 300 per vehicle, over the price fixed for the chassis.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask if any departmental costs are added in arriving at the cost?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Not, so far as I am aware.

COMPENSATION FOR AIR-CONDITIONING SETS REQUISITIONED FROM PRIVATE OWNERS.

211. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) the policy of Government in connection with payment of compensation for air-conditioning sets requisitioned from private owners;

(b) whether the price is based on replacement value or on the original value; and

(c) whether there is any variation in regard to assessment of value of such sets from the practice followed by Government when sets are purchased or acquired from the trade?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) and (b). The policy of Government in fixing compensation is based on the principle that compensation shall not include any appreciation in value due to war conditions. The intention is that no one should benefit at the expense of the public from restrictions imposed owing to the war. The amount of compensation must also depend on the actual condition of the article, i.e., allowance must be made for depreciation and wear and tear. Compensation for air-conditioning sets requisitioned by Government is therefore based on the original cost plus repair charges, if any, less depreciation at 10 per cent. per annum, plus installation and restoration charges.

(c) No.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if his attention has been drawn to a leading article in the *Statesman* about the 20th October last, entitled "requisitioning", wherein it was mentioned that an officer of Government had obtained a set through the Government which he advertised for sale at a price in the *Statesman* which was nearly twice the price he paid for it?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: My attention has not been drawn to that. I do not know what I am expected to do even if my attention had been drawn to it, unless precise particulars are furnished.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: If the Honourable Member will make enquiries he will know what he should do.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I will look into it.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Will the Honourable Member state whether any of these sets have been resold by Government?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Not to my knowledge.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Has the Honourable Member got a list of the distribution of these sets—who has got these sets and how they are being used now?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have not got it but I am certain somebody in the Supply Department has got the figures.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Will the Honourable Member see that these are being used for proper purposes since they have been taken?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I shall look into it.

Mr. C. P. Lawson: I quite appreciate his point regarding depreciation but may I ask the Honourable Member whether his department has taken into account the normal advance in the price of all commodities and all machines of this kind before making compensation?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If my Honourable friend means by 'normal advance' replacement cost of the article at the present moment I venture to state that replacement cost cannot be a test where there is no replacement possible now or as long as one can look ahead. If we were in normal days this might be taken into consideration, but in times like these when no air conditioning plant is now coming through the trade channel and if it can come at all it can come only on Lease-Lend, the question of replacement cost or what my Honourable friend says, normal advance in prices cannot be a factor to be taken into account.

Mr. C. P. Lawson: I quite appreciate that replacement cost cannot possibly come into this, but does the Honourable Member not think that if replacement cost is impossible and unfair, the pre-war cost or invoice cost less depreciation is equally unfair?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The policy has been settled in consultation with the Finance Department who have the largest say in the matter. I shall endeavour to have this question re-examined in consultation with the Finance Department if necessary.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Is the Honourable Member aware that there are sets for sale at profiteering prices?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: We would like to know where they are. We would like to requisition them.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: That is exactly the point. If the Honourable Member will make enquiries he will find that sets are for sale, while private individuals have been made to give up their sets?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If the Honourable Member has got any information, I shall be grateful to him if he can furnish it to me.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The Honourable Member's department has only got to make enquiries in the city of Delhi.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: May I ask the Honourable Member whether he is prepared to issue a statement of the number of air-conditioning sets that have been requisitioned and have been handed over to hospitals and those that have been handed over to departments of Government?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If the Honourable Member will please put down a question to that effect he will get the information at the next session.

MUSLIMS RECRUITED TO CERTAIN POSTS IN GUN AND SHELL FACTORY, COSSIPORE.

212. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state:

(a) how many Muslims have been recruited to the following posts in the Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore, including the Dum Dum Branch:

(i) Officers (Gazetted),

(ii) Foreman,

(iii) Assistant Foreman,

(iv) Store-holder, and

(v) Assistant Store-holder; and

(b) how many new posts have been created in the above Factory since the war started, and what the proportion is of Muslims in comparison with Hindus and others in the above category of posts?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) One as Assistant Foreman.

(b) 81 posts. I lay a statement on the table of the House.

Category of Posts.	Muslims.	Percentage.	Hindus.	Percentage.	Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans.	Percentage.	Europeans.	Percentage.	Jews.	Percentage.
(i) Officers (Gazetted).	Nil	Nil	2	16.6	Nil	Nil	10	83.3	Nil	Nil
(ii) Foremen . .	Nil	Nil	3	20	3	20	9	60	Nil	Nil
(iii) Assistant Foremen	1	2.63	14	36.84	14	36.84	8	21.06	1	2.63
(iv) Storeholders .	Nil	Nil	1	100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(v) Assistant Storeholders.	Nil	Nil	2	50	1	25	1	25	Nil	Nil

RAILWAY BOARD RULES re SELECTION BOARDS FOR PROMOTION TO SELECTION POSTS.

213. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) whether the rules regarding the constitution of Selection Boards for promotion to selection posts have been revised by the Railway Board recently; if so, if the Honourable Member proposes to place a copy of the instructions issued in this connection in the Library of the Central Legislature;

(b) whether the Selection Boards are constituted to make a definite act of selection; and whether they are directed to fix the order of merit of the candidates so selected; and

(c) whether or not appeals against the decisions of the Selection Boards are permissible, and whether the order of merit fixed by a Selection Board is liable to revision by an authority other than the Selection Board?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The revision of the rules in question is under active consideration.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

PROMOTION OF SUBORDINATES TO LOWER-GAZETTED SERVICE IN TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

214. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the criteria for the promotion of subordinates to the Lower Gazetted Service in the Traffic Department of the Operating and Commercial Branches of the North Western Railway?

(b) Is it a fact that some years ago all such promotions were given, as a general rule, to Traffic Inspectors and station staff?

(c) If the reply to (b) above is in the affirmative, when and why was this practice stopped?

(d) Is it a fact that Superintendents and Head Clerks are promoted to the posts in the Lower Gazetted Service in the Commercial Branch now-a-days?

(e) How many Head Clerks have been promoted as officers in the Lower Gazetted Service, and how many of these appeared before a duly constituted Selection Board and were not selected for the post of Office Superintendent?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) While the criteria cannot be precisely defined the qualities which are required of an officer are well understood by the competent authorities.

(b) No, promotions were not confined to such staff.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes; they are considered for such promotion along with other staff and are promoted if considered suitable.

(e) The Honourable Member has not specified the period to which he refers. There are at present four Head Clerks who are officiating in the Lower Gazetted Service in the Transportation (Traffic) and Commercial Departments and all of them are borne on the list of clerks approved for posts of office Superintendents.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the criteria for promotion of subordinate officers on the N. W. R. are different from other Railways?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My answer was that the criteria cannot be precisely defined. The qualities which are required of an officer are well understood by the competent authorities.

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND HEAD CLERKS (ESTABLISHMENT) ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

215. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the communal composition of Superintendents and Head Clerks, Establishment, on the North Western Railway on the 1st October, 1943?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The statement which I lay on the table gives the information readily available.

Statement showing communal composition of Superintendents and Head Clerks, Establishment, on the N. W. Railway on 1st October, 1943.

	Hindu	Mu-lim	Sikh	Total
Superintendent, Establishment, Headquarters Office	1	..	..	1
Assistant Superintendent, Establishment, Headquarters Office	..	1	..	1
Head Establishment Clerks	10	4	1	15

REPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH AIR FORCE CONFERENCE, LONDON.

216. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state:

(a) whether the Government of India have received the plan which is reported to have been evolved at the Commonwealth Air Conference held in London recently; if so, if it is proposed to place a copy of the same on the table;

(b) the views expressed by the representatives of Government who were delegated to the Commonwealth Air Conference; and

(c) whether the Government of India have taken any decisions on the plan or report; if so, what they are?

Sir Gurnath Dewoor: The Honourable Member is referred to the replies given by me to starred question No. 16 put by Mr. K. C. Neogy and starred question No. 21 put by Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh on 8th November, 1943.

POST-WAR DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION IN INDIA.

217. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please state if the Government of India have any comprehensive plan for the post-war development of civil aviation on the lines on which various other Dominions as well as foreign Governments are reported to have? If so, do Government propose to publish this plan for the information of the public so as to allow full opportunity to the public to address itself to the problem and make its views known to Government?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to part (c) of Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh's starred question No. 21 in this House on the 8th November 1943.

REPORT OF THE COMMONWEALTH AIR FORCE CONFERENCE, LONDON.

218. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air please inform the House:

(a) if before committing themselves to any plan that might have been agreed upon at the Commonwealth Air Conference, the Government of India will consult the Legislatures as well as Indian commercial interests;

(b) if the Government of India intend not to countenance any proposals which are not in the interests of Indian nationals and which in the international sphere discriminate between Indian interests on the one hand and British and foreign interests on the other;

(c) if Government of India will see to it that no non-national interests are allowed to acquire ownership and control of civil air lines in the country, and that fullest opportunity and assistance is given to Indian national interests to run air lines in the country;

(d) if in any plan that may be formulated either here in India or anywhere else in regard to civil aviation, accredited representatives of Indian public opinion and commercial community will be associated with the delegation that might represent India on such Conferences; and

(e) if without effective consultation with such representatives on all vital matters connected with the development of civil aviation, Government proposes to enter into any commitments with any other Government?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) As I have already stated in reply to certain previous questions in this House, the Air Conference held recently in London was for the oral exchange of views and the discussions were of an informal and exploratory character. The conclusions are only provisional and there is no question of Government committing themselves to any plan at this stage.

(b) The Government of India can never have any such intention. On the other hand, they are confident that the development of Indian Air Services will have full scope for development as a result of any agreements that they may enter into.

(c) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to parts (a) and (b) of Mr. K. C. Neogy's starred question No. 247 on the 9th of August, 1943.

(d) This would depend on the character of the Conference on which India is represented and representatives would be selected accordingly.

(e) Government are always prepared to receive representations and views from all persons interested in the development of civil aviation and would give their careful consideration to them but consultation with any particular interests would depend upon the circumstances of each case.

SUB-DIVISION OF CONTRACTS ON COMMUNAL BASIS ON RAILWAYS.

219. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to the policy laid down in the Railway Board's letter No. 357-T, dated the 25th May 1940, regarding the sub-division of contracts on a communal basis, viz., "That it has come to the Board's notice that a Railway has recently divided long standing Hindu Fruit Contracts at certain stations into separate contracts for Hindus and Mohammadans. The Board consider that the decision to divide contracts on a communal basis would not accord with the intention of the principle laid down in paragraph 2 (a) of the Board's letter, No. 357-T, dated the 11th May 1940. I am, accordingly, to state that the Railway Board desire that, as far as practicable you should refrain from sub-dividing existing contracts on communal basis.", and state if this policy or

principle is carried out by the North Western Railway at Delhi, Lahore, Amritsar and other important stations on that Railway? If not, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, and I have no reason to suppose that this policy has not been followed by the N. W. Railway ever since the issue of the letter referred to by the Honourable Member.

TWO DEAD BODIES FOUND NEAR RAILWAY LINES BETWEEN DALPATPUR AND MUNDA PANDEY RAILWAY STATIONS.

220. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state:

(a) if it is or it is not a fact that on or about the 11th or 12th July, 1943, two persons were found dead near the Railway Lines between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey Railway Stations (Moradabad-Bareilly Section) on the East Indian Railway;

(b) the cause of their death, whether they were thrown down by the running train or otherwise; and

(c) the verdict of the enquiry?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a), (b) and (c). No, but I understand that on the 13th July one person was run over and killed while trespassing on the track between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey. The Police report shows that the incident was not due to the fault of the Railway Administration or their servants.

SURPLUS WAGONS AT DEPOTS IN COALFIELDS OF BENGAL AND BIHAR AND RAISING OF COAL OUTPUT.

221. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that in recent weeks a very large number of surplus wagons have been lying idle in the different Depot stations in the coal fields of Bengal and Bihar for want of sufficient indents from the collieries due to shortage of coal? If so, what is the number of such wagons week by week?

(b) Is it a fact that, of late Government have been considering the question of increasing the output of coal?

(c) Is it a fact that the potential capacity of the smaller collieries to increase their output is greater than that of the bigger collieries? Have Government any proposal under consideration for giving any special facilities by way of an enlarged public supply of wagons to the smaller collieries with a view to helping the increase of the output of coal?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to place on the table a statement of the suggestions, if any, made by the different trade organisations and other individual members of the trade for increasing the output of coal, as well as the opinions of the technical experts of the Government of India on the relevant points in so far as they may concern the Honourable Members' departments?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Since the resumption of traffic on the E. I. Railway main line, coal loading in the Bengal and Bihar fields has not been up to the level of wagons available and the balance of wagons left over after all allotments had been made was on the increase. The figures asked for are not readily available.

(b) Yes.

(c) No, Sir. The surplus of transport is due to the serious drop in the raisings of coal. This again is primarily due to a shortage of labour, which affects all collieries, big and small, alike. In order to make the most effective use of the wagons available, various inducements were given to all collieries. For example, the associations of the coal trade were asked to give figures of any stocks of coal of low grade lying at any colliery so that arrangements

could be made to move that coal, special wagon supplies were allotted to industries that could secure coal, consumers were permitted to draw supplies of coal from whichever source available, and the loading of hard coke produced by the non-by-product plants was permitted. Unfortunately, some of the steps taken produced a detrimental effect on the equitable distribution of coal and were discontinued. The re-introduction of the old "public" supply system of allotment was considered in consultation with the coal trade associations and it was agreed that this would be extremely harmful as it would allow large quantities of coal to go into the black market.

(d) No, Sir. The suggestions received from associations relate mainly to matters which do not affect the departments under my control, but I shall be prepared to give information on any specific points affecting my departments, which the Honourable Member may have in mind. A printed pamphlet has also been received from one individual member of the coal trade and this is doubtless in the hands of the Honourable Member.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

NON-INCLUSION IN STATE RAILWAY ESTABLISHMENT CODE OF PROVISIONS OF RULE 7 OF RAILWAY SERVICES (CLASSIFICATION, CONTROL AND APPEAL) RULES.

32. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether the provisions of rule 7 of the Secretary of State for India, Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules ensuring that nothing in the said rules or any rule framed thereunder shall operate to deprive any person of any right or privilege to which he is entitled:

(i) by or under any law, or

(ii) by the terms of any contract or agreement subsisting between such person and Government on the date these rules came into force,

have been embodied in the State Railway Establishment Code or any other Code framed and issued by the Governor General in Council under Section 241(2) of the Government of India Act 1935?

(b) If the reply to (a) above be in the affirmative, will the Honourable Member please refer to the specific provision of the rules on the point?

(c) If the reply to (a) above be in the negative, why has not such an important provision been included in the Railway rules? Is it proposed to do so now? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) No, the provisions of rule 7 of the Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules have not been included in any of the Codes issued by the Governor General in Council under Section 241(2) of the Government of India Act, 1935.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Because the inclusion of provision in this sense was not felt to be necessary.

EXTENSIONS OF SERVICE TO STATE RAILWAY GAZETTED OFFICERS.

33. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the number of gazetted officers, separately, in each State-managed Railway, (i) who are on extension of service on the 1st September, 1943, and (ii) who were due to retire after the 1st September, 1943, but have been given extension of service to commence from the date of their retirement?

(b) How many officers from each Railway have been lent for service with the Defence or other Departments in connection with the war?

(c) If the number of officers on deputation in connection with the war is less than those on extension, is it proposed to reduce the number of officers on extension to enable the lower grade officers to get their due promotions? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) and (b). The attached statement gives the required information.

(c) Does not arise.

Railway	Statement.		
	No. of Officers on extension of service on 1-9-43	Officers due to retire after 1-9-43, whose services have been extended.	Officers lent to the Defence and other Departments in connection with the war. Position on 1-9-43.
B. & A.	10	1	23
B. B. & C. I.	17	2	31
E. I.	29	5	42
G. I. P.	19	4	21
N. W.	18	4	37
O. & T.	2	1	13
Total	95	17	167

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

FAILURE TO IMPLEMENT THEIR GUARANTEE OF INDEPENDENCE TO LEBANON BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of a motion for the adjournment of the business of the House from Sir Abdül Halim Ghuznavi. He wants to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the failure of the Government of India to persuade His Majesty's Government to implement their guarantee of Independence to Lebanon and to restrain the French Committee from acting in a tyrannical and oppressive manner which is so prejudicial to the progress of the war and the solidarity of the United Nations.

Is that the responsibility of the Government of India?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Why not?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I hold it is not. The motion is out of order.

RECONSTITUTION OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform Honourable Members that I have decided to re-constitute the House Committee which was set up by me in February 1935. I accordingly nominate the following members to the Committee:

- (1) Mr. A. C. Datta (Chairman);
- (2) Sir F. E. James,
- (3) Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad,
- (4) Mr. N. M. Joshi,
- (5) Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta,
- (6) Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee,
- (7) Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan,
- (8) Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra,
- (9) Mr. G. V. Deshmukh,
- (10) Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait,
- (11) Sardar Sant Singh,
- (12) Sardar Mangal Singh.

MOTION RE THE FOOD SITUATION.—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Before the House proceeds with the debate on the motion regarding the food situation in India, I should like to know whether it is agreed that there shall be a time limit on speeches today?

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Before

I speak on that, I should like to inform you that the Honourable the Leader of the House and the Honourable the Food Member have agreed that the debate on the food problem will be continued on Thursday, provided that official business is finished on Wednesday. If necessary, the closure will be moved at the end of the day and the Party Leaders will support this closure motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the business is not finished?

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: In case the business is not finished, then the closure will be moved but we are all hoping that it will be.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Closure can only be moved with respect to a debate that is going on on a motion. If there has been sufficient debate, then the House will accept the closure. Otherwise not. There cannot be a closure that there should be no business on any particular date or particular hour.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): The position is that we are prepared to allot Thursday for the continuation of this debate, provided we are guaranteed that our legislative business will be finished tomorrow. This can only be done if the House, as a whole, will agree to the President applying closure to the motion, when the last Bill may be under discussion. We may be safe in assuming that the official business will be finished tomorrow.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The best thing would be for the Leader of the House and the Leaders of Parties to consider the matter today and let me know at the end of the day the decision arrived at. In the meantime, I should like to know whether there is going to be a time limit for the speeches today.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I suggest 20 minutes for ordinary speakers and 30 minutes for Leaders of Parties. That is my personal opinion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Does the whole House agree to that?

Sir Henry Richardson (Nominated Non-Official): May I suggest that what the Leader of the House has said creates a rather impossible position for the Leaders, because although it is evident that the House does want another day, who can guarantee that a spark on the Hindu Code Bill, in the course of a ten minutes speech, may not set alight a bonfire, in the flames of which the chances of our getting an opportunity to voice our views on the food situation may be absolutely extinguished. Therefore I do suggest that the Government should make up its mind and if the House really desires another day, it should be done unconditionally. Let us have the food debate tomorrow. Let us finish it tomorrow and if the Leader of the House is so sure that the Government business will be finished in a day, it can be taken up on Thursday.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I regret that the Government is not in a position to accept that suggestion. We must finish the Legislative business before the end of the Session. For that purpose, we want the co-operation of the whole House and not only the Party Leaders. I said that the House as a whole should agree to this arrangement.

Sir Henry Richardson: There are gentlemen who are not members of any Party.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: That is why I said 'the whole House'.

Honourable Members: We are all agreed.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I ask the House to agree to the closure being applied by the President at the time of the last motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The President cannot apply the closure if there has not been sufficient debate. That is why I suggested that the matter should be considered and a statement made at the end of the day.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): If the debate is to close today, some of the Leaders may have to speak and the Government will have to reply. Therefore the House and the Leaders will have to make up their minds earlier.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Is the Government business more urgent than the food situation?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is not the issue at all. I hope the food situation will improve as a result of this debate. I should like to know if there is going to be any time limit.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): I suggest 40 minutes for Leaders and 20 minutes for others.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I do not think the Leaders should have more than 30 minutes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I want the position to be made clear.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, the position as far as the Leaders of Parties are concerned and as far as the organised Parties are concerned is that they are agreeable to your fixing the time-limit at 40 minutes for the Leaders of Parties and 20 minutes for others. As far as the unattached Members are concerned, I do not know what objection they can have to this arrangement.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The objection is that we want to get a chance of speaking.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot make any distinction between the Leaders of Parties and the other Members. It is for the Members to come to an agreement among themselves. If they come to an agreement, I shall be very glad to enforce it. But if there is no agreement, then, of course, there shall be no time-limit because I have not got the power myself to fix a time-limit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I wish to make an offer to the organised Parties. If only the Leaders of Parties speak hereafter, then we are prepared to give them 40 minutes, provided their followers do not speak.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): May I take it that, at any rate, the time-limit of 20 minutes for Members generally is agreed to.

Honourable Members: Yes, yes.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I wish to make it quite clear that other party Members will not speak hereafter.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Does that mean, Sir, that after this only the Party Leaders will speak and their followers will not speak?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That depends entirely upon the Chair. **Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta**.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, it is not just three months when we have had a full-dress debate on the food question. The situation at that time . . .

Mr. N. M. Joshi: On a point of order, Sir. May I ask whether the Leaders of Parties will now get the same time as the other Members and nothing more than that because the Honourable the Deputy President is not a Leader of a Party and he is going to speak now? I take it that there is no agreement regarding the 40 minutes to be given to the Leaders of Parties.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I understood that so far as the Members generally are concerned, 20 minutes' time-limit is agreed to.

Honourable Members: Yes, yes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well. **Mr. Datta**.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: I was saying, Sir, that it is now just three months that we had a full-dress debate on this food question in the last Autumn Session. The situation that existed at that time was fully discussed. Therefore, I should think that it is not quite necessary to re-open the whole question from the very beginning. We are concerned at the present moment in this debate with the situation as it has developed after the last Session, that is, during the last three months. Therefore, I shall confine my remarks to the period after the last Session.

Now, Sir, we are told that during the last three months many ships have arrived with grains and they have been unloaded and that a very large quantity has been sent to Calcutta and other districts. That is all right. Figures have been given to prove the increasing supply and better distribution. But what

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.]

is the actual position now in spite of all these imports and distribution? Has the position improved or has it deteriorated since then as a result of the efforts of Government? I do not want to give my own version. We have had from the Honourable the Food Member himself a statement which he issued in the shape of a White Paper. He has told us in that statement that the position, so far as Bengal is concerned, has deteriorated. He has also told us that during the last three months the position has become more serious. He also says that rice is not available in a number of districts and wherever it is available the black market price of Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 per maund is beyond the means of even the well-to-do classes. I do not know how to emphasise these two short statements. In the first place, he says that rice is not available in a number of districts in Bengal. His second statement is that wherever it is available, the price is beyond the means not only of the poor people but even of the well-to-do classes. Those are the statements made by the Honourable the Food Member in the White Paper which he has issued. These two very short statements give us a complete picture of the magnitude of the famine in Bengal. So, there has been no improvement during the last three months but there has been a steady and serious deterioration. Then the question is what will happen now? We have been told by the Honourable the Food Member that the next 2½ months is most critical and we have been given the assurance that the Government of India is making every effort to tide over the difficulty. But he says that the success of these efforts will depend upon the possibility of importing substantial quantity of food during these 2½ months.

Now, let us examine this question of imports. We know that in May last, when the position of the country was desperate, an offer of Australia was partly refused by the Government at Home with the full concurrence of the Government of India on the ground that there was no need for it and that there was a good prospect of a good harvest in the Punjab. On that ground the import was refused. That was in May 1943. Let us come to the present time when according to the Food Member the position has become still more serious and still more critical. Now, Sir, at the present moment we have been told that a very generous offer of Canada has been refused by the Government of India.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): It has not been refused.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: It has been refused. That is the statement made in the House of Commons and that is the statement made on the floor of this House. I am sure about that position. It has been refused and the ground given is not that shipping is impossible or difficult but on the ground of mere economy of shipping. That is the ground given for refusing supplies from abroad when thousands and thousands are dying for want of food.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings (Secretary, Food Department): The Honourable Member is mistaken. That has not been refused either by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: I am not dreaming. I am speaking on the basis of the statements made on the floor of the House and in the House of Commons by Mr. Amery. That, Sir, is the position with regard to the imports. Although we are told that large quantities have been imported we do not know where they have gone. We demand a clear statement from the Government about this. We have demanded many times information on this point in the press and on the platform and we demand again on the floor of the House a clear statement from the Government as to where and to whom this imported stock has gone. So much about the imports. What about exports? Exports are continuing in spite of the recommendations of the Gregory Committee. Exports are continuing under one pretext or another. Recommendation of the committee has been accepted but not without exceptions. These exceptions are only the thin end of the wedge. The Press Communique of July 1943 said that "in view of the gravity of rice position in India, the Central Government finds it impossible to undertake, until further notice, further exports of rice from India". But again

we have been told in this White Paper issued on 11th November that the export quota basis to Ceylon has been restored.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: Is the Honourable Member referring to rice or pulses?

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: I am referring to pulses. Pulses are also food-grains. It does not make any difference, whether it is rice or pulses. The export quota which was cancelled in July has now been restored. I do not think the Honourable Member will challenge the statement which is contained in the White Paper. A monthly quota has been granted. My case is that export was never stopped. I shall give a very interesting piece of information. In Calcutta, I was told by a respectable gentleman—the source of his information was no other than an Agent of Isphani & Co.—that at dead of night, after one o'clock every night cart loads of rice were taken in bullock carts to the docks. They were removed at night to escape the notice of the people. My friend told me that he got curious and so one day he kept awake and with his own eyes saw cart loads of rice being removed. Thus he verified the statement. I sent this statement to the Press, but it was not allowed to be published. It was not challenged but only withheld. Even full story of death is not allowed to be published. That is the position about exports. That disposes of the first promise of import for the next 2½ months. The second hope is given on the basis of *aman* crop, the winter crop. The Food Member says that there will be improvement in procurement and distribution. What do you mean by improvement in procurement of *aman* crop? Purchase of crops on the spot? We know one thing, that the *aus* crop was purchased by the Government, we also know what was the fate of the *aus* crop purchased by Government. The crop purchased by Government disappeared mysteriously and did not give the slightest relief. No reply was given to repeated enquiries as to disposal and destination of that crop. That is the experience of the purchase of *aus* crop. That is the bitter experience. The past experience has made people apprehensive about the purchase of *aman* crop. That would give no more relief than the purchase of *aus* crop. The thoughtless and reckless policy of purchase by Government in a haphazard manner is one of the reasons for the famine in my Province. Purchase even above the control price. It is a matter of common knowledge that District officers openly advised their agents to "purchase any quantity at any price". That is one of the main reasons why there is so much distress in Bengal. At the present moment, even now we are receiving reports that Government agents are busy making purchases, and wherever there is purchase by Government Agents, the prices at once go up.

Well, Sir, about distribution: responsible officers of the Food Department have complained to me bitterly that there is absolutely no arrangement for distribution. We demand the immediate formulation of a scheme which will minimise delay in grain going from the main grain centres to different local centres. The essence of the whole matter is quick action in view of the nature of the calamity. There must be a scheme for creating local stores for a group of villages and for every town so that there may be physical demonstration of the stock and that will inspire confidence in the measures taken by the Government. At present there is no organisation, there is no machinery, there is no agency, there is no staff for distribution. The poor district officers are handicapped and helpless and cannot cope with the work. As to military help recently requisitioned I have no remarks to make because I have not yet been able to form any opinion as to what they are doing, and what they will be able to do.

We have been told by the Food Member that an important announcement of policy as a result of the recommendations of the Gregory Committee is collaboration and co-operation of people, without which he feels and admits it is impossible to solve this food problem. I ask the Government to be honest with regard to this policy. Release the Congressmen. They will be the most suitable agency to help you in the matter of distribution of foodstuffs to people. Rightly or wrongly, the people have no confidence in Government measures.

[Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta.]

Whenever a Government agent appears, people immediately lose confidence. They become shy and keep aloof. I therefore think that the moment you release the Congressmen—you cannot dispute at all events that they are lovers of the country—the moment the Congressmen take up this task of distribution of foodstuffs, it will inspire confidence in the minds of the people. As regards distribution, I have got one specific suggestion, as regards Greater Calcutta. It must be fed by import from abroad and not by diversion from the districts. As regards rationing, I reserve my remarks as the scheme and its details are still under consideration.

The Food Member's critical period is advancing and still there is preparation and consideration. They would never come to a decision. This is about the next 2½ months. I have discussed the first three months, and I have discussed the next 2½ months. Now what after the next 2½ months? There will be temporary relief from the *aman* crop. But what is the programme after *aman* crop? I give you warning that import and distribution must be continued until the causes which have operated in bringing about this calamity have ceased to exist. There is just the danger of Government feeling a false sense of security and they will again be caught napping. It is this non-realisation at the proper moment of the difficulties and realities of the situation that is responsible for this famine in Bengal.

There is one other most important matter which, it appears to me, has not received proper attention—i.e., the question of post-famine rehabilitation and reconstruction. It will not do merely to feed them at the present moment. Not merely for the present should the wolf be kept from the door but some steps must be taken to rehabilitate and to reconstruct. The surviving distressed must be restored to their pre-famine condition: and must be put on their feet and given a fresh start. I have no time to elaborate it, but that is a most important question.

That is about food. As regards cloth, winter has come and cloth is as essential for the preservation of life as food. I invite the attention of Government to this question of standard cloth. The quantity allotted by the Government of India to Bengal has not been sent; their promise has not been implemented. And I am told that as many as three steamers came with standard cloth from Ahmedabad to Calcutta, but only one has been unloaded and the other two still remain waiting to be unloaded. Another complaint about standard cloth is the fluctuation in prices.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Standard cloth is not under discussion now; it is the food situation which is being considered by the House.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: That was mentioned only incidentally.

On this food question our case is that it is a man-made famine, as a result of the war. The responsibility must be fixed. Who is that man or that group of men who are responsible for this famine?

Pandit Shambhudayal Misra (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): I named them.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Every one is giving those names, but there must be some authoritative finding. The law has provided the extreme penal punishment—a life sentence—for a man who is responsible for the death of one single human being. What should be the penalty for those people who are responsible for the slow and prolonged process of murder of thousands of human lives? They should be publicly tried. I do not know if there is still a case of over-dramatisation. It is a pity that that responsible officer who spoke of over-dramatisation is still in His Majesty's service.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Before I call on the next speaker, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal wants to know whether he will be allowed to make a speech on an amendment of which he has given notice. It has been repeatedly laid down by the Chair that no Member, by simply giving notice of an amendment, acquires any priority or a right to be called on to speak. He has got to take his turn with others.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: Sir, in my speech this morning I shall not attempt to cover the whole of the ground traversed in this debate. There are certain questions which I know the Honourable Member would desire to speak on himself, such as Central control, the question of imports, special measures for nutrition and rehabilitation of the population, and also the amendments which ask for different forms of inquiry. These I shall not touch. I have, I am afraid, neither the wit nor the eloquence which might commend me to this House. I am unversed in Parliamentary graces, and I am quite prepared to be described as just another sun-dried or perhaps, to use a more technical term that is common in my department, a "dehydrated" bureaucrat. But, Sir, I can offer you, if I may say so, a sincere expression of my feeling of sympathy for the people who are suffering, particularly in Bengal, the province where I have had the privilege to serve off and on for 23 years and where I have received much kindness and hospitality from the people. But I am afraid that expressions of horror and distress will not satisfy this House; they will want to know what I propose to do to secure for the people of Bengal and the people of this country the food which is their property and which is their right. I should like to stress that word "property", because I regard now the food of India, wherever it comes from, as common property. We have got to get away from the idea and the conception of food as private or provincial property from which capital, whether it is political or whether it is financial, can be made. For, unless we can bring the whole resources of India to account and make them available for distribution to hungry people, no help that I can bring from outside can secure us against local distress and local famine. It is no longer a question of it being a matter of grace or of charity or of congratulation that surplus areas should send what they know they can easily spare to deficit areas. It is an inescapable duty which must be scrupulously performed, whatever may appear to be the needs of local or sectional interests.

That, Sir, is the problem which we in the Food Department have to face. It has been stated in slightly different terms in the report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, where it is said:

"The procurement problem is not primarily an issue of moving supplies from surplus to deficit provinces but of acquiring from the cultivator the maximum amount to be obtained from every part of India."

This debate has certainly not been without constructive suggestions, of which I have made a very careful note. In particular, yesterday we received some very constructive suggestions from my Honourable friend, Mr. Gwilt. Many of these suggestions have been of great value and interest, but I think that many of them also will be found to reappear in Government's own policy. And if in the time at my disposal today I do not deal with each of them in detail I trust that the House will not deem it a discourtesy. They will not be brushed aside nor will they be forgotten. Many of them indeed are familiar friends to officers of my department and of other departments of the Government of India who have been discussing and working on this problem for months. And it has been of intense interest to me to hear from different sections of this House the same ideas, the same points of view, often diametrically opposed to each other with regard to almost every aspect of the problem which we have under consideration. On procurement we have been told, "You must go straight to the cultivator", and again, "It is fatal to cut out the trade; you will never succeed unless you make use of the existing trade organisations". As to prices we are told on the one hand that there can be no statutory control of foodgrains prices, and on the other that we shall be failing in our duty if we do not impose the most rigid control. In fixing prices first of all we have been told that we should consider the interest of

12 Noon.

the producer, then we are told that we must put the interests of the consumer first. We are blamed because we failed to ensure the continuity of food supply by providing reserves in time. Then again we are told that for Government or the Army or the essential services to have reserves is to starve the general public. Not long ago, it was the army that was supposed to be taking the grain out of Bengal and starving the people.

[Mr. R. H. Hutchings.]

Now, Sir, the House realizes that it is the Army that is feeding and saving the people.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Whom and where are they feeding? Are they feeding you? They are not feeding our men.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: They are feeding no less than 7 districts. I am now able to tell that in the last two days we have sent out from Calcutta 2,000 tons of food a day to these districts. If the Honourable Member would like to have a list of the amounts, I will give it to him.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Since the food debate started.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: I do not mention this diversity of views which has been offered to us in order to pour ridicule on our critics. On the contrary, the course of the debate is merely an illustration of the fact that whenever earnest and thoughtful men come to consider and apply their minds to this food problem, they find that there are usually at least two answers to every question—sometimes four or five—of which only one can be the right one; and generally the same answer is not applicable all over India. That we have made experiments in the past, that we have made mistakes, that we have had to change our policy from time to time, is admitted. But, Sir, is it really to be wondered at if even now and in this House there are so many different opinions on the same problem.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: You want to take advantage of that.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: I venture to suggest that it is not surprising that the Government of India and the Food Department did not at once foresee every possible contingency and provide automatically the appropriate remedy.

The fact is, Sir, that no bright ideas or inspirations or sudden stroke of genius are going to settle the Indian food problem. It is in essence an extremely simple one. We all know that we want to achieve, we all know the results that we would like to see. But when we come to work it out in detail, it is clear that we are up against a very big administrative problem, which is not only new to the administrations which have to deal with it but for which in many cases, entirely new staff and entirely new machinery which does not exist at present, has to be constructed in order to carry out the work. The prime need, as I see it, is not to continue arguing about what should be done and what should not be done, but to lay down broad principles, to agree upon a coherent policy, which will make allowance for special conditions or special emergencies, and apply that policy consistently throughout the whole of India. I claim, Sir, that that is the position and the aim of the Food Department today.

After a series of crises and expedients, the Foodgrains Policy Committee was appointed and it made its report. The Fourth Food Conference was held and it was designed to ascertain in the quickest manner possible from the administrations, who would have to carry the policy into execution, what were their opinions on its general proposals. Those opinions were expressed and decisions were come to. Those decisions have been announced both by the Honourable Member and myself at the conclusion of the Conference, and I do not propose to repeat them here. In some cases we have had to accept the principle as an ideal, and decide, either for administrative reasons or because of emergent conditions in a particular area, that we would work towards that ideal by reasonable stages rather than attempt a doctrinaire solution of problems which required elastic treatment. The policy, however, has been settled and announced. Let nobody have any doubt that we intend to see it through, and in seeing it through I would ask for the whole-hearted support of this House.

What then are the prospects? Clearly the most important factors in the situation are now psychological. We have got somehow to restore confidence both among the producer and the consumer. I shall be told perhaps that there is little in the past history of this subject and our treatment of it, to inspire confidence, but I think that the situation now is different from what it was a year ago. Far be it from me to hold out any false hopes of an easy solution, or to say that now we have got imports, India is perfectly all right. I do not

say that. Nor do I believe that our troubles will end with the harvesting of the next rice crop, bountiful though I hope it will be. When I say that conditions are different, I mean this and nothing more that imperfect as our statistical information and imperfect as our knowledge still is we have now got a policy which we had not got before. Administrations are far more alive to their duties and responsibilities. The public itself is beginning to realise that food is no longer a subject which can be made the sport for all political ambition or financial ingenuity. The connected problems of the control and supply of other commodities are receiving increased, and increasing, attention. At least one High Court has called for records and pronounced a salutary judgment on food offences for which it has prescribed greatly enhanced sentences. The House will shortly see, I hope, other measures which we have in preparation to teach the same lesson.

What are the most important things that we must strive for? I have said that the problem is in essence now an administrative problem. Food must become the first priority subject for the time being of all administrations. The whole resources of those administrations must be focussed upon it in all its different and connected aspects. One of the most important points is an effective application of the Foodgrains Control Order. Hard-pressed district officers, I know, will say that for this they need more staff. Very well, that must be faced. It has been said more than once that the Centre took no steps to control the hoarding of stocks. But the Foodgrains Control Order was issued as long ago as May 1942. Like many such measures it was by no means perfect in its original form.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: What has your office been doing all along?

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: The administration of the Foodgrains Control is naturally a matter for the provinces and I am pointedly drawing attention to the duty of the provinces to administer the order.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: You are now drawing attention and you stop there?

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: Well, the order is still open to amendment, and if the Honourable Member has any amendments which he would like to propose in that order, I shall be the first to welcome his suggestions.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: We do not want amendments: we want that the destitutes should live.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member will have his own turn.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: This order provides that persons engaged in any undertaking which involves the purchase, sale or storage of foodgrains in any quantities exceeding 20 maunds shall take out a license from the Provincial Government. The order also provides that such licensee has got to declare his stocks and he must make true returns of his stocks to the Provincial Government. In other words the order gives you the basis on which you can assess and locate the stocks within your province. That, it seems to me, must form the basis of any sound food administration. Secondly, we believe that prices must at least be kept under control. We have accepted that statutory price control is the ideal to be aimed at all over India. It is perfectly clear that it is anomalous that a particular commodity produced in one province should have a price there which bears no relation whatever to the same commodity elsewhere. We must first of all strive to reduce those immense diversities of prices which are the result of emergent local conditions and which in their turn give rise to heart-burning and jealousies which, we find, seriously interfere with procurement and distribution. It is perhaps a truism to say that where ideal conditions exist for price control, then there is no need for it. But I for one do not see how we are to reduce the present price chaos in India to anything approaching order unless there is control. How that control is to be exercised in different areas, by what stages and in what regions we should establish parity, whether a successful system of ceiling prices which is in operation should be allowed to continue or not, all these are questions which must under existing conditions be answered with reference to the actual facts of the situation in different localities. But price

[Mr. R. H. Hutchings.]

control must, we believe, not only be supported by control of other commodities, and the attempt to supply consumer goods, but it must be accepted throughout India in principle, and we shall neglect nothing to make it effective. . . .

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Have you succeeded in making it effective at any place?

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: You have heard Mr. Kirby speak on rationing, and I do not propose to repeat any of the grounds which he covered; but I would like just to make two points about rationing. In India, as in the rest of the world, I believe—in fact I know—that experience has shown that wherever rationing has been introduced it has been successful, and it has been welcomed by the great majority of the people. Its essential attraction from the point of view of the consumer is its fairness, and from the point of view of the Government its attraction is that it establishes beyond doubt what is the actual need of the urban population. The more that doubt can be replaced by certainty, the greater are the chances of successful planning, and from that successful planning will flow the re-establishment of public confidence. I know that there is the argument that in surplus areas the demands of urban areas in the rationing scheme may seem on paper to be larger than under normal conditions.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: May I have a few minutes more?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Yes.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: But I would say that experience again has shown that the off-take in a rationing scheme is seldom more than 80 per cent. of the numerical demand.

I have finished except for making one point and it is this: that I believe that in this problem that we are facing today in India, the psychological or if you like to call it, the spiritual factor is of vital importance. At the last Food Conference, a remark was made by a great Indian leader and administrator, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar; he was speaking on price control and he made a rather astonishing statement: he said "Price control is a spiritual matter". I thought over what it was that he was trying to convey; and I think what he meant was that in food control and in price control, success depended on an element of co-operation and sacrifice such as perhaps is not too common in the world today. We in India, I feel, are suffering now from the effects of exactly the same things that created the war in Europe—those motives of fear and of greed which have made international co-operation and friendship impossible. I would like, if I may, to recall to you the terms of a letter which was written two thousand years ago by a man called Saul of Tarsus to the people of Ephesus. He had been discussing with them the difficult conditions under which they lived and what it was they had to face up to; and this is what he said, if I can recall it to you.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Keep it for Sunday service.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: I thought the words are worth recording; he said:

"Stand then with your loins girt about with truth and having on the breast-plate of righteousness and your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Above all taking the shield of faith."

What did he mean by that? Confidence and trust. . . .

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: In Government?

Mr. R. H. Hutchings: If we can re-establish that feeling. . . .

(Interruptions.)

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I must ask the Honourable Member to conclude his speech now.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): This is a most vital and important question that we are discussing, but before I come to it, I ought to place before the House facts relating to the working of the Committees that are being appointed by the House, because it has been said in this House that the attendance of Members of this

House at these Committees has not been what is desired. This Food Committee was appointed about nine months back and the first meeting was called by wire on the 7th November, and I find that no less than four members out of the five were present. And still it is said that we are not present at the meetings! Again, several conferences and committees were being held, a big report has been brought out, but to none of these conferences or committees did the Government ever think it fit to call a single Member of this House. And still we hear from the Government that the Members of this House do not attend committee meetings! So far as the Supply Committee and the Defence Committee are concerned—both of the war—I can say that 90 per cent. and sometimes 95 per cent. of Members have been present.

Now coming to the main question, there are certain things that have been well established, established beyond doubt. The first is that there is famine prevalent not only in Bengal but there was a famine before that in Bijapur, that the conditions in Orissa, Travancore and Cochin are almost on the verge of famine, that the condition in Malabar, in parts of Madras, and if I may say so, in Bombay, is very severe. It has also been admitted, and rightly too, and it is for my purpose a very strong point; that no less a person than Mr. Amery has, after all, agreed that for the last 30 years the people of this country have not had sufficient food to eat. In fact, he has admitted that even to-day the position in the country is that a greater portion of the people are not being fed as they ought to be and as are fed in all other parts of the world. This is our prosperity, or poverty which I leave to those people who claim to be of the great civilised nations to judge, and who at times pride themselves on their great successful administration of colonies and countries that are ruled by them and call themselves trustees, guardians and what not.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Why quote Amery?

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Because he is the last man to admit true facts about us. Another important fact has been established beyond doubt, and that is, up to this day we have no reliable statistics of the food produced in this country. Even after four years of this great war, and after the last war and during all this period the administration has not got any reliable statistics to go upon. This proves beyond doubt the kind of great interest that is claimed to have been taken or is being taken for better administration, which includes law and order, peace and prosperity of the people of this country. To-day again we have met here to consider figures that have been placed before us. Three months back certain figures were placed before us. Before that some time back certain figures were placed before the conferences and committees. What do we find, I ask my Honourable friend, the Secretary of the Food Department? The first paragraph of the Food Committee report says that reliable statistics are not yet available. And not a single Member of this House has been invited to any conference or committee or anywhere else. Although this condition is prevalent a policy has been laid down, settled and announced. This is the great regard for the people of this country. The other day the Honourable the Food Member said, you are a supreme body. To-day we hear that policies have been settled and announced. Some time back the Honourable the Leader of the House said we have got very great regard for the House. And the regard is this, that we are nowhere called up till now, when for some time a great portion of the country is starving or on the verge of starvation. Who can deny that? Up to now not a single Member of this House has been taken in the conferences or committees, and not a single piece of reliable statistics has been placed before this House. But we are told a policy has been settled and announced and therefore, Sir, we are here only for the purpose of hearing the word 'regards' from the lips of my Honourable friends on the Treasury Benches.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): . . . and lectures from foreign experts!

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): This is only a school debate.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: The policy has been announced. Then why do you want us? What have you placed before us? This scrap of paper . . .

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: This White Paper.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: But the print on it is black.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: While I feel very glad that the Honourable the Food Member is taking it so nicely, I must admit that for my part I feel very much. However, thank you very much. Further if I may say so, you conveyed to us the other day that you have got supreme regard for this House.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That I have.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Let us live in that hope. I live in hope, you live in hope, everybody else lives in hope. Hope never dies. This is the condition of this House. We have been told in the British Parliament that they were responsible so long as Indians had not got self-government to look after the affairs of India. When we read that, we thought that something was going to be done. There are many people in Great Britain who are very sympathetic towards humanitarian objects, if not for anything else. We find when food discussion took place there in the House of Commons out of about 600 members the maximum attendance was between 35 to 53, and we find that in that debate neither the Prime Minister, nor the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, the greater Labour leader—I do not find just now either our Labour leader, Mr. Joshi here, or Mr. Jammadas Mehta, or I am sure they would feel very sorry. We do not find there any of those who had been in India, like Sir George Schuster, or Sir Stanley Reed, and lastly we do not find a word being said by Sir Stafford Cripps. That was the state of affairs during the debate that had gone on in the House of Commons, but one thing has emerged from it and that is this. That the Secretary of State has admitted the dire poverty of India and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir J. Anderson, has agreed that there is inflation in this country.

Now, we have got very recently the Food Committee's report, and in that report we have not been supplied; nor has any committee or conference asked what are the figures of all exports of foodstuffs during 1938 to 1943. This is very important to know true position. Is it that you cannot find that figure? A country to find out its true position has to rely upon export figures as much as on figures of production and consumption. Will that be denied? But not anywhere do I find that the great committee of 25 gentlemen that was selected have insisted for that. There are no export figures from 1939 to 1943. We have only got the figure for the army consumption and we knew that that figure was not very great. However, we are thankful that that figure at least has been given and I must admit that it has removed a lot of misunderstanding. So far so good, but what about the total export figures? I demand that. It has been alleged against the Government that large exports have been going on. Why don't you give those figures? Have you not got your records and records of the custom houses? Have the Custom Houses administrations also gone or have they also become just in the same position as the departments of the Government of Bengal? The Government of Bengal cannot give us death figures or rates. The portfolio of local Self-Government may therefore be taken as gone. It is good for nothing. Take the case of law and order, if we do not know death figures we do not know how many people have committed suicide and how many have been murdered. Is it that Bengal Police does not truly know? This is the sample of how local Self-Government and the Police in Bengal work, and may we take it that it is why the Government of Bengal are unable to give the figures of deaths for days together that are taking place in the various districts of Bengal and in Calcutta, or else why do they not come forward and give us the figures of the deaths? Many people have committed suicide, or have attempted suicide. Why has no action been taken?

An Honourable Member: The figures are sun-dried and de-hydrated.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Now, Sir, since the war started, a very large number of our countrymen have ungrudgingly helped the war efforts. I am very glad that our present Viceroy has been one of the foremost in declaring the great services rendered by the people of this country and by the Forces. Since 1939 we have supplied so many things including large quantities of foodstuffs not for our military only but also for the people of Iraq, Iran and for

the people of Russia. If that is so, why the quantities of those supplies have not been mentioned anywhere? Today even I am in a position to state that a part, a small part it may be, of the provisions that we are sending to the Middle East for our own soldiers is going to the civil population. I do not grudge that. It is essential. Why is there no mention of that? There is an object in what I say. We are very much grateful to Australia and Canada for offering us 100 thousand tons of wheat. We ought to accept it. Thanks have been already conveyed. Has anybody ever thanked us for the foodstuff that we sent in 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942? We do not know. At least, this side does not know. The people do not know whether you sent one ton or one hundred thousand tons to various countries. Is there any letter of thanks from them? Can this Government enlighten us whether there is any gratitude expressed to us? Neither figures nor thanks have we got but we are all eager to send out our thanks. Certainly we are a courteous people. We claim we are more civilised people. We send out thanks for anything that is offered to us but in this case it may be the fault of the Government who wish to keep us ignorant of the quantities that have been sent by them that they do not say anything. I wish that the Government would place before the country the quantities they have sent and also letters of thanks or acknowledgment. Have we received thanks from Russia, if not may I ask, from anywhere else? (*An Honourable Member:* "We do not want thanks. We want our food back.") We were told a little time ago in one Committee that we were going to get some foodstuffs from the United Nations on certain conditions. If those conditions were not set out, I should certainly have appreciated that offer very much and would have thanked those people who had offered them. I never knew till recently that the United Nations had representatives in this House, representing their views and laying down conditions for the food that is likely to come. I find that my friend, Mr. Gwilt, the other day, said, 'If you don't have rationing and if you do not conserve well your own foodstuffs, it is impossible for you to get supplies from the United Nations'. I agree, Sir, that we should conserve our foodstuffs but I never expected the gentleman representing the United Nations in this House, which includes China and Russia, to lay down any condition. When the question of equality or some status or position is concerned, the Asiatics are treated by them quite different from the Europeans. We are nobody there. I ask, is it honourable or fair that we should be told like that? Is this the kind of lever to be applied? Have we not sent foodstuffs and so many other things to them for solid four years? Foodstuffs and many other things have gone from India to even Britain for all these four years. We never put any such condition. According to the Food Committee report, we have been asking only for 250 million tons from outside to make a reserve of 150 million for distribution and 50 thousand...

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: You are wrong about your figures. It is a million and a half altogether and five hundred thousand for the reserve.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Thank you. I wanted that figure. For that we want tonnage and we are unable to get tonnage. Only half a dozen ships have brought some cargoes and for that half a dozen messages of thanks have been conveyed to His Majesty's Government, as if we have no right on our mercantile marine. We are told that His Majesty's Government have been graciously pleased to supply transport by the end of the year, sufficient to bring in some quantities and we have already expressed our gratefulness to His Majesty's Government. We have our own a number of steamers on the Indian register belonging to Indian companies. Almost all of those ships are for now four years being utilised by the British Government for war purposes. Where are those ships, may I ask? When Japan declared war, Australia and New Zealand wanted every one of their soldiers on the battlefield to come back to their own country but, it is regrettable, we cannot ask for some of your own ships when we are starving to come to your aid. We have got about 40 ships on the Indian register, which have been serving His Majesty's Government for four solid years and yet you cannot ask for half

[Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee.]

a dozen of those ships for conveying foodstuffs to you when hundreds and thousands of our people are dying in our country, and when a couple of ships are given our Government expresses our gratefulness for them and asks us to be grateful. Sir, when a couple of ships were recently sent our Government was eager and anxious to send your grateful thanks to them, and told us we cannot expect unless they were able to spare for us, as if we were no one.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Am I not, Sir, entitled to 40 minutes?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That was not agreed to.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Very well, Sir. The only thing that I want to ask the Government is that they have been sending out ships for various purposes and they must now demand them back at once for food. Then, there has been a shortage of river craft in Bengal, which is an admitted fact, and something must be done. We have long neglected this transport although famine has been raging.

Finally, Sir, I want to say to my people who are always considering themselves to be the surplus provisions that they also depend upon other parts of India for many things and specially for their cloth, tea, sugar, iron, matches and for so many other things. Controls have been put and we are, they must remember, selling them at controlled prices. It is not fair at least for Sind to make profits from Bombay, a province with which she was so much attached not long ago and to which the Bombay province made a subsidy of 60 to 80 lakhs annually without ever considering that a day might come when the Sind people will forget all those obligations and would want some profit from us. I am sorry, Sir, I have very little time I agree generally with the remarks of Honourable Member and with the Honourable the Secretary of the Food Department that so far as food is concerned, it must be considered to be the property of all the people of India and that no one has got a right to claim it as his own. The surplus provinces must be prepared to give to the deficit provinces. I also agree with him that there should be reserves, price control and rationing. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that had it not been for the great help that the military has rendered just now at the instance of the Viceroy to Bengal the position would have been still worse and we are very much thankful to both His Excellency the Viceroy and C-in-C. for having done that. But I ask in all humility why this was not asked for at least during last few months?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must conclude his speech.

Pandit Nilakantha Das (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the famine that is raging in Bengal has been characterised as a man-made famine, but it has been forced upon the province from which I come. There have been demands from all sides of the House to fix the responsibility for the famine. It is quite natural for those who have seen the famine area and the way in which things are being managed or mismanaged there to make this demand. But I should like to say that we may wait a little for fixing this responsibility if it is at all necessary. The present is not exactly the time for fixing the responsibility either by means of a Royal Commission or even by public trial. Then, again, the fixing of the responsibility is not a very difficult matter. Such of the provinces as are functioning today under the provincial autonomy have to labour under various handicaps, safeguards and special powers and they are being made the scapegoats. In season and out of season Mr. Amery has inside and outside the House of Commons trotted out the ground that it is the fault of the provinces which are autonomous. Even just now Mr. Hutchings was asked: 'Why do you not do this and that?' He blamed the provinces. Mr. Amery does it for the consumption of Allies and the U. S. A. But there is no reason on earth why the same thing should be said here in this House? Of course, during the war the Centre has been made a very weak, disunited and disorganised body. They cannot handle anything successfully. When the war

began, it was the duty of the British Government to set up a strong centre with an organised unity of Departments, something like the joint responsibility of cabinets to make all India one solid unit. There is provision in the Constitution Act to that effect and that provision has also been strengthened later on by amending Parliamentary enactments. There was no difficulty to follow them. But it was not done. As my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy remarked yesterday, it was not done in order to show to the world that Indians cannot manage their own affairs even in Autonomy. Although the primary responsibility for all this and the main responsibility for things like famine and food distress are in the White Hall, my friends on the Treasury Benches cannot be absolved. Entirely subordinate to the White Hall as they are, it is their direct charge to exercise that responsibility.

Without going into details, I should like to illustrate things by what is happening in my own province of Orissa. There the famine has been forced by the Central Government on account of its weakness, want of foresight and disorganised activity. All these things can be well illustrated there and note may be taken by the Government for their future action. Here I must, however, remark that it is very regrettable that unnecessary and undesirable political propaganda is being carried on there and capital is made of the sufferings of my people for that propaganda. Apart from that, I will now describe how the food distress happened in my province. I may at the outset refer to the normal economic conditions of the Orissa peasant. I may refer the House to a statement made by my Honourable friend Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh in the Council of State on the 12th of August last during the food debate there. Very interesting figures are given in the last three columns of his statement: *per capita* production in oz. and in mds. and *per capita* consumption of foodgrains in different provinces. Here I may point out that Orissa is perpetually on starvation diet. It is always on the verge of starvation. In Orissa, the *per capita* production is 19.6 oz. per day and *per capita* consumption is only 13 oz. foodgrains. In the neighbouring province of C. P. the *per capita* production is 26.5 oz. and consumption is 22.8 oz. In Sind, the *per capita* production is 28.6 oz. per day and consumption is 20.6 oz. The Oriya peasant has got nothing to supplement his food, such as meat, eggs, fruit, etc., unlike the peasants in N.-W. F. P. or even in Sind. This 13 oz. foodgrain is paddy and not wheat, nor even rice. Orissa is not a wheat eating province. There is also another factor to be taken into consideration. The non-coastal districts are better off in production and consumption.

An Honourable Member: What about fish?

Pandit Nilakantha Das: That requires money. This *per capita* consumption if calculated in rice will come to about 6 or 7 oz., that is, about 15 or 17 tolas of rice. Any one who knows the peasant in Orissa will bear me out that the Oriya peasant does not even supplement his rice with an onion, and sometimes not even with salt. So in the case of Orissa, the dictionary meaning of surplus does not apply. It is something else. The peasant has got to sell his paddy because he has no money—no other means of paying his land rent and taxes and also for his little necessities of life like salt, cloth, etc. According to the figures given by my Honourable friend in the table referred to Orissa exports 187,000 tons of foodgrains outside the Province per year on the average though it is not a surplus Province as such. The Oriya peasants have no money to meet their ordinary demands, they are obliged to sell their produce. It is not real surplus. The situation now in Orissa has been aggravated on account of people coming back from Burma. On account of the bombing of Calcutta and Assam; an army of such people also came back from those places. We used to send out 187,000 tons or 45 lakhs of maunds of paddy or 30 lakhs of maunds of rice from the Province in normal years. There is no margin. If the export is a little more or production a little less we are sure to be in the grip of famine. The Central Government should be careful. Foodgrain control merely in theory will not do. These little details must be observed and carefully attended to.

[Pandit Nilakantha Das.]

When last year it was required that all surplus Provinces should contribute to the deficit areas, our Provincial Government carefully calculated, for last year the stocks and sent out 18 lakhs of maunds of rice before the middle of this year. Suddenly there appeared to be alarming conditions in Calcutta and the Central Government went off its head, and there was declared free trade in the eastern regions of India. Many of the Honourable Members might have observed what the Premier of Orissa then said. He said, that if the free trade continued, there was no other alternative for the Ministry except to resign. There was a public statement to that effect. But in the meantime 10 lakhs of maunds of rice had gone out to Bengal, and 4 lakhs of maunds had been amassed by stockists to be sent to that Province. When the appeal was made by Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee for opening free kitchens, these 4 lakhs of maunds were finally allowed by the Premier of Orissa to be sent to Bengal. On the 4th of this month a statement was made by that Premier that only 1½ lakhs of maunds out of this stock were sent out to Bengal by that date.

When this was the position the Provincial Government wanted somehow to bring paddy from the non-coastal districts where there was some surplus to save the situation, if possible. But in the last statement of the Premier it was made clear that there were no transport facilities available, and in the words of the District Collector of Ganjam "starvation stalks in the land" and we are today in the dire grip of the famine. Who made this famine possible and who forced it on our people? Ganjam, Puri and Balasore, the coastal districts were all caught up in the famine. This is in short the history of the famine in Orissa.

There is another factor also to observe. I found that some patriotic people, for humanitarian reasons wanted to open free kitchen in Puri, and they got some rice locally. Perhaps some shopkeeper got it by providing means of private transport from Sambalpur. So the real difficulty for the starving people was that there was no money. Rice was selling at ten annas a seer, but there was no money to buy it. People were starved to death for want of money to purchase rice. This condition is peculiar and must be taken note of. Sterling balance, inflation and various such other money creating devices do not mean anything to the poor Oriya peasant. You should give money to this land. Oriyas must get money.

I was a Member of the Supply Department Committee since when the department was organised. I quite realised that money was being poured out to all in India. But my people in Orissa were starving. No money was sent to Orissa, because there were no industries which could supply war materials. I also stressed this point in the Committee and here I must acknowledge with thanks the kind sympathy shown by Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan and Sir H. P. Mody towards my poor Province. I named small industries like pottery, China clay, tinning and dehydrating fish, etc. I wanted them to start those industries in Orissa with small capitals.

I need not go into more details. Today the fact remains that though you have purchased 600 crores of rupees worth of articles from this country for

1 P.M. lakhs. I was told to go to the Commerce Department and the Transport Department and from this door to that door, but I have gone to all these places in vain. This disorganised thing is no Government; you must organise the Departments in proper co-ordination and co-operation with one another. It has been now held that a strong Government is necessary. But a strong Government may be still oppressive and it might create panic among the people. It must be properly organised to make it one unitary institution. One department should always count upon the co-operation of another whenever necessary.

In this connection I will give another fact which is very significant. In the coast of Orissa the only factories worth the name are rice mills. I may say by the bye that those rice mills ought to be closed at once if possible

because they are the worst hoarders. And many of these millowners have no life interest in the land; they come from outside like so many merchants and others also in Orissa. They are not only the worst hoarders but they can corrupt even the blind God of justice. Apart from that, they employ a very small number of people. In this region there is only one factory, a glass factory, which employs about 600 labourers. This factory is near my home and some six months ago I found that the managers there employed very few people in spite of getting some war supply orders. To my question they said they had no coal. I went to the Provincial Government and they said that they had recommended 15 wagons a month. I went to the Transport Department and the Commerce Department and what they said or what they did I need not here say. The glass factory is practically closed today for want of coal whereas for those rice mills coal is being supplied and there much of this supply is being sold in the black market today. That is the position.

Here I may tell you that there are three aerodromes in Orissa and many Members here might have read the statement of Maharaja Parlakimedi, the Premier of Orissa, when he resented even labour being brought from abroad, from C. P. and Malabar for these aerodromes. Orissa is famous for its labourers, and the adaptability to skill of Oriya labourers is well known.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Pandit Nilakantha Das: Very well, I have already indicated how things should be managed and how there should be a strong Central Government with a definite plan and purpose working like a unitary institution with firmness as well as forethought.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Sir, let me begin my speech by expressing thanks to those nations who do not belong to the so-called Commonwealth but who have shown their sympathy in our distress; I mean particularly the contribution of £100,000 by Ireland and the promise of another £100,000 to come. Let me also thank China for having contributed to our country in our hour of distress. Sir, let me also take this opportunity, with which I hope the whole House will agree, that we here are very happy that the great Asiatic European nation has recovered its lands from a foreign foe, that nation being Russia. We are happy at the recovery of its lands by Russia for we know very bitterly in this country what it means to have our lands and resources taken up and administered by a foreign agency.

Now, Sir, coming to the immediate subject of the debate, my concern is not with the death of yesterday so much as with the death of tomorrow; for I see that death which is today stalking round the land of Bengal will tomorrow be striding all over the country. Today it is Bengal, tomorrow I am sure my own province will not be immune from it. I am not so narrow-minded as to think in terms of this province or that province; my mind is broad enough to consider that every part of India right from the North-Western Frontier to Cape Comorin is my country and that the minutest minority and the biggest majority are all my countrymen. Those being my feelings I am not going to bother over petty things as to who is responsible for this disaster and who is not responsible for it. I want to go into the root of the question and I say that this famine is not only man-made but is the result of planning; and I am not making this assertion without foundation. If I had any doubts about it I am today convinced after hearing the Honourable Member who spoke for Government,—the sun-dried "dehydrated" bureaucrat. I am convinced that this is the fact and that all of us have to be careful to save ourselves from this planned famine in one part of the country. Sir, if it is not part of a plan how do you explain the bungling measures which were taken by the Central Government? One day they talk of food control, the second day they talk of free trade, the third day they have Regional Commissioners; one day they say that prices should be controlled, the next day they say there should be free trade. What is the meaning of all this? Can you imagine that these highly paid men whom we pay for their services to this country do not understand these elementary things? My Honourable friend who spoke on the side

[Dr. G. V. Deshmukh.]

of Government just now talked platitudes about psychological factors, food price factors and spiritual factors and Food Controllers, and so on, as if we do not know anything. I want to tell him that he knows mighty little about the general principles of war rationing and food question at the time of war. Is this a new subject? At the time of the last war, in 1918, all these questions had cropped up before the British people, and there is absolutely no excuse for those gentlemen to come here and say that the question is new, that it is complex and tackling it would be an ambitious scheme, that they have no agencies and no officers and no men to deal with the subject, and so on. I say these are all hypocritical excuses. They are fatly paid, paid so much that no service in the world is paid as much; I do not see any reductions made in their salaries even during war, and if anything, there have been extra allowances. And what are we paying these people for? To remain ignorant and at the time of crises to ask experts to come after two or three years of war to settle the food policy of this country. What is the meaning of control of prices of wheat at the early stages and then realizing after six months that this is not good; this leads to blackmarketing. Let me give my Honourable friend a simple elementary lesson in food rationing. Everywhere he talked about rationing and food control. It is an elementary principle of war economy that when you reduce civil consumption—and you must reduce civil consumption—you cannot go in one direction. Both production as well as distribution and control have to be simultaneously looked after. Was this not done in England? Why should not these British people who take fat pays—these sundried bureaucrats who bask in the sun here; that is all they do—why should not they have realized at the beginning of the war that if during the war food economy was going to come to this country, they should read books on the subject? They should have intelligence enough to realize that. Books were published by the League of Nations before 1939 on 'how to manage war rationing'. I do not admit that these gentlemen, who are responsible at the Centre, did not know about war rationing. Sir, one of the two positions these men must occupy, and that is they are ignorant and therefore inefficient. Yet they are so highly paid. You might as well resign and leave that money for feeding my countrymen. If they do not accept that position, if they think that they are very wise, if they claim infallibility—these sundried and 'dehydrated' bureaucrats—then I say that they must admit—and there is no other alternative—that the whole situation is part of a plan, and nothing else. This monkeying with the food problem of this country is part of a plan and it is not just due to oversight.

The next question is production. Have they any idea as to how production has been increased in England which was not primarily an agricultural country, but which was primarily an industrial country. Here the Members expect applause from the House when they announce that in the last three years of war, or after the fall of Burma, the food acreage has gone up from 2 to 4 per cent. This is the result of which we have to be proud of. What has happened in England? There the acreage has gone up by 40 to 60 per cent. How did they manage it? Not by giving niggardly loans as you have given to the provinces, but by giving subsidies to the extent of 60 per cent.—not 14 to 15 per cent.—in order to increase the area under cultivation. Here in India what does 'food production plan' mean? First of all it means big posters: "Mother give me barley, because it is more nutritious than rice". Well, if barley is more nutritious than rice, why don't you give it to the Army, and leave the rice for the poor population. It is more nourishing and contains more vitamins. Why don't you do that? This propaganda advertisement is at par with the efforts of other departments of the Central Government. Here is another instance. At first we saw big pictures of stout Indian soldiers—Sikhs, Marhattas, Punjabis, Gurkhas and Jats—tall, six feeters, and by their side a little European soldier—a Tommy—and these six feeters are told "Give your money to this little man and he will protect you". You might as well ask Sir Edward Benthall or Sir Azizul Huque to hand over all his money to my Honourable friend, Maulvi Sahib, or my brother, Mr. G. V. Deshmukh,

so that when the opportunity arises, this little man will protect you. It was an insult to the soldiery of India.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can proceed with his speech after Lunch.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock. **Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: May I know, Sir, how much more time I have?

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have spoken for 9 minutes and you have eleven minutes more.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Sir, I am sorry to see that the exhibition of arrogant infallibility that we saw this morning is not in the House. He wanted to teach us

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am in his place.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Not you, the other gentleman; he speaks for the Government more than you can or you are allowed to do. If that arrogant infallibility had been here—I am waiting for him to come—I could have told him that he did not have elementary ideas about food situation in war time. I could have told him that the whole mess which you have made is due to your not knowing the elementary principles. To give you an instance, what does he say about rationing? He said something which I did not think was worth paying attention to. The whole idea of rationing is that the man with the lowest income ought to be able to get subsistence food during crisis time: that is the idea behind rationing. But here we find all sorts of ideas put forward. If a man is an industrial worker, give him more food or more calories; if he is a worker in heavy industry, give him still more food; but that does not mean that you can bring in rationing unless you can ensure sufficient supply of food for the population; and therefore all this monkeying about the food problem that has been done by the Central Government can lead only to one conclusion, that it is nothing else—it is not due to inefficiency or to ignorance, but it all is part of a plan. If any more proof was needed, besides the statements of the Secretary of State for India, who seems to have changed his opinion about the famine conditions from day to day as easily as a *demi-mondaine* might change her associates—I say, the way the Viceroy who was responsible for this food crisis sneaked away from India like a thief in the middle of the night, the way the Governor of Bengal fell ill, the way the whole thing has been managed can lead to one and only conclusion and that is that this is not due to ignorance or inefficiency. If that is so, then it can only be part of a plan. I have very little time left; otherwise I could have proved by their own facts and figures and statistics that what I am saying is not a wild statement but it can be proved. Now one more proof I can show you is this: I am reading from Sir Nazimuddin's statement in the Muslim League Council. What he says is this:

"At a conference held on 3th May 1943 Major General Wood laid down the following line of policy for adoption by the Government of Bengal:

(1) The fact that there was a sufficiency of food for Bengal should be proved statistically and given the widest publicity by advertising and repeating *ad nauseam*.

(2) No price control in Bengal until Government acquire physical control of supplies of rice. Meanwhile, forget prices and concentrate on ensuring free flow of rice into the market and exercise restraining influence on prices through Government agencies at regulated prices, the quota allotted to each commercial agent and the price at which he is permitted to buy from day to day being kept secret. Buy in the cheapest market and bring down your offer of prices by judiciously holding off the market when necessary."

Now, Sir, are these measures of a government? Is government run for private profit? Are the finances of a government to be run on the same lines as that of a private capitalist industry? Now, if you are going to do that, then all this talk about the welfare of the country and all that is sheer nonsense—absolute bunkum. It means that the Government is in this Country for nothing else but to make profit, and that profit they want to make out of the misery of the people. That is the mentality of all these exploiters, whether they are

[Dr. G. V. Deshmukh.]

in the Government office or elsewhere. The whole lot of them here seem to have that mentality when we are starving for food; one gentleman who is fairly well-nourished—I am not badly famished either—talks about sending a shipload of bicycles, or a tanker, which would be of more use. We want food; we want strength in our legs to move about, and they are thinking in terms of profits and bicycles. That is the way in which the whole thing is managed

An Honourable Member: May I interrupt the Honourable Member

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I have very little time—I will answer you later; if the Chairman will give me more time, I am prepared to answer you. Therefore, there is not the least doubt that this is all part of a plan. This war has taught us how European wars are run. If we had any doubts about European diplomacy before, all those illusions have been swept away. These European wars are run for European civilisation with Asiatic blood and Asiatic treasure. There have been more men killed and wounded of my countrymen than I dare say even the Britishers themselves, for whose empire this fight is being carried on; and in spite of all that, do we get any credit for it?—Whichever way you look at it, it always takes the same turn. If you are fighting for the sport of fighting they are mercenaries. My countrymen are not cowards. Thank God that the womb of Mother India does not produce cowards. It is still producing heroes. From the heights of Abyssinia, to the plains of Tunisia, Tobruk, Sicily—and the latest information is that when in Italy the 8th Army could not do anything it is the Indian regiments who are being engaged—what does it mean? It means that wherever there is any doubt or difficulty, it is my countrymen who have to come forward and give their lives. And what does this Government do? I do not see one gentleman whom I knew before the war has left this country, and yet they are talking of the empire: they say they are fighting and they are using my countrymen as mercenaries for pay. But if some of us do not fight, because we have got our own ideas of respectability and independence and we would rather fight on equal terms and not as slaves, then they say “You are not doing your duty by the empire or commonwealth,” liberty, freedom and all that bunkum that we have been hearing about *ad nuseam*. I say we will have nothing to do with this European diplomacy, where our blood has been spilled in this war as a matter of compulsion. We do not want to have anything to do with your European politics, whether it is Nazism, or whether it is Fascism or whether it is even Britishism, which means talking big and behaving mean. We do not want these Europeanisms at all. We want to look at this thing from our own point of view, from the point of view of our own interests. I have got a toothache and have got to see how that can be relieved, I have got a stomach ache and I am hungry and therefore I want food; that is how we look at the problem. All this talk does not impress me, as I say, whether it is Nazism, or Fascism or Britishism or any other ism; of Britishism we have had a long experience. Recently we are having an addition to this Britishism in the statements of the Secretary of State: he is making vulgar statements after statements day after day, repeating untruths, which nobody pays any attention to, repeating like a parrot or even worse. We do not want to have anything to do with those things. What we want is our own interest; and I say behind this planned famine there is this vindictiveness. There is vindictiveness for this reason that in the last 150 years—I see that my time limit is approaching, I am not going to take more than a minute—in the last 150 years, in spite of your efforts at emasculation my countrymen can produce heroes about whom I can be proud. In spite of the 150 years of keeping us down so that we may be humbled and we may have inferiority complex I find that my countrymen are just as good as, if not better than these people who have tried their utmost to humiliate and humble us. We may be poor, we may be famished, but I can tell you I am proud that in spite of their attempts they have not been able to make us slaves. That is the vindictiveness behind, and all I say is this, that on the brow of our poverty you cannot force us to wear the crown of slavery.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I support the amendment to the motion moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy. I must say that having listened to food debates, this being the third one, I do not feel that they have been followed up by any substantial achievement on the part of the Government. I have been listening attentively to the speeches made by the Members of Government to see if there was any indication that they have realised the seriousness of the position for one thing, and secondly, that they felt confident that they can grapple with the problem. The Honourable the Mover of the motion was very restrained, asked for co-operation, told us what has all been done. He said that the Government is going to follow a particular policy. He has been supported by two of his subordinates. Mr. Kirby told us about the mechanics of rationing, and Mr. Hutchings this morning reviewed the debate in this House, preached a sermon, but gave us no hopes so far as the future is concerned.

Sir, what is happening in this country and in England is an attempt at throwing responsibility on others shoulders. Every person who is responsible in a measure wants to shove off the responsibility on to somebody else. The debate in the Parliament revealed, the Honourable Mr. Amery wanted to throw the responsibility on Provincial Autonomy. Sir, I remember that while this House was discussing this question of food on the last occasion I showed fairly conclusively, in my opinion and in the opinion of those that can judge the question,—that the question of Central Government's responsibility could not be disputed. At that time I referred to the operation of sections 102 and 8 of the Government of India Act by reason of the declaration of an emergency, and the addition of section 126A to the same Act which made the executive authority of the Central Government supreme. If the executive authority of the Central Government becomes supreme where is the responsibility? The authority of the Governor General is supreme and he owes allegiance directly to the Secretary of State for India, and how could Mr. Amery say that the responsibility by reason of Provincial Autonomy functioning is that of Provincial Government? My Honourable friend on my left—Mr. Neogy—clearly pointed out the other day how executive authority is being exercised in the provinces by the Central Government when it suits them. Sections 12 and 52 of the Government of India Act read with 14 and 54 lay upon the executive authority of the Government of India the responsibility for the prevention of any grave menace to peace and tranquillity of any part of India and makes it a personal responsibility of the Governor General. And now at the modest computation, over a million people are dead in Bengal and it is estimated that about four to five millions more will die before the end of the year over various parts of India, and it is said it is not the Governor General's personal responsibility and it is not the Secretary of State's responsibility! In the face of these facts how is it possible to support an amendment asking for a Royal Commission to enquire into the cause of all this. It is not, as my Honourable friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta mentioned, that I have cast away my inferiority complex. I maintain I never possessed it. I think, to-day to go and ask Amery and Co. to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate into what has happened in India, particularly when they have shirked their responsibility and tried to cast it on provincial ministers, is something that the world will laugh at. Sir, what we have really to ask is, how are they going to discharge that responsibility? The Government of India Act under which we are working in this House, forbids us to recommend to the House of Commons the only remedy that should be taken in the circumstances. But we can very well ask, we can very well remind them of a statement made in 1901 by the then Secretary of State, Lord George Hamilton, in introducing the annual financial statement in the House of Commons. He repudiated the idea that Britain was bleeding India, that Britain was exploiting India and said:

“I admit at once that if it could be shown that India has retrograded in material prosperity under our rule we stand self-condemned and we ought no longer to be trusted with the control of that country.”

[Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari.]

Is it or is it not a fact that retrogression in the economic sphere has taken place in this country all these 43 years; and to-day we have reached the climax of that retrogression. Can anybody on the Treasury Benches or anybody in the House of Commons deny that that retrogression has been progressive and has reached its culmination to-day? Am I or am I not right if I remind the British people, if I remind their agents in this country, of that statement of Lord George Hamilton made, not in a cavalier manner, but in all seriousness—if I remind them of that and say, "Quit, get out, we have had enough of you, we do not want you any more", is there not enough justification for asking you to do that? Having that justification how can we with our self-respect intact,—how can we asked them to come to this country and be the arbiters in regard to the responsibility for this famine and decide who is responsible? The responsibility is theirs, it is not ours. The primary responsibility is theirs when they have taken all the power and they have shirked it, not only to-day but during all these 150 years, and particularly, after that statement of Lord George Hamilton, all these 43 years. We are right in asking them to quit whether it offends them or not, no matter whether the circumstances under which we ask them to quit are right or not right, or propitious or not propitious.

With regard to the question of the appointment of a committee of enquiry, I agree with my Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, that as facts have to be found a fact finding enquiry committee is useful. Probably facts might themselves be judgments, but a Royal Commission we shall not have. And it is not necessary to-day so much to fix responsibility, whether it belongs either to the provincial ministry or to the Central Government. We are convinced that it is Central Government's responsibility and I am not concerned whether the responsibility is going to be saddled on the shoulders of Mr. Fazlul Huq so far as Bengal is concerned, or shifted on to the present ministry. We are not concerned with it at all, but we do want an examination into the facts which have led to this debacle in order that it might help us to face the future.

Sir, I think that, if the facts are examined, as my friends who spoke before me have proved, without doubt, the Government of India's responsibility would be clearly shown. Starting from the denial policy, which is in effect a scorched earth policy, operated in this country out of mere panic, starting from that, the putting in of an extra population in Bengal where the pressure on the stocks of food was in existence together with a complete inability to improvise food for the extra population that they have put in there, for this the Central Government must take the responsibility without any shadow of doubt. It may be that the Provincial Government is partly responsible but can it be denied that during the second Huq Ministry, it was not the Ministry but Sir John Herbert that was ruling the province and the Ministry was tamely submitting to the acts of the Governor. Look at what happened to Travancore and Cochin States where the quantum of food that is produced locally is just two-fifths of the needs of the population. The Government of India under their basic plan have promised very generous treatment to these States but the actual performance has fallen terribly short of the promises made. The conditions in Travancore and Cochin are nowhere similar to what obtains in Bengal in spite of infinitely poor resources in these States and the responsibility for that must be laid at the door of Sir John Herbert and his bureaucratic machinery. There is no use trying to put the blame on the popular Ministry because the Ministry had no power but only responsibility.

Sir, the question that has got to be asked today is what is the Government going to do about it all. Your free trade policy which sought to help Bengal has in effect brought Orissa to the same misery. (An Honourable Member: "Bihar also".) My friend says that Bihar is following suit. I may tell this House that what happens to Orissa will happen soon to the Vizagapatnam District in the Madras Presidency. It is very near famine conditions. Conditions are bad there and if something is not done to arrest the progress of this famine it will creep from place to place and soon the whole country will

be in the grips of famine without a doubt. What is the Government going to do about it. You can devise the mechanics of rationing. You can devise the mechanics of procurement but how can you produce food. My Honourable friend Mr. Gwillt very rightly warned us about one fact. He warned us that this assistance which is now forthcoming from other countries will not be available for long. If it happens that the war situation in Europe gets better, if more countries come under the occupation of the United Nations, then as the area of occupation increases food from the countries which now offer us food and the few ships which are now carrying food grains to us will be diverted to Europe as these areas will probably need relief more than we do.

What are the Government going to do about it. Have the Government thought out any plan? Has the Finance Member thought of utilising his sterling resources in this connection. Has he thought of requesting U. S. A. or Britain to give us a few ships which we will buy ultimately as against our sterling resources, so that we shall not be adversely affected by any change in the circumstances of the European warfare but will have a regular supply of food grains coming into the country. I understand that so far as Bengal is concerned the official hierarchy feels that they have merely to wait for two months and that at the end of two months they will get the *aman* crop and all will be well. Suggestions have been made that the *aman* crop should be purchased by Government. But people who have been in Bengal and who have studied the question feel that it is not going to be so rosy as all that. After all the *aman* crop will be available only for six months, provided it is taken hold of by the Government. Even if rationing is introduced; it can be successful only in urban areas. It has been successful in Bombay. It has been successful to a degree in Madras but do the Government's advisers realise that there are pockets in between one rationing area and another where there are a large number of people without land, people who live on a cash wages, who have to purchase in the black market. My experience in Madras is this. Where there are two very good rationed areas where rice is sold at a fixed price of say Rs. 18 per bag or something like that, in between these two urban areas in the villages rice is being sold at about Rs. 45 per bag. This is the black market price. What is the use of your mechanism of rationing when dealing with countrywide famine. It will only suit urban areas. Unless rationing is going to provide for all the deficit areas, for the landless labourers and those who live on cash wages, what is the use of rationing? But even in regard to rationing, I do not know if what is contemplated by the Bengal Government at present is going to prove suitable at all. I have here a statement which says that the dole which the Bengal Government contemplate at present for manual labourers is 6 chhataks, whereas an ordinary adult will get 4 chhataks and as against this I will ask the House to compare what has been laid down as being the correct ration under the Famine Code, under which an adult labourer gets 16 chhataks. An ordinary adult who does not do manual labour gets 12 chhataks as against the four chhataks that has been proposed by the Government of Bengal. I cannot understand what use doling of this quantity is going to be, unless it is the opinion of Government and its advisers that those who have been starving should not be given a meal which will fill the stomach and that they can assimilate food better if fed on a smaller dole. Unless that be their opinion I cannot understand how this is going to solve the problem of starvation. So, rationing on these lines under which a man gets only a quarter of his needs is not of much use. One cannot therefore draw much comfort or solace from that erudite speech of Mr. Kirby. It was good as far as it went and as far as urban areas go but what about the rural areas. That is the real crux of the problem today. In Bengal what is happening is that destitutes are being removed. Very rightly perhaps but why is that being done. Today, the zamindar, the capitalist, the contractor and the office holder mentality rules in this country. Could you persuade the Central Government to take action against the Punjab? The Punjab zamindari interests are adequately represented here and the people who represent those interests cannot divest themselves

[Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari.]

of their previous affiliations and that is exactly what happens all over this country. In Calcutta, the rich English business man, the Indian business man, the rich Marwaris and the well-to-do classes live in their houses and go to their cinemas and races as if nothing is happening, as if there is no famine in Calcutta. They do not wish to see these miserable people dying in the streets of starvation and the Bengal Government is willing to oblige them by transporting the destitutes to up-country areas.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I am finishing. I would impress upon this Government that unless they divorce themselves of this affiliations and unless they propose to put their shoulders to the task and give some hope that something is being done—instead of merely asking the people to co-operate with you—and that something is being definitely planned, it is not much use having these food debates. They leave us exactly where we were.

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): Mr. Deputy President, Sir, it is pleasant to see my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh back in the House after absence of some time during which he has lost none of his sound fury and wind; but I am bound to say that my Honourable friend did not contribute very much else to the purpose of this debate. He stigmatised an argument used by my Honourable friend Mr. Lawson as a foolish one, not apparently aware of the fact that one of the difficulties in the present situation is the absence of consumer's goods, as he himself, coming from Bombay, knows very well indeed.

Now, Sir, I am not going to say a word as to where the blame for the present situation lies. Many people can point a finger of scorn at this or that administration but my own view is that everybody who has been in public life in the last two years must share to some extent the blame for the present situation, and no one is exempt.

Some Honourable Members: Why? No, No.

Sir F. E. James: I gather that the response of my Honourable friends shows that the cap fits them in any case. In any case, what we should do here is not to look for scapegoats but to look for remedies. It is in that spirit that I wish to address a few remarks on certain points which I do not think have been dealt with in this debate.

Now, I want, first of all, to say this. While as an old resident of Bengal, I have heard with great distress of the trouble there, I know there are many in this House who can speak with much more direct evidence of the situation there today. I do, therefore, want to put in a plea for the situation in South India and particularly in the States of Travancore and Cochin. Whereas rice production in Bengal is 83 per cent. of Bengal's requirements, in Travancore and Cochin together it is less than 50 per cent. Therefore, they have to be fed mainly, whatever else they might do within those States, from supplies abroad. Here I would like to pay a tribute to the administration both of Travancore and Cochin.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Indian States are administered much better.

Sir F. E. James: One is administered by a Dewan who is personally known to many Members of this House and another is administered by a European who is a member of the Indian Civil Service. They have been working together in the kind of comradeship that I hope to see in other parts of the country. They have from the very beginning controlled prices. They have set up a monopoly procurement agency. They have brought under control the distribution of all available supplies. They have instituted rationing not only in urban but also in rural areas long before other provinces or States even thought of it. And yet today, so meagre are the supplies which they are able to get even on the basis of the revised basic plan of the Government of India that the rationing per head per day is 5 ounces of rice or, including other grains, only 7½ ounces per head.

An Honourable Member: It is not even 1 lb.

Sir F. E. James: Not half a pound. If the Honourable Members had travelled through Malabar as I have travelled and seen the effect of this meagre allowance upon the life of the population, their hearts would have been wrung, as mine was wrung. Unfortunately, owing to the declared policy of the Travancore and Cochin Government, they did not give publicity to their woes. They felt, whether rightly or wrongly I cannot say, that if they gave the kind of publicity that was given to the troubles in Bengal, it would undermine the confidence of the people of the States in the ability of the administration to deal out evenly such meagre supplies as they receive. The deficit per month is 31,000 tons. Up-to-date, under the revised plan of the Government of India, they are only receiving about 30 per cent. of that each month and under the basic plan according to the figures that I was given by my Honourable friend Mr. Hutchings the other day for 1943-44, the Government of India are only planning to give 50 per cent. of the requirements of the people in those two States. Is that to be the penalty of efficient and wise administration? I would ask my Honourable friends, the representatives of the Food Department here, to look into these figures. They ought to be revised; they can be revised and, if necessary, they should be put on as high a priority as supplies for Bengal. I can assure my Honourable friends of this, that whatever they send to Travancore and Cochin will not disappear. It will go to the people and it will go on the basis of rationing, which is the only fair and equitable basis for the distribution of food today.

The next point I should like to raise is in connection with rationing. I was very glad, indeed, to hear a new speaker in this House, Mr. Kirby, the other day and I am sorry he is not here today because I want to raise one particular point in connection with the application of rationing, and it is this.

May we assume that where rationing is applied to urban or other areas, it applies to all alike? I ask that because today in the Bangalore Civil and Military station where certain necessities of life are rationed to the civil population, there are certain classes, the dependents of military officers, who draw rations from military supplies, whose rations are in some cases three, four, five and many times the amount of the rations which the ordinary civil population draws. That is entirely wrong. That has created in Bangalore and in other places, in South India, which I need not mention, two classes among civilians, the ordinary and the privileged. Now, Sir, I will say this in justice to the military authorities, whom I myself saw in Bangalore when I was there last, that they are perfectly willing to apply exactly the same scales of rationing to the dependents of military officers as are applied to ordinary civilians.

But they claim that they must be approached on that by the civil administration. Why has not that been done before? The Bangalore Civil and Military Station is a direct responsibility of the Central Government. I do suggest that this should be put an end to immediately. Civilians who are not actually in uniform must be treated alike and there must be no favoured class.

The third point I wish to touch upon is the reference in the report of the Gregory Committee to the need for greater austerity among the more favoured classes. Here, I speak with great feeling. I have been in Bengal and I have seen the meals prepared at the great hotels and restaurants in Calcutta which are out of all proportion to the situation surrounding. In Bangalore, the other day, where we knew that there was a shortage of rice, I was present at a luncheon where at least 120 persons, belonging to the middle and upper classes, were served with plates of curry and rice. That is wrong. You can go into the hotels and restaurants of this imperial city of Delhi. Where are the signs of austerity? When I was in the Middle East with some of my colleagues in May last, I found that there was a shortage of meat. What was the result? It was decreed immediately that in every hotel or restaurant, there should be four meatless days. When there is shortage of rice in India, has anybody thought of introducing riceless days in the public places and restaurants of towns? Again, in the Middle East we found that

[Sir F. E. James.]

those who were extravagant or who hoarded or who profiteered received very short shrift. In one place in Alexandria I saw myself in the main street on a platform exhibited to the contempt of their fellowmen, 12 citizens of Alexandria with notices hung over them—they were in chains—saying that these men are profiteers, that they had been sentenced, and that they were going to prison tonight.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Are they Ministers of the Provinces?

Sir F. E. James: Ministers or private individuals, they should be treated alike. That is an important thing in this country. That is the basis of the philosophy of rationing, and as it is the basis for supplying, let it also be the basis for punishment for those who commit a sin against the social conscience of the community. Then, Sir, I suggest to those who are in authority, if my words could reach the Big House, not far from here, I hope they will be considered, why there should not be a nation wide campaign in the interests of austerity on the part of the more fortunate classes of this country. Believe me, Sir, that starvation and malnutrition among ordinary people, up and down the length and breadth of India today, are sowing seeds of discontent and misery that will one day be reaped in a rich and unpleasant harvest.

Now, Sir, my fourth point is to suggest that there is a good deal of waste in military circles. I mentioned the other day the case of a distinguished scientist in Bangalore who was approached by the authorities of a prisoner of war camp not far from that City, with a request that he should advise them as to how to make compost out of the surplus bread which they did not need; and that when people are starving! We reported that immediately to the General Officer Commanding the Southern Army and he ordered an instant enquiry. Sir, I have no time to develop this item, and all I will say is this,—I am sorry my Honourable friend the Secretary of the War Department is not here—that from reports I have received from various quarters, there is at least *prima facie* evidence of serious food wastage in military circles, and this should be very carefully investigated.

Then, Sir, the next point is, I was glad to hear from my Honourable friend the Secretary to the Food Department this morning, but was a little disappointed that he did not deal with the administrative recommendations of the Gregory Committee report. I would like to be assured that those recommendations are receiving the highest priority in his own Department. What has happened to the proposals to set up these expert committees? We are told that they are under consideration. I know they are. But after all, the report was presented sometime ago, and on 13th October, more than a month ago, it was considered by the Provinces and the State Governments concerned at the last Food conference. Every day matters, and I am sure the Honourable the Food Member realises that. I do earnestly appeal to him not to let any day pass without putting into effect some of these very important recommendations.

Then, Sir, I am sorry that when my Honourable friend the Member for Education, Health and Lands spoke the other day, he spoke only about food production. But what is being done for medical relief? It is a sad thing to think that even when this immediate problem is solved and when once more people are getting food, these years and months of malnutrition and starvation will lay a very heavy toll upon the children of the future. They are after all to be the citizens of India, the new India that is to be built. How can you build a new free country on a generation which has been starved in its childhood? Therefore, while food is the first essential, the second, almost equal essential is to rush to the infected areas adequate medical and health relief and supplies. Sir, I hold the view that this situation in India, whatever the causes for it, is the responsibility not only of the administrations in India, not only of the British Government which has a direct and primary responsibility in the matter, but also of the United Nations, for after all this is the United Nations war. One of the satisfactory features of this, the present

crisis, has been the instant and willing response that has come from various countries throughout the Commonwealth of Nations. I wish there had been as instant a response from some of those great and wealthy countries outside the Commonwealth. That response cannot be put into effect unless the United Nations decide that supplies to India is the first priority of their war effort and I hope that will be understood and appreciated by those who now control in the interests of the United Nations, all the shipping lines to this country.

My final word is to say, what I am sure, has been in the minds of many, that although this situation may have revealed defects in the administration, yet those who are now in power, as is the case in Bengal, are putting their shoulders to the wheel in no uncertain way and are trying to do what they can, irrespective of community or race. They deserve our support and I hope that the voice of politics in this matter will be dead for ever, not only here, but also in Calcutta. Those who are now in power in Bengal deserve the fullest support of all communities.

Sardar Sant Singh: For miscarrying the whole thing.

Sir F. E. James: Those who miscarry when they have the goods to carry deserve to go out of office. Give them the goods to carry. If you give them the goods, they will do the job. First give them the goods. Do not criticise before they have the weapons with which they can wage this war. Sir, not only has this crisis revealed defects in administration but it also has revealed what we knew, but what we sometimes forget, and that is, the terribly low standard of living to which millions of British subjects in this country have been condemned in the past. The moment there is maladjustment they have no margin from which to stand the strain. That fundamentally is the root problem. You do not solve this problem by deciding who is responsible. The solution of this problem lies in the future, and in the hands of those who will wield power in this country. No nation can be half slave and half free.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sir F. E. James: Political freedom will be counterbalanced and more than counterbalanced unless there is at the same time economic freedom in this country.

Mrs. Renuka Ray (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, it is not my desire to apportion praise or blame between different individuals, ministries or Governments for the manner in which the food situation in Bengal has been allowed to develop; but it cannot be denied that when the situation was most critical there was an entire lack of machinery to deal with it, and even the immediate problem of giving relief fell on the shoulders of voluntary organisations, on whatever small scale they were able to take it up. It is not necessary for me to go into details of what is being enacted in Bengal today, for everybody has heard of it. Today every continent is feeling the miseries of war, our senses are perhaps blunted in regard to mass scale murder and death, yet if we make a comparison I think the death that has faced Bengal for the last few months, the death from which thousands and thousands of our countrymen, women and children are dying inch by inch is far worse than any death by any means of modern warfare. Sir, those of us who have gone down to the interior districts can give you details of unbelievable and untold misery, but I will not go into those details now for they have already appeared in the press and elsewhere. But I think that the tragedy of Bengal is really complete when we find that far more time and far more consideration has been given in acrimonious recriminations and in blaming others and in shelving blame than in combining all energies towards solving this problem or at least saving something out of the devastation that has already set in.

It has been said by many that it is landless labour that has mainly suffered; it has even been said that the small cultivator has aggravated the situation by hoarding. I have seen large numbers of these small cultivators and their families starving. Tempted by the soaring prices these small cultivators

[Mrs. Renuka Ray.]

sold out a far larger proportion of their foodgrains than before, not even keeping enough for their own immediate needs and hence their condition. Outside in the districts and in the rural areas far more than in Calcutta the fate of the poorer-middle class families clinging to the last shreds of respectability is perhaps the worst among those who have suffered so far. I have seen women without clothing or in rags and tatters unable to go out for food in relief kitchens, reconciling themselves to death inch by inch by slow degree torture; and this in the 20th century! Can this age be called a civilised age?

Sir, it cannot be denied that when the situation was worsening no authority who was in a position to take action seemed to be aware of what was happening. The growing population, the lack of improvement of agriculture and acreage, the trend of rising prices, scarcity of foodgrains,—these were all there clamouring for attention, but nothing was done. To put the blame on hoarding and speculation alone is to beg the issue. Hoarding and speculation is no particular characteristic of India or of the Indian race; this type of exploitation takes place, as the result of the action of a particular section of the community in every race and in every country including Great Britain. And if a Government fails to take firm and courageous action in time this is bound to gain the upper hand. The actual shortage of foodgrains is recognised today. Each of the factors that have contributed towards it is small in itself, but in the total they are not inconsiderable. It is true that the amount of rice that was needed for Bengal from Burma was not large; it is also true that the amounts kept for the military and for stocks for military and industrial workers or for essential services or for extra population due to evacuation from Burma, when compared to the requirements of the whole population was inconsiderable. But they are all contributory factors. And if we add to all these the failure of harvests, the havoc that was caused last year by the cyclone in Midnapore, the floods of Burdwan and the denial policy of Government, and in particular the boat denial policy, the effects of which have been very unfortunate amongst the fishermen in Bengal, and last but not least, natural apprehension which has played its part on the delicate instrument of price control,—the picture is complete before us.

But it is not to the past but to the future that we must look. I am sure we all welcome what the Honourable the Food Member has told us in regard to the action that is going to be taken in regard to the fixing of prices, rationing in Calcutta and distribution. But it is very necessary that immediate action be taken and that no mistake should be committed again because this time the mistake will be very much more fatal than before. It is not enough for Government merely to buy up the winter crops; it is also necessary that investigation should be very fully made as to whether places known as so-called surplus areas are really surplus or not. Then with regard to distribution, it is a problem of immense magnitude and it is not going to be at all easy. Even with the recent changes that have been introduced or are in the process of being introduced very great difficulties of distribution still remain. I know myself that even stocks that have reached district headquarters or in some cases sub-divisional headquarters have not reached the rural areas and are not moving rapidly or fairly. The distribution should really go through the normal trade channels as far as possible, that is, of course if normal conditions can be brought back. Once everything has been thrown completely out of gear it is not very easy to bring back normal conditions. There is no ground for the slightest optimism when the aman crop comes into the market shortly. There is no doubt that conditions will improve a bit. But a worse fate will face Bengal in the summer of 1944 if adequate arrangements are not made about distribution and also about the real deficit that faces us. I think any economist should be able to tell us that one of the main things, which is necessary in a situation of this nature is the restoration of public confidence. Today there is a total lack of public confidence, and this is not only in the economic sphere, but in other spheres also, for example there is abject terror amongst the destitutes to go to

homes, camps or centres set up by the Government. Therefore, I say, something has to be done to restore confidence, and normal conditions have to be brought back.

Sir, I have been down very recently to one of the temporary relief centres set up by the Government of Bengal on Diamond Harbour road. This place was clean, hygienic, with newly built shelters. We saw a batch of 20 destitutes brought in while we were there. They were given clothes and foodgrains, but on closer investigation we found that there was some truth in the criticism that these families are being ruthlessly broken up. I found one old man crying and I asked him what had happened and he said that his 8 years old son, his only surviving relative, had been left behind in Calcutta wandering in the streets. He had protested when he was dragged into the van either to let him wait for his son or to leave him behind, but his protests went unheeded. The same thing happened in the case of a woman with her two children. She said her son had got a job and that at least her son should be informed. Nothing was done. Six out of 20 cases were like this. If in a random selection, six out of twenty cases are of families being broken up like this, then surely it is not just unfair criticism, not just that people want to find fault with Government, when they say these things. There must be some justification in it and surely it is up to those in authority, if they cannot avoid the mistakes, to take the help of voluntary organisations in removing these destitutes and repatriating them to the villages. It is a good move no doubt to return the destitutes to their villages, if relief centres in the vicinity of the villages, and places for cheap foodgrains are really set up. But these mistakes should be avoided at all costs and certainly they do not help in the restoration of confidence if things like this continue to happen.

Sir, I have already said that even the immediate work of giving relief fell on the shoulders of voluntary organisations, and with the help and sympathies that they have got from the whole of India they have carried on well. But of course it is only the State that can really grapple with a problem of such magnitude, and we welcome all efforts of the State in this direction. At the same time, Government schemes, as they have outlined, have not come into operation particularly in the interior districts, and voluntary organisations are really doing good work. And yet there is some truth, some justification in the criticism that these voluntary organisations of ten have to face impediments and obstacles. I am not in a position to say personally about all the obstacles and impediments, and as to how far they are exaggerated or not, though there are many complaints but I think it is my duty to place before this House one case that I know for myself. It has happened very recently. On the 1st of November, a wagon of fine rice was sent as a free donation from the Central Provinces to the Secretary of the Calcutta Branch of the All-India Women's Conference. On receiving the Railway Receipt she went immediately—the same day—and got a permit according to regulations from the Civil Supplies Directorate. She sent a lorry down with freight charges of Rs. 381 immediately to fetch the rice, but she was told that this rice had already arrived a day before and had been unloaded and could not be located. After seven days she was informed that it was located and so she sent the lorry down for the second time, but this time she was told that she must pay Rs. 1,100, not Rs. 381, because there were some demurrage charges and various other charges. So she sent Rs. 1,100 in cash together with the permit asking for the rice again, and this time—for the third time—the lorry was again returned on the ground that she must send a cheque and sign a declaration that no dues are owing to her and that she had received the grain intact. She signed the declaration and sent a cheque for Rs. 1,100, instead of cash, and then this time some coarse rice was given. It was not the rice that was sent there. She refused it and at this stage she got into touch with those who could approach higher authorities for help. Of course on application the higher authorities immediately took up the case and I am sure she has by this time received the rice and charges are reduced. But what of the lorry hire and what of those who have no accessibility to higher authorities? Is this the treatment to be meted out to

[Mrs. Renuka Ray.]

those doing relief work? I do not wish to imply that responsible authorities—high or low—would willingly allow such things to go on, but the net result is just the same. My point is that they should be very careful and they should take steps against those responsible for these mistakes the moment things like this are brought to their notice, and it is for this reason that I have brought up this case before this House. It is no good, saying there are exaggerations and shutting one's eyes to facts when things like this are occurring. It does not restore public confidence either. Nothing can be achieved if public confidence is not there.

Sir, I hope I have not taken more time than I was entitled to. Before I conclude I should like to say one word. I think I am voicing the feelings of my people—people of Bengal—when I say that they are not interested in the mere finding of scapegoats, or the apportioning of blame between authorities and individuals because this will not satisfy the hunger of the starving millions of my country. Sir, I think it is very important that a very thorough investigation should be made, and made at once, with regard to all the contributory factors and the causes which have aggravated the situation. This is not only needed for avoiding mistakes in the dim distant future but in the immediate future that is before us. This work of investigation should be done in the shortest possible time and action taken so that after the *aman* crop, in the summer of 1944, a worst tragedy may not be enacted, that we are seeing enacted before our eyes today.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): Sir I had hoped in speaking on this debate to avoid the controversial past. But there are one or two points that have been made in the debate which necessitate my giving an answer. My Honourable friend opposite, Sardar Mangal Singh, yesterday fired a few shots at me, and coming as he does from the martial races, he would not respect me if I did not fire back at him. He retailed with evident delight what I have come to regard as a jolly old fairy tale from the Punjab, which bears no relation at all to the present situation. I regard it as a fairy tale because in the first place his figures were wrong. He claims that in the month of May the railways carried out of the Punjab only 16,000 tons.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): Out of the stocks purchased for the Government of India.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The actual figures were, I think, 49,205 tons. Just as his figures were wrong, so were his facts. He said that there was a shortage of wagons in August. In the ten days ending on the 21st August of this year we allotted for export from the Punjab 776 wagons, of which only 627 were filled with foodgrains.

An Honourable Member: What happened to the rest?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The rest were unfilled. The foodgrains were not there to fill them. On the 19th August the Regional Food Controller, not an officer in my department, went down to inspect a certain *mandi* where there was considerable stocks; he wanted to know why they were not moved. There were 33,339 bags in the *mandi* and only 800 bags offering for transport. The conclusion is that the remainder were being held back; and I am afraid that at that time those who were owning a great part of that wheat were not carrying out what my Honourable friend Mr. Hutchings described as the inescapable duty of making available foodgrains as rapidly as possible for the relief of other parts of India. Why does my Honourable friend have to go back to May, June and July, if he wishes to complain against the supply of transport? The answer clearly is that he has not got any complaints of a later date. I must point out that my Honourable friend and my Honourable friend's Honourable friends cannot have it both ways. They cannot on the one hand claim, as they have done in defence of the Punjab's attitude, that larger quantities of foodgrains have been exported out of the Punjab than ever before, and yet that the railways have not carried them. They have not

been moved by river, they were not moved by road or by air; they have moved by rail.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member give figures of wheat lying at the railway stations at the end of June, purchased for the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member himself has quoted those figures—but when we came to ask for that wheat to be put into the wagons, it was not all there.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Even purchased?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It was not all there; but all this argument about the past I submit, is profitless. What actually happened over that period is summed up, as well as anywhere, in the words of my budget speech, made six months before this happened. What I said then was:

"So long as the need arises, foodstuffs will be moved in high priority; and if bumper *rabi* crops eventuate, as seems reasonably likely, and if confidence is restored, the railways must be prepared to meet exceptionally heavy grain movements which will tax their resources severely."—*So they did*—"But in all events the food will be transported."

And that is what has happened.

For the future I am particularly anxious, it is my ambition, to work in as close collaboration as possible with the Punjab Government and every other Government. I think we can continue to move their foodgrains; I have no doubt about it, except in one circumstance. There are good *kharif* crops in the east of India; there are heavy imports of foodgrains coming in; there is a prospect that more shipping can be made available. In that set of circumstances, it is quite possible that the time may come when the holders of wheat may all wish to see who can get rid of their stocks first, and if that happens and if it is accompanied by what I regard sooner or later as an inevitable panic to get rid of these stocks, then I openly confess that it is quite likely that we shall not be able to carry those stocks fast enough to please them.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Let us hope that they come soon.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The second point which I wish to answer was the point raised by Mr. Neogy and touched upon by one or two other Members. They accused government institutions of hoarding foodgrains. The House knows very well what is the Government's policy towards railwaymen. We have adopted deliberately a policy of cheap food, and of thereby stabilising the cost of living of the railwaymen. We are pledged to fulfil our undertakings and we have done so and done so without hoarding. The monthly returns of the railways between April and October show that over that period the railways based on Calcutta—the E. I. R., the B. and A. Railway and the B. N. R.—held an average stock of rice for 42 days. Mr. Kirby, the rationing expert whom you were listening to yesterday, has, I believe, laid it down—and it is accepted by Government—that a thirty days' stock is a reasonable figure for any large concern which has undertaken to feed its staff.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Minimum?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: That is the minimum; but at any rate even in present conditions, that is reasonable. In the case of the railways it is legitimate to argue that the figure may be higher, because the railways are not one big compact unit, but their staff is spread over hundreds of miles. By the end of October, and in the early days of November, the railway stocks were reduced to 21 days in some cases and in other cases to even less. The position quite recently got so serious that we had to ask the Central Food Department to help us out with some of their stocks and very nobly they have come to our rescue. There is no evidence of hoarding there. You cannot expect the railwaymen to work without food; you cannot expect your food to be transported without feeding your railwaymen, and it is wrong to blame efficiency just because it is efficient.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Is there rationing amongst the railwaymen?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes—the scale of supply.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Will the Honourable Member state whether the supplies for the railways were obtained through private channels or in every case through the Government agency as far as Bengal is concerned?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The arrangements for procurement of food for the railways is that Provincial Governments are responsible; but the Provincial Governments asked the railways to provide the food in the first instance and they have bought at controlled or other prices, not above controlled prices, in the market.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What are the other prices? Are they above the controlled prices?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No; they have never been. I cannot give way to the Honourable Member in the short time available to me. I venture to say that had we failed to produce the food for the railwaymen and thereby failed to carry the food and other necessities for the public, the Honourable Member who accuses us of hoarding would have been the first to spill his venom on Government.

I do not think it necessary to give the full details of all the transport arrangements made as they stand to-day, although, if time permitted, I should like to have done so in response to Mr. Hooseinbhoj Lalljee's request that we should show due regard to the House and give them all the information possible. I think it is generally recognised that so far as transport of foodgrains to Calcutta is concerned adequate arrangements exist. I would only like to make one comment myself and that is, at the moment we cannot find as much grains to be put into wagons as we could in September or October.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: From what part of India?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Mainly from the north of India.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: The Punjab?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: We could carry a great deal more if it were made available. As to the details of arrangements for transport to Calcutta I have already given them to the House; I need not repeat them as there has been little change since I spoke last. As regards arrangements for transport of grains to parts of Bengal other than Calcutta, we have arranged for 20 wagons a day to move from the North Western Railway via Naihati direct to the districts, that is about 400 tons per day; four broad gauge wagons, i.e., 80 tons a day via the metre gauge; 5 metre gauge wagons by the O. and T. Railway, and in addition 400 tons of rice for Eastern Bengal from Dinajpur district. In addition to that we have recently completed, in close co-operation with the Bengal Government, with the assistance of the army and with the help of the local transport authorities, the following arrangements for movement from Calcutta to the districts of Bengal. These figures will I think interest Mrs. Renuka Ray. 500 tons per day are scheduled to move from Calcutta by rail to North and East Bengal and 325 tons per day to move by steamer to East Bengal. This gives me an opportunity to pay a tribute to the inland steamers. They are one of the silent services of whom one hears little, but they have done most valuable transport work in Bengal in recent months. 600 tons per day can be moved by rail to Khulna and on by steamer and flat, and if and when arrangements are made by the Army and the Bengal Government, we will move another 600 tons by that route. But for that additional 600 tons it will be necessary to organise country boat traffic. Finally, there are arrangements being made for moving 600 tons a day to West Bengal by the B. N. R. and E. I. R., if it is required. It is cross traffic of course, and we hope better arrangements can be made. All these arrangements are in addition to the arrangements which are scheduled for direct shipments to the districts from outside Bengal, previously mentioned, i.e., 530 tons a day, and they are also in addition to any arrangements made by the army for moving foodgrains from Calcutta by motor vehicle or by their own steamers.

These are the arrangements which have been scheduled for transport. It is for others to fill those wagons or those ships and flats and I am confident that

with the close co-operation which is now existing between the different departments we shall see those wagons and those flats and ships filled and there will be steady improvement. As regards the new aman crop, a transport programme will soon be arranged, and so far as I can see, owing to the satisfactory crops likely to come forward in the east, demands made on transport may be less, but I think that, whatever happens, they will be within the capacity of the transport both internally in Bengal and from outside.

Now, Sir, Napoleon III in one of his more inspired moments said: "War is a matter of detail. There is more detail about an army than anything else on earth". And so it is with the organisation of the war against famine. There is quite a lot of detail to be gone into before bulk supplies can be moved into the mouths of the people who need food in the districts. Goods have to be sold and bought; they have to be removed to the *mandi* and to the railway station; they have to be booked to their destination and to the right destination. They have to be transported, unloaded, taken delivery of, cleared from the railway depot, possibly redistributed by lorry, river or rail, unloaded, taken delivery of and distributed into the mouths of those who need it. All that does require a large administrative organisation, and I am glad to say from the transport angle that the difference between now and a few months ago, even since the time I last spoke, is that the organisation is incomparably better and I would like to pay due credit to all those officers in all the departments of all the Governments concerned for the improvement which has taken place in recent weeks. When I last spoke I showed a certain impatience with the state of the organisation. Certainly since that date much has been done, and now departments of the different Governments are working with much closer harmony, there is greater accuracy about facts and figures and the work generally is better co-ordinated. The final link has been provided by the army. So far as we are concerned, from the transport angle, final arrangements for distribution were the missing link which the Army now supplies. The value of a disciplined force in the final stage of distribution is a factor of the very greatest importance and one which is bound to have its effects very quickly.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

In conclusion, Dr. Deshmukh in one of his more relevant moments asked us to look not to yesterday or to-day but to look to tomorrow. It was over a year ago when I said that the peoples' food was a matter of the highest importance, and if it was offered for movement it would be moved. Ever since August of 1942 priority arrangements of one kind or another have existed for the movement of food. Ever since that date there has been no complacency on the part of the Government in the matter of the movement of peoples' food, no lack of foresight. I venture to say that in this matter of getting food to the areas where the danger of famine was showing Government was awake long before the public. There has, of course, been a certain amount of operational difficulties, but there has never at any time been any question of our not being able to move food that was offering over a period. My Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, referred to the disastrous breaches on the E. I. R. They were disastrous from several points of view, but not from the point of view of food, because we were able to move more food, after the breaches took place, to Calcutta than before.

Food is one of the things which must move like coal and military traffic. It must move, it can move and it will move, and what I am saying is not, as my Honourable friend the Nawabzada would say, whistling to keep up courage. What I have said will be done will be done.

Those who are familiar with Government procedure will know by sight the red "Priority" labels which we have on the files. We have also a label in blue marked "Immediate" for anything which is even more urgent than that. It is credibly reported to me that in another great arsenal of democracy in the west when they have a priority file they label it "Rush", and when there is a super-priority file, they now label it "frantic". We go about it in more prosaic ways. We have a "Central Priorities Committee", not a "Frenzy Bureau", but I

[Sir Edward Benthall.]

maintain that by one way or another it gets results. But whether the movement of food is labelled 'Priority' or 'Immediate' or 'Rush' or 'Frantic', the people's food will be moved wherever and whenever it is offered for movement. In this regard I would mention to Sir Frederick James that we have very carefully in mind the question of supplies to Travancore and Cochin. We are aware that even if bumper crops in Bengal and the East help to alleviate the position there, the problem of Travancore and Cochin will always be with us and arrangements must always be made for feeding them. But the arrangements for Travancore and Cochin must largely be made by sea and I understand that a careful and detailed programme has been worked out. If it is not sufficient, I have no doubt that the authorities concerned will go back to the Food Department to make out their case but so far as transport is concerned, so far as my department is concerned, we will give Travancore and Cochin just as close attention as Bengal. That is all I have to say. This year the difficulty lies in the main in Bengal, Travancore and Cochin. Next year, it may be elsewhere but from the transport angle, I can assure the House that we will be alert to watch the situation and to try to forecast beforehand the requirements of transport for whatever area is in need.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Mr. President, this Assembly has seldom, if ever, been invited to consider a matter of such tragic importance as what we have been discussing since last Friday. I do not intend to paint the gruesome picture of misery that is stalking the fair land of Bengal. Suffice it to say that the distress which has been prevailing in Bengal has been real, widespread and calamitous and at last through the efforts of the *Statesman* which is the news Bible of every Englishman in this country, it has come home to them not only in this country but in England that India is really in the grip of one of the worst calamities that could befall a country. My Honourable friends who have spoken before me, specially from the European Group, have said that this is not the time to place blame on anybody. Let us not think of the past. Let us not think of the present but let us think of the future. Let me tell them that unless you take into consideration the past and the present, you can never decide about the future. It is only if we are to examine the past with regard to this matter of food that you will be able to plan for the future. The Food Department has been, during the most critical months, saturated with European officers. The Food Department during the most crucial months was under the direct control of the late Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, because from February to May, till the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque took charge of the Food Department, it was administered by the highest in the land. Is it not an irony of fate that a Viceroy who had come with hopes, with promises of improving the agriculture in this country should have ended his regime with an inglorious page in the history of the last 7½ years? If he had devoted more time and attention to the economic ruination of India than to geographical unity, he would have been able to save thousands of lives in this country. I think every member of this House will express his appreciation of the prompt action which has been taken by the new Viceroy. He realised his responsibility. He realised his duty and now I ask whether it was necessary to wait till hundreds and thousands of lives of poor Indians were lost before they could take effective measures. I want to know why was it not possible for the Government to take the same measures four months ago as what they did now. Is the war situation any better today than what it was? As a matter of fact, during that time there was less danger of Japanese invasion or Japanese attack than there is now and if the military could spare the transport and the men to serve the people of Bengal now, why could they not have done this a few months ago. Why should they have waited to see thousands of lives of men, women and children being lost before any effective measures could have been taken. My Honourable friend, Mr. Hutchings, I think I am right in saying that it was his maiden speech today, has made a speech which is the worst condemnation of the present Government. He stated, as a matter of fact he admitted, that

"we have made experiments in the past. We have made mistakes. We have changed plans from time to time". This is what he admits. A Government that makes mistakes, changes plans, where the lives of innocent people are concerned, has no business to be sitting there. A Government like that in a free country would have been kicked out long before this. What is the use of your coming forward and saying 'We have made mistakes? We had no plans'. Why did you not have any plans? Whose fault is it? Is it the fault of the peoples of India or is it your fault? Who was there to check you from making plans? Who was there to prevent you from having a well laid and well planned policy? And now we are told that they have now a plan.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Who knows that plan will not be changed again?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I only hope that this time their plan is of a different nature and that this time what they have planned will really give food to the peoples of India. My Honourable friend Sir Edward Benthall said that this time I would not say that he was whistling to keep up his courage. I was rather disappointed because in the speech that he made today there was not that courage which I found in his last speech. His speech today was an admission of failure. He told us that "the foodstuff will move; it must move;" but he did not say it did move.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I did.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Sir, if the House will see the speech as reported, they will find that that expression 'it did move' is not there. My Honourable friend may have had it in his mind. However, let us admit that it did move, but it moved very slowly. It moved so slowly that it is equal to not having moved at all.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: It moved too fast for the suppliers.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend says that it moved too fast for the suppliers. I am afraid in the 20 minutes that I have at my disposal I am not able to expose the activities of my Honourable friend's Department. But he would find that from facts and figures I could show that if the food in Bengal did not move from Calcutta to Mofussil, it was the fault of his department and of nobody else.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My Honourable friend says 'No.' As I said, I am not going to be dragged aside from this debate, but I have got here the statement of no less a person than the Chief Minister of Bengal which he made yesterday at the Council of the All-India Muslim League and which has been published in the papers this morning and it shows in clear terms the inefficiency of the Department of Transport, apart from the inefficiency of every other Department of the Government of India.

Sir, my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh, who, I think, spoke yesterday, gave a very fertile picture of the success which the 'Grow more food' campaign has achieved. He told us that so many million acres of land have been brought under cultivation of food, but he did not tell us that it was not due to his propaganda for 'Grow more food' but it was due to the fact that a large tract of land where cotton used to be grown before had to be converted into food-growing area because of the fact that the Japanese market for short staple cotton is no longer there. I would have liked to know how much more land throughout the country has come under cultivation during the last year and not his telling us that so much more has come under cultivation of food. In this connection, let me tell you that the whole history is tragic and the actions of the Government of India have been callous. There is next door to Bengal two million acres of land lying fallow in Assam. The yield per acre is 15 maunds. That means that 30 million maunds of rice can be grown. Converted into tons, it comes to over one million tons and that is exactly what is expected to be imported into this country or perhaps a little more than that. If the Government had any plan and if they could think and not be buried into files, looking at the colour of the labels attached to them, they would be able to find out that India itself could be self-sufficient in the matter of food. But no attention is paid to that and no notice is taken of that.

I submit, Mr. President, that the whole tragedy of the situation is due to

[Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan.]

the actions of the British Government. The situation that has arisen in India is due to the fact that India has been made a party to this terrible war that has been raging in the world. It is the British Government that have decided to make India as the base for their operations in the East. It is the British Government that have decided to make Bengal as the frontier of India in this war. Bengal, in fact, is suffering for the cause and for the safety of the whole of India, if not of the whole of the British Empire. I submit that it is the duty of the whole of India and of the British Government to help Bengal fully to get over this calamity. But what do we find? My Honourable friend, the Finance Member, has become only a financier and has ceased to be everything else. When the Bengal Government asks for help at this time and when it requires the financial assistance of the Government of India, they are told that they must manage in their own way. They must try and raise loans and if they fail, then the Government of India will see what can be done. I submit that this is not really the kind of policy that is expected of a Government which is responsible for bringing this calamity on the people of Bengal. It is the duty of this Government to help fully and freely the Government of Bengal in trying to improve the condition and save the lives of millions of people who are still in a very serious danger.

My Honourable friends, some of them, have opposed the appointment of a Royal Commission on the ground that we do not want a Royal Commission; we want this Government to get out. If this Government could get out by our merely saying 'get out', then there would be nothing better than that. It is no use our playing to the gallery and saying 'get out' as if they have got out by our saying that. This is what we have been saying for the last 20 years, but they are stronger today than what they were 20 years ago, thanks to the policy that some of our countrymen have been following. That is not the point. The point is that we do want a thorough inquiry into this matter not so much for making a scapegoat of any individual but to prevent a recurrence of it. I submit—and it is my experience after having toured Bengal for three weeks—that the mighty steel-frame of administration in this country has collapsed under human misery. It is not able to deal with situations like these. It has been playing the role of a policeman for so long that it has lost all initiative, all drive and all courage to face a situation like the one that is prevailing in the country. It is a matter which needs very thorough enquiry.

Now, Sir, a number of amendments have been moved suggesting that there should be a Committee like this, or a Committee like that. But I am afraid these Honourable Members have not appreciated our demand for a Royal Commission and not for a Committee. Those who know the constitutional and the legal position would realise that a Royal Commission has got much more and much greater powers than any Committee that may be appointed by the Government of India. A Royal Commission can ask for any papers from the Government of India. A Royal Commission can summon anybody to appear before it and give evidence, a Royal Commission can administer oath to every witness which no Committee can. If you want an enquiry, let that enquiry be of a kind that would really find out the real causes and the real remedies to prevent such a situation in future. What is the use of your Committee? If your Committee wants some paper from the Home Member, let us say, then he will say, "it is a secret document, I cannot give it to you". So that is the reason why we want a Royal Commission.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Will such a Commission have an Indian element in it?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: My friend asks, will there be an Indian element in it. My Honourable friend, who is a Member of our Party, has not seen the amendment moved by Mr. Essak Sait that the Royal Commission should compose of independent and impartial persons, a majority of whom shall be Indians, Indians—I do not want to cast any reflection on those who are sitting over there—not Indians like those who are in the Government of India now, but Indians who will command the confidence of the peoples of this country. I want to know what fairer composition, what better

composition of an enquiry committee can be than the one which has been suggested in the amendment. Nobody has opposed that there should not be an enquiry into it. My Honourable friend, I believe, it was Mr. Gwilt, said that they want a fact finding enquiry.

An Honourable Member: It was Mr. Lawson who said this.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: I am sorry if I have interpreted something on Mr. Gwilt which he did not say. Mr. Lawson said he wants a fact finding enquiry, yes—finding of fact as to who is responsible for the loss of thousands of lives of Indians, finding out the fact whether the present machinery is able to cope with situations like these, finding of fact as to what measures should be taken and to see that there is no recurrence of a situation of this kind in the future. That is the object of the amendment which has been moved by my Honourable friend Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan and has been amended by my Honourable friend Mr. Essak Sait. I appeal to this House and I do hope that they will support this amendment and I request the Government also that if they have the good of the people of this country at heart, they should be the first one to welcome a proposition of this kind which would prevent a recurrence of such a tragedy.

I see that my time is nearly over. I can only say that I make an appeal to the people of Bengal that this is no time for petty jealousies, this is no time for internal squabbles and quarrels when thousands of our countrymen are dying of starvation and hunger, when Hindus and Muslims are both equally suffering from this misery and calamity, but this is the time for every one to unite and work hard and co-operate with the Provincial Government and any machinery that is there to relieve the distress of the millions of people living in Bengal.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I rise to support the demand made from all parts of the House that there should be a thorough enquiry into the situation that has arisen in Bengal and several other parts of this country. Sir, thousands of people have died in Bengal and we do not yet see when these deaths will stop. The other parts of India may not be as worse off as Bengal, but they cannot be free from that danger. I therefore feel that it is the duty of this House, considering the great bungle and the muddle made by various Governmental authorities in this country and in Great Britain that this legislature will fail in its duty if they do not demand and secure a thorough enquiry into this muddle. There must be an enquiry into the causes that led to this muddle. The enquiry must go to the root of the cause, there must be an enquiry regarding what was done by the Provincial Government, the Central Government, and by the Secretary of State and the responsibility must be fixed upon the right shoulders. I would also like that the enquiry should be thorough. Among the causes which have led to this disaster, I feel the main cause is the weak agricultural economy of Bengal and some other Provinces. Bengal is the place where the zamindari system exists and there is the greatest exploitation of the poor peasantry of that Province. I feel, Sir, there must be an enquiry into this fundamental matter. As regards the machinery for enquiry, I have no special prepossessions in favour of any one, but I want to say this on this occasion to my colleagues in this Assembly that this is the occasion when all parties in this House must agree. We all want an enquiry and therefore it will be wrong, if on account of our insistence upon our small differences, we allow the Government to escape the censure which is implied in this demand for an enquiry. I therefore, if I may, appeal to all sections of this House not to insist upon their small differences. I mayself have got something to complain about the Royal Commission, something to complain about the other forms of Committees which have been proposed before this House. Objection has been raised to the Royal Commission. I am myself a republican in my views, but, Sir, I know as a practical man, in order to come to this legislature, I have to take oath of allegiance. I may say all persons here have taken the oath of allegiance, and therefore if we can unite on a Royal Commission, let us unite and give up our small differences. This country has suffered terribly on account of our internal differences, let us not allow our country and especially Bengal to suffer on

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

account of our differences as regards the machinery which should make the enquiry into this matter. I would therefore appeal to all sections of this House to unite on this point. Sir, if I have made an appeal to all sections of the House to unite I would make an appeal to all sections of governmental authority to unite also. The most painful and the most undignified spectacle presented to the whole world by the governmental authorities of this country is the disunity and the recrimination which has been indulged in by every section of that governmental authority. The Secretary of State for India thought that it was the best opportunity for him to condemn the people of India and their capacity to rule this country. He talked of the popular ministry in Bengal being mainly responsible for the muddle, forgetting altogether the constitutional situation in this country. No Provincial Government can be responsible for fixing the prices and for moving on grains from one province to another. The best remedy and the main remedy for any deficiency of food in the first place is that the prices must be controlled, which can be done only by the Central Government and inter-provincial movements of grain can only be done also by the Centre. Then, Sir the Bengal Government finds fault with the Punjab Government and also with the Central Government and the Central Government tries to bully and use blustering words only. I therefore suggest to the Government of India to stop this fault-finding among themselves and unite and co-operate with each other. Let them admit frankly that there has been a failure on the part of every governmental authority in this country and in Great Britain. I do not wish to defend the Bengal ministry; the Huq ministry was complacent. If the complaints which Mr. Fazlul Huq is making today had been made at that time, and if he was not listened to either by the Bengal Government and the Government of India, it was his duty to resign, but he waited for the Governor to ask for his resignation. Sir, the present Ministry in Bengal has been in existence and administering the country for six months. They too could have been more vigorous and more efficient. It is now several months since we have been hearing about the Bengal ministry introducing rationing in Bengal, and we were promised that rationing in Calcutta would be introduced on the 15th November. But the 15th November has passed. The Government of India have failed and failed very miserably; they were first timid in using their powers of controlling prices and when they began they vacillated. Sir, it is not a Government of this kind which can solve such an important and difficult question. I do not wish to spend more time in pointing out the failure of this Government or that Government. I suggest to them now that since they will not resign and we cannot remove them from their position, they should open a new chapter, take up courage and unite and face the problem.

Sir, the Government of India appointed a committee and that committee has reported. I would suggest that they would now stop discussing; we have enough discussion. Let there be action. The time has come for action. I have many faults to find with the decisions of that committee; some of the recommendations are at least in my judgment halting. But I am prepared to accept, in order to get prompt, quick and vigorous action, all the recommendations of that committee. I suggest that the Government of India should draw up a time-table now and take action so that within three months, within at least six months, all the recommendations of that committee will be given effect to. I suggest that they should make a monthly report to the public and to the legislature as to the action taken on the recommendations of that committee. The committee made 93 recommendations; I should like the Government of India to get reports, every month from all the Provincial Governments and publish in a tabulated form the action taken in each of those 92 recommendations; and let such report be published every month till at the end of the six months all the recommendations will have been given effect to. I suggest that the Government of India should not stint money on printing as they are doing. Unfortunately this Government do not realise, although they sometimes talk of securing public confidence, the importance of public education. This Com-

mittee published a report. Plenty of people after seeing a summary came to me in Bombay and asked for a copy, thinking that as a Member of the Legislative Assembly I might have been given a copy. Not only was I not given a copy while I was in Bombay but after coming here I had to beg for a copy. Copies are not available at the bookstalls. The Government of India have never realised the importance of public education. They feel that they are an irresponsible Government and need not bother about the public; and when they make a muddle and cannot deal with a situation they talk of securing public confidence. If they want to get public confidence they can only get it by public education. I therefore suggest that they should make a report to the public and to this legislature every month on the action and progress made on all the 93 recommendations made by the Committee. I do not wish to go into the details of the questions dealt with by that Committee, but I wish to say a word about the control of prices. I should like the Government of India to follow a bold policy as regards the control of prices. They said that their ultimate goal is that there should be Central control by the Government of India. I should like that ultimate goal to be reached very quickly. You cannot have different and varying prices in different provinces and deal with the present situation at all. Prices must be uniform as far as possible in all parts of the country.

The second point which I should like to make about prices is that the prices ruling today in all provinces are too high and beyond the power of the general masses of people in the country. You may try to provide grain throughout the country but if your grain is too costly to be purchased by the people, starvation will not end. Sir, some praise has been given to Bombay for its rationing. If I may say so, I had contributed my humble mite towards at least securing rationing in that city. But let me tell the Government of India that in Bombay after one month's experience we found that at least 30 to 40 per cent. of the ration was not taken by the people.

The Honourable Secretary this morning said that 20 per cent. of the ration was not taken, or at least 20 per cent. of the ration is generally not taken. In Bombay, nearly 40 per cent. of the ration was not taken. I feel, Sir, that it is due to the fact that the prices in Bombay were too high for some sections of the population to buy grain which was too dear. I would therefore suggest to the Government to take every measure to lower the prices. I am not suggesting that the peasant should not get his reasonable cost of production; let him get only reasonable cost of production. But if, on account of the policy which the Government of India is following in finance and in allowing inflation to take place, prices cannot be reduced, I would suggest to the Government of India to face that question boldly and take up the question of giving subsidies and thus keeping the prices at a reasonable level at least for that section of the population which cannot afford to purchase food at the present level of prices. Sir, I would suggest to the Government of India, if they are going to stop starvation in Bengal, that they will have to subsidize food for the landless labour in rural areas. Even if you take your grain to the villages and if your prices are high unless the landless labour plunders his richer neighbour he will not get food. I would therefore ask you take steps to provide subsidy at least in the case of these landless wage-earners in rural areas. I feel, Sir, there is a similar need for subsidizing the food of un-organized labour in urban areas. For instance, in Bombay the textile labour is getting dearness allowance; he may be in a position to purchase food, but there are hundreds and thousands of labourers even in the city of Bombay who are not well-organized, who are not getting sufficient dearness allowance from the employers. In their case too a method must be found for subsidizing their food.

Sir, much has been said about 'Grow more Food' campaign. I would suggest to the Government that they should take a bold step to secure more food from the land in this country. The Government of India had failed to take precautions to secure fertilizers for the land. It is a well known fact admitted

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

by everybody, and a most humiliating fact, that although the land in India is not very poor the yield of land in India is the lowest in the whole world.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I therefore suggest to the Government of India to take bold measures. The Honourable the Food Member told us that 41,000 tons have been brought into this country during this month in six ships. I would like to ask one question. If he is thinking of bringing into India 1,500,000 tons at the rate of 41,000 tons per month in six ships, will he not take 40 months—at least 30 months—to complete this import? Is that sort of action going to remove the distress in this country? Is that going to give confidence to the public?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sir, I have done.

Mr. Frank R. Anthony (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I agree entirely with the Honourable the previous speaker who said that all sections of this House should unite in demanding an enquiry. But I feel, Sir, that we should not expect too much from such an enquiry. I agree entirely also with the point made by my Honourable friend, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, that a Royal Commission will have certain wider powers and definitely show certain superior features as compared with an ordinary committee of enquiry. But a Royal Commission also will not, I feel, come up to our expectations. It will, as its name implies, take its terms of appointment from the British Government and can we expect such a Royal Commission—if circumstances warranted—to indict the British Government, if it found it necessary, or to indict a member of that British Government, if it found it equally necessary. To expect this, Sir, is to expect too much. The Royal Commission would be placed in the unenviable position of having to find a scapegoat or scapegoats, and it will find a scapegoat or scapegoats. The result will be that the findings of the Royal Commission will inevitably lead to its repudiation by the people of this country. It will lead to bitter recriminations; it will lead to unseemly and even indecent controversy.

I, for one, cannot see how those responsible in London and in Delhi, for the direction of policy of this Government, are going to escape blame, complete blame, for the present disaster which has overtaken this country. I cannot see how they are going to repudiate the indictment which published facts inexorably lay at the door of those who control and have controlled Government policy in this country.

I have before me the Gregory Committee's Report. On page 29 of this Report figures are given of the net imports and exports with regard to India for the period from 1937 to 1943. I find that in the year before the war India was a net importer of over one million tons of foodgrains. In 1939-40 India was a net importer of foodgrains to the extent of almost 2½ million tons. And then suddenly we find in 1942-43 that India is no longer a net importer; India becomes a net exporter to the extent of 360,000 tons. These published facts tell their own story. The Government cannot explain away this gap by saying that it was caused by the sudden stoppage of imports from Burma. It was the inescapable duty of the Government to see that at least a semblance of the previous balance between exports and imports was maintained. Government by their lack of foresight—I will not use the expression used by my Honourable friend, Mr. Jammadas Mehta, of criminal negligence—created this gap of three million tons of foodgrains as between the period 1939 and 1942-43. The total consumption of foodgrains in this country has been placed by Government between 52 and 55 million tons. That is, Government by its lack of foresight—I won't say by its deliberate policy—has deprived this country of 1/18th of its total supply of foodgrains. It has deprived twenty millions or more of the people of this country of the foodgrains which were available to them in the year 1939-40.

And if it was necessary in 1939-40 for India to be a net importer to the extent of 2½ million tons, how much more necessary is it today, in the face of the vast additional demands that India is carrying in the matter of food? My friend, Sir F. E. James indicated today that there is tremendous wastage by the military. I myself have heard stories—I have not been able to verify them but I have no reason to doubt them—about the considerable wastage on the part of the military authorities, of troops selling their excess supplies in the markets, while thousands of other people were dying of starvation. Apart from any wastage, military consumption in this country has imposed a tremendous additional burden on the food resources of India. This is an issue which officials have sought to treat lightly and are still trying to do so; but no good can be achieved by burking this issue of the tremendous burden placed on India's resources by military consumption. The Food Member is not here, but I think he gave the military consumption as a percentage—he mentioned some time ago that India's armed forces ate something not very much—that they were consuming one per cent. of the total foodgrains available in this country. Regarded as a percentage it may not seem much; but let us analyse the actual figures. According to the press, India has raised about two million troops; many hundred thousands of these are overseas. Even if we allow a liberal margin, we can safely estimate that there are not more than two million troops in this country, that is, .5 per cent. of the population as a whole. According to the Food Member's own figures this .5 per cent. of the Indian population is eating one per cent. of the total foodgrain supply; that is, they are eating double of what should be allotted to them on the basis of the available food supplies. Worked out in actual figures it means just this: two million troops in India are eating their own share and they are, in addition, eating the share of two millions of India's civilian population.

I do not, for one moment, suggest that the troops should not be well fed; it is axiomatic that an army, in order to constitute an effective fighting machine must be well fed, it must be contented. But what I do ask is, that the Government should not sidetrack this issue of the tremendous additional burden which consumption by the armed forces is placing and will continue to place on India's food resources. And this is a problem which will be accentuated and not mitigated in the near future. With India as the chief basis of operations against the Japanese, we should normally expect the number of troops in this country to increase and not to lessen.

Then again I feel that another serious strain has been imposed on India's food resources by the thousands of prisoners who have been brought into this country. The actual figures have not been made available to us, but even if tens of thousands of prisoners have been brought into India their consumption of foodgrains represents a very serious additional burden on Indian resources, because these prisoners are, according to my information, treated not only on a liberal but on a very lavish scale.

The number of refugees brought into this country also represents a serious additional burden thrown on India's food resources; and I would ask the Government not to blink at these various facts, not to put off criticism or suggestion by saying that these different elements merely consume a very small proportion of India's foodgrains. I maintain that the cumulative effect of the consumption by India's armed forces, by the thousands of prisoners in this country, by the tens of thousands of refugees in India—the cumulative effect has been to deprive hundreds of thousands of civilians of the stocks which would normally have come to them.

And in the face of these vast additional commitments, if it was necessary, as I have said, in 1939-40 that India should have been a net importer to the extent of 2½ million tons, how much greater is that need today? Mr. Joshi has just mentioned that the Honourable Food Member is trying to satisfy us by saying that India has imported 40,000 tons of foodgrains. We have heard and read typical official statements that foodgrains will be imported into this country as and when shipping space permits. But these statements bring no reassurance to us. Unless the Food Member can wield real influence in this

[Mr. Frank R. Anthony.]

matter—and I doubt it very much—unless he can impress upon those who really control the government of this country the inescapable need for importing, not 40,000 tons, not even a million tons, as suggested by the Gregory Committee, but several million tons of foodgrains, only then can we hope to see the present situation succumbing even partially to administrative control.

I feel sure that most of us agree entirely with the principle of rationing. I think it was Mr. Kirby yesterday who asked us why many of us were afraid that rationing meant not salvation but starvation. Apparently Mr. Kirby, who seemed very new to this country, is not aware of the fact that rationing, if it is to be a success in India, will depend on the efficiency, the integrity of your administrative machine; and the public in this country know that not only is your administrative machine not efficient, not only is it not honest, but today it is a broken reed on which neither the Government nor the public can rely. It is a hopelessly unbalanced administrative machinery on which you have got to depend for the hopes of success of your rationing scheme. That is why the public in this country are afraid about the success of that rationing scheme because you have a hopelessly unbalanced administrative machinery—overpaid and mentally famished at the top, and under-paid and morally famished at the bottom. If the vital pre-requisite of rationing, that is an adequate and continuous flow of foodgrains is not ensured, you will, in attempting to implement rationing, be building up a powder magazine which will blow up the Food Department and its whole scheme. I have watched the working of rationing in South India where this vital pre-requisite of an adequate and continuous flow of foodgrains was not there. I have seen the poorer man, the daily worker standing, not for hours, but for days, in queues, not only losing his daily wage but being required, because of control or lack of it, to starve.

We also realise that before rationing can seriously be implemented you must have a successful procurement scheme. Even if you cannot implement rationing, I feel that you should have a procurement scheme. Even if you have to allow for a margin of loss, owing to the inefficiency or corruptness of your administrative machine, it is better to have a procurement scheme that will procure some food, rather than not have a scheme at all. In this connection I would ask the Food Member as to what machinery if any he has devised for procuring the *Aman* crop. If you have no machinery ready to collect the *Aman* crop, you will find the prospect which you normally expect from a bumper crop, you will find the prospect of relief literally slipping through your fingers.

We realise also the need for price control, but I would ask the Honourable the Food Member and his advisers to remember that the declaration of price levels does not constitute control of prices. In Bengal for instance you have declared, I think, the rice price-level at Rs. 15. Having declared this price-

level you will accentuate the tendency to hoarding and black-markets. Your *Aman* crop, unless you have an effective procurement machinery, will disappear so soon as you have imposed the price control level which you will not be able to implement unless you have at your disposal machinery for counteracting hoarding and blackmarket dealing which will inevitably result from the declaration of the price control level. That is why, finally, I would ask the Honourable the Food Member to remember this, that his procurement scheme, his rationing, his price control, these measures will accentuate the tendency to hoarding and blackmarket dealing, and the only way in which he can possibly scotch hoarding and blackmarket dealing is by adopting, if he has the courage and the vision to do it,—by adopting the most ruthless measures against hoarders, blackmarket dealers and profiteers. As Mr. Jamnadas Mehta said in his speech, Government seems to have some kind of spiritual affinity with hoarders and blackmarket dealers. We still see on the part of the Government an inexplicable tendency to deal with these people with misguided leniency. As I have mentioned, your price control attempt, your procurement scheme, your rationing all these will aggravate the tendency

of hoarding and blackmarkets and unless you are prepared to deal ruthlessly with the hoarder and the blackmarket dealer, all your hopes, all your schemes all your plans will be torpedoed.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): As regards the business for Wednesday and Thursday, it will contain the following items; first, the legislative business which was entered in the original list, and secondly, after this is finished, the continuation of the food debate. In view of what appears to be the general attitude of the House, there will be sufficient time perhaps even to-morrow for the continuance of the food debate; if not, at any rate, there will be a whole day, Thursday, available for that debate.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 17th November, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 17th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Harry Greenfield, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

ORDINANCE FOR DISTRIBUTION OF FOODGRAINS IN BENGAL THROUGH REGISTERED CO-OPERATIVE STORES.

222. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if he is prepared to recommend to the Governor General to pass an ordinance regarding the distribution of foodstuffs through the registered Co-operative Stores in different places in Bengal in preference to the ordinary normal trade channels who are selected to be the instruments for distribution by the local municipalities?

(b) Is he aware of the fact that these normal trade channels withdraw foodstuffs from the market as soon as control of prices is announced by the Provincial Governments, and that they carry on trade through the black market?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that local police do not take steps against the dealers indulging in black market even when they are approached by the helpless aggrieved parties? If so, what steps does he propose to take to prevent such negligence on the part of the police?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) There is no proposal under consideration for the issue of such an ordinance. Both Central and the Provincial Governments have power under the Defence of India Rules to regulate the distribution of foodstuffs.

(b) Yes, in some cases.

(c) No such reports have been received. Control of the police is the Provincial Government's function.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Is the Honourable Member aware that the Gregory Committee has recommended that co-operative stores should be used for distribution of foodstuffs?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Are you going to use these co-operative stores as instruments for distribution?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, as far as possible but the Honourable Member is aware that the co-operative movement has not made the same progress in every province and in every district.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: In Bengal, it has not touched the fringe of the problem.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: Wherever they are, they may be used as instruments of distribution in Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: My information is that the development of the co-operative movement in Bengal as a whole does not justify the employment of these societies as the sole channel of distribution.

Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: One of the channels, not the sole channel?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Where a co-operative society justifies itself, it will have the job of distribution.

SUPPLY AND DISTRIBUTION OF RICE, WHEAT, ETC., IN BENGAL.

223. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state the total tonnage of rice produced or harvested in October in Bengal, and how that quantity is being distributed?

(b) Is he aware of the fact that in places near Calcutta neither rice nor coal was available between the 15th September and the 15th October, 1943?

(c) How has all the supply of rice and wheat to Bengal during September and October been distributed? Has the Liaison Officer, Government of India, any authority in the matter of distribution of foodstuffs in Bengal?

(d) Does the Honourable Member propose to set up control shops in those places in Bengal where the Provincial Government could not set them up? If not, is it proposed to pass an ordinance to set up control shops in municipal towns and rural areas under the Union Boards?

(e) Do Government propose to pass an ordinance to bind every owner of the fallow land to use it for cultivation, and in case of failure, to empower any body else to cultivate such lands on payment of a nominal rent or no rent?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) It is not possible to give an estimate of the quantity of rice produced or harvested in a particular month in any Province. The estimate of the *aus* harvest this year in Bengal is 1.7 million tons.

(b) I am aware there has been great scarcity of rice.

(c) The supplies received during September and October have been distributed partly through grain shops and controlled markets in Calcutta and partly in the deficit districts in the mofussil: The Government of India's Regional Commissioner (Food) has no authority in the matter of distribution of foodstuffs in Bengal beyond communicating the advice and if necessary the order of the Government of India to the Provincial Government.

(d) No sir, but the Government of India are constantly pressing the Government of Bengal to improve their distribution arrangements.

(e) An amendment of the Defence of India Rules to secure the object in view is already under the consideration of the Department concerned.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If there is scarcity of food there and there is no storage of food also, how are they going to live?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: From the surplus areas, patches of food.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: From where?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: From the surplus areas.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD IN BENGAL THROUGH FOOD DEPARTMENT.

224. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Does the Honourable the Food Member propose to take up the work of distribution of food through his Department in Bengal? If so, what steps does he propose to take immediately to control the food front in Bengal?

(b) What precautionary steps does the Honourable Member propose to take to prevent hinderance to the war effort which may ensue from the present serious food situation in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The distribution of foodstuffs in Bengal is the function and responsibility of the Provincial Government, under the general supervision and guidance of the Food Department of the Government of India. The Government of India are in very close touch with all the arrangements for distribution made by the Provincial Government, and have, on various occasions, rendered practical assistance. The Honourable Member will also have observed the recent announcement of the appointment of a high military officer to assist the local civil authorities in the organization and creation of the movement of foodgrains in Bengal.

(b) Despatches of foodgrains from the surplus areas to Bengal have been increased and expedited; distribution by rail and river within Bengal has been improved; substantial imports have been arranged from abroad; over 5,440 relief centres have been opened throughout the province; rationing is expected to be introduced in Calcutta shortly. The Government of India have been

in the closest consultation with the Government of Bengal regarding plans for the procurement of the winter rice crop for distribution within Bengal. To the extent that these measures relieve the present distress in the Province, they are calculated to prevent a dislocation of the war effort.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is it the policy of the Government to rob those provinces which have got surplus and make them deficit provinces.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No. We do not regard foodstuffs as the property of any one province.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member indicate the date since which the Central Government undertook the duty of controlling the Provincial Government in regard to the distribution of foodgrains. I want the approximate date.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have throughout rendered them advice and this policy of definite supervision and control was accepted and enunciated in the last Food Conference.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member now satisfied that the scheme of distribution which has been adopted by the Government of Bengal is satisfactory?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The whole matter is under constant examination.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What is the result of that examination so far?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I think I may claim that the result has been a steady improvement.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India propose to start centres in all the villages in Bengal in order that the landless labourers may get grain at a cheaper rate and whether the Government of India propose to give landless labourers the statutory right to secure grain at a very reasonable rate?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: This is primarily for the Provincial Government but I shall examine this suggestion.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is this control being exercised by the Central Government with the consent of the various Provincial Governments or is it being done by the executive authority of the Governor General?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I would say both. With the consent of the Provincial Government but where necessary we interfere.

RICE AND OTHER COMMODITIES EXPORTED FROM MADRAS PROVINCE.

225. ***Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu:** Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) the amount in tons of the following commodities such as rice, bajra, jawar, ragi, chillies, tamarind, coriander and pulses exported from the Madras Province to foreign countries such as Ceylon, South Africa and North Africa and to Indian States in the Province such as Travancore, Cochin, Mysore and Hyderabad during the years 1940, 1941, 1942 and 1943;

(b) the amount of the above commodities at present available in the Madras Presidency; and

(c) whether the present stock is sufficient for the population of the Presidency until the new crops are available?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Separate statements showing (i) exports from Madras to foreign countries and (ii) exports from Madras to Hyderabad and Mysore States, are placed on the table. Travancore and Cochin being within the same trade block as Madras, exports from Madras to these States are not separately recorded.

(b) It is regretted that the information is not readily available.

(c) The Government of India have been informed that there has been a definite improvement in the situation in Madras and have no reason to believe that the stocks held at present in the Province will not suffice until the new crops are available.

[17TH Nov. 1943.]

STATEMENT I.

Exports from Madras to Foreign Countries.

	Ceylon.			Strait Settlements.			Malay States.			Mauritius.		
	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*
(1) Rice	100,517	120,755	110,322	65,144	9,498	8,	245	...	3,113	2,502	101	...
(2) Jawar Bajra	3	6	2,737	3	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	...
(3) Chillies	5,243	5,617	9,177	1,220	02	519	...	...	6	71	...	...
(4) Coriander	830	822	2,469	486	135	250	...	...	...	...	...	...
(5) Tamarind	...	...	...	...	N O T	A V A	I L A	B L E	...	...	...	...
(6) Paddy	2,077	1,819	32,828	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
(7) Gram	266	323	1,691	...	26	225	...	...	63	39	1	...
(8) Other Pulses	1,089	3,219	6,120	805	295	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Total	110,025	141,506	174,044	67,658	10,023	9,256	279	...	3,192	2,606	129	...

	Burma.			Union of South Africa.			Australia.			United Kingdom.			New Zealand.			British West India Island.			Maskat.		
	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	
(1) Rice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(2) Jawar Bajra	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(3) Chillies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(4) Coriander	34	...	...	...	6	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(5) Tamarind	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(6) Paddy	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(7) Gram	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
(8) Other Pulses	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	
Total	36	...	...	...	6	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	

	Athen.				Iraq.				Canada.				(Total.)				Grand Total
	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943*	1940	1941	1942	1943	
(1) Rice.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	113,133	141,104	119,778	65,144	439,159				
(2) Millets.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	2,751	3	2,751				
(3) Chillies.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..	..	..	..				
(4) Coriander.	..	2	..	..	..	..	5	..	5,382	6,255	9,310	1,249	22,196				
(5) Tamarind.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,010	2,123	2,591	499	6,223				
(6) Paddy.	..	..	..	N O T	A V A I L A B L E	..	..	..	2,086	1,837	32,835	..	39,758				
(7) Gram.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	364	1,992	..	2,613				
(8) Other Pulses.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,449	3,529	6,121	805	11,904				
Total.	..	2	..	..	..	..	5	..	123,331	155,209	175,364	67,700	521,604				

*Relates to period from January to September only.

STATEMENT II.

Showing export of various foodgrains from Madras to Hyderabad and Mysore (by rail) during 1940, 1941, 1942 and 1943.

	Hydrabad.				Mysoro.				(In tons).	
	1940.	1941.	1942.	1943.*	Total.	1940.	1941.	1942.		1943.*
Rice	61,687	27,556	47,618	8,865	145,726	39,408	35,709	21,851	17,097	114,005
Millets	758	313	19	..	1,090	104	69	55	23	251
Maize	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Gram	16	181	150	..	347	2,164	5,187	6,029	1,923	15,303
Total	62,461	28,050	47,787	8,865	147,163	41,676	40,965	27,935	19,043	129,619

*1943 figures records only from January to July, 1943, the rest is not available.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Is the Honourable Member aware of the distress in the famine areas where people are unfit and are suffering from want of food?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The situation has greatly improved.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Is it by the Government effort or by the help of charitable institutions?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It is definitely by the help of the Government because we have sent them a lot of stuff.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: How many tons of foodgrains have been sent to ceded Districts?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I cannot give the information off-hand. I would like to have notice of the question.

FOODGRAINS IMPORTED IN BENGAL.

226. *Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member please state the amount of foodgrains in tons that has been imported to Bengal from the various provinces of the country and overseas since August 1943?

(b) How far has the distress caused in Bengal due to want of foodgrains been relieved?

(c) Is it a fact that the situation in Bengal is growing worse day by day in spite of the measures taken by Government and the public to relieve the distress? If so, what steps do Government propose to take to save Bengal from starvation?

(d) What is the total quantity of various food commodities required for the Bengal Province to relieve the distress completely until the new crops are available?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) According to the latest information received 225,000 tons of foodgrains were imported into Bengal from the 1st of August to the first week of November.

(b) and (c). Special relief measures have been taken throughout the distressed areas of Bengal. These include the opening of about 6,000 free kitchens, at which over 2 million people are fed daily, of hospitals, reception centres, relief camps for destitutes and orphanages. The rate of delivery of foodgrains into Calcutta and the districts has been increased. Reports from District Magistrates show that there has been perceptible improvement in certain districts as a result of these measures.

(d) Estimates vary. The minimum quantity of foodgrains required to be imported into Bengal has been estimated at 250,000 tons for the three months October to December.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member received any recent report regarding the distress that prevails in some parts of the districts of Tippera, Chittagong and Noakhali?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, Sir; we have received reports.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What do these reports indicate?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Well, Sir, conditions are still bad and we are not yet out of the wood, but there is a steady improvement.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is there any system under which the Government of Bengal is expected to keep the Central Government regularly informed about the position in each district separately?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We get fortnightly reports describing the conditions in each district.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member satisfied with these fortnightly reports? Does he not think that having regard to the seriousness of the situation, the Government of India may as well ask for weekly reports?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: In addition to these fortnightly reports, we get daily a Secraphone message from our Regional Food Commissioner.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I ask the Honourable Member what quantity of rice has been imported into Bengal out of the foodgrains?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: It does not seem to arise out of the question and I have not got the information ready with me here.

IMPORT OF FOODGRAINS FROM AUSTRALIA AND AMERICA.

227. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether it is intended to import foodgrains into India from Australia and America to meet the shortage in the country, particularly in Bengal?

(b) When are the imports expected to reach India, and in what quantity, and in what grains?

(c) Until the imports arrive, what steps are being taken to prevent deaths from starvation in Calcutta and other parts of India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). Arrangements have already been made with His Majesty's Government to import substantial quantities of foodgrains into India from abroad. Several ship-loads carrying wheat have already arrived at Indian ports and more are expected shortly. The sources of supply are those which are the most convenient from the shipping point of view. It is not in the public interest to reveal either the quantities expected or the names of the countries from where imports have been arranged.

(c) Arrangements have been made to procure grains from areas with surpluses and despatch them to areas in deficit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask within what period Government propose to import 1½ million tons of foodgrains into India?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am sorry I cannot indicate any period. I am doing my best to expedite imports.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable Member give us some rough estimate of the time?

(No answer.)

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: In view of the fact that rice is the staple food in Bengal, may I ask what is the proportion of rice among the foodgrains now imported into Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I would require notice of that question.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask how much time it took to receive the quantity of the grain that the Honourable Member says has been received from Australia and other places? How much time has it taken after the requisitions had been made for it?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I regret very much I cannot give any indication of time.

INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION OF INDIA.

228. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state what has been or is being done for the industrial organisation of India with a view to ensuring a decent and dignified existence to all her citizens?

(b) What steps are being taken to provide for equitable adjustment between capital, labour and consumer so as to ensure Indians against want and insecurity?

(c) Has the Post-war Policy Committee started functioning? If so, what progress has been made by it so far, and when does it expect to complete its labours?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (b). I am afraid it is not possible to reply to these questions in answer to a question.

(c) The Post War Policy Committee has started functioning. Its first meeting was held on October 21st and 22nd. It has approved of the issue to industrialists of an Industrial Questionnaire intended to elicit information on the basis of which plans can be made for the future of industry. The date of the completion of its labours will naturally depend upon the progress that is made.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India has made any provision for the representation of labour on the post-war Committee for industrial development?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am sure it must have been there, but if the Honourable Member wants a specific answer, I should have notice of that question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India agree to the policy that labour should be represented on the post-war Committee for industrial development and I wonder whether he wants any notice for this reply?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: As I have said, Government of India must have considered and taken representatives of labour in various Committees, but if my Honourable friend wants a specific answer, I should have notice of that question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask if the Honourable Member will keep the Members of the Legislature informed of the progress made by these various Committees?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I will always try my best to give as much information as is required by the Honourable Members of the House. I hope, however, Members will realise that we have to follow the rules of procedure and, as such, it is only when exceptional circumstances demand that it is possible for us to make a statement without any specific question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is it right and proper to keep the Members of the Legislature completely in dark as to what is going on in these Committees?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am sure Honourable Members will have an opportunity of knowing the activities of these Committees when discussions take place about them in the House.

BEVERIDGE REPORT FOR POST WAR SOCIAL SECURITY.

229. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have considered the Beveridge Report for post-war social security;

(b) whether they have any social security plan in view for India after the cessation of hostilities;

(c) whether, if the matter has not yet engaged their attention, they will take it up now with a view to evolving a plan similar to what is known as "Beveridge Plan" for this country; and

(d) on what lines, if any, the Post-War Reconstruction Committee is working?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) It is not for the Government of India to consider the Beveridge Report submitted to the Government in the United Kingdom. The Government of India are, however, aware of the Report.

(b) and (c). I would invite the attention of the Honourable Member to the resolution on this subject passed at the last meeting in September, 1943, of the Tripartite Labour Conference. Copies of the resolution are placed on the table of the House. The Government of India is giving active consideration to the question of implementing the resolution.

(d) I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the statement laid on the table of the Council of State on the 4th August, 1943, by the Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava in reply to question No. 74 by the Honourable Pandit H. N. Kunzru.

Resolution passed at the Tripartite Plenary Labour Conference held at New Delhi on the 6th and 7th September, 1943.

This Tripartite Labour Conference recommends that with a view to provide adequate materials on which to plan a policy of social security for labour the Central Government in co-operation with the Governments of the Provinces of British India, the Indian States and the Chamber of Princes should immediately set up machinery to investigate questions

of wages and earnings, employment and housing and social conditions generally, and that as soon as possible after receipt of the required statistics and data the Central Government should appoint a mixed Committee to formulate plans of social security.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE DELHI RESTRICTION OF USES OF LAND ACT, ETC.

230. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) the total number of persons appointed or employed for the administration of the Delhi Restriction of Uses of Land Act, 1941, and the number of Muslim (i) officers, and (ii) men;

(b) the total number of officers employed in connection with Ribbon Developments Scheme in Delhi, and the number of Muslim officers;

(c) the description and number of schemes approved and the number of such schemes taken up; what arrangements have been made to protect and exempt graves and burial places, under the provisions of the Delhi Restriction of Uses of Land Act, 1941; and

(d) the names of officers or persons-in-charge for looking after the protection and exemption of graves etc., under the provisions of the said Act?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The information has been called for and will be furnished to the House in due course.

PRODUCTION OF AND FORECASTS FOR FOODGRAINS.

231. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) the total production of foodgrains for 1942-43 and forecasts for the year 1943-44;

(b) the quantity of foodgrains required for (i) the civil population and (ii) the Military Department in India;

(c) the total quantity of foodgrains exported from and imported into the country during 1943-44; and

(d) the total quantity of foodgrains purchased for military purposes in 1942-43 and 1943-44?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b) and (c). A statement is laid on the table.

(d) It is not in the public interest to furnish this information.

(a) The total production of foodgrains in 1942-43 was about 52.1 Millions Tons. Complete information about forecasts for 1943-44 is not available.

(b) The quantity of foodgrains required for civil consumption on the basis of average production plus net imports during the five years ending March, 1942 is about 53.9 Million Tons. The quantity required for military consumption is about 650,000 tons of all foodgrains.

(c) The following are the figures of exports from India of foodgrains during April to October 1943.

Foodgrains	Export from India (Tons)
Rice	26,874
Wheat	30,991
Wheat products	10,215
Barley	24
Milletts	9,594
Oats	114
Pulses	9,390
Others	8
	87,210

Total imports from April to October 1943 amounted to about 100,000 tons. Rice exports stopped in July.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to part (c), do I take it that the figure of the exports of food grains included in the statement includes exports made on Government account or does it indicate merely exports made on private account?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No exports, as far as I am aware, are made on Government account, excepting whatever the army takes out of the country out of their own quota. I am not aware, I can give no information about what the army takes with it to the various battlefields.

NEGLECT OF LAWNS IN FRONT OF 'ORTHODOX CLERKS' QUARTERS IN D. I. Z. AREA, NEW DELHI.

232. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that the lawns in front of orthodox clerks' quarters in the D. I. Z. area of New Delhi are not properly maintained?

(b) Is it a fact that most of the ground is covered with dried up stunted grass?

(c) Is it a fact that the roads bordering these lawns have almost in all cases lost their alignment, and that some portions of the road are covered with grass, while in other cases the grass has completely disappeared and is covered by bajri and soil?

(d) Is it a fact that there are *malis* regularly employed by the Horticultural Division to look after these lawns?

(e) Is the Honourable Member aware that these *malis* water the lawns only once or twice a month and do not pay any attention to anything else?

(f) Are Government prepared to take action to see that these lawns are properly maintained?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) No.

(d) Yes.

(e) The *malis* not only water the lawns but also keep them in proper order.

(f) The question does not arise, but Government will be prepared to enquire into any *bona fide* complaints on this subject.

Sardar Sant Singh: Has the Honourable Member simply given the reply on the note prepared by the Department or has he taken pains to see the conditions of these quarters to satisfy himself whether the allegations made in the question are correct or not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no reason to suppose that the information supplied to me is not correct.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member take the trouble of going and seeing for himself the conditions there and he will find out that the Department is not working properly.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

BAN ON KEEPING MILCH CATTLE IN CLERKS' QUARTERS IN NEW DELHI.

233. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state whether it is a fact that Government have banned the keeping of milch cattle in clerks quarters in New Delhi, other than the A and B type of quarters?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that very few of the occupants of A and B types of quarters are keeping milch cattle in their compounds?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the very high price charged for milk and milk products in New Delhi, and of the difficulty of the Government of India staff in obtaining supplies on account of this increase in price?

(d) Are Government prepared to allow the occupants of all types of quarters generally to keep milch cattle in their quarters, especially in view of part (b) above, at least for the duration of the war? If not, why not?

(e) Is it a fact that Government are daily advising people to grow more food?

(f) Are Government aware that a general permission to keep milch cattle in their quarters will go a long way to help their staff who propose to keep such cattle in obtaining some substantial food and thus relieve pressure on the market for the benefit of others who may need it?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a), (b), (d) and (f). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to his starred question No. 146 on the 13th November, 1943. As I then stated, the New Delhi Municipal Committee is examining means of augmenting the milk supply.

(c) and (e). Yes.

†234*.

†The question was withdrawn by the questioner.

EMPLOYMENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN WHITE EVACUEES FROM BURMA FOR UTILISATION OF INDIA'S MINERAL RESOURCES.

235. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas been drawn to the editorial comment of the *Hindusthan Standard* of Calcutta, dated the 21st August, 1943, on the employment of South African White evacuees from Burma in the utilisation of India's mineral resources?

(b) Is it a fact that the Government of India have entrusted South African White evacuees from Burma with the work of carrying on prospecting operations and of helping towards the utilisation of India's resources, specially the mineral wealth in the Indian States? If so, how many of the South African White evacuees from Burma have been employed, and on what terms?

(c) Why have Government employed such South African White evacuees when the South African Government have recently passed the Pegging Act against the Indian settlers?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) Two South African nationals who had served in Burma have been employed in the Utilisation Branch of the Geological Survey of India. One of the officers has been in charge of prospecting operations in connection with the re-opening of the lead and zinc mines at Zawar in Mewar State. The other has been employed as a Mining Engineer in the mica production section of the Utilisation Branch, Rajputana. This section is engaged in assisting mica miners in Rajputana in obtaining stores and increasing their production of mica. The first officer has been employed on contract, terminable on one month's notice by either party. His salary is Rs. 1,500 per mensem. The second officer has been temporarily released from military service. His services will be terminated when his work in the Utilisation Branch is finished or when the war Department establishes a higher claim to his services. His pay is Rs. 800 per mensem.

(c) Both officers possess exceptional qualifications for the work they are doing which is of the greatest value to the War effort. They were employed because no Indian was available with such qualifications. The appointments were made before the recent "Pegging" Act was passed by the South African Legislature.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if the Honourable Member could not get an equally expert officer from any other nationality than that of South Africa?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I want notice.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if the Honourable Member represents the policy of this House that no South African should be employed on any account in India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I represent the policy of the Government of India.

Sardar Sant Singh: What is the policy of the Government of India in regard to the employment of South Africans? The whole of India is against the employment of South Africans in India on any account?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I know that.

Sardar Sant Singh: Then what is the Honourable Member doing to frame the policy of the Government of India that no South African should be employed in India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I have already said in my answer that these appointments were made before the Pegging Act was passed.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member then terminate the appointments by giving notice on account of the irritation that it causes to the people of India in seeing South Africans employed in India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I am aware of the irritation and share it myself and the question of terminating the employment of these people will be governed by the decision which the Government of India will take in this matter.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Have the Government framed any rules, have they been put forward for the sanction of the Government regarding the employment of these persons in the service of the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I do not think that this question arises.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The question arises because this question relates to the employment of South Africans in the services of the Government of India.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Rules are being framed; some have already been framed, others are to be framed.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Have any rules been framed regarding the appointment of South Africans in India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Yes.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Have they been forwarded to His Majesty's Government for approval.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I am not in a position to disclose correspondence between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government.

OPERATION OF THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

236. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of contravention of the Payment of Wages Act (Act IV of 1936), detected on the East Indian Railway during each of the years 1941, 1942 and upto the 15th October, 1943;

(b) the number of applications made to the authority appointed under section 15(1) of the Payment of Wages Act by the Inspectors for offences committed by the East Indian Railway authorities since the Act was brought into force in 1937; and

(c) the number of cases in which penalties were imposed under section 20 against the East Indian Railway officers?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The number of cases of contraventions of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway were 334 during 1941-42, 481 during 1942-43 and 123 from 1st April to 15th October 1943.

(b) Nil.

(c) Nil.

OPERATION OF THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

237. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that the Inspectors of Railway Labour have to obtain prior sanction from the Supervisor of Railway Labour for any action they may intend to take against offenders under the Payment of Wages Act?

(b) If the reply to (a) above be in the affirmative, what is the number of instances when such permission was sought and sanction accorded relating to cases of contravention of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway year by year from 1937?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) It is only the Supervisor of Railway Labour and his Deputy who have been appointed Inspectors under Section 14 of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936, any formal action under the Act has therefore necessarily to be taken by these two officers and the question of taking their prior sanction does not arise.

(b) In view of the reply to part (a), this does not arise.

OPERATION OF THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

238. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is or it is not a fact that lack of effective and proper supervision of the conduct of the Payment of Wages Act is responsible for such frequent contravention of the Payment of Wages Act on the East Indian Railway?

(b) Do Government propose to consider the advisability of making changes in the existing machinery with a view to affording proper and effective check on such contraventions of the Payment of Wages Act by the Railway officers?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) What the Honourable Member suggests is not a fact. The very fact that such a large number of irregularities

are brought to light every year and rectified at the instance of the Supervisor of Railway Labour proves the effectiveness of the machinery which now exists for this purpose.

(b) Does not arise.

REPRESENTATION FROM MR. V. G. BALWAIK *re* WAR BONUS TO WORKERS.

239. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) if he has received a representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik, President, Central Provinces and Berar Provincial Workers' Federation, Nagpur, in the month of October, 1943, in connection with war bonus to workers;

(b) if Government have arrived at any decision regarding the condition attached to the additional war bonus by the Empress and Model mills, viz., the Government of India to decide whether more than two months' wages as war bonus can be treated as expenditure on which the company will have to pay no tax; if so, what their decision is; and

(c) if he is aware of the decision of the Working Committee of the Central Provinces and Berar Textile Workers' Federation to go on strike from the 15th November, 1943, if the mill-owners in the Province will not pay this additional or second instalment of the war bonus by the 14th November, 1943?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No. The general question of limitation of bonuses admissible as revenue expenditure is under consideration and it will not be expedient to give further details at the present stage.

(c) Yes.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know the reasons why it would not be possible to arrive at a conclusion at an earlier date and give details?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: We are doing our best to arrive at a conclusion as early as possible.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What time it will take, because the withdrawal of the strike has been made under my instructions that the Government of India will decide this question and the strike had better be postponed?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am unable to give any detail.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India is aware that there is very great discontent among the textile workers of Central Provinces on account of the fact that the Government of India have not decided this question early?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no information on the point.

STATUTORY PRICE CONTROL.

240. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state:

(a) if Government have decided on Statutory Price Control; and

(b) if Government have exempted any province from the operation of this Statutory Price Control; if so, on what grounds?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The Government of India have accepted the majority opinion of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, which was endorsed by the Fourth Food Conference, that statutory price control should be instituted for all major foodgrains in all Provinces. The Government of India agree with the Committee as to the importance of ensuring that certain conditions exist when statutory price control is introduced. The Government are of opinion that in the present emergent conditions which exist in India All-India Statutory Prices for all food grains are an impossibility. In accordance with the recommendation No. 74 of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, therefore, the Government of India have decided that pending the enforcement of statutory control of prices throughout India, such Provinces as desire to enforce statutory control should be permitted to do so subject, however, to the approval of the statutory price by the Central Government. These decisions apply to all Provinces without exception.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Government of India consult the growers before fixing the price and issuing any ordinance about price control?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The point of view of the growers will be fully taken into account.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What will be the procedure for taking their views into consideration?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am associating an advisory council with my department and I hope it will be possible for me to get the benefit of their views on many questions like that.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if any Members of this House will be associated for that purpose?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That matter is still under consideration. But, as I explained the other day, I have agreed to a standing committee of 15 Members of the two Houses of Legislature, and as I consider that standing committee to be a supreme body I do not know whether the Members of this House would like to lose their importance and supermacy by being associated with minor committees.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: My question is, will the question of procedure about the fixing of prices be referred to this food committee?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As I have said, I will use every means in my power to ascertain the viewpoint of everybody. I have got several committees associated with me now and I hope there will be representatives of the growers or, at all events, people who will put forward the views of the growers to me.

INDIANS SHOT IN POLICE FIRING IN MAURITIUS.

241. *Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas been drawn to the news reported in the *Hindustan Times* under the head "Cry from Mauritius Four Indians shot in Police firing"?

(b) Can he state the circumstances under which the Police firing took place?

(c) Do Government propose to institute an enquiry of its own to find out the full facts? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). I have received a telegraphic report that disturbances occurred on 4 estates pending the settlement of a demand for higher wages. The police are reported to have been assaulted and in the course of firing which followed 3 persons were killed and 3 wounded. A Commission of Enquiry is investigating the causes of the outbreak and Conciliation and Wages Board are examining the adjustment of wages. Fuller details are on their way and after receiving them I shall consider what further action, if any, is required.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know the designation of the person on the spot, if there be any, who is to look after the interest of Indians and report matters immediately to the Government of India?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I want notice of that question.

STUDENTS ADMITTED TO DHANBAD SCHOOL OF MINES.

242. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) the number of students admitted to the Dhanbad School of Mines, and the number of Muslims therein during 1941, 1942 and 1943;

(b) whether any quota is fixed for the admission of Muslims; and

(c) the total number of Muslims who applied for admission during the last three years?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) 24 students were admitted during each of the years 1941, 1942 and 1943. No Muslim student was admitted in 1941 and 1942. In 1943 two were admitted but one did not join the School.

(b) No; and

(c) 34.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What is the reason for the non-admission of Muslim students?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That is because they do not qualify themselves at the entrance examination.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: As for academic qualifications I can prove that there are any number of Muslims who are fit to join that institution. But is it not a fact that scholarships are not given to Muslims?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I cannot say: I shall want notice of that.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Is it a fact that last year qualified Muslims applied but they were rejected outright?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: No. If I may explain to the Honourable Member, the method of admission to the school is that first of all 50 per cent. of the places are filled as a result of an entrance examination which is open to all students. After that a certain quota is filled for the purpose of representing each province according to a quota that has been fixed. After that the balance of students is taken purely on the basis of merit. At this school there is no reservation with regard to any particular community at all.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Do Government propose to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the matter?

ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRAL NURSING COUNCIL.

243. *Sir F. E. James: Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Advisory Board of Health at its fourth meeting held in January, 1942, recommended that the Central Government should consider, at an early date, the constitution of a Central Nursing Council to co-ordinate the activities of Provincial Nursing Councils, to advise on nursing problems generally, to establish uniform standards of nursing and training, to inspect the conduct of examinations, to maintain an All-India register of nurses and nursing qualifications, and to arrange for reciprocal registration with other countries;

(b) whether any steps were taken to carry out that recommendation;

(c) whether the Central Advisory Board of Health at its fifth meeting in October, 1943, again recommended *inter alia* that in view of the extreme shortage of nurses and of the urgent importance of the development of nursing services, Provincial Governments should be consulted forthwith with a view to the early establishment of an All-India Nursing Council as previously recommended by the Board; and

(d) what steps have been or are being taken to prepare a scheme for the establishment of such a Council for the urgent consideration of the Central and Provincial Governments, and generally to carry out the recommendations of the Board referred to in (a) and (c)?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes, save that there was no specific recommendation regarding an All-India Register.

(b) No. As the proposal involved central legislation which could not be regarded as immediately essential and Provincial Governments were fully occupied in dealing with urgent administration problems no steps were taken to carry out the recommendations.

(c) It recommended the creation of a Central Nursing Council at an early date as previously recommended by the Board.

(d) A scheme is under preparation.

Sir F. E. James: Will my Honourable friend assure the House that once that scheme which he said is under preparation is completed no further time will be lost in sending it to the provincial and State Governments concerned?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, Sir; I think I can give that assurance.

SUPERINTENDENT OF INDUSTRIES, DELHI.

244. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(a) the duties and functions assigned to the office of the Superintendent of Industries, Delhi;

(b) the yearly cost of maintenance of this office; and

(c) the necessity of maintaining the office in Delhi?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The information is being collected and a statement will be laid before the House in due course.

ISSUE OF PERMITS OF WHEAT AND OTHER FOODGRAINS BY SIRDAR MEHTAB SINGH.

245. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(a) since how long Sirdar Mehtab Singh was entrusted with the duties of issuing permits for wheat and other foodgrains;

(b) the total quantity of permits of foodgrains and sugar issued by him;

(c) if Sirdar Mehtab Singh was the Chief Adviser of the District Magistrate in fixing the prices of commodities from time to time; if not, what hand he had in this; and

(d) what hand Sirdar Mehtab Singh had in fixing selling agents of sugar, gur, etc.?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Information to supply a complete answer to the question is not available with the Central Government. A report has been called for from the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, and his reply is awaited.

CAUSES OF PRESENT FOOD CRISIS IN BENGAL.

246. *Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state:

(a) the correct reasons which led to the present food crisis in Bengal, and how much the following causes contributed to it—

(i) the change from food crop-cultivation to jute cultivation during the last three years, stating the area thus changed over;

(ii) the "denial policy" under which foodgrains were removed from certain parts of Bengal;

(iii) exports from Bengal; and

(iv) Government's purchases for military purposes;

(b) whether the Government of India and/or the Government of Bengal had foreseen the possibility of shortage of foodgrains arising out of the above causes; if so, what preventive measures were taken by these respective Governments, and the reasons for their total failure; and

(c) how much the frequent and four-fold transfer of the food portfolio in the Central Government during the last two years contributed towards the present crisis in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the answer given to starred question No. 36 by Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya on 9th November 1943.

As regards the factors referred to by the Honourable Member (i) the area under jute in Bengal in 1939 was 4.9 million acres and in 1942, 2.7 million acres, but the present acreage under rice in Bengal is also larger than the acreage in 1940. (ii) The foodgrains in question amounted to only 40,000 tons of rice, most of which was redistributed in Bengal. (iii) Before export of foodgrains was stopped 3,500 tons had been exported from Bengal this year against a normal pre-war figure of 160,000 tons annually. (iv) No. rice has been purchased in Bengal this year for military requirements.

(b) Yes; the 'Grow More Food' campaign and the reduction of exports.

(c) There is no connection between changes in the Government of India and scarcity in Bengal.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: With reference to the answer to (a) (iv) that there was no purchase for the military, was it because they had already hoarded or was there any other reason for not purchasing for them?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No, Sir. We knew there was going to be scarcity of rice in Bengal and so we did not purchase for the military in Bengal at all. We obtained their requirements from elsewhere.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With reference to the answer to (a) (iii) may I know why the Government of India allowed the export from Bengal in view of the fact that they already had a loss of about 165,000 tons of rice on account of the loss of Burma?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As this relates to a period some months back I should like to have notice of that question.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Arising out of his reply to part (iv), where he stated that the Government did not make purchases because they knew of the scarcity of foodstuffs in Bengal, may I know why under part (iii) exports were permitted by the Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: These exports were the barest minimum which could not be stopped at that time. The Honourable Member's attention is drawn to the fact that against the normal export of 160,000 tons annually, there was an export of only 3,500 tons. It was a very drastic cutting down of the export quota.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Why export at all.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the import figures also went down considerably?

(No reply was given.)

PROVINCES FACING FOOD SHORTAGE.

247. *Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Will the Honourable Member for Food be pleased to state:

(a) in what provinces other than Bengal the food position is serious or going to be serious in the near future;

(b) whether it is a fact that in some of the deficit provinces a grave situation is to be expected at the end of the winter; and

(c) what measures are being taken by Government to prevent a repetition of the Bengal situation in those provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The food position is most difficult in certain coastal districts of Orissa and also in certain parts of Bombay and Madras.

(b) On present reports of crop conditions there is no reason to apprehend a worsening of the situation in these areas.

(c) So far as Orissa is concerned, it is expected that the winter rice crop will relieve the situation. As for Bombay, the Government of India are taking steps to supply foodgrains from the surplus areas as well as foodgrains imported from abroad. In addition, the Provincial Government is taking measures to procure a considerable part of the crops which are being harvested or will be harvested shortly. Steps have also been taken to supply Madras with millets but the position there is reported to have improved considerably.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Was any attempt made to ascertain the food situation in the Central Provinces and Berar?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What is it like?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The position, so far as I know, is very satisfactory.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: When was this enquiry made?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We are in constant touch with the provinces and the conditions prevailing therein.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What is the position in Malabar?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I admit conditions in Malabar were bad, but since then relief has been sent and we are doing what we can.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: And what is the position in Cochin?

(No reply was given.)

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Arising out of his reply to part (b), it appears that the Government is still pursuing its policy of complacency because it draws a very rosy picture of the future. May I draw the attention of the Honourable Member to the proceedings of the Conference at Hot Springs, to which a reference was made in Parliament, and request him not to let complacency have the upper-hand, and see that rationing, which is supposed to be the only method, is introduced by the Government of India in the provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I need not assure the Honourable Member that we are not complacent.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know whether the Honourable Member knows the food situation in Bihar?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes, Sir.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know what is the price of rice at which it is being sold in Bihar?

(No reply was given.)

POST-WAR SHIPPING POLICY.

248. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether Government have now received a full report of the Debate in the House of Commons on the subject of post-war shipping policy? If so, does he propose to make a statement on the policy of the Government of India regarding post-war shipping of this country?

(b) Is it a fact that in declaring the policy of His Majesty's Government regarding post-war shipping, the following three basic propositions were stated in the House of Commons by Mr. Noel Baker, Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport, on the 14th July last:

(i) "The first is that, for us, the Merchant Navy is a vital national interest and will remain so in peace time as it is in war".

"It is that this country must—I ask the Committee to observe the word 'must'—continue to serve the world with a large and efficient mercantile marine. The word 'must' is fundamental. It governs all the rest. It declares the general object of our policy which we are determined to achieve".

(ii) "Secondly, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to collaborate with other like-minded Governments in establishing conditions under which shipping of the world can be efficiently and economically carried on."

(iii) "The third is that when the Government speak of the efficiency of the Merchant Navy, they include in that term the best attainable conditions of employment for the officers and men who are now serving the country so well"?

(c) If the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, do Government accept the substance of the aforesaid three propositions in relation to their future policy regarding Indian shipping, and are determined, like His Majesty's Government, to develop and expand a national Merchant Navy in such a manner as would enable India to serve the world in future with a large and efficient Indian mercantile marine?

(d) Have His Majesty's Government consulted the Government of India and indicated to them the lines of collaboration on the part of India on which shipping of the world can be efficiently and economically carried on? If so, what are the broad lines on which they have been consulted and the broad principles on which they are expected to collaborate?

(e) What are the general lines on which Government propose to develop and expand an Indian Merchant Navy, both for the carriage of India's maritime trade and for securing its due place in the carriage of world maritime trade? What steps are proposed to be taken to obtain "the best attainable conditions of employment for the officers and men" serving the Indian Merchant Navy?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a), (c) and (e). Government have received a full report of the statement made by the Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport. They have asked for further information and clarification on certain points, and on receipt of this, consideration will be given to post-war shipping problems as part of the wider question of post-war trade and industrial policy. I am, therefore, not in a position at this stage to make a statement.

(b) Yes.

(d) The answer to the first portion is in the negative. The second portion does not arise.

Sardar Sant Singh: In view of the achievements of the Eighth Army and Fifth Army in the conquest of Italy, may I know if the Government of India will make a request to His Majesty's Government to allot the Italian Navy to India for the services rendered by India.

(No reply was given.)

DEVELOPING SHIP-BUILDING INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

249. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state if his attention has been drawn to the following statement made by Sir Arthur Salter, the Joint Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport, in the House of Commons on the 14th July, 1943:

"I believe we all feel that that effort has been one of the most remarkable things in the history of the British Commonwealth. Take the shipping side only. Canada between the two wars built no ocean-going ships at all. She is now building, in addition to corvettes and other protective craft, approximately, the same merchant tonnage as we in this country"?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, what steps have been taken by Government and what encouragement have they given for developing such a shipbuilding industry in India so far?

(c) Are Government aware that Canada, which did not previously build any ocean-going ships, will be building this year 900,000 tons of merchant shipping, i.e., merchant shipping to the same extent as would be built by Great Britain?

(d) If the answer to (c) be in the affirmative, how many ocean-going ships and of what tonnage will be built in Indian yards in 1943? If no ocean-going ships could be built, what are the reasons for this, and what steps do Government propose to take for bringing about conditions whereby such ocean-going ships can be built in India in the near future?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No, except what has appeared in some press reports.

(b) Government have made full use of India's capacity for building small ocean-going vessels and were extending all possible assistance to an Indian concern which had a scheme for developing merchant shipping; the scheme had to be abandoned temporarily owing to circumstances over which neither Government nor the Company had any control.

(c) Government have no information.

(d) Numerous ocean-going vessels will be built in India during 1943 but it is not in the public interest to give information about their number or tonnage.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the tonnage in all these cases is negligible?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What is the maximum tonnage?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I cannot give that information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Not even that.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No.

DROP IN THE OUTPUT OF COAL.

250. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to refer to his statement in reply to starred question No. 349, asked by me in the Legislative Assembly on the 20th March, 1943, to the effect that the drop in the production of coal was so slight that no detailed enquiry had been held into its cause, and state whether it is a fact that there has been a considerable drop in the output of coal both in British India and in the Indian States since January last?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the extent of such drop, month by month, ever since it was noticed?

(c) Was any warning given about the threatened coal shortage by any trade organisation or any individual member of the trade to the knowledge of Government? If so, when did such warning come to the knowledge of Government for the first time, and what steps, if any, were taken thereupon?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Compared with the corresponding months of last year, the output of coal in British India and Indian States has shown a decrease during 1943. During the first 5 months of the year the drop was slight; but from June onwards it has become more considerable.

(b) 1940 was the peak year for coal production. Since then production has

fallen slightly year by year. The fall assumed serious proportions from June 1943. Compared with the corresponding months of 1942, the output in June, July and August of this year fell by about 353,000 tons each month, while September showed a decrease of 299,000 tons.

(c) A warning was given by an individual member of the trade in August 1943. Government were already well aware of the situation by that time and were actively considering remedial measures. The following are some of the principal steps that have been taken to improve the situation.

(1) More wagons have been provided to take away coal, particularly in the Bengal and Bihar fields.

(2) Efforts are being made to ensure the prompt delivery of colliery stores and machinery.

(3) Women have, since August, been permitted to work underground in the Central Provinces and Berar coalfields.

(4) Action has been taken to prevent interference with colliery labour from military activities in the coalfields.

(5) Schemes are under preparation to provide a greater quantity of consumer goods for collieries and in particular of food, and arrangements are being made to ensure an adequate ration at concession rates to the miners.

(6) Welfare officers are about to be appointed in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields to promote the health and general welfare of miners.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the principal factors that contributed to this coal shortage?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Sir, the principal factor that contributed to the shortage of coal is undoubtedly the shortage of labour. That was due to the fact that labour was drawn away from coal fields by the 'Grow More Food' campaign and by the military works that were started near about the area where the coal mines are situated.

THE COAL TRADE CONFERENCE AT DELHI.

251. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether the principal object of the Conference of representatives of coal trade and other interests, that was held in Delhi on the 23rd October last under his chairmanship, was to consider the question of increasing the output of coal? If so, what were the circumstances that led to the decision to hold the conference, and the result of the discussions thereat?

(b) Has the present effort to increase the output of coal been influenced in any degree by the necessity of stimulating an increased export of coal from India for war purposes or otherwise?

(c) Is it a fact that in a letter issued by the Department of Labour to the invitees at the Conference, mention was made of the persistent and increasing fall in the output of coal coupled with the increasing demand for Indian coal, both inside and outside India, which was stated to have caused the Central Government acute anxiety? When was such anxiety first caused to the Government of India and due to what circumstances, and what action has been taken ever since for the purpose of improving the situation, and with what result?

(d) Is the internal supply of coal in the country likely to be affected in any manner by any policy that Government may have in view with the object of stimulating the export of coal on Government or private account?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes, Government believed that one of the principal reasons for the decline in output was shortage of labour. If this shortage could be made good, the fall in production would be arrested and an increase to the target figures would become probable. Government were anxious to secure the full co-operation of employers in any measures they proposed for this purpose. The principal result of the discussions was an agreement that in Bengal and Bihar the Employers' Associations should initiate schemes on uniform lines for the supply of foodgrains and other commodities to their labour and the Government of India should assist the Associations in giving effect to such schemes.

(b) An increase in output of coal is necessary to meet the internal requirements of Indian industry as these have increased and output has diminished.

(c) Yes. Since the beginning of the War, Government have been anxious to maintain the output of coal at its maximum. The peak year for coal production was 1940. There was a very slight fall in 1941 on the 1940 figures and a further slight drop in 1942. It seems more than likely that the 1943 figures will show a further drop on the 1942 figures. From about June of this year, it became plain that output was not going to be sufficient to meet the increased demands for coal being made by essential consumers such as War Industries, railways and for military projects of the first importance. Supplies of coal for all consumers have accordingly been rationed. In order to meet these rationed demands, and such outside demands as it might feel necessary to meet, Government have to ensure that 25.65 million tons of coal per annum will be made available for consumption. This is a larger quantity than has ever been made available before; and measures to increase production have, therefore, become of the utmost urgency.

As regards the action that has been taken to improve the situation, the Honourable Member is referred to the answer given to part (c) of his starred question No. 15. It is too early yet to assess the results of these and other measures.

(d) No.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Is it a fact that in order to increase the output of coal production, female labour has been employed underground in coal mines?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I said so.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: If it is so, will the Honourable Member say how long female labour will be employed in these mines?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Well, while the emergency lasts.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Will the Honourable Member tell me what precautions have been taken to look after these female labour employed underground in the mines?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: We are contemplating measures and if my honourable friend will table a question some time in the next Session, I will give him some information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has there been any suggestion from His Majesty's Government for the purpose of stimulating export of coal?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no information on the point.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

RESIGNATION BY HOUSE SURGEONS OF LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL, DELHI.

252. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if it is a fact—

(i) that 7 out of 13 House Surgeons of the Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital, Delhi, tendered resignation of their services in a body on the 30th September, 1943, and if so, what may be the cause of their resignation;

(ii) that before resigning the House Surgeons addressed three successive representations to the authorities for increase in their maintenance allowance owing to the prevailing rise in prices; but not only did the Principal refuse to consider their representation but also prevented the House Surgeons from having their meals supplied from outside with a view to economising their expenses;

(iii) that the Principal ordered the House Surgeons who resigned on the 30th September, 1943, to leave their quarters by 12 midnight on that very date, although some of them had been assigned hospital duty till 1 A.M., following, and no train was available till the next day; and

(iv) that these 7 House Surgeons have been refused payment of their dues for the month of September, and further that they have not only been denied any certificate but also threatened by the Principal that suitable action will be taken against them, so as to debar them from obtaining employment elsewhere?

(b) Have allegations of this character reached Government? If so, what inquiries, if any, have been made thereinto, and with what result?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) (i). Yes. The cause of their resignation is understood to be the rejection by the Executive Committee of the demand of the House Surgeons for an increase in their stipend from Rs. 50 to Rs. 75 p. m.

(ii) It has been reported to Government that the House Surgeons submitted three representations, the first one of which was considered and rejected by the Executive Committee. There was not sufficient time for the Committee to consider the other two representations before the House Surgeons concerned left the service of the hospital.

The practice of obtaining food from outside was stopped for administrative reasons.

(iii) No.

(iv) In accordance with the usual practice one month's stipend was withheld as the House Surgeons did not give one month's notice before leaving their duties. The issue of certificates was not refused but the House Surgeons were told that the reason for their resignation would be mentioned in them.

(b) It has been ascertained that the Executive Committee have made recommendations in the matter of stipend to the Governing Body of the College.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I should like to have a more specific answer to part (b) of my question. I should like to know whether any independent enquiry has been made by Government into these allegations.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No independent enquiry has been made. We have had fairly full details supplied by the Acting Principal of the Institution and the Secretary of the Executive Council.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: So I take it that the Government is content to read out the substance of the report of that very official against whom these House Surgeons had complained.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir. I do not know quite who is meant by "the very official against whom these House Surgeons had complained", as there was at the time an officiating Principal and in her absence another officiating Principal, but I have certainly made a number of enquiries from the Secretary of the Executive Council since we received a reply to our first enquiry.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Executive Council going to reconsider the matter at an early date?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have already said, Sir, that the Executive Committee have made recommendations in the matter of stipends to the Governing Body.

APPOINTMENTS OF MANAGERS OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESSES, NEW DELHI AND CALCUTTA.

253. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that for the recent appointment of Managers of the Government of India Presses, New Delhi and Calcutta, the claims of the senior-most Muslim Assistant Managers were overlooked; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, refused to relieve a Muslim clerk recently selected for a clerical job in the office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery, while he relieved a number of non-Muslim clerks selected for clerical posts in the Controller's Office, Assembly Department and Supply Department;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Assistant Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, ordered the transfer of six Muslim piece-compositors of the Lino Section; if so, the reasons for such wholesale transfer of Muslims from this Section;

(d) whether it is a fact that the post of a correction checker in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, was recently filled by the officiating Manager by the appointment of a junior new-scale man, overlooking the claims of the senior incumbent in the old scale; if so, why;

(e) whether the Managers and Assistant Managers of Government Presses are empowered to make appointments and promotions and order transfers and declare certain posts selection posts; if so, whether any rules have been laid down for their guidance in these matters;

(f) whether the Honourable Member proposes to institute an enquiry to find out whether these rules are strictly observed by these officers in all cases; and

(g) in view of the frequent and increasing complaints about arbitrary and unjust actions in these matters by the authorities of the Government of India Presses, whether the Honourable Member proposes to consider the advisability of constituting an independent committee with powers mentioned in (e) above?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Yes. This was done in the normal course of sectional interchange which takes place every 3 months to allow each worker periods of easy and strenuous work. Three non-Muslim piece compositors were also transferred, along with the Muslims and 2 Muslim piece compositors brought on to the Lino Section.

(d) Yes. The post of Correction Checker being a selection post, the best man available was selected on merit.

(e) Managers of the Government of India Presses are empowered to appoint and promote men to certain classes of posts in accordance with the rules laid down in the Departmental Handbook. They are not competent to declare any post as selection post.

(f) and (g). No specific irregularities of the nature mentioned above have so far occurred necessitating the action suggested.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With reference to part (d) my Honourable friend admitted that the claims of a Muslim were overlooked for certain reasons. Is he aware that the Muslim whose claims were overlooked had worked for 22 years?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I am prepared to accept that from my Honourable friend, although I have no information.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Then he said that the answers to (a) and (b) were in the negative. Will he take it from me that with regard to (a) the appointments have been made this year?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I must have notice of that.

DEARNESS OF VEGETABLES AND FRUITS IN BENGAL.

†254. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether he has any information as regards the percentage of increase in the price that has taken place during recent months of vegetables and common fruits which are in use in the different provinces of India, particularly in Bengal, and how the quantities in which they are available to the civil population have been affected in any manner during the same period?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware—

(i) that apart from the high prices and scarcity of foodgrains in Bengal, the vegetables and common fruits that used to supplement the food of the people throughout the country are no longer available to them except at very much enhanced prices;

(ii) that there is a comparative scarcity of these vegetables and fruits in Bengal, and that their high prices place them beyond the reach of a large section of the people, and that this has resulted mainly from large purchases of such vegetables and fruits made for the consumption of the fighting forces (including non-combatant personnel) now stationed in Bengal; and

(iii) that suppliers of these articles to the fighting forces have recklessly put up the prices thereof in the markets of Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) A statement to show the monthly prices of vegetables and fruits in the Calcutta market since January, 1943, is laid on the table. There is considerable variation from month to month in the prices of vegetables and fruit. Information as regards prices in

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

[17TH Nov. 1943.]

other parts of the country or about the quantities available to the civil population is not readily available.

(b) (i) The prices of vegetables and fruits are generally higher than before. (ii) and (iii). My information is that the Army is largely self-supporting in the matter of vegetables, and local purchases are made under the control of local purchase officers who are directed to consult freely the civil authorities regarding stocks and prices. The system of purchase is by lowest tender after consulting current market prices.

Monthly prices of vegetables and fruits at Calcutta.

Month.	Potatoes (Desi Nainital) per Md.	Cauliflower per one.	Cabbage per one.	Pulbul per seer.	Squash per seer.	Tomato per seer.	Pineapple (Assam) per 100.	Mangoes (Madras) per 4 doz.	Oranges per 100.	Apples (Kashmir) per 100.	Banana (Sabri) per doz.	Grapes per 20 seers.	Mozambique per 4 doz.
1943.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
January	4 14	0 0	0 6	0 12	0	0 3	0 100	0	3 6	0	0	0	5 0
February	5 10	0 0	0 6	0 12	0	0 3	0 80	0	2 8	0	0	0	5 0
March	8 14	0 0	0 8	0 4 6	0	0 2	0 90	0	2 14	0	0	0	2 2
April	8 2	0 0	1 2	0 5 6	0	0 3	0	0	4 12	0	0	0	2 2
May	8 12	0 1	1 10	0 2 6	0 10	0 10	0	0	13 0	0	0	0	2 14
June	10 6	0	2 4	0 2 0	0 11	0 1 8	0	0	12 12	0	0	0	4 2
July	12 0	0	3 0	0 4 6	0 8	0 2 0	0	0	14 0	0	0	0	8 0
August	20 4	0	1 8	0 5 0	0 6	0 2 4	0 75	0	15 0	0	0	0	4 0
September	16 12	0*0	1 0	0 7 0	0 6	1 12	0 100	0	8 8	0	0	0	3 12
October	27 0	0*0	2 4	0 7 0	0 6	1 11	0 105	0	4 0	0	0	0	3 0
October 1942	11 6	0*	..	0 7	..	..	61 4	0	6 3	0	0	0	3 12

* Shillong variety.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

427

REPRESENTATION BY THE INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CALCUTTA, FOR UTILISING SHIPPING SPACE FOR IMPORTING FOODGRAINS.

†255. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if Government have received representations from commercial bodies in the country, especially the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, urging the necessity of utilising all available shipping space for importing foodgrains into this country from abroad, rather than luxury goods? If so, have Government taken any action thereon?

(b) What quantity of foodgrains has been imported so far from abroad, and what further quantities can be reasonably expected to arrive within the next three months?

(c) Has air transport been utilised for bringing foodstuffs into India, as suggested by Mr. Clement Davies, M.P., President of the India Relief Committee in Britain?

(d) What quantities of whisky, toilet articles and other luxury goods, have of late been imported into this country, in view of the improvement of the shipping situation? What are the countries from where such goods have been imported? Was the question of utilising the shipping space taken up by these goods, for the purpose of bringing food articles (other than whisky), ever considered by Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yes. The Chamber was informed that the luxury goods would occupy only a fraction of the space that would be required to make any appreciable difference to the food situation and that the greater proportion of these goods were to be shipped from areas in which foodgrains were not available.

(b) About 50,000 tons have arrived since September, 1943, but it is not in the public interest to reveal what further quantities are expected to arrive in the next three months.

(c) No.

(d) Figures for imports of whisky are not separately available but according to information at present available 320 gross tons of liquors were imported in September and October 1943 for civil purposes from all sources. The corresponding figures for toilet requisites is 78 gross tons. If the Member will indicate more precisely the other luxury goods to which he refers, I will endeavour to provide the figures for which he asks.

The figures given include imports from the United Kingdom, North America, Australia, South Africa, the Middle East and South America. With regard to the last portion of the question the Honourable Member's attention is invited to my answer to part (a).

DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO INDIAN AND NON-INDIAN SHIPPING ON INDIAN REGISTER.

†256. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state if any differential treatment is meted out to Indian and non-Indian shipping on the Indian Register in matters of requisitioning of ships?

(b) Have Government been able to provide tonnage to Indian-owned companies to replace the tonnage requisitioned by them? If not, why not?

(c) Is it a fact that the benefit of the Empire Chartering Scheme has not been extended to India, although Indian shipping interests were agreeable to co-operate in the working of the scheme on the same terms and conditions as British shipping interests?

(d) Do Government propose to formulate a scheme like the "Replacement Tonnage Scheme" obtaining in the United Kingdom, so that Indian ship owners could replace their lost tonnage and regain their position in the trades built up by them after years of enterprise and effort?

(e) If the answer to (d) be in the negative, how do Government propose to safeguard the position of Indian shipping interests in the post-war period, in the absence of any scheme of replacement of tonnage and of a national ship-building industry?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No.

(b) No; because opportunities of securing tonnage for replacement have been negligible.

(c) Yes; the exigencies of the war have made it impossible for India to get any ship allocated to it under the Empire Chartering Scheme.

(d) Government are taking steps to obtain a copy of the scheme and will consider on its receipt the practicability of adopting a similar scheme for India.

(e) Does not arise.

MUSLIM ASSISTANTS REVERTED FROM THE FOOD DEPARTMENT.

257. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member please state whether it is a fact that some Muslim Assistants have been reverted recently from the Food Department? If so, what is the number of such men?

(b) Have any Hindu Assistants also been reverted from the Food Department?

(c) What were the charges against the persons reverted? Were they allowed to present any defence as required by rules of Government Service, particularly the Classification, Control and Appeal Rules?

(d) If no defence was allowed, why not?

(e) Is there any Establishment Committee to consider and adjudicate on such cases, as is the case in the Supply Department?

(f) Is there any Muslim officer in the Food Department dealing with cases concerning the establishment of the Department? If none, why?

(g) Are the Superintendent of the Establishment Branch, Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary and Deputy Secretary dealing with Establishment cases, Hindus?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes. One.

(b) No.

(c) There was no charge against him. He was reverted because he was found incapable of performing the duties required of him.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) No.

(f) None. Such an appointment has not been found necessary.

(g) Yes.

OPERATIONS OF THE "GROW MORE FOOD" CAMPAIGN.

†258. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to make a statement giving the latest details of the 'Grow More Food' Campaign in its operation in the different provinces?

(b) With what object has the Honourable Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands paid visits to different places in Bengal recently, and what special action, if any, is proposed to be taken for the purpose of increasing the output of foodgrains in Bengal as a part of the 'Grow More Food' Campaign?

(c) Is the Department satisfied about the sufficiency of the supply of seed paddy of the better-yielding varieties, and adequacy about the arrangements of its distribution at the instance of Government, throughout the Province of Bengal so as to improve the yield of paddy as also to counteract the effect of consumption of any stocks of seed paddy by the cultivators due to the present famine conditions?

(d) Has the Department made any enquiries as regards the accuracy of reports that have been current that in many cases the cultivators of Bengal have parted with their cattle as well as implements of cultivation under the stress of famine conditions? If so, what action is proposed to be taken for the purpose of rehabilitating these cultivators in their occupation?

(e) Is the Honourable Member aware that the smaller cultivators have been selling away their agricultural lands in different parts of Bengal as a result of the famine conditions? If so, is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate the extent of these transactions, even approximately? In

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

favour of which classes of the people generally are such transfers taking place? Are they actual tillers of the soil, or do they belong to the category of non-cultivating ryots or other middle-men?

(f) Are Government in communication with the Government of Bengal in regard to the various aspects of this problem, and have they under consideration any scheme under which the smaller cultivators may not be reduced to the position of landless labourers, and the ranks of non-cultivating middle-men may be unduly enlarged?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) A statement giving brief particulars of the "Grow More Food" Campaign schemes in different provinces, for which the Government of India have given financial assistance in the shape of loans or grants, is laid on the table of the House. These are supplementary to the measures which the Provincial Governments are themselves undertaking. The details of the latter are not readily available with the Government of India. The target aimed at in British India during the current year is an increase of area by 100 lakh acres for rice and millets together and by 35 lakh acres for wheat and gram over the acreage of the 3 pre-war years 1936-39.

(b) The Honourable Member's main object was to acquaint himself with the problems of Bengal relating to the food production drive by personal discussion with the Honourable Minister for Agriculture and the officers of the local Agriculture Department. The Government of India are assisting and will continue to assist the Government of Bengal in every way possible to increase the area under paddy and other food crops, particularly wheat, pulses, mustard, potato and sweet potato.

(c) The first rice forecast reveals an increase in the area under paddy in Bengal by 25 lakh acres, compared with the corresponding figure of the previous year. On this basis, the area under rice during the current year, of early and late varieties taken together, is likely to reach the record figure of 262 lakh acres, against the average of 220 lakh acres of the 3 pre-war years 1936-39, and 238 lakhs acres which is the maximum attained in the past decade. There was, therefore, in fact, no shortage of seed for growing paddy during the current year. The Provincial Government distributed a large quantity of *Aus* and *Aman* paddy seeds for areas newly brought under cultivation or which were affected by floods and cyclone. Details of the *Aus* seed distribution scheme, for which no financial assistance was asked from the Centre, are not known to the Central Government. Three lakh maunds of *Aman* seed were distributed involving an outlay of about Rs. 66½ lakhs. The Government of India assisted the Provincial Government in financing this scheme and also in appointing additional staff required for the proper distribution of the seeds. The result shows that the arrangements made were adequate and satisfactory. The Government of India and the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research are assisting the Provincial Government to extend the area under better yielding varieties, but it will take some years before the huge paddy acreage in that province can be covered with improved seeds.

(d), (e) and (f). The information is being obtained from the Provincial Government with which the Government of India are in close touch in all these matters, and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

Statement showing brief particulars of the Grow More Food Campaign Schemes in different provinces for which the Government of India have given financial assistance in the shape of loans or grants.

Name of Province or State and schemes sanctioned.

1. Madras.

(1) Paddy seed multiplication scheme in Vizagapatam, Chingleput, Guntur, Chittoor Districts.

(2) Meeting half the cost of the permanent advance to the Director of Agriculture, Madras for financing supply of Manures to Cultivators.

(3) Distribution of paddy seeds to the Cultivators.

(4) Free distribution of Manures to poor deserving ryots.

(5) Grant of loans to actual Cultivators at Rs. 2 per acre for the reduction of cotton cultivation.

(6) Incidental expenses and overhead charges of the scheme for the distribution of paddy seeds, to the cultivators [Scheme (3) above].

(7) Annual overhead charges (except transport charges) of the scheme 2 above for the purchase of groundnuts cake and fishguano for sale to ryots as manure and losses which may be incurred by the sale of this manure.

2. Bombay.

(1) Interest free taccavi advances repayable in 3 years for the cultivation of cultivable waste lands.

(2) Scheme for the distribution of improved seeds of rice, wheat, jowar and gram and ordinary seeds of bajra.

(3) Supply of Manures at concession rates to cultivators provided the Central Government's share does not exceed Rs. 20 per ton, (no manure will be transported from outside the province. C. R. P. will be consulted for rail movements).

(4) Supply of 200 tons of bone-meal manure to cultivators in Kanara District at concession rates for manuring paddy.

(5) Cash rewards to cultivators of cotton tracts for growing food crops in place of short staple cotton.

(6) Grant to the Provincial Government as 80 per cent. of the loss sustained by them on supply of food crop seeds at concession rates.

3. Bengal.

(1) Distribution of 3 lakh maunds of *Aman* paddy seeds for lands newly BROUGHT UNDER cultivation and for areas affected by natural calamities last year.

(2) Additional staff for the intensification of food production drive.

(3) Emergency Irrigation projects (6 schemes).

(4) Purchase of 50,000 maunds of wheat seed for distribution to cultivators.

(5) Purchase and distribution of 42,000 maunds of gram, lentil, and mustard seeds for rabi season.

(6) Purchase of 1 lakh maunds of potato seeds and 75,000 maunds of oil cakes for distribution to growers.

(7) Substitute crops in flood affected areas in the Province to encourage the growing of rabi crops in place of rice by purchase and distribution of 56,400 maunds of seeds.

(8) Irrigation by Persian wheels—wheat and potato crops.

(9) Drainage schemes in furtherance of the "Grow More Food Campaign" in the Districts of Bakarganj, Mymensingh, Nadia, Bogra, and Khulna.

4. United Provinces.

(1) Distribution of oil cakes (1 Lakh maunds) to cultivators covering 20,000 acres of paddy.

(2) Emergency Irrigation Projects.

(3) Compost making and preservation of Urine earth.

(4) Opening of 20 new seed stores in the backward state—Tubewell areas.

(5) Opening of 84 new seed stores for the multiplication and distribution of improved paddy seeds and the stocking of pedigree seeds for renovating the seed stocks in the existing seed stores.

5. Punjab.

(1) Reclamation of 50,000 acres of 'Sailab' (riverain) lands for cultivation of wheat, gram and barley.

6. Central Provinces and Berar.

(1) Scheme relating to the sinking of wells.

(2) Construction of field embankments for converting single crop areas into do-fashi areas.

(3) Free distribution of gram seed for newly broken lands.

(4) Free distribution of sann-hemp seed for green manuring 20,000 acres of land most of which should go under wheat.

(5) Purchase and distribution of oil cake manure (10,000 tons) for 54,000 acres on condition that these oil cakes will be used for manuring rice crop only.

(6) Additional staff for the intensification of the food production drive.

(7) Muramnala Irrigation scheme.

(8) Extension of Potato cultivation.

7. Bihar.

(1) Distribution of improved seeds of paddy and manure for 2 lakhs acres at concession rates.

(2) Additional staff for the intensification of food production drive.

(3) Six ganges river side pumping sets.

(4) 76 Standard $1\frac{1}{2}$ cusec tube-wells each with 3 miles channel, 1 mile long 11 K. V. line and transformers.

(5) 12 river-bed percolation pumps energised by 2 mobile generating sets.

(6) A 70 mile long 33 K. V. main electric feeder line from Patna Power Station through Bakhtiarpur and Bihar to Ruanger Sarai.

8. Assam.

(1) Scheme for the distribution of seeds and manures at concessional rates.

(a) Paddy seeds.

(b) Pulses.

(c) Wheat and barley.

(d) Oil Seeds.

(e) Manures.

(f) Potatoes.

(g) Contingencies and storage (26 seed stores) for above items.

(2) Emergency Irrigation.

(a) Small projects.

(b) Staff for minor Irrigation Projects.

(c) Sale of 50 Persian wheels to cultivators at 50 per cent. of cost.

9. Orissa.

(1) Reclamation of waste lands to the extent of 66,000 acres.

(2) Scheme for increasing do-fashi areas to the extent of 39,000 acres.

(3) Purchase and distribution of green manure seed free of cost for the paddy crops.

(4) Provision of tendas for irrigation from existing wells for wheat and rabi crops.

(5) Additional staff for the intensification of food production drive.

(6) Supply of 15,000 maunds of groundnut cake manure to cultivators at concession rate for manuring 5,000 acres of paddy lands in the canal irrigated tracts of the Province.

10. Sind.

(1) Purchase of improved paddy seeds in Kharif 1944.

(2) Raising of Rice seedlings in Karachi District.

(3) Purchase and distribution of Millet seeds.

11. Coorg.

(1) Grant of bonus to actual cultivators at Rs. 7-8-0 and Rs. 20 per acre for the cultivation of waste lands to the extent of 1,500 acres of dryland and 1,500 acres of wet land respectively.

(2) Additional Staff for intensification of food production drive.

12. Ajmer-Merwara.

(1) Grant of bonus to actual cultivators at Rs. 2 per acre for diverting areas from short staple cotton to food crops.

(2) Distribution of wheat gram and Barley seeds.

MALARIA IN DELHI PROVINCE.

†259. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to refer to the statement made by Lord Linlithgow in his address to the Legislative Assembly on the 2nd August, 1943, to the effect that Delhi is a model so far as the anti-malaria campaign is concerned, and make a statement showing, month by month, for the period of the past twelve months, the incidence of malaria in the cities of Old Delhi and New Delhi as well as in the Delhi Province, separately, as compared with the corresponding periods of the previous two years?

(b) What steps, if any, have been taken in recent months for the purpose of reducing the incidence of malaria in these respective areas?

(c) What supplies of quinine have been made available to the people inhabiting these respective areas during the past twelve months, and at what prices generally? Is the Honourable Member satisfied that there has been an adequate supply of quinine in these areas to cope with the situation?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) A statement giving the desired information is laid on the table of the House. I should, however, add that for a proper appraisalment of the position the figures of 1942 and 1943 should be compared with the last epidemic year—1933—and regard should be had to the increase of population since that year.

(b) In addition to the usual control measures, e.g., application of larvicides, use of paris green, spray-killing of adult mosquitoes and minor drainage works, the following further steps were taken during recent months—

(i) 6 patrol-driven sprayers were acquired;

(ii) two additional inspectors were added to the staff of the Delhi Anti-malaria Organization and two important anti-malaria engineering works were approved and are to be taken in hand shortly.

(c) Information regarding the quantities of quinine made available for each of the areas specified has not been received but the total allotments to Delhi Province since August 1942 amount to 1,173 lbs. It is believed that the quinine supplies have on the whole been adequate. At Government depots quinine is sold at the rate of 3 tablets for one anna and quinine mixture at the rate of 6 doses for 2 annas.

*Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

Incidence of Malaria in Old Delhi, New Delhi and Delhi Province for the years 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43.

Month.	Old Delhi.			New Delhi.			Delhi Province excepting Delhi Urban Areas.		
	1940-41	41-42	42-43	1940-41	41-42	42-43	1940-41	41-42	42-43
November	4364	4678	8216	1424	2039	2844	1417	1412	4087
December	3806	2693	3915	1242	1035	1626	786	832	2938
January	1913	1397	1561	564	561	799	475	512	737
February	2160	1575	1144	768	656	786	538	519	583
March	2412	1604	1086	909	693	754	724	554	970
April	3978	2161	1872	1599	878	815	960	679	918
May	2453	1569	2286	1201	644	1375	1058	764	1564
June	1744	1401	2471	1029	665	1915	1077	516	1807
July	2529	1416	3518	1178	798	2045	930	733	1640
August	2472	2649	6199	1103	1184	2695	900	2616	1959
September	4803	15329	16839	2028	4978	5687	1210	7794	4369
October	4783	15646	16064	1980	6369	6801	1327	9494	not available

FACILITIES FOR MANUFACTURE OF MANURES AND FERTILIZERS.

†260. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if Government have given any orders, or granted any facility, to any firm or firms in India for the manufacture of manures or fertilizers?

(b) If the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, what are the quantities for which orders have been placed, and what is the nature of facilities thus granted in the case of each firm?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Supply Member.

MAKING INDIA SELF-SUPPORTING IN QUININE AND CINCHONA PRODUCTS.

†261. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state whether Government have under their consideration any scheme for the purpose of making India self-supporting in the matter of necessary supplies of quinine and other products of cinchona? If so, does the Honourable Member propose to explain the scheme in detail?

(b) Have Government taken any action on the report of Mr. A. Wilson, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Cinchona, Government of Madras, regarding development of cinchona cultivation in the country?

(c) Have Government received representations from Indian pharmaceutical concerns and other private parties expressing a desire to cultivate cinchona in India? If so, what are the parties from which such representations have been received, and what replies have been given to their representations?

(d) Have Indian manufacturers been given any supplies of quinine for the manufacture of injectibles and other medical preparations?

(e) Have Government received any representations from any technical associations, such as the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association of Calcutta, on this subject? If so, what action has been taken on such representations?

(f) What have been the rates of quinine per pound fixed by Government from time to time during the last twelve months as compared with the approximate cost of production?

(g) What has been the level of retail prices of quinine in the principal centres of India during each of the past twelve months or so? Is there any proposal under the consideration of the Government to bring down the price of quinine in the near future?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). Quinine production has been increased from 70,000 lbs. to 90,000 lbs. as a result of extension of cultivation by the Governments of Bengal and Madras. The question of further long-term development will be considered in the light of conditions likely to prevail after the war and of developments in the production of synthetic anti-malaria drugs. In the

meantime the Government of India have taken steps to encourage the short term production of quinine in order to increase quinine supplies within the shortest possible period.

(c) The Government of India received a representation from the Standard Pharmaceutical Works, Ltd., forwarding schemes which they had proposed to the Government of Bengal for the grant of land to the Company on certain terms for the cultivation of cinchona. The representation was referred to the Government of Bengal who stated that they required all the suitable land available for extension of their own cultivation and the Company was informed accordingly.

(d) and (e). Under arrangements made by the Government of India 300 lbs. of quinine bihydrochloride have been supplied by the Madras Government to certain firms for the manufacture of quinine in injectable form to meet the requirements of certain Provincial Governments for sale to the public. It has also been suggested to the Bengal Government that they should make arrangements for the manufacture of quinine in injectable form to meet the requirements of Bengal. No supplies have been made available for the manufacture of other medicinal preparations as all the available supplies are required for distribution under Government control for the treatment of malaria.

(f) The price charged for quinine sold from the central reserve is Rs. 25-8-0 a pound. The cost of production of this quinine which has been acquired at various times and from various sources is not known.

(g) Complete information regarding prices charged by Provincial Governments for Government quinine sold to the public is not available but it is understood that the prices charged by Provincial Governments for quinine sold to the public vary from Rs. 32 to Rs. 38 a pound. It is understood that where stocks of other quinine are available in the hands of dealers they are being sold at much higher prices. The question of the control of the price of quinine under the Drugs Control Order, 1943, is under consideration.

TRANSPORT OF RICE AND WHEAT TO BENGAL AND DISTRIBUTION THEREOF.

†262. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the amount of rice and wheat that has been arriving in Bengal month by month since the 1st August, 1943, and how much of it has been earmarked for consumption of all priority organisations, and how much has been supplied to the public?

(b) What special facilities in respect of transport have Government arranged for bringing food supplies to the famine-stricken people of Bengal from all the different provinces which are sending foodgrains to Bengal?

(c) How much of shipping space has been arranged for transport of foodgrains from Karachi to Calcutta and how much foodgrains have already arrived in Calcutta by ships?

(d) Is it a fact that the Government of Sind refused export permits to donors willing to purchase foodgrains for relief of the people of Bengal and ship them by a steamer of the Scindia Steam Navigation, free of freight?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) The quota of wagons for movement to Bengal from various parts of the country has been increased in accordance with the amounts of foodgrains expected to be moved from different areas to Bengal. In addition, special trains have been run when large quantities were immediately available. Shipping has also been arranged from Karachi to load foodgrains available there for shipment to Bengal.

(c) 41,000 tons of shipping was made available for transport from Karachi. The quantity shipped exceeded 40,000 tons.

(d) No Sir. The Honourable Member's attention is invited in this connection to the answer given on 13th November, 1943, to starred question No. 124 by Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

Statement showing arrivals of rice and wheat in Calcutta month by month since the 1st of August, 1943.

	Tons.
Rice—	
August	21,000
September	8,500
October	14,000
	43,500
Wheat and wheat products—	
August	29,000
September	64,000
October	55,000
	148,000

In addition, a quantity of about 5,000 tons of wheat was also received during this period but the quantity monthwise is not known. Of these quantities about 4,025 tons of rice was earmarked by the Central Government for certain priorities. The Bengal Government also supplied part of the requirements of certain priorities out of their stocks; the exact quantities so supplied are not known to the Central Government.

DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO INDIAN AND NON-INDIAN SHIPPING ON THE INDIAN REGISTER.

263. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state why differential treatment is meted out to Indian and non-Indian shipping on the Indian Register in matters of requisitioning of ships?

(b) Have Government been able to provide tonnage to Indian-owned companies to replace the tonnage requisitioned by them? If not, why not?

(c) Why has not the benefit of the Empire Chartering Scheme been extended to India, although Indian shipping interests were agreeable to co-operate in the working of the scheme on the same terms and conditions as British shipping interests?

(d) Do Government propose to formulate a scheme like the "Replacement Tonnage Scheme" obtaining in the United Kingdom so that Indian shipowners could replace their lost tonnage and regain their position in the trades built up by them after years of enterprise, efforts and in the face of heavy losses?

(e) If the answer to (d) be in the negative, how do Government propose to safeguard the position of Indian shipping interests in the post-war period, in view of the absence of any scheme of replacement of tonnage and particularly of a national shipbuilding industry?

(f) Have Government received any representation made in this connection by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, in which attention has been drawn to the statement of Mr. Noel Baker to the effect that "in the interests of all traders and customers of the nations of the world" an imperial or an international shipping policy has to be evolved?

(g) What steps have the Government of India taken on the basis of the statement of Mr. Noel Baker, to obtain for India her due place and her proper share in the quantum of the world tonnage?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) to (e). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given today to Mr. K. C. Neogy's question No. 256.

(f) Yes.

(g) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given today to Mr. K. C. Neogy's question No. 248.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: On a point of order. These questions to which the Honourable Member referred in the course of his reply are now to be treated as unstarred questions and the House will have no opportunity of knowing the answers to the starred question just put by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi. Is it not right in such circumstances that the Government should give a complete answer to any starred question that might be put by some other Member though covering the same ground as another question?

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not see what difference it makes by which Member a question is put if the answer had already been given. It may be expected that the Honourable Member will put the question and every other Member interested in the matter will make himself familiar with the answer. It is possible for any Member who is interested in the matter to put any supplementary questions that may legitimately arise.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: We will lose the privilege of asking supplementary questions.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The rule does not prevent supplementary questions being put to a question when it is starred.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member has referred to the starred question put by me.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Has the answer been laid on the table?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have answered 248 verbally today; it is only about No. 256 that it was ruled that it will not be answered verbally.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I draw the Honourable Member's attention to the fact that the points raised in No. 263 are not identical with the points raised in 248?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: That does not cover my question at all. I want the answer to question No. 263. 248 has nothing to do with my question.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It was with reference to part (g) that I referred to No. 248 where reference was made to Mr. Noel Baker's statement; but so far as Mr. Neogy is concerned, it was to 256; there I am in your hands, Sir.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: But apparently you referred to the answer to 256.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I know; I am quite prepared to read the answer, if allowed.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What about parts (c) and (d) of No. 263?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: You will find that in the answer to 256; it is exactly the same thing. 256(c) reads:

"Is it a fact that benefit of the Empire Chartering scheme has not been extended to India?"

256(c) says the same thing:

"Why has not the benefit of the Empire Chartering scheme been extended to India?"

Our difficulty is that so many identical questions are put to us that we have to refer to some previous answers.

(b) Written Answers.

MOGUL LINE SHIPS GIVEN TO SHIPPING COMPANIES OF EGYPT FOR CARRYING PILGRIMS TO JEDDA.

264. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state if the steamers of the Mogul Line come within the control of the Government of India for the purpose of requisition?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, had that Line given on Charter or on hire their steamers to the Shipping Companies of Egypt or any other country for the carriage of pilgrims to Jedda during the last three years, and is it a fact that such steamers given either on Charter or on hire carried over 10,000 pilgrims each way?

(c) If the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, were the steamers thus given on Charter or on hire given the consent of the Government of India? If so, were not such steamers required for the trades in which the Mogul Line usually plies or for other requirements of the Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) to (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given on the 13th November, 1943, to Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari's question No. 157.

REPRESENTATION BY THE INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CALCUTTA, FOR UTILIZING SHIPPING SPACE FOR IMPORTING FOODGRAINS.

265. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if Government have had several representations from

commercial bodies in the country, especially the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, urging the necessity of utilising all available shipping space for importing foodgrains into this country from abroad rather than luxury goods?

(b) What is the quantity of foodgrains so far imported from abroad, and the further quantity which can be reasonably expected to arrive within the next three months?

(c) Has air transport, as suggested by Mr. Clement Davies, M.P., President of the India Relief Committee in Britain, been utilised for bringing foodstuffs into India?

(d) What quantity of consumable goods, such as whisky and luxury goods, have so far been imported into this country, in view of the shipping situation having appreciably improved?

(e) What are the countries from where such consumable goods, such as whisky and toilet products, have been imported?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply which I have given to Mr. K. C. Neogy's question No. 255.

OUTCOME OF THE "GROW MORE FOOD" CAMPAIGN.

266. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state to what extent the "Grow More Food" campaign has helped in increasing the food crops in the country?

(b) What was the estimated yield of 'Aus' rice crop this year? What quantity of 'Aus' rice crop have the Government of Bengal purchased from the surplus districts in the province, and through what channels? What was the rate at which Government purchased it, and how the same has been distributed?

(c) What will be the estimated yield of the 'Aman' rice? Has any quantity of it been already purchased by the Bengal Government? If so, what is the quantity, and how do the Government of Bengal propose to distribute it?

(d) To what extent, and how do Government propose to assist in the manufacture of fertilisers in India for growing more food crops?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) As a result of the 'Grow More Food' campaign, the area under principal food crops increased by 80 lakh acres during 1942-43 as compared with 1941-42. For 1943-44, it is proposed further to increase the area under rice and millets and that under wheat and gram to 1 crore and 36 lakh acres, respectively, above the average area of the three pre-war years 1936-39. It is too early yet to say whether this objective will be achieved.

(b) The estimated yield of the *aus* crop this year is 1.7 million tons. Purchases reported to-date amounted to 30,000 tons. They were made through agents appointed by the Government of Bengal at the controlled prices fixed by the Government of Bengal or slightly lower, the controlled prices being:

Rs. 30 from 28th August, 1943.

Rs. 24 from 10th September, 1943.

Rs. 20 from 25th September, 1943.

The quantity purchased has been distributed among the deficit districts.

(c) The *aman* crop is estimated to yield over 8 million tons. No quantity has yet been purchased and the last part of the question, therefore, does not arise.

(d) Government proposes to encourage the manufacture of Ammonium Sulphate for use as fertiliser in India. A conference of representatives of industries and Government was held a few weeks ago and certain enquiries have been issued to certain firms who are interested.

FACILITIES FOR MANUFACTURE OF MANURES AND FERTILIZERS.

267. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if orders have been placed or any facilities granted by Government to any firm or firms in India for the manufacture of manures or fertilisers?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, what is the quantity for which orders have been placed, if any, and the nature of the facilities extended?

(c) What are the names of the firms with whom such orders have been placed or to whom such facilities granted?

(d) Is it a fact that the Imperial Chemical Industries, Limited, have been granted facilities or given orders for the manufacture of sulphate of ammonia?

(e) When do Government propose to set up a Central Commission consisting of members of the business community, attached to the Food Member, as suggested in the Note of Mr. D. P. Khaitan attached to the report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee? Will a businessman be the chairman of the Commission?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) to (d). The question should be addressed to the Supply Department.

(e) The question of the machinery to be set up to ensure that technical advice is available to the Department when necessary is under examination. I am not yet in a position to make an announcement.

DEATHS DUE TO STARVATION IN BENGAL.

268. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the number of deaths from starvation in consequence of the present food famines in Bengal, district by district, and in Calcutta, during the period July to October?

(b) If starvation be the principal cause, do the Central Government believe that the Government of Bengal will be able to cope with the situation by the introduction of rationing?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) No reliable information is available.

(b) The introduction of rationing is expected to bring about limitation of demand, regular and equitable distribution, and restoration of public confidence, all of which are likely to have a good effect on the general situation.

INCREASED DEATH RATE IN CALCUTTA AND OTHER DISTRICTS OF BENGAL.

269. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the daily average number of deaths taking place in the whole of Bengal, district by district, and in Calcutta?

(b) Was any statement supplied by the Central Government to Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, regarding the death rate, on the basis of which the Secretary of State for India, recently made a statement in the House of Commons to the effect that 1,000 deaths were occurring in a week in the whole of Bengal?

(c) How far does Mr. Amery's statement tally with facts?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply given to part (a) of starred question No. 140, asked by Mr. K. C. Neogy on 13th November, 1943.

(b) and (c). No, Sir; but information was supplied to the Secretary of State for India, on the basis of which he replied to a question in Parliament on October 28th, in the following terms:—

"It is estimated that between August 15th and October 16th about 8,000 persons have died in Calcutta from causes directly or indirectly due to malnutrition. No reliable figures are available for the districts but conditions in South East and South West Bengal are, I fear, worse than in Calcutta."

DEVELOPMENT OF CINCHONA CULTIVATION IN INDIA.

270. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if Government have taken any action on the report of Mr. A. Wilson, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Cinchona, Government of Madras, regarding development of cinchona cultivation in the country?

(b) Why have not Government so far extended, on the basis of Mr. Wilson's report, the cultivation of cinchona bark to a larger area, thereby overcoming the shortage of quinine as also checking the rise in the prices of this drug?

(c) Have Government received representations from several Indian pharmaceutical concerns, desiring to cultivate cinchona in India, and do they intend giving proper facilities to these concerns? If not, why not?

(d) Why have not the Indian manufacturers been given any supplies of quinine for the manufacture of injectibles and other medicinal preparations?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) to (d). I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply just given by me to the Honourable Mr. K. C. Neogy's question No. 261.

DEVELOPMENT OF CINCHONA CULTIVATION IN INDIA.

271. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if Government intend helping the pharmaceutical and chemical industries of the country by granting facilities for cultivation of cinchona? If not, why not?

(b) What measures do Government propose to undertake to bring down the price of quinine?

(c) What steps do Government propose to undertake, for the sake of public health, to check the adulteration of quinine?

(d) Why have Government raised the price of quinine from Rs. 18 to Rs. 45/8/- per lb. while the cost of production of quinine is only Rs. 9 per lb. as stated by the Drugs Enquiry Committee?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The grant of land for the cultivation of cinchona in the Provinces is a matter for Provincial Governments. The Government of India will examine any application for the grant of land in centrally administered areas which may be received.

(b) Reference is invited to the reply given to part (g) of Mr. K. C. Neogy's starred question No. 261 answered to-day.

(c) The Rules to be made under the Drugs Act, 1940, will enable action to be taken to check adulteration of quinine.

(d) The Government of India have not raised the price of quinine sold by them from the central reserve to Rs. 45-8-0. The present price at which stocks from the central reserve are sold is Rs. 25-8-0.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

KEROSENE SCARCITY IN AJMER.

34. Rai Bahadur Seth Bhagchand Soni: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that there is an acute scarcity of kerosene in Ajmer and it has become difficult for the poor people to purchase kerosene even in the smallest quantity;

(b) if it is a fact that retailers refuse to sell kerosene for more than half an anna to one individual at a time and that, too, after a long waiting in queues; and

(c) whether the Honourable Member proposes to enquire into these conditions and consider the advisability of increasing supplies of kerosene for the civil population in Ajmer?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No specific complaints have been received by Government from Ajmer-Merwafa.

(b) and (c). Enquiries are being made and such remedial measures as may be necessary and are possible will be taken.

TRADE UNIONS SUPPLIED WITH GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS, ETC.

35. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered, separately, whose objects are not confined to one province;

(b) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered, separately, who are supplied official publications free of cost;

(c) the names of the Trade Unions, both registered and unregistered, separately, who were invited to take part in the Tripartite Labour Conference and Committees; and

(d) the reasons for the differential treatment, if any, in the subject matters referred to in parts (b) and (c)?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) A list of registered trade unions, whose objects are not confined to one province, compiled from materials readily available is attached. Particulars regarding unregistered trade unions are not available.

(b) I presume the Honourable Member is referring only to unions whose objects are not confined to one province.

Copies of certain bulletins, annual reports, etc., have been furnished free of cost, on request, to the two All-India Associations of workers, namely the All-India Trade Union Congress and the Indian Federation of Labour. No official publication is supplied free of cost to any individual trade union as such.

(c) The constitution of the Tripartite Labour Conference and the Standing Labour Committee provides for the nomination of workers' representatives in the following manner:

(i) For the Labour Conference—

11 representatives of employees, of whom 4 will be nominated by Government in agreement with the All-India Trade Union Congress, 4 will be nominated by Government in agreement with the Indian Federation of Labour, and 3 will be nominated by Government as representatives of other employees' interests.

(ii) For the Standing Labour Committee—

5 representatives of employees, 4 of whom will be nominated by the Labour Member in agreement with the two All-India Associations of workers and the fifth nominated independently by the Labour Member.

The nominations to the Conference and the Committees have been in accordance with their constitution and there has been no question of any differential treatment between different unions.

(d) It will be clear from the replies to (b) and (c) that no differential treatment has in fact occurred.

Central Trade Union registered in the various provinces.

Printing Presses.

1. Government of India Press Workers Union.

Scamen.

2. Indian Merchants Navy Officers Association, Bombay.

Miscellaneous.

3. The All-India Telegraph Line Staff Union, Lahore.

4. The Indian Sugar Industry Employees Association, Lucknow.

5. Indian Sugar Mills Association, Calcutta.

6. Indian Jute Mills Association, Calcutta.

7. Imperial Bank of India, Indian Staff Association, Calcutta.

8. Central Council of Tobacco Manufacturing Workers Union.

9. All-India Telegraph Workmen's Union, Lahore.

10. The Indian Southern Provinces Sugar Marketing Board, Madras.

Railway and Transport.

11. N. W. Rly. Junior Clerks Association.

12. Bengal Assam Rail Road Workers' Union.

13. Assam Bengal Rly. Employees Association.

14. E. I. Railway Employees Association, Calcutta.

15. Bengal and Assam Railway Employees Association.

16. B. N. R. Employees Union, Calcutta.

17. B. N. Rly. Indian Labour Union, Kharagpur.

18. N. W. Rly. Employees Union, Karachi.

19. G. I. P. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.

20. G. I. P. Railway Accounts Staff Union, Bombay.

21. B. & C. I. Railway Employees Association, Ahmedabad.

22. B. & C. I. Railwaymen's Union, Bombay.

23. National Union of Railwaymen of India & Burma, Bombay.

24. B. B. & C. T. Railway Employees Union, Bombay.

25. G. I. P. Railway Contractors & Licensed Coolies Union, Bhusawal.

26. N. W. Railway Accounts Union, Lahore.

27. N. W. Railway Union, Lahore.

28. E. I. Railwaymen's Union, Lucknow.

29. Railway Workers Association, Moradabad.

30. E. I. Railway Guards' Association, Lucknow.

31. Railway Workmen's Union of India, Allahabad.

32. B. N. Railwaymen's Association, Gorakhpur.

33. E. B. Railway Workers' Union.
34. Association of Accountants, E. I. Railway.
35. Association of Accountants, N. W. Railway, Lahore.
36. All-India Railway Mechanical Workers' Federal Union, Lahore.
37. Delhi-Sonapat Bus Service Union, Sonapat.
38. Ittihad Motor Union, Panipat.
39. N. W. Railway Guards Association, Lahore.
40. Federated Union of the N. W. Railway Workers, Lahore.
41. Union of the E. I. Railway Ticket Checking Staff, Calcutta.
42. E. I. Railway Joint Hands Union, Hooghly.
43. All-India Railwaymen's Union, Nagpur.
44. United Union of N. W. R. Workers, Lahore.
45. Delhi-Garmuktesar Motor Association.
46. East Indian Railway Muslim Employees Association, Lucknow.
47. S. S. Light Railway Employees Union, Saharanpur.
48. B. N. W. Railway Workers Association, Gorakhpur.
49. E. I. Railway Workers Association, Calcutta.
50. The Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway Employees' Union, Perambur, Madras.
51. The South Indian Railway Labour Union, Golden Rock, Trichinopoly.
52. The South Indian Railway Employees Association, Villupuram.
53. The All-India Railwaymen's Federation, Mylapore, Madras.

POINT OF ORDER *RE* MOTION PROPOSING COMMUNICATION
OF FORMAL ADDRESS TO H. E. THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): Sir, I desire to raise a point of order in respect of a request I made to you to permit me to make a motion under S. O. 74. Under that Standing Order, 12 noon. the Assembly is competent to send a communication to the Governor General.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member wants to raise a point of order, will he mention the point of order?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: The point of order is this: I am coming to it. A communication can be made by means of a formal address. To this I received a reply from the Secretary that you, Sir, have decided that the motion which I am raising is one which deals with matters of general public interest and that it would not, therefore, be allowed unless the Honourable Member incharge of the particular subject gives his consent; and you have also further informed me that the Honourable the Leader of the House who, you think, is the Member concerned with this subject, has not given his consent. My submission is this, that so far as communications to His Excellency the Governor General are concerned, it may comprise all subjects which are of general interest and also subjects which are of particular interest which can only be represented to His Excellency.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Under what rule or Standing Order does the Honourable Member wish to present his address or rather to make a motion to that effect.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Under Standing Order 74.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It only provides the machinery for communication; once the motion is made and passed. The Standing Order only says that communications from the Assembly to the Governor General shall be made by formal address after motion made and carried in the Assembly. But the question is how is the motion to be made?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: The motion is to be made under Rule 24A, which expressly excludes this kind of motion from the rules incidental to ordinary motions. I am not a lawyer, Sir, but yet

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): This has been considered before?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: If you will permit me, I will refer to only two instances before. One was in respect of a motion made by Mr. V. J. Patel to the then President, Sir Frederick Whyte, that the sittings of the Assembly might be postponed to a later date to enable the election of the President for the next Session. It was ruled out by Sir Frederick Whyte, not on the ground

that it did come or did not come within the mischief of Rule 24A, but he seems to have taken the limited view that this Standing Order can be invoked in respect of a difference of opinion between the two Houses, in respect of any legislation agreed to by one House. The second instance was when Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar made a motion when certificate of the salt tax was announced in the Assembly, that the Assembly make a representation to His Excellency the Governor General that the House does not approve of the certification procedure. Both these cases are not relevant to my motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): How has the Honourable Member made out his case with reference to 24A?

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: With regard to Rule 24A, it says expressly, "Save in so far as is otherwise provided by these rules or in any case in which a communication is to be made to the Governor General under any provision of the Act, of the Government of India Act etc., etc.," the rules governing the moving of a resolution or motion apply. Therefore, my submission is that in so far as communications under Standing Order 74 are concerned these are not the rules which govern my case. But it may be said whether it would be reasonable to suppose that there is no rule governing procedure of this sort.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Rule 24A does govern all motions not otherwise provided for.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: By giving me an Atlantic Charter, so far as the rules are concerned.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well; the Honourable Member's contention is that Rule 24A does not apply to the motion which was sought to be made by him; but I do not know of any other rule which would allow such a motion to be made. This is a matter of general public interest—there is no doubt about that; and therefore I think it is clear that the Honourable Member must comply with Rule 24A, and since the Government Member has refused his consent to this motion being moved, the motion could not be allowed.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE DELHI UNIVERSITY COURT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the Assembly that the following further four members have been elected to the Court of the University of Delhi:

- (1) Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan,
- (2) Raja Bahadur Kushalpal Singh,
- (3) Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall,
- (4) Nawab Siddique Ali Khan.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I lay on the table a copy* of each of:

- (1) Appropriation Accounts (Civil) 1941-42 and Audit Report, 1943.
- (2) Commercial Appendix to above.
- (3) Finance Accounts 1941-42 and Audit Report, 1943.
- (4) Appropriation Accounts (Railways) 1941-42, Parts I and II.
- (5) Capital Statements, Balance sheets, etc., of State Railways, 1941-42.
- (6) Balance sheets of Railway collieries and statements of all in costs of coal, 1941-42.
- (7) Railway Audit Report, 1943.
- (8) Appropriation Accounts (Defence Services) 1941-42.
- (9) Commercial Appendix to above.
- (10) Audit Report, Defence Services, 1943.
- (11) Appropriation Accounts (P. and T.) 1941-42, and Audit Report, 1942.

*Not included in these Debates, but copies have been placed in the Library of the House—Ed. of D.

[Sir Jeremy Raisman:]

(12) Corrections to Appropriation Accounts (Civil) 1941-42 and Audit Report 1943.

(13) Corrections to Railway Audit Report, 1943.

(14) Correction to Commercial Appendix to the Appropriation Accounts (Civil) 1941-42, and the Audit Report, 1943.

(15) Corrections to Appropriation Accounts (Railways), 1941-42.

(16) Corrections to the Capital Statements, etc., of State Railways for 1941-42.

THE INDIAN TEA CONTROL (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938, be taken into consideration."

I do not think I need take very much time of the House except that I should explain that this amending Bill consists of only a few clauses. The first clause is with reference to certain amenities in the shape of small gifts of parcels of tea which are sent to troops under the auspices of the Directorate of Welfare and Amenities, G. H. Q. But, as the law stands, strictly speaking, it is only the Red Cross which may be permitted to send this export quota. We thought that it was better to regularise this by changing the law. The Red Cross, I may say, is mainly concerned with the sick, wounded and prisoners of war, but quite apart from the sick, wounded and prisoners of war, there are many troops abroad who occasionally will undoubtedly appreciate a little gift even in the shape of a small quantity of tea. That is why we wish to introduce this clause and nothing more than that. So far as sub-section (5) of section 17 is concerned, there is power in Government to direct the Licensing Committee to postpone the issue of special export licenses as there is a similar power in the Central Government to authorise the Indian Tea Licensing Committee to grant it in the case of general licenses. Unfortunately there is no such power to direct it to refuse such special export licenses, as it can do in the case of general licenses. We thought that in the case of both these licenses the law should be exactly the same and that is why this amending Bill is brought in, making the necessary provision for that. The next clause is really to make the intention clear. By an unfortunate mistake, as it stands, it is only the land which was planted on the 31st March, 1943, which can get the benefit of the section. But the intention was that not merely areas which were in existence on the 31st March, 1933, but all areas which were under tea, but lying fallow between 31st March, 1931, and 31st March, 1933, should also be brought in and receive the benefit. When once tea is not planted, it remains fallow, for about two years before it can be re-planted again. So, in order to make it apply to land which was on cultivation on the 31st March, 1931, but left fallow with a view to re-cultivate it, this Bill makes provision to include all such land. So far as section 33 is concerned, I draw the attention of the House to the amendment which was made in section 12, sub-section (4). Section 12, sub-section (4) says:—

"No tea or tea seed shall be taken by land, sea or air out of British India to any place in India other than the States of Travancore, Mysore, Cochin, Tripura and Mandi, unless covered by a permit issued by or on behalf of the Committee."

The object is to guard the smuggling of tea, and it was found when there was that provision, there is no provision for the breach of the law and we want to make a penal provision for a breach of the provisions of sub-section (4) of section 12. That is all I have got to say on the Bill. There are three amendments which have been given notice of by my Honourable friend, Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury. First of all, they are not in time, but I may explain as regards his first amendment, that the words "or any organisation" have been introduced with a view to regularise small amenities sent to troops abroad. As regards the second amendment, I think he may leave the drafting matter to the Legislative Department. As regards the third, it is really again a negative provision—the omission of the words "the general or" will make the law still worse. That is all I have to say. I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938, be taken into consideration."

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury (Assam: Muhammadan): I have got one or two points in doubt, and that is why I would like to speak. Amendments were made in 1942 and 1943, in working some of which the small tea garden was placed at a disadvantage. As regards presents to troops I am in perfect sympathy, but I only want to make this clear. If in the Bill it had been said, Red Cross or some other philanthropic institution, or some such thing, the matter would have been clear and there would have been no objection. There may be confusion in working if you have the words "any organisation". Take, for instance, the Liptons or Brooke Bonds. They may wish to send parcels to the troops. How much will they send without any control on the part of the Director of the Licensing Committee? This point needs to be made clear and the best thing would have been to have the words, "any such philanthropic institution". That would have made it clear.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: May I interrupt my Honourable friend? There are two restrictive provisions as against that. The first restrictive provision is whether it is a philanthropic organisation or the Red Cross, it must be within the quota prescribed under an executive order by the Central Government, and secondly, there must be the previous sanction of the Central Government before anybody can be authorised. Therefore, if my Honourable friend says, philanthropic organisation, the Central Government will have to consider whether it ought to be permitted to do so or not. We did not make it purely official on the ground that there may be an occasion in which a non-official may be permitted by Government.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury: I have heard the arguments put forward by the Honourable the Commerce Member and I think I am almost satisfied with what he has said. But in order that there may be no confusion in working, it would have been better, according to me, if some such words as "Red Cross or some such institution or some philanthropic institution," could have been inserted here instead of leaving it as "any organisation". That is my view. But if the Honourable the Commerce Member thinks that the purpose will be served without putting in those words I am agreeable. I do not see any reason to move any of my amendments as the most objectionable part has been met. I agree to the motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Tea Control Act, 1938, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2, 3, 4 and 5 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

I have nothing more to say except one sentence, that as a lawyer everybody knows that the term "philanthropic" in legal language might be just the opposite of "philanthropic". That is why I did not do it. I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Member for Commerce): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913, be taken into consideration."

The position of the banks under the law was such that a certain revision in Form F of the Schedule was necessary in 1937. It has been the practice all along, not only here but elsewhere, that had and doubtful debts, in regard to which the auditors are satisfied that adequate provision has been made elsewhere;

[Sir M. Azizul Huque.]

were not specifically mentioned. That has been actually the existing law in India from 1927. When the law was changed, this was not specifically amended and it was thought that a change in the form will do. That change took place in 1937 but a recent judgment of the Bombay High Court said that that notification by executive order is beyond the power of the Government of India under its rule-making power. It is only with a view to bring this law into line with the actual working practice, as it has been existing in this country since 1927, as also the conditions in England, that I have brought in this Bill to amend the law as it stands. It is a purely formal matter. It has been the existing law, except that in 1937 it was done by notification, which has now been decided by the Bombay High Court to be *ultra vires*. Therefore, the law requires to be amended. Consequential amendments have also been made in one or two other sections. That is why this Bill has been brought up. I move that the Bill be taken into consideration.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That the Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2, 3, 4 and 5 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

THE CENTRAL EXCISE BILL.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to central duties of excise be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Nauman, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. H. Greenfield and the Mover with instructions to report on the opening day of the next Session of the Assembly and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

Sir, the character and object of this Bill are fully explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons and I shall detain the House only for a few minutes with a few further observations.

For many years, the Government of India's only revenue from the consumption of goods produced within the country was derived from salt and the rate of the tax was periodically varied in accordance with budgetary requirements. In 1917, an excise was laid on motor spirit in order to restrict civil consumption of petrol, but was later retained for revenue purposes and in 1922 a similar duty was imposed on kerosene. In 1930, a duty of excise equal to the customs duty was imposed on silver. 1934 saw the imposition of excises on sugar, on matches and on iron and steel and these were followed in 1941 by an excise on tyres and, last year, by excises on tobacco and vegetable product.

There being till now no general excise law such as we possess in regard to Customs, each of these imposts had perforce to be constituted by a separate, self-contained Act, giving power to attract provisions from the Sea Customs Act where necessary, and supplemented in each case by a set of Rules for carrying into effect the purposes of the Act; and to these there had presently to be added a group of rules providing for the refund of duty on certain exports. The Central excise machinery has thus undergone considerable expansion in recent years and the time has now arrived when, in the interests of public convenience and administrative efficiency, both the law and the regulations should be consolidated and arranged in a comprehensive Central Excise Code.

The inclusion of the salt laws in the proposed consolidation follows logically from the nature of the tax. Moreover, certain excise operations, particularly those affecting tobacco, are conducted in mofussil areas, to which a number of

the machinery provisions of the salt laws are better adapted than the similar provisions of the Sea Customs Act to which we have hitherto had recourse.

Each of the several taxing systems covered by the proposed consolidation was adapted to the particular features of the commodity to which it related and, since the circumstances in which these commodities are produced vary considerably, it follows that there are material differences between the several systems; and these variations are reflected in the respective Acts. The purpose of consolidation is, of course, to provide a measure which will embrace all the subjects dealt with by the individual enactments. It follows that certain provisions of the consolidation measure which previously applied only to particular subjects will, following its enactment, be applicable, or susceptible of application, to the whole field. For example, the provisions of Chapters III and IV of this Bill now appear only in the salt laws, and, where similar provisions were necessary in regard to Central excises, they were attracted from the Sea Customs Act. Those in Chapter III closely resemble kindred provisions in the provincial excise laws and are clearly desirable features of any comprehensive law for the administration of Central excises and are accordingly given general application. Those in Chapter IV on the other hand, while necessary for the security of certain excises, are not required for all and power has, therefore, been taken to exempt from the operation of this chapter excisable goods in regard to which the provisions would not be necessary. Certain provisions which are relatable only to salt have been included in a separate Chapter. For the rest, with the exception of a small addition made to the rule-making powers, the Bill is simply a consolidation measure and the sources from which the various provisions are drawn have been indicated in the notes on clauses. I need not, therefore, take up the time of the House with further explanation.

Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to central duties of excise be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the Honourable Sir Asoka Roy, Mr. Muhammad Hussain Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Nauman, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall, Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. H. Greenfield and the Mover with instructions to report on the opening day of the next Session of the Assembly and that the number of members whose presence shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of the Committee shall be five."

The motion was adopted.

THE HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION).

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy (Law Member): Sir, I move:

"That the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, as reported by the Joint Committee, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 1st June, 1944."

Honourable Members will have observed that in the concluding paragraph of their report the Joint Committee have expressed the opinion that the Bill has been so altered as to require republication. An expression of opinion in this sense by a Joint or Select Committee has commonly been taken to convey a recommendation to the Member in charge that his next motion should be for circulation or re-circulation as the case may be and not for consideration. I have no hesitation in accepting the recommendation and I move, Sir, for circulation. I may observe that although the Bill was circulated by executive order, there has been no circulation within the meaning of our Standing Orders.

The report of the Joint Committee shows that the Committee have made certain important changes in the Bill, and in my view the changes made render it imperative that the interested public should have a further opportunity of expressing their opinion before the Bill, as reported by the Joint Committee, is taken into consideration.

Sir, I need not now deal with the changes in any detail, but I should say that the changes made by the Joint Committee by no means exhaust the case for circulation, for I find it impossible to repudiate the contention forcibly

[Sir Asoka Roy.]

urged in the course of the debate on the motion for reference to a Joint Committee that particularly in the Province of Bengal interested parties had not had an adequate opportunity of expressing their views in response to the original circulation of the Bill and that the original publication was inadequate. In my view, this is emphatically a measure with which we should not proceed without the fullest consultation with public opinion.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Will the Honourable Member kindly see that it is done more effectively this time?

The Honourable Sir Asoka Roy: Certainly.

There is another recommendation of the Joint Committee to which I should refer. The Committee have said:

"We think that steps should be taken to resuscitate the Hindu Law Committee and to encourage the formulation and enactment of the remaining parts of the projected Code in the interval which is to elapse before the present Bill, when passed, comes into force. It may well be found that the present Bill requires, before it is allowed to come into operation, re-adjustment and amendment in the light of decisions taken in connection with other branches of the Hindu law."

This is an important recommendation and at the present stage I need say no more than that it is engaging my earnest attention.

Sir, I cannot conclude without paying a tribute to the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed and the Members of the Joint Committee for the painstaking care and patience with which they dealt with this difficult and complicated piece of legislation.

Sir, I move.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, as reported by the Joint Committee, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 1st June, 1944."

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Sir, no one need be afraid that I am going to make a long speech on this motion. All I wish to say is that from the Hindu point of view this measure is very important. This Bill was considered at great length in the Joint Committee and I am glad to say that our Honourable friend Sir Sultan Ahmed became in the Committee a Hindu Pandit. He gave us such a lead that sometimes I was wondering if in his last three incarnations he was not a Hindu and perhaps in the next birth also he might become a Hindu because he has taken so much pains over this measure. This measure is not without difficulties; it has very many difficulties. We took nearly one month over this measure and we also consulted several persons who are supposed to be very competent on Hindu law. We are actually codifying the Hindu law and this is only the first stage. Therefore, we have to be very careful. I find that there was a difference of opinion in the Joint Committee too and the very fact that there were so many minutes of dissent shows clearly that the measure requires a great deal of labour to be spent over it from all points of view in order to make the law suitable for all the Hindus. I must say that it was very wise on the part of the Joint Committee, to which the House is now agreeing, to re-circulate this measure. Bengal holds one view and the other parts of India hold a different view. Therefore, it is very necessary that different provinces should be fully consulted.

Sir, I support the motion.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, as reported by the Joint Committee, be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 1st June, 1944."

The motion was adopted.

MOTION RE THE FOOD SITUATION—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now proceed with the motion relating to the food situation. I take it that the time-limit of 20 minutes will apply to the debate today.

THE FOOD SITUATION

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I hope somebody will be in the House to represent the Food Department before I finish my preliminary remarks.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): I represent the Food Department.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: The Honourable Member represents everybody. Sir, there is a maxim in Sanskrit which says: *Raja kalasya karanam*. Literally, it means that the king is the cause of the times, but it really means that it is the Government which is responsible for the times that exist in a country and there is no doubt that we are passing through terrible times. If the Government is the cause of all that happens in the country, good or bad, if the Government is such that certain terrible events are happening in the country, then it logically follows that that Government must be removed in order that those circumstances which are existing in the country at a particular time may disappear and may give place to another situation. Now, Sir, formerly there were two ways of changing the Government. The King used to abdicate and go to the forest

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must confine himself to the food situation. The Honourable Member must not deal with extraneous matters.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What I am saying is this. The Government are responsible for the situation that arises in a country. If the Government have created a situation which is ruinous to the country, then that Government had better give way to a better Government

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member had better stick to the motion before the House.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Well, Sir, this morning I asked the Honourable the Food Member to ascertain the situation as regards food in C. P. and Berar. He said that it was satisfactory and that the situation was being ascertained from time to time. I wish to tell the Government that the situation in C. P. and Berar is not what it appears to be to the Government. It was alleged that the situation is satisfactory. We were given certain statistics last time. It was said that the population of C. P. and Berar was one crore 68 lakhs 22 thousand; the average quantity of rice, millet, etc., available for consumption and seeds was said to be 33 lakhs 37 thousand and the production for 1942-43 was given as 37 lakhs 30 thousand tons and the surplus was said to be 3 lakhs 97 thousand. It would therefore appear to anybody, if one were to go by statistics, that this was a surplus Province. Statistics are all right, but the actual situation one faces is this. In most of the districts, the villagers live on a piece of oil cake of the size of a biscuit, and a little piece of jaggery; that is all. If there was surplus in the Province, where was the necessity for the villagers to live on such a frugal meal a day in the villages which are the actual producing centres for foodgrains. Cases of such under-feeding are frequent. Why did this situation arise? Either there was no surplus, or if there was surplus, it became deficit. I have elicited by putting questions that on the basis that this was a surplus Province, the C. P. Government are exporting grain from this Province. First of all the Government have an idea that so much crop is likely to be harvested and they proceed on that basis. They hardly realise that by the time the grain actually comes to the hands of the grower, many things may happen and their calculations may go wrong resulting in disaster. They proceed on certain estimates which are not realised. They go on calculating and conducting their proceedings on those lines. We are having in C. P. and Berar what they call dry farming. As there is dry farming and no irrigation, the result is that a shower of rain which is wanted makes all the difference to the grower. If the grower does not get the shower, then the calculations about the crops by the Government do not materialise and no crops reach the hands of the grower. It may also be the other way. If there is heavy shower, all the crops are destroyed. There also the calculations of the Government go wrong. In the case of dry farming, a shower more or a shower less makes all the difference in

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

the Province and the calculations of the Government go wrong. But the Government proceed on the assumption that this particular crop will reach the agriculturists. On that basis they start exporting. By putting questions, I have shown that foodgrains have been exported from C. P. and Berar. So far as this Province is concerned, apart from the fact that there are military contractors from other Provinces coming and purchasing, there is also the Local Government purchasing, and the third one is the Central Government purchasing. Thus there are three purchasers of the foodgrains in my Province. The Local Government purchases for provincial reserve, the Central Government purchases for its reserve and the third one is the military reserve. All these three different bodies proceed on different lines. The Provincial Government wants to have a provincial reserve because it thinks it must have a reserve in order to meet any eventuality that may occur. The military people have an idea as to how much they will require to build up their reserve. So, if the military people and the Central Government get their own reserves, why should still an inroad be made into the provincial reserve. If your rationing scheme and other schemes are based on the theory that there should be sufficient produce in the Provinces, then and then alone rationing scheme or the scheme for prices will work properly. Neither the Central Government nor the military department has got any business to make inroads into the provincial reserve and thereby increase the price of foodstuffs for the civilian population or for others. I have also shown that this Department instead of making inroads on the Provincial Governments should direct its energy to other departments.

By putting questions, I have already pointed out that the Central Government should economise. For instance, I suggested that they should repatriate the Italian prisoners. I suggest that negotiations should be carried on with His Majesty's Government to see that those Governments make sufficient provision for troops which come from different countries. The problem of scarcity of food is sought to be tackled by two methods, firstly by procurement and secondly by the "Grow more food campaign". First of all there must be more food grown, otherwise you cannot procure food. It was said that the Government was giving Rs. 2 per acre as subsidy for bringing land which was under cotton cultivation to jowar cultivation. Let me give an instance as to how this works out in C. P. As agriculturist brings land which was under cotton cultivation to jowar cultivation. Take for instance 50 acres; according to the Government calculation of subsidy, the agriculturist should really get Rs. 100 as subsidy; but he gets only Rs. 5 in hand in cash and for the balance of Rs. 95 he is given a receipt saying that he contributed the same to Red Cross fund. Is this kind of procedure for growing more food likely to appeal to any agriculturist? You must see that the grower receives this amount which he is entitled to and it should not be taken from him unless it is voluntarily given in the form of charity to Red Cross fund or some investment to bring down inflation. That is one instance which I have given.

Let it not be forgotten when people talk of price control and think of arbitrarily fixing prices that for a cycle of 10 or 11 years the agriculturist has had to suffer. He went underground; there was depression. You may say that it was world depression; but the consequences were that the agriculturist had considerably to suffer. Not only the crops failed but the prices went down. The result was that the agriculturist who was already heavily indebted got still more heavily into debt. Then, fortunately or unfortunately, this war came in and as a result the prices went up. Then everybody started complaining that the prices of foodstuffs had gone up very high and that the agriculturist was not entitled to the profits he was making. But these very gentlemen who complained had not, in those 10 or 11 years during which the agriculturist had suffered, started any relief fund for him. The Government did not start any relief fund nor did any charitable institutions. And now when there is a chance for the agriculturist to wipe out his debts,—he may be able to wipe out his debts if these prices continue for a long period,—there is a hue and cry that there should be statutory price control. It may be that I am a solitary voice in this House so far as the price of agricultural produce is concerned, but I am going to put

my view before this House. Sir, it has been said that the prices must be brought down. But what will be the result of that? If they bring down the prices to a considerably low level it will reduce, as it has already reduced, the standard of living of the agriculturist. He is on the border-line of starvation and this is the time when he can meet the needs not only of his sustenance but the needs of his children's education and his medical needs. And if just at this time you bring down the hammer and reduce or "dehydrate" the prices he will not know what to do. If you wish to maintain his standard of living you should help him with subsidy. They are thinking not only of bringing down the prices but thinking that the grower is hoarding and they want an anti-hoarding drive. People who talk in that way talk nonsense. The plight of the ordinary agriculturist who has no other means of livelihood except agriculture is not known and understood by many. Even Government come down on him and want the revenue in time. He has to dispose of his grain, pay the moneylender from whom he has borrowed money, failure to pay whom will involve his field being auctioned; then there are his social needs. I am not talking of the big landlord but the ordinary agriculturist who has nothing else to rely on. In my province Government agents are being sent to collect what they consider to be the surplus crop left with the agriculturist. They do not take the villagers into their confidence and calculate what can be the surplus. They have their own ideas about it, and one of the Sub-divisional Officers who perhaps wants a title or quick promotion issued a notice that tehsildars and revenue inspectors, etc., will go and the surplus must be given to them. Is that the voluntary way of procurement? If you wish to procure, there are two ways. According to you it will be requisition and according to me it will be voluntary sale. If you fix a proper price that shall be an inducement to the cultivator to bring his produce to the market. If there is compulsion to disgorge all that he possesses you shall have difficulty to get all that you want. If you proceed on the line that you shall requisition the surplus the difficulty is how you shall calculate the surplus. And if you fix the price arbitrarily how do you expect the food to come into the market? Therefore in fixing the prices you should take into consideration, as I said before, his various needs, like sustenance, education of his children, medical needs, his needs like seeds, etc., for the next year. Then I have already said that particularly in my province where there is dry farming you must allow him to keep something by way of provision for failure of crops. Only when you do all this can you expect him to have a good surplus and if you give him a good price I have not the least doubt that he will come forward and sell his grain.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I will finish in two minutes, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot allow the Honourable Member any more time.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: These things should be taken into consideration in fixing the prices.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have given notice of a motion and as it is a very long one I should like to read it in the manner of Sir James Grigg. I beg to move:

"This Assembly views with great surprise . . . the control of price without controlling the stock . . . origin and causes of the food famine in Bengal . . . men and women of young age."

I do not like to waste the time of the House by reading the whole thing which is before you.

This food problem is essentially a war effort. For the successful prosecution of the war it is necessary that we must keep up the morale of civil population, and consequently it is necessary that this problem should be included in the programme of active work of those who are devoting their attention to war efforts.

Sir, I first come to the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Hutchings. In his speech he laid down a dictum which ought to be the guiding principle of the Food Department of the Government of India. He said, "Food is the common

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad.]

property to which rich and poor has equal share and equal right." I wish he would judge the merit of each question by the dictum which he himself has laid down. In addition to this dictum, I would like to add one more for his guidance, and that is "Corruption in food is inexcusable and should be heavily punished". I would also like to add, as a kind of rider or corollary, another proposition which was laid down by Sir Frederick James and that is "Wastage of food should be a criminal offence." Now, these are the three guiding principles by means of which we ought to judge the policy of food department.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know what the Honourable Member was reading from. If he was moving an amendment, that could not be allowed now.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I had moved my amendment first.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I did not hear what he read out

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Every problem that arises should be judged according to these dictums. But how are you going to translate it into practice? For this purpose I gave notice of a Bill which I called "Anti-hoarding Bill" in order to safeguard all these three principles which have just been enunciated. I requested the Government to take up that Bill as Government Bill so that it may be passed through very quickly and we may be relieved from the distress of 1944. I did not receive the permission of the Government of India to move that particular motion, but I am sure that during the next Session the Government will come forward with an Anti-hoarding Bill, because without a Bill of that kind it is impossible to carry into effect all the three principles which I have just enunciated.

Sir, I agree with my Honourable friend, Mr. Hooseinbhoj Laljee, when he challenged the Government Treasury Benches that in all their food committees and conferences they assiduously leave out the Members of the Assembly. On page 8 of the Gregory Committee's Report, they say that in these committees there should be representatives of the Government, representatives of the trade people and representatives of the growers. But the consumer is always overlooked in all their committees and conferences. And who are the representatives of the consumers? Certainly, the elected members of this House have got every right to speak on behalf of the consumers. I challenge the Honourable Member to give a single example of a committee or conference, held by the Food Department, in which they appointed a single elected member of this House. On several occasions I have said that they ought to include us, but no attention has been paid by them, and that is the reason for protesting day after day on the floor of this House that the Food Department takes very little care about the elected members because they are very inconvenient to them. And I can tell you why they are very inconvenient to them. I take this opportunity of pointing out that I came across certain merchants—I am not going to tell you the names of those merchants, because it is no use—who deal in foodgrains and they told me in the presence of a very honourable company that they spent 6 crores of rupees in bribing various agencies dealing with foodgrains during the last year. It is only the members of the Assembly who can expose the corruption of the Department, and that is why they are very inconvenient to them and they assiduously try not to nominate them in any of their committees and conferences. I do not propose to give particulars of those merchants, but if the Government of India becomes serious to make any particular enquiry, I will give them the particulars also.

Coming to the question of distress in Bengal: I confine myself to two points. The Government knew in December 1941 that Bengal had lost Burma rice amounting to 135,000 tons. Since then what steps have the Government taken to make up for this deficiency. Several courses were open to them, but they never utilized any. For example, it was suggested by Mr. Neogy, I think, or by some other speaker, that we have got plenty of land in Assam and we have got plenty of labour in Bengal, and the Government never made any attempt to

utilize the labour of Bengal in order to grow more rice on the soil now in charge of Assam Government. This was one obvious step which they ought to have taken. Now, Sir, the distress which is prevailing at present may again appear in 1944. Unless vigorous steps are taken to grow more rice for the people of Bengal. From the figures supplied to us, we find that as a result of the 'Grow More Food' campaign there has been an increase of 6 million tons in foodgrains, but the quantity of rice has fallen down by 2 million tons, and therefore the loss of rice, which is the staple food of Bengal, has become very serious.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): What is the increase in the quantity of foodgrains as a result of the 'Grow More Food' campaign?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: It is given on the first page of Gregory Committee's Report. It is 6 million ton.

I would like to know what steps are the Government taking now in order to avoid the same catastrophe which has overtaken Bengal at the present moment; what long-range-policy steps have they taken? That was one step which they could take.

The second step is that they should have a planned crops. They should know how much rice can be produced in other provinces. They should consider how much land they could allot for the production of jute in Bengal, how much for cotton in Bombay, and how much more rice could be grown in the U. P. and the Punjab so as to make up the deficiency of rice in India on account of the loss of import from Burma.

The second thing is: What is the staple food of Bengal. It is not rice alone. It is rice-cum-fish. In certain river areas they have taken away the boats of fishermen and these men cannot now catch fish; the men residing in those areas are suffering seriously and they are dying of hunger. Therefore in the interests of meeting the present situation to which the world's attention has been drawn, I would like to urge the Government of India to take the long-term policy into consideration and see that we have more rice production in this country during 1944 and ample provision for fishing should be restored, so that the people of Bengal may have their full quota of food, i.e., rice-cum-fish.

I now come to the important question of rationing which follows directly from the principle of Sir Frederick James, i.e., wastage is a criminal offence. I agree with Mr. Kirby that it should be introduced, but if there is going to be corruption in the distribution of food and in rationing, then the task will be exceedingly difficult. We have heard from Mr. Jammadas Mehta about the condition of the flour supplied to Bombay. We heard another speech praising the distribution of food in Bombay. Putting these two together one concludes that the distribution of food is not on an even scale. We must follow the dictum of the Secretary of the Food Department, Mr. Hutchings, that food is the property of all and all should be equally treated with regard to it.

The next point is that if you introduce the rationing system, there must be two essentials. The first is that you must have a reserve. I agree with the report of the Gregory Committee that we should have a reserve of 500,000 tons as minimum. But I would request the Government that this reserve should be obtained, as far as possible, by import from outside like Australia. The next important thing is that you must know what stock is available in the country and where it is, and for this purpose I moved my Bill for a system of licenses. The third condition which will follow is that you must fix the price. Here I come in direct conflict with the people of the Punjab. My friend Sardar Mangal Singh is not here, but I would have reminded him that we showed great sympathy to the people of the Punjab while Lyallpur wheat was being sold at Rs. 1-12 a maund by imposing a fine on every consumer in India of one rupee per maund by putting import duty on Australian wheat. Now when other people are in trouble it is not fair to say: "We are not going to listen to you". This question of price is closely connected with the question of the monetary policy of the Government of India. If you want to maintain the monetary policy and the price level of your paper note, you must take into

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad.] account the purchasing power of this rupee. People are misled into believing that the trouble is due to Provincial Autonomy. They shield their inefficiency by finding wrong excuses. It is a problem, as I have said above, of stabilising the purchasing power of your paper rupee. I think it is fair that the purchasing power should be fixed at 50 per cent. higher than what it was in 1929. This should apply to silver, to foodgrains and to everything.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up. I think I made it clear that the Honourable Member could not be allowed to move any amendment at this stage. This is the fourth day of the debate and thirty Members have already spoken. I could not follow him properly but no amendment could be moved at this stage. I am, therefore, not going to put it to the House.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Mr. Deputy President, Sir, I rise with a heavy heart to discuss the food problem which is not only appalling in Bengal but has made the situation in the entire country rather miserable. It is unfortunate that the Food Member is not in his seat even as yet to hear from us what comments we make on the present situation. I would not like to enumerate the different factors which are responsible, as they may be so many—failure of crops in some parts, export to other foreign countries, inflation of currency and many others. There is one very patent fact which I want to point out to the House and it is this: that all these factors are the corollaries of one single fact existing today—the condition of the world war; and as such I believe the chief cause should be tackled for this rather than any other. I am not trying to discuss how this war has been foisted on us. This is no occasion for it; but I would certainly say that as the war is directly responsible for this condition which is existing and for the condition which has been brought about in the matter of food supply, it is the war exchequer which should pay and nobody else. It should be through a subsidy from the war exchequer and none else. It is said that this is a man-made famine; and as such I believe that the Government as represented today should at least see that this man-made famine is redressed by man-made efforts. I do not know what financial implication the subsidy programme may ultimately involve, but I would just point out the figures which have been given about the Food Department establishment at the centre and its cost. On calculation you find that it is costing about Rs. 2½ lakhs monthly or Rs. 30 lakhs a year. This is for salary alone. The paraphernalia and establishment for safeguarding the food interest in this country; and probably another 30 lakhs per year for the travelling allowance bills, for the staff, for the housing and for other things. So you are already spending Rs. 60 lakhs a year at the centre alone besides those in provinces. According to the speech of the Honourable the Food Member, there was a deficit of about 1½ million tons in Bengal. What would have been the cost if that grain was subsidised by purchases from the Central Government in the way that they should have been purchased from those parts of this country and other dominions which were in a position to spare at reasonable rates, and should have been sold to Bengal or such other affected areas, by subsidised rates of practically half the purchase rate. On my own calculation I believe it would not have cost more than about Rs. 100 millions or Rs. 10 crores. Whether it was to be debited to the Defence Department or the Offence Department I am not concerned. But as this war is responsible for this situation, it is certainly right that that Department should be debited with this amount. This Government could have given this even as a loan to Bengal Government on certain terms of moratorium for five or ten years, which that government could have repaid in the heydays or through her excise duties

of jute and income tax but all those things never occurred to the mind of the present bureaucracy which sits there. I would just like to refer to the speech of Mr. Hutchings, the Secretary of the Food Department made yesterday.

He was very proud to mention the control ordinances of food rates, but he does not realise that this mischievous system of control has, instead of producing any healthy effect, been responsible for creating the situation to what it has come in many places. I am not trying to say that this is the only cause which is responsible, but this is certainly one of the chief causes. Who are the controllers? Those people whose duty it has always been to preserve the British bureaucracy, through the British bayonets. They never realised what the sympathy of the people means, and what the co-operation of the people can amount to. I say that this government stands self-condemned, and it has forfeited the right to exist as a government when it says it cannot control the black markets. Mr. Hutchings was very proud of the ordinance about food control; but he did not refer to the results which he has been able to achieve out of it. I say they have forfeited the right to call themselves a responsible Government or a civilised government even because what do we find? The Government machinery is always capable to control all kinds of sabotages, conceivable and inconceivable, all kinds of secret societies existing or not existing; they are able to control every man here or there whom they for reasons or no reasons believe to be fifth columnist; they can hunt out any Hur hiding in a certain jungle in Sind; they can find out a Jai Prakash living in the remotest corner of India, but they can not find out the black marketeers, and the hoarders and profiteers. They cannot control the black market or those culprits who are selling commodities at an exorbitant rate. What happened in Bengal? It was not exactly that rice was not available: it was available in many places in the black market, at Rs. 40 a maund or above; but it was not available at the so-called controlled rate of say Rs. 20 or even Rs. 25 a maund. That was the whole situation.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas has remarked in a note appended to the Gregory Committee's report that the Government are understood to have resorted to the black market for their own purchases.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I do not know what the Honourable the Food Member has got to say about what Mr. Neogy has just told him, that even the Government itself resorted to black market for their own purchases, and in that case probably, they are responsible for establishing that black market as well.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It is Sir Purshotamdas's note, not mine.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman: I want an answer from the Food Member. The Home Member can hunt out a culprit anywhere for any subversive movement which his Department thinks may exist, but he and his Government cannot find out a man who is selling in the black market openly and in the daylight; and that is not one individual or ten or a hundred, but thousands of such profiteers who have been doing it in every part of this country for over 2 years. I do not believe that the Honourable the Food Member who is an Indian and who has been in politics for a long time, who knows conditions in this country, and who probably knows a lot more about these black market people himself, should have sat like that and shaken his head in that manner as if he does not know them. So, what is the position and to what conclusion do we come? The only conclusion to which we can come is that this famine is not only man made but, it is British patent famine, brought about in this country for a particular purpose, sinister or otherwise.

I now come to another important factor. Am I to believe that the British administration has failed miserably not without a purpose? What is the position of the British administration in England? I would just refer to the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 22nd June, 1943, in which he said that in England two pound loaves were to be sold for 12 annas or one shilling, and sugar was being sold at a rate of four pence per pound which comes to seven annas a seer. That means that the market in England was being con-

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman.]

trolled at about 10 to 15 per cent. above the pre-war level prices. And that is the story of a country which does not grow any appreciable quantity of foodstuff of any kind, and has to depend for supply on imports from different sources, whether from Dominions or other countries. What has the Honourable the Food Member to say to that? I do not think that the British administration in England is spending even one-third of the amount which this Government is spending on the so-called Food Department. Government of India brings out experts from England. They have one Mr. Kirby from England. Has he had any knowledge of the conditions of India, and has he been able to study what is the position of the country in the present condition? He was trying to tell us what rationing was. Well and good, I do not want to comment on that, but that is only for urban areas. Probably he does not know that a very small percentage of people probably less than one per cent. live in the urban areas in this country and the conditions in this country cannot be compared to those in European countries.

Sir, it is said that people are not co-operating. What co-operation does my Honourable friend in the Government expect? People have tried to give all sorts of benevolent and desirable suggestions from different platforms, and newspapers had been writing about the situation here and there. The Food Conferences that they have held here have resulted in fiasco, without any active part being taken after the deliberations were over. I have no time to comment fully on what Sir Theodore Gregory and other so-called experts have tried to report to the Government and make the situation still worse. One of the striking passages in that report is that Sir Theodore Gregory feels that the farmers when they are getting more money out of the sale of their produce are using more foodstuff than they could have done in normal times. But he forgets that the unfortunate farmer is not in a very comfortable position too. I agree that if twenty acres of land yielded 500 rupees before it may yield now about rupees three thousand, but does Sir Gregory realise that for the commodities which the farmer requires for existence, he has to pay six times. Say for instance, if it cost him in pre-war days Rs. 500, now it costs him Rs. 3,000 or even more, and leaves him as miserable and as wretched as he was before 1939 with that amount of money which he used to get as a return on the sale of the produce that he grew? That is the position. Sir Gregory should have studied these factors also.

As I said earlier in my speech, there should be a definite programme of subsidising the sale in such areas where you find that there are famine conditions existing. In my own province, Bihar, you can see the result of this paraphernalia of the Food Department. They said on the 5th August 1943—so late as that—that Bihar was a surplus province—that was the statement made in reply to a question of my Honourable colleague. In the Gregory report they have said that Bihar is a deficit province. Report was published only two months after that statement when the mischief to Bihar had been done. I do not know what mechanisation is there to produce any figure that they may like to have and that may suit them. I want to impress on the House that it is high time that the Honourable the Food Member and the entire Government of India should try to co-operate with the people, in giving them at least as much relief as is humanly possible. I am not prepared to concede for one moment that it is not within the powers of this administration to control things and to subsidise their purchases in manner that the entire rate for the country would be one and the same. If they want to do it, they can do so; but when they do not want to do it they can make all sorts of pretensions as they have been doing. With these few words I would only ask the Government to take this House and the entire country into confidence and would ask the Food Department to co-operate with elected food committees in the different centres in towns and in rural areas. The entire organisation of purchase and sale should be through agencies which would work either at a sacrifice or on a very nominal profit. I hope the Government would accept the amendment which has been moved by my Party. With these few words I take my seat.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu (Madras City: Non-Muhammadian Urban): I am a new Member of this Assembly who took seat on the 26th July last. At that time I could not take part in the discussion on food because my mouth was under lock and key. Now, Sir, I am free as my Party has decided to attend the sittings of the session and take part in important questions. Now, I am free to speak on this important question of food problem.

Sir, India is a country where the basic industry is agriculture. It is a proverbial fact that India was giving food to several foreign countries, and still has been giving food—countries where there is no agriculture at all, where people do not know what is agriculture, where people do not know how to make cloth. And yet this country, such a country, is in a state that her children are driven to emasculation and death. People in such a country from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin,—the sons and daughters of that country, have been suffering for want of food.

On the first day, I carefully heard the statement made by my Honourable friend, the Food Member. In that statement I find that no practical suggestion has been made as to how to proceed with the control of food in the country. I have heard the speeches of my Honourable friends in this House but no member made any practical suggestion that can be adopted by the Government or by the people. Without the co-operation of the people, you cannot do anything. (An Honourable Member: "You want national government".) Yes, we are a national government. We are in our country. These are the days of democracy. We cannot deny it. (An Honourable Member: "Are they?") Certainly they are: We are forgetting that we are in our own country. We are forgetting that we are free in our country. Though the British Government is there, we are free. If we say we are free, we are free. If we think in our minds that we are free, we will be free. We are always free.

Now, I come to the practical suggestions. I am referring first to the recommendations of the Gregory Committee. The first recommendation is that for the duration of the war India should be a net importing country. It should be accepted by each and every one. We must import during the crisis of this war. The second wonderful recommendation is this: In order to get foodgrains from the cultivator, an effort must be made to increase the supply of the goods he needs, this problem being given a rank next only to that of munitions. Unless the cultivator is supplied with the goods that he needs, how can he produce food. Without food how can you fight your enemy. First the needs of the agriculturist must be supplied. The agriculturist is the most important man in the country. He should get his materials supplied by the Government. Without the agricultural implements, the agriculturist cannot produce food in the villages. Without food, how are the soldiers going to fight? What is the use of manufacturing munitions if you cannot give food to the soldiers? Food must be the first consideration. Then the third recommendation is that rationing should be introduced in the urban areas on the principle of a daily minimum ration of one pound of rice. As early as the 14th century, Sultan Allauddin Padshah of Delhi allow the people to purchase in the market $3\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of rice and foodgrains. Now, one pound is recommended. A man of my stamp can eat at a time one pound of rice. I am a man of 75 years. If I get my belly full of food, I will be prepared to take arms in my hand and fight our enemy and lead an army to fight the enemy. Not only myself. There are persons of my age in our country, stalwart persons, vigorous and energetic persons who will fight the enemy if they are well fed. Even my Congress friends will be prepared to fight the enemy and take up arms in their hands if our national demand is conceded. That is the question to be considered first by this Government. They want our co-operation. If they want the co-operation of Indians, they must first concede the demand of the national parties in the country. The biggest and the oldest national organisation is the Congress organisation. Next comes the Muslim League and then there are other national organisations. They want India to be independent. That demand must be conceded if you want us to present a united front to

[Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu.]

fight the enemy and send him out if he at all comes into India. We do not want anybody to come into India, to step into the Indian borders. We will fight with the Britishers, and wrest independence from them. That is our policy. But the policy of the British Government is to put the Congress leaders in jail. Although the Congress offered their aid to fight the enemy, their help has not been sought and the Government has not accepted our proposals. They do not want to part with power. I say that this recommendation about one pound of rice must go and the quantity must be doubled. Unless it is doubled, people cannot go on with their activity.

Another thing is that I am a Madras man and I want to speak about my province. It is my bounden duty to speak about my province. I say that these blessed recommendations of the Gregory Committee are worthless. They do not want to help the cultivator. They do not want the cultivator to eat more than a pound. They want Indians to fight for them but they do not give them food. Madras is a province where agriculture is the basic industry. There are 25 districts in our province. Out of these 25 districts, eight are delta districts. The food that is produced in these eight delta districts can be supplied all over the districts where there is famine. In the Ceded Districts, there is famine. The food that is produced in our province can be provided for all these famine areas in our districts provided it is not exported to foreign countries. It was exported and it is being exported now from our province.

It was exported to Ceylon and to the Indian States like Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin. This export has, I think, now been stopped after so much hubbub and protest. Sir, Madras Presidency is always self-sufficient in the matter of food if exports are not made. You can make exports to Indian States which are within our presidency like Travancore and Cochin, but food should not be exported to Hyderabad and Mysore.

I come, Sir, from the City of Madras and the food situation there now is quite satisfactory because of the introduction of rationing system. I put up a strong fight with the responsible persons in the Provincial Government and with the Collector of Madras in the beginning when the food trouble was very acute because there was no control over it. I told them that they did not know the method of controlling food. I said you accompany me to the villages where food is produced. Please remember that in India every agriculturist is a food expert; in India every merchant is a food expert; everybody in India is a food expert because the basic industry of India is agriculture. Everybody knows what is agriculture and everybody knows how to produce food. Every body knows how to distribute food. Such is the condition of India. Our friends on the Treasury Benches want to import food experts into India as if we have no food experts in India. So, I said to the Collector of Madras to let us go to the villages because our food experts are there and let us consult them. If you want to control the prices of foodstuffs, you must go to the villages. A villager is a responsible man. Ask him what is your rate of taxation? What is your expenditure on labour? What are your family expenses and what is the expenditure on your cattle? Calculate all these and then fix a rate. This is the practical suggestion. A bag of one hundred and sixty-four pounds of paddy, you sell at the rate of Rs. 6. Go to the wholesale dealer and ask him to sell it with a profit of four annas a bag. Then, the retail dealer who gets his grains from the wholesale dealer fixes a rate. You may say how it is possible? The Collector of Madras also put the same question to me. I will tell you how it is possible. Let us go to the villages. You have got some Government employees in the village, you have got a *chaprasi* there. You have got village munsiff and *Karnam* there. You can form a Committee of non-officials in the village. Make responsible villagers the members of this Committee and give them powers to control the food prices. What is required for a village should be kept there and the remainder can be sold to the wholesale dealer. You should allow free trade. Government need not trouble about controlling food. There is the machinery there from top to bottom. There is the Collector, the Deputy Collectors, the Assistant Collector, the

Tahsildars and so many other people to work. Without doing the right thing, they are speaking here whatever they like. They are mentioning things here which are not practicable at all. Impracticable things cannot be taken into consideration. The Collector and other responsible persons do not accept my suggestion because the people's representatives, the producers and the merchants are treated by this blessed Government as mosquitoes. I am a man of 20 years' service in the Madras Corporation. I am a man of practical experience. I am a man who comes from an agriculturist family. I hold lands now and I hold gardens. I am a cultivator. I know how to produce food and how to distribute it. And yet a suggestion that is made by a man of my position in life is not taken into account by the Government. Then, what is the use of this Government? What is the meaning of this administration when suggestions made by responsible public men who have got experience of the country and who have got respect in the country are not taken notice of. My practical suggestion is this. Let us go to the villages.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: So, my only practical suggestion is: Go to the village. If I am allowed to speak on this subject, I can speak for two hours giving practical suggestions.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has one minute more.

Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: If my speech is required by my friends in the House and if the Deputy President allows me to speak, I can speak for two hours. So, these are my practical suggestions. It is no use having all these speeches; it is no use having all these reports. It is no use to have a Royal Commission which will consume six lakhs of rupees. It is also no use having a Committee and waste our money on their daily and travelling allowances. My practical suggestion is you must try to obtain the confidence of the people's representatives, the confidence of the producers and the merchants and get their co-operation. You must go to villages and there commence your control of food prices.

That is all I have to say.

Rai Bahadur Seth Bhagchand Soni (Ajmer-Merwara: General): Mr. Deputy President, I have ventured to join the debate not with a view to side-track any help that might and should go to the suffering Bengal, but to remind the Central Government about a centrally administered area, called Ajmer-Merwara which I have the honour to represent. It is well known that Ajmer-Merwara, with its total population of 5½ lakhs, is ever a deficit area. To our misfortune, it has had in recent months the sad experience of unprecedented heavy floods, rendering the food situation even more acute. The people in my constituency had always been dependent on the Punjab, U. P. and the neighbouring States. We still need their help. But we need their help not only to the same extent but even more this year, because of the effects of the floods, if the people in my constituency are not to experience what has been the fate of our Bengali brethren. I am not complaining, I am only pleading. I am also appealing to the Central Government which is in charge of Ajmer-Merwara to remember us in any allocation of foodstuffs under the basic plan that may be devised. As the House is aware, industrially Ajmer is poor, except for the railway workshops that are at present engaged in war effort. Therefore, our people have not got purchasing power to the extent that obtains in several other parts of the country. Yet, they are accustomed to taking only wheat and wheat is now being sold at a price which is not within the reach of the poor. Not only is the price high, even the quality has suffered considerably in recent months and this point requires the vigilance of the Government whenever they procure food for this area. I do not wish to labour the point, but would request the Honourable the Food Member to give my people an assurance that their claims for a reasonably good quantity

[Seth Bhagchand Soni.]

and quality of food at fair price are not ignored in any calculations for procurement and distribution. As for our part, we shall offer you our utmost co-operation in any measures that may be devised. Ajmer City having a population of more than 1½ lakhs comes under the proposed scheme of rationing that is to be introduced shortly. I would urge the Honourable the Food Member to see that in order to make the rationing scheme a success, a continued supply of good quality of wheat and other food commodities is arranged without delay. We, in Ajmer City, are not averse to rationing or price control, but we expect the authorities to make the scheme workable in the conditions prevailing there. The help and co-operation of the leaders of that locality will, I feel confident, be forthcoming.

May I turn now, Sir, to the needs of the country at large and offer just a few observations? Several Honourable Members have spoken in different voices and I think Mr. Frank Anthony was frank enough in his analysis of the disease, though one may not agree with all his conclusions. There is no gain saying that there is enormous wastage in the Army which should have been checked and can be checked even now. Again, one would like to know what proportion of the Army in India belonging to all nationalities is stationed in Bengal and to what extent they have been responsible for the acuteness of the food situation. I would like the Honourable the Food Member to take the House into confidence on this aspect of the question to enable us to understand the position. It is suggested, Sir, that one of the means for alleviating the situation is that the Army in India should be fed totally by imports from abroad, thus making this the concern of the United Nations. Is it too much to hope for an assurance on this point? In this connection one cannot fail to take note of the boldness and quickness with which His Excellency Lord Wavell has been devising measures to tackle the famine situation in Bengal and other areas. But, I feel an equal degree of purposefulness must inspire the activities of all those engaged in battling against the famine. Otherwise, the fear of our Bengali friends about the *aman* crop might turn out to be real. The Government of India should be more decisive in their policy and even-handed in their treatment of the Provinces. I was pleased to read this morning a Press communique in which the Central Government have ordered the Sind Government not to amend or cancel the order fixing the maximum prices of food grains in the province without the previous approval of the Centre. This is a welcome sign and shows that the Government of India mean to be businesslike. It is in accordance with the policy enunciated by the Food Member himself initiating the Food Debate. But it is not enough to order only Sind. There are other areas which do and may require similar treatment and I trust that the Government of India will not flinch from doing their duty in order to save the people from further starvation.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, I associate myself with my Honourable friend Dr. Deshmukh in offering our thanks to those countries which have rendered help to India in her distress, particularly Ireland and China. Sir, after this, I want to express my thanks to the Central Legislature for coming to the help of the Punjab grower in those days of distress when economic depression set in and he was getting much less than what he actually spent in growing wheat in the Punjab. My Honourable friend Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad referred to this matter just to remind the Punjab that the Central Legislature was not remiss at the time. I am fully alive to that suggestion. I know what efforts I had to make in the Central Legislature in the early days when I became a Member of this august House to bring good deal of pressure upon the Government of India to introduce the first Wheat Import Duty Bill which was passed by this House. Sir, in the present debate on Food, it has been blitzkrieg on the Punjab, mass assault made on the Punjab that the Punjab is heartless, inhuman and atrocious Province which does not feel for the famine conditions of their brethren in Bengal and which fills in her stock of wheat only to get profits out of the distress from which the sister province is suffering.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Bengal never said that.

Sardar Sant Singh: I must say that in the White Paper that has been presented to the House of Commons, probably under instructions or under brief given to the Secretary of State for India by the Government of India, the Punjab has been held up as a guilty Province. Sir, I take this opportunity of completely repudiating this charge. This charge is as untrue as it is fantastic and ridiculous. The Government of India were not honest in not sending the full debate in this House on the food situation and withholding the views of the opposition. The speech of the then Food Member alone was embodied in that White Paper, as appears from the press reports. It is really surprising that the British Parliament should not be made aware of the suggestions made by the opposition in this House to meet the situation that had arisen in Bengal. It is also surprising that the British Government and the Members of Parliament should not have cared to fully appreciate the blunders and the bunglings committed by the Government of India in dealing with the food situation and bringing about this famine in Bengal.

I am not concerned with that today but one point in the speech of Sir Frederick James has surprised me; I am sorry he is not in his seat just now. He said that to give publicity to the famine news to the world was to affect the morale of the people. That has been the policy followed by the Government of India and still they think that if they had concealed the matter and concealed the number of deaths that are taking place in Bengal it would have been better for the Government of India. I quite appreciate such line of argument coming as it does from those quarters who believe that they are here in India to govern, and to govern means to maintain order, not even law. Such a callous, heartless and wooden Government complaining and citing the Scriptures from those benches now has been rightly cartooned by Shankar today in the *Hindustan Times*; it is a sermon not on the Mount but from the Treasury Benches, given to the starving and dying people of Bengal. However, the point that I want to make is this; who is the guilty party? Does the guilt lie on the Punjab or does it lie somewhere else? That is the issue with which I will try to deal in the short time at my disposal. I will first deal with the charge of profiteering made against the Punjab. It is alleged that the grower in the Punjab has withheld the stocks from the market. But the best refutation of this charge is to give the figures of stocks that arrived in the Lyallpur market from the beginning of this year up to the end of September.

Mr. R. H. Hutchings (Secretary, Food Department): Who is accusing the Punjab?

Sardar Sant Singh: That question should be addressed to the Food Member, Mr. Amery, and to some speakers who made speeches here. The arrivals of wheat in the Lyallpur market were as follows in 1941, 1942 and 1943, in bags:

	1941	1942	1943
January	13,200	Nil	1,800
February	7,750	Nil	19,180
March	22,800	Nil	30,900
April	22,300	5,900	8,910
May	...	156,800	94,700
June	68,600	145,400	89,200
July	80,600	23,100	58,000
August	54,400	6,780	68,600
September	50,600	13,650	100,780

These figures disclosed that the growers in the principal grain growing centres of India, i.e., Lyallpur, were sending their stocks to the market in quantities greater than what they sent in the corresponding months in the previous two years.

An Honourable Member: It was withheld in 1942.

Sardar Sant Singh: That may be, but in 1943 they are sending foodgrains, and I understand that Government became alive to the famine conditions in Bengal in 1943, not in 1942.

[Sardar Sant Singh.]

These figures speak for themselves. Then I come to the charge of profiteering, which is still more ridiculous. The charge was made in complete and stupendous ignorance. As regards profiteering I will first draw attention to the oft-repeated charge made here against the Government of Sind. They made a profit of over 2½ crores of rupees at the expense of the Sind grower. What right had they to make that profit? I know that the Bengal Government whose sheep were dying under the very nose of the shepherd who was controlling the administration were making a profit. I will presently quote the figures at which the Bengal Government sold wheat to the people who were dying in the streets of Calcutta. Then there is the Central Government which is now a more human Government than the Provincial Governments. And what did this human Government do? They purchased wheat in the Punjab at Rs. 10-8-0 per maund and sold it at Rs. 11-10-0 per maund to the provinces after controlling the exports from one province to another. That is to say the Central Government made a profit of Rs. 1-2-0 per maund. Doesn't it strike horror in the minds of those who sit in this House that the Government of India should make the famine conditions in the country as a source of revenue to themselves. The Honourable the Finance Member is here. I will expect him to tell me whether it is a fact or not that they have made a profit of one crore of rupees on the wheat purchased from the Punjab and sent to other deficit provinces.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I am willing to give the Honourable Member ten rupees for every one rupee that he can prove that the Government of India has made on all its food operations.

Sardar Sant Singh: I am very happy that the Honourable Member has made this statement which the Government of India had not so far made. Probably the Government of India are aware that the Punjab Ministers have been making this statement in the press for the last three to four months, and the Government of India never came out with their contradiction.

Now, I will ask the Honourable the Food Member: Is it or is it not a fact that the average price paid to the Punjab wheat grower was Rs. 10-8-0 per maund by their agents who purchased wheat in the Punjab, and whether they supplied this wheat at Rs. 11-10-0 to other provinces or they did not? The question is specific and definite and calls for an answer in yes or no.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Will the Honourable Member support the taxation proposals which will be necessary in order to cover the loss on food operations which the Government of India makes?

Sardar Sant Singh: I will deal with that question when it comes up in the Budget Session. Till then we can safely wait. But may I ask the Honourable the Food Member to deny the fact that they have been selling wheat to the deficit provinces at Rs. 11-10-0 after purchasing it at Rs. 10-8-0 in the Punjab. In the case of Bengal, freight charges were to be met by that Government, and not by the Government of India. Why do you deny that fact?

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): He does not.

An Honourable Member: That is not profiteering.

Sardar Sant Singh: What is profiteering then?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): I will reply to your question in due course.

Sardar Sant Singh: I will await it with anxiety and interest.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: The Food Member followed the profits!

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, I will read a passage from September number of the *Modern Review* in this connection:

"The purchase price of wheat paid by Central Government in the Punjab markets is not more than Rs. 9-8-0 to Rs. 10-4-0 per maund (82 lbs.). As against this purchase price, the Central Government charges Rs. 11-10-0 per maund to the Bengal Government, Railway freight being borne entirely by Bengal Government. The difference between the selling prices of the Government of India and the purchase price of the Government of Bengal is from Rs. 1-6-0 to Rs. 2-2-0 per maund."

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: This is ancient history.

Sardar Sant Singh: My dear, Sir, if this is ancient history, then the Honourable Member will become a remnant of archaeological importance because he has been with us for a year!

Then, Sir, I come to profiteering. Sir, I appreciate the point of view expressed by my Honourable friend, Sir F. E. James, when he said that those who profiteer at the expense of the lives of poor Indians should be publicly ridiculed.

An Honourable Member: Hanged.

Sardar Sant Singh: I do not say 'hanged'. I say that they should be arrested and publicly ridiculed, so that what happened in Egypt should happen in India too. That is to say, profiteering must cease. May I ask the Honourable Member whether he has the same remedy to offer to the millers of Bengal. The Bengal Government got wheat from the Punjab at something like Rs. 13 per maund and sold it at Rs. 15 per maund (subsequently it was reduced to Rs. 14-8-0 or Rs. 14-4-0 per maund). That is to say after making some intervening profit for themselves, the Bengal Government sold this wheat to the millers. With what result? I will tell you. The millers charged tremendous amount of money as milling charges. And not only this, an indirect subsidy was paid to them; for every 100 maunds of wheat flour they were given 105 maunds of wheat—i.e., 5 maunds extra. Why was it so? Milling charges in the Punjab have been comparatively much less. And then, Sir, the wheat flour was sold at a considerable profit by the millers. I have no time to go into figures.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has got one minute more.

Sardar Sant Singh: but I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that profiteering has been going on.

I come now to my next point—I don't think I can deal with others—and that is the transport question. The Honourable the War Transport Member told us that a number of wagons came empty from the Punjab because no wheat was to be found at the stations. Here I have got figures which I will quote of undespached balances on account of lack of wagons to lift the stocks of wheat.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sardar Sant Singh: I have only to give these figures, Sir, and then I have finished.

	Undespached balances.
May 1943	179,325
June 1943	158,969
July 1943	141,637
August 1943	78,463
September 1943	63,006

Sir, it is easy to say that the wagons came empty, but here are the figures which prove things to the contrary. Therefore, Sir, to say that the Punjab was withholding food stock to Bengal to relieve the distress there is to say what is not correct.

Mr. K. S. Gupta (Ganjam cum Vizagapatam: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I come from a place which was visited for the first time by the Japanese on the 6th of April, 1942. My constituency is peculiarly situated. I have got a part of it in the Orissa Province, and the rest is in Madras Presidency. The Orissa Province is considered to be a surplus province; it is alleged to be a surplus province. But with yearly visitations of famine thousands of people export themselves to the sister provinces, that is Bengal in the North and Madras in the South for domestic and menial services. Of course it is a paddy-growing area; it is a granary for the circars. Berhampore is the most important place of the Ganjam District, most of which has now gone to Orissa. In Berhampore deaths have started due to starvation. In the month of August 32 people died and they had to be removed by the Municipality of Berhampore. In September about 60 people died and in October the death roll had gone up

[Mr. K. S. Gupta.]

to 90. Is it worth congratulating the Ministry that is now existing in the absence of the real representatives of the people? The real representatives of the people are in jail. They have not been allowed to come out and do the work of helping the poor, of helping the destitute, of helping the starving and the dying. Who is responsible for this? Are they the people who are prepared to lay down their lives for the sake of the poor? Is the spiritual sanction of the Government of India or of His Majesty's Government, which is 6,000 miles away which has brought this calamity by imposing this war on us, required to release? We never wanted war. We do not want it. We could have avoided it if we had not this British connection. It is only the presence of the British that is an eye sore to any other nation whether east or west.

Sir, this is the province where the Ministry gloats, as it has boasted the other day that it is capable of exporting four lakhs of tons of rice to deficit provinces when its own people are dying in thousands and lakhs. Isn't it a shame on the part of the Ministry to be ready to export to the deficit provinces or the Government of India to accept such a decision on the part of the Ministry of Orissa? Sir, Mahatmaji said after his extensive tour some years ago: "India is the poorest country in the world and Orissa is the poorest province in India."

Then, this Orissa province has already exported a good portion of its rice. Who is responsible for it? The free trade policy of the Government of India is responsible for the depletion of the stocks which would have stood in good stead for the poor and dying people of Orissa.

Sir, there was a cyclone of unprecedented ferocity in October 1942. There was a terrific rise of the waters of the Lake Chilka and it inundated thousands of acres around it—that was paddy growing land and the crops failed. It would be heart-rending to note these figures. There is a village called Palur near Ramba where 438 people perished in the rising waters of Chilka. 7,169 cattle were drowned, and 42,115 homes were washed away by the rising waters of the Chilka. Not a tear was shed; not a Minister did go there, and is it a matter of congratulation to anybody either of this Government at the Headquarters or the Ministry in Orissa? The Centre and periphery are both rotten. They are not only rotten but to the core. So something must take the place of this kind of rotten jugglery and boasting. When his people are dying in thousands for want of food, the Chief Minister of Orissa takes pleasure in visiting Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi but not the villages which are absolutely devoid of food and raiment. There is another cry in addition to that for food.

Sir, if Bengal is suffering from want of food, Orissa has been suffering and is suffering from want of raiment also, i.e., clothing. I know in certain villages thousands of women do not see the light of day for want of proper dress, for want of a cover of their shame, and isn't it a shame that the British Government should remain a moment longer as long as this pitiable state of affairs exist in a province which is considered to be a surplus province. Under no circumstances should it be treated with scant courtesy and lack of sympathy on the part of the Central Government.

Sir, the other day one friend said: What about fish in Orissa? Sir, the fishermen were the first to suffer because their boats were burnt. This is due to the denial policy of the Government of India. Who is responsible for making the poor the poorer and who is responsible for depriving people of the few morsels of food from their mouths. I know, Sir, there are women throwing their children into wells, and into the rising waters of Chilka because they have not been able to spare a morsel of food or a drop of milk from their breasts which had already become dehydrated. There is no good of elation here in the Central Government due to inflation. Away with it. The rise in prices has gone so high that, Sir, there are places where rice is not available even for love or money. There are places where two bags of rice, i.e., four maunds are distributed to 1,500 people per week $\frac{1}{2}$ seer per family. Is that sufficient for one single meal of a family? They have to sustain themselves upon this half

measure. In rural parts four annas worth of rice means half a measure because two measures can be had for a rupee. This half measure would not be enough, even for my friend Mr. Rangiah Naidu, although he is 75 years of age, for one gulp. Now you want this half a seer of rice to satisfy a family for a week. How on earth can anyone tolerate such conditions in a province which is said to be a surplus province! Who has declared it? Is it a man from Bedlam or a lunatic asylum who has declared this as a surplus province which can afford to export four lakhs of tons of rice to Bengal and other deficit areas?

Sir, who are the people suffering most? They are the Bouris who are considered untouchables. They are the landless labourers. Then we have the low castes and aborigines Savanas, Hadis and Kondras. You might not have heard of these names at all in the history or geography written by our friends from 6,000 miles away and these are the people most affected. Fishermen are very much affected for the want of boats in which they go about fishing. They were forcibly and most unwillingly removed. They are deprived by whom? By God? No, Sir. It is man who is responsible for removing their grain from their granaries, for removing their boats from their canals and waters, and this is the pitiable state of affairs; several people have not been paid at all for taking away their boats, and some were paid but not paid properly. Who will hear the cries of those poor people who are afraid of approaching even the village chowkidar? Yet in those villages tahsildars and *karnams* go about for collecting the war fund! What does it amount to? It is an ignominy; it is something which is absolutely false; and not the real Government that is existing; it is a Government corrupt and rotten to the core. My friend the other day said Government of India was famished in the head but bloated in the body; it is this head-famished Government which is responsible for this chronic poverty of the province as a whole.

Recently my friend, Dr. Kunzru had been to this area. Sir, I forgot to tell you one thing. On the 31st October, 1943—it is adding insult to injury—these people who were deprived of their homes a year ago, constructed some hovels and these hovels were ill-roofed but even these roofs were torn away by another gale of unprecedented ferocity on the 31st October, 1943. On account of this gale, the mail from Madras to Calcutta had to be diverted via Raipur and Nagpur for three days. Was there any tear shed or a rupee subscribed for those people there? Pundit Kunzru had been there, and also my friend Mr. Santhanam, an *ex-member* of this House, they made extensive tours. They have written lots of reports about the calamitous conditions and they are very definite and detailed, and it is worth the while of government perusal. Sir, if you have not read them, send for them; talk to them and take practical lessons from these two great men who have done their best for the poor and devastated country of Orissa. Here I would read a statement from Dr. Kunzru—I shall not trouble you with details:

"Orissa is a poor country. The economic condition is such as always to cause anxiety. It should therefore have received special consideration at the hands of the central authorities; but instead of showing any sympathy in its distress they have unfortunately accentuated its misfortune by their policy."

The policy of free trade and denial is of course foolish and shortsighted—I feel sure that Orissa would have been treated with greater consideration, had the public been more fully aware of its sorrow. As Orissa is a poor country, it has no paper of its own to extend its publication to all parts of India. The several thousands of people are dying unwept and unsung. The other day the Minister of Finance of Orissa had the good sense to go to certain areas of the Puri district. After returning from his glorious tour he made a speech at Cuttack, in which he said:

"The conditions are unthinkable bad. (Note every word). The people have been reduced to bags of bones from extreme want of food. (Here is another pitiable sight). I saw emaciated people trying to ask for food but, falling down, were speechless."

They could show signs of hunger and starvation. As they were at the threshold of death; they could not speak, they were speechless. This is from the Minister of Finance of Orissa. There is no good of any complacency on the

[Mr. K. S. Gupta.]

part of the Central Government, Sir! You must immediately send for the Ministers, if you can and if you think they will obey you. They could disobey you because you allowed them to do so on previous occasions. Please do not, for a moment longer, allow a grain of paddy to go out of that province. Otherwise, the dying people will become spirits and haunt you in your sleep or in the life after death.

Coming to my place, Vizagapatam, the district of Vizagapatam is considered to be a famine district in a deficit area. In Vizianagram and Berhampore there was rationing; it was introduced some four months ago and it was working well. God only knows why the rationing had to be cut down by 50 per cent. each adult was getting half a seer of rice per day; suddenly it was reduced to a quarter seer. Those who sit at home and work with their brains can afford to be satisfied with one-fourth seer, but what about those who work from morn to eve—the wage earners, the field workers and the landless labourers? I tell you the people are subsisting on things ranging from horse gram to coir dust. I have seen with my own eyes people eating the remains from the chaff, they go to the mills and take the chaff and winnow it several times and pick out bits of rice that may be left behind; such is the poverty stricken condition of the people in the villages. Rationing! we welcome on an all-India basis. It is worth trying as an experiment. If any one says it is impossible, I would say it is an idle excuse on the part of those who say it. The whole of Europe and Russia are now on rations because of responsible and representative Governments.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have got one minute more.

Mr. K. S. Gupta: I tell you Sir, that goodwill is absent. Confidence cannot be found even with a torch. If you think that all is well, you are mistaken beyond redemption. There is a tragedy, a worse tragedy to be enacted in Orissa and in the Andhra Provinces. The Ceded Districts have been a hotbed of famine for several years, from time immemorial. In fact nothing has been done to alleviate the dire and distressed condition of those people. Of course the Government of Madras is tackling it in its own way, but that is not enough. Several people have suggested several remedies. The organisation of grain banks in villages, etc. etc.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Your time is up; you must stop now.

Mr. K. S. Gupta: One sentence, Sir. Mahatma Gandhi and his followers, our leaders, should be set free; they will have a tearing all-India campaign to do the best for the poor and drive distress out of India.

Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad Siddiquee (Chittagong Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I hail from Chittagong, the land of wonders of India, which has withstood wonderfully the onslaughts of Japanese aggression and barbarism. I do not like to talk much on the food debate as the matter has been discussed and brought to light by many Honourable Members of this House, and it would be a repetition of the same if I discuss again by wasting the valuable time of this House.

I wish to bring only a few facts before this House regarding the food situation in Chittagong. Chittagong being the south eastern frontier of India, near the enemy land, the affairs and conditions of Chittagong are neither published by the Government nor the public and the press are not allowed to give any publicity although terrible famine broke out in Chittagong long ago. Rice was not available in Chittagong even at one seer a rupee from the beginning of the year 1943. I wrote several letters to Mr. K. G. Ambegaonkar, the then Deputy Secretary of the Food Department, setting out the crying needs of the people of Chittagong, but to no effect.

With the beginning of the Denial Policy in the year 1941, prominent merchants, exporters and importers were compelled by the Government to leave Chittagong with their bag and baggage. A major portion of Chittagong being

hilly, her production in rice was always insufficient to a considerable extent. With the fall of Burma, her population has been increased by more than two lakhs, totalling more than 20 lakhs. A great majority of the people of Chittagong had to depend upon Burma for trade, commerce and industry and foodstuffs. But the Government fully realising the future situation did not make any provision to feed the people although the people of Chittagong were courageously defending the eastern gate of India against Japanese aggression. The people of Chittagong have been playing a very important role in merchant ships and the navy throughout the world, more than any other part of India, in the successful prosecution of the war, and thousands of her brave sailors have already sacrificed their lives in high seas for defending the shores of India and the Empire. But no consideration has been made even to feed the widows and children of those who have sacrificed their lives. On the contrary, the military police killed hundreds of poor and destitute persons by kicking when the unfortunate persons went to beg in search of food near the military areas. Vast areas of fertile paddy fields have been made aerodromes in several places of Chittagong. Moreover, they destroyed many green paddy fields by donkeys and always prevented the civil population from bringing rice or any other foodstuffs in sufficient quantities from outside to Chittagong with the result that thousands of people died every month in towns and villages long before the so-called Bengal famine was made known to the public. Public were prevented from representing their cases of food scarcity to any authority. My humbleself being the President of the Muslim Chamber of Commerce of Chittagong and Chairman of the Chittagong Central Relief Committee, the Calcutta Muslim Chamber of Commerce offered me one wagon of rice and several pounds of condensed milk every month as free gift about a month ago provided I could secure priority certificate for booking those articles.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

But to my utter misfortune I was flatly denied any facility by a high official although we are feeding thousands of distressed daily, irrespective of caste or creed in different centres. On my failure I wired and wrote to the Bengal Premier and Minister of Civil Supplies to take necessary action, but I do not know how far they have been successful, and I have left all papers with my Secretary for securing those articles somehow.

Sir, may I ask if still the Denial Policy is going on in Chittagong? I see no reason why foodstuffs should be denied for feeding the poor and the needy in Chittagong.

Sir, another problem has arisen in Chittagong, and that is about livestock. With the military concentration in Chittagong, fifty per cent. of her cattle were consumed by the military and the rest have been dying in hundreds every day owing to a serious epidemic unprecedented in history, threatening the total extinction of cattle in Chittagong. Pure milk in Chittagong town and mofussil places has become the problem of the day. Pure milk is not available even at one rupee a seer. Unless the Central Government comes forward to supply cattle in thousands to the agriculturists before the next cultivation begins there, there is every likelihood of a great majority of the lands remaining uncultivated.

Recently another more serious problem has arisen in Chittagong. A very large number of paddyfields, valuable agricultural and horticultural lands have been occupied by the military people and very little compensation has been paid in a few cases, and in many cases no compensation has been paid yet to the sufferers. Over and above, the military Department have been requisitioning the civil population houses in such large numbers that the civilian population are dying for want of accommodation and food in open fields and on public roads. In the opinion of civil authorities the military authorities have gone far beyond the top limit in requisitioning the civilian houses. A house which was rented at Rs. 10 a month a year ago is not available even at Rs. 100 a month, as building materials are not available to the public. Ordinary bamboos which were selling at Rs. 2 to 3 per 100 have risen to more than Rs. 30 per 100. The Government is not considering at all the question

[Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad Siddiquee.]

of giving any adequate compensation according to present circumstances, to the evacuees, nor are they considering the housing problems of the evacuees. The Government have got abundant resources in their reserve forests in Chittagong for building houses for troops. Unless the Government of India take up the whole matter for the people of Chittagong in the matter of food for and housing the civilian population, there is every likelihood that the whole civilian population would die with a very few exceptions. The condition in Chittagong is so critical and complicated that even a man of my position would not be able to live in this world unless God helps me. I appeal to the Government of India in the name of God and humanity, especially to His Excellency the Viceroy and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to take up the whole matter of Chittagong directly under the Government of India; otherwise, the Provincial Government would not be able to save the people of Chittagong under the frequent interferences of the military authority.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadian): At long last I have got the opportunity to say what I wanted to say on my amendment. I find that most of the things have been said on this debate food—I deliberately use the words, “debate food”, because it has been converted from food debate into debate food, and we have already consumed a sufficient quantity of this food, of this debate food, for the last four days. Now, I want to say something about the amendment that I have placed before the House.

Of course, many amendments have been tabled on this subject and I find that most of them have tried to dig up the dead bones and some have gone to the extreme of condemning the Viceroy and the Secretary of State. To me, it seems that these are all impracticable things and however much we may exercise our lungs and liver here, the net result is already a foregone conclusion. So, it is better that we contribute some practical suggestions that may be taken up by the Government and some relief may be given to these dying people, because those who are stranded and are crying for food have little interest in censuring the Government or asking for the impeachment of any high officials. With that point of view, I have urged that a committee of officials and non-officials should be appointed to go into the matter, so that the recurrence of such things may be stopped in future and for the present they may take some steps at once so that those who are starving in the affected parts may be helped. For this purpose, I have suggested gruel kitchens which have already been opened in many parts. I have suggested orphanages for lodging the orphans. I have got practical knowledge of the fact that people have been asked to take charge of some orphans from Bengal in one of the established orphanages. We have heard the story narrated yesterday by Mrs. Ray, as to how people are snatched away from their own family members and how the family is disintegrated, how the young children are taken away from their parents and the parents are crying in the streets of Calcutta. In order to avoid these things, I think the best course would be to start public orphanages by the Government where these orphans may be lodged and the parents may not have to undergo the pangs of separation indefinitely. I have got no words to emphasize the points that Mrs. Renuka Ray placed before the House yesterday. She placed it so nicely that the hearts of most of the members must have been moved by the facts brought to light by her. So, it is, only to emphasize that point that I have mentioned that the remedy lies in opening the orphanages. I have also suggested the opening of poor houses and industrial factories in important towns and the stopping of beggary. If you do this, you kill two birds with one stone. We see how much people have become demoralised when we travel on the railways. When a passenger puts a morsel of food in his mouth, he is surrounded by a large number of young boys and beggars and it is difficult for the man to eat. This has been the practical experience of most of us. In order to stop this demoralising thing, I suggest the opening of poor houses. You will urge the difficulties of finding funds for this purpose but you are finding money for bigger and higher purposes. But

I can say that so far as this country is concerned, this is the most pressing problem and you can help the solution of this problem by diverting some of these persons, who are reduced to the demoralising position of begging in the streets, and who are being reduced to the position of beasts, to useful occupations. At present you find 50 people gathering round a man who is eating and waiting for a morsel or crumb from him. In order to get rid of such demoralising things, you can open poor houses. This thing should be done immediately.

Then a great deal of discussion has taken place about the question of taking food to the affected parts. We have heard about the difficulties. We have been told how even the Railways have stood in the way. My view is that the result is due to the different angle of vision and the conflicting interests of the Government and the people. Instead of wasting so many words in discussion, there should be a heart to heart talk between the representatives of the people and the Government and they should settle as to how these two interests can be made to coincide. If you think that you must have food for the military and do not care even if hundreds of thousands of people die in this land, then of course we can never find out a solution, because you will go on thinking from your own angle of vision and the representatives of the people will go on thinking from their point of view. Both sides must come to a common settlement. I do not mean that we should in any way hamper the war effort. We have heard from several speeches during this debate how even the Government is resorting to black markets. I had a shrewd suspicion about this control business from the very beginning. When I was a member of the Control Committee in my district some one from the merchant class came to me and said ‘You are only fixing the price but after fixing the price the Government goes the next day and takes hold of all the food grains in the market. Keep this secret. We don’t want to disclose any names’. Even the merchants tell us how the things are being taken away from them and how the farce of fixing the price is being enacted. I know myself that the food stored in the granary of jails is sufficient for the consumption of the jail population for two or three years and yet Government is placing orders in advance for the purchase of foodgrains even before the harvest is ready. If these things are true and if there are different interests and different angles of vision in tackling the same problem, then it is beyond the power of any human being to bring the facts home to the Government. When a man is asleep he can be roused but if a man is really awake and pretends to sleep, he can never be roused and no attempt of any kind on the part of any one can wake that man. If you really think that the problem has been made so much complicated that it requires an urgent solution, it can be done. If you have this attitude of mind, then, of course, remedies can be found. Suggestions have been made and they can be acted upon.

So far as I am concerned, I am going to mention a few points about my own province of Bihar. I have here a letter published in the *Search Light* by R. C. Pandit, the Manager of the Bank of Bihar. He is a well-known man and is engaged in trade and commerce and you can understand what importance can be attached to his letter. He says:

“I had asked what is the Bihar Commercial Corporation? Is it a fact that it is a very new concern, something like a ‘war baby’ sucking all the milk while the war lasts? Is it a fact that this concern does a good amount of sales and purchases of the Government through the Trade Adviser? Is it on a commission basis or buying at Rs. 10 or 12 a maund and then selling at Rs. 16, 18 or 20 and pocketing the difference over deals of thousands of maunds of rice a day? Who are the proprietors? Why are not open tenders called for or mills dealt directly? Why does not the Government release the large stocks it has accumulated. The rains will spoil the large portion of it.”

So, the trend of this letter is that things are going on in a way which do not come to the notice of the public. We know that a Corporation in Bengal was also engaged in this very way as this concern is connected with the Government of Bihar. After all, such under-hand dealings are going on. If for the show of the public some explanations are offered here to solve the problem, then the problem will remain where it is and there will be no solution at all.

[Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall.]

Then, Sir, I have a point which I was anxious to place before the House and which I am glad to say has already been mentioned by my friend Mr. Muhammad Nauman. Last time it was said that Bihar is a surplus province. We, who come from Bihar, were so eager to challenge this statement during the last debate but not one of us was given an opportunity. This time also we thought it will go unheard and we will remain in the background. Fortunately, my friend Mr. Muhammad Nauman got an opportunity and I have also got an opportunity of placing before this House the fact that after all the Government of India has found out that Bihar is a deficit province. So far as the starvation deaths are concerned, the other day I put a supplementary question to the Honourable the Food Member and he said that no information was forthcoming from Bihar. I have myself seen in the streets of my town of Bhagalpur people dying of starvation. I do not know whether any notice is taken of these persons by the Provincial Government or whether this is also a part of the policy of Government to keep these things unnoticed so that they may conveniently say that there are no deaths by starvation in Bihar. If the Honourable the Food Member does not get any reports from Bihar, I may inform him that people are dying of starvation in the streets of Bihar. If he cares to call for a report from the Provincial Government and if they are truthful enough, he will get the same information. I think the bubble of Bihar being a surplus province has now been pricked and the Government should now know that it is a deficit province. In connection with this very point I may also say that the people who are dying of starvation in the streets of Calcutta are not all from Bengal. It is a well-known fact that most of the labourers that are working in Calcutta hail from Bihar and also from some parts of the United Provinces. Of course, Calcutta is such a cosmopolitan city that people from different provinces are expected to go there. But most of the labourers that migrate to Bengal for earning their livelihood go from Bihar. Honourable Members know that Biharis have never migrated to any other province for holding the posts of a High Court Judge or any other responsible position. They have always migrated in search of labour. I hope my Honourable friend the Law Member who hails from Bihar will bear me out when I say this.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The Law Member hails from Bengal.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I meant the Leader of the House, who hails from my province, will bear me out that Biharis mostly have migrated to Calcutta in search of labour. It is they mostly who are dying like flies in the streets of Calcutta. It is not for the pleasure of dying that they have gone to Calcutta. The real thing is that the conditions at home are such that they are compelled to go out. The fact of the matter is that there is very little scope for giving publicity to the matter. Of course, the papers in Bihar do not publish generally the news that is controlled by the Government. Even here, when I attempted an adjournment motion, it was not published. I do not know what is the condition that is prevalent in Bihar that frightens the Government so much even to publish it. Even the press does not publish that sort of news.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: There is no internal censorship.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: What do you mean by 'internal censorship'?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: That is, within India.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: But is it not a fact that the Government of Bihar or somebody on their behalf have stood in the way of the two papers of Bihar, the *Search Light* and the *Indian Nation*, from publishing such a thing?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Honourable Member's time is up.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: As my time is up, I leave the subject there. The point that I have tried to bring to the notice of the Government is that if they try to find out the actual conditions prevailing in Bihar they will find that Bihar is as bad a sufferer as any other deficit province.

Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur (South Madras: Muhammadan): Mr. President, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to ventilate my views on this

Food question so far as my Province of Madras is concerned. Sir, when my Honourable friend Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar was the Commerce Member of the Government of India, when there were no indications about famine, even then he acted up to the principle of prevention is better than cure. What did he do? He invited all the representatives of several Provinces and consulted them as to what measures should be adopted to see that famine does not occur. My humble view is that had his successors followed the noble procedure, the sympathetic procedure adopted by him, much of the suffering, particularly the sufferings of our Bengali brethren would have been alleviated, would have been minimised at least. Unfortunately this was not done. My Honourable friend had to quit India for some time and take the place of War Minister in England. He might have proved himself very useful there, but so far as India is concerned, it sustained a great loss by his going there just at the time. Sir, attempts have been made to prove as to who is to blame for this miserable and appalling condition not only in Bengal but also in Orissa and in certain districts of Madras and so forth. There is unanimous opinion so far as non-officials are concerned that the Central Government is to blame. They had not acted up to the principle laid down by one of their own Members, I mean my Honourable friend Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar. If they had taken a sympathetic attitude regarding certain indications which were already visible, of course this catastrophe would not have transpired. That is my humble and candid view. The head of the Government in this land—I am sorry I have to speak in his absence, but all the same I cannot but give expression to it—has been sleeping over this important question and did not mind as to what was taking place in the Provinces. Some say that the British Government have opposed this. These are our custodians, these are our trustees, these are our guardians and they regard us at least for names sake as their wards, but in reality they have failed in their duty. I have completed my 85 years of age, I am now in my 86th year and so I have seen enough ups and downs of life in the history of India. In those days, there were famines, there were pestilences, there was dearth of food, and also of other necessities of life. We have been subjected to all these kinds of difficulties and calamities. Fortunately for us, the present Viceroy is very sympathetic, he thought it incumbent upon him to visit at least Calcutta and some other important places. Being a gallant Viceroy, he enlisted the co-operation of the military department from whom some help, not much help—I am very careful regarding the use of the word 'some'—some help is being rendered to the civilian population in the distribution of food grains.

Sir, I am obliged to pass this remark that the military people though very gallant, yet they are actuated by selfishness. They store any amount of food-stuffs for their own soldiers. They are very miserable in paying Indian sepoys when compared to European soldiers, they pay the Indian sepoy very negligible amount, but so far as rations are concerned, they give ample rations to the military personnel at the expense of the civilian. This is the result. Now, Sir, even the present Viceroy's visit to Bengal has not proved very effective. There is a Persian saying among Iranians which says:

"*Chamcha Zadu Chamcha Zadu Halva ko (kujast).*"

Oh! spoon you have been moving again and again in the jar, but where is the halva. Halva is not forthcoming. The sweet is not forthcoming. What is the meaning of your moving here and there and making regular noise. The chamcha may be compared to the Government. The outcome of all their efforts is nothing.

An Honourable Member: The Food Member is born with a silver spoon in his mouth.

Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur: Yes, that is why he can do things as he likes. He has got his own licence while sitting on the Treasury Benches. So far as Bengal is concerned, I may tell the House that I visited some of the districts of Bengal as a Member of the Haj Enquiry Committee. Mymensing district as has been stated by Chaudhuri Ismail Khan is really a rice producing district in former days and yet it is subject to famine. A doleful picture about our suffering Orissa brethren was given a few hours ago. The other day my Honourable friends Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty and Mr. Krishnamachari,

[Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur.]

both coming from Madras, brought to the notice of the House the appalling conditions in some of the districts of Madras. Madras, Sir, could have been a self-contained Province, but unfortunately this 'grow more food' campaign has not been given effect to there by the authorities. As has been pointed out by some of the speakers, this grow more food campaign has been only a farce. So far as Assam is concerned, there are lakhs of acres lying waste. The lands there are also very fertile and many Bengalis want to go and till the lands there and reclaim the lands at their own expense, but yet they will not be given permission to do so. Even one or two acres per head will not be given to them. When such is the case, what is the meaning of crying hoarse and advising us to grow more food. This is nothing but farce. If you go deep into the question, you come to one and only conclusion, namely the absence of national Government is the cause for all this misery. The absence of a sympathetic responsible Government is the cause for all this misery. As I have told you there are one or two exceptions among Indian Members of the Government of India who are true sons of India who want to help these poor souls, but they are quite helpless.

Sir, some mention was made about Travancore and Cochin and British Malabar. I know something about these places. Some Honourable Members might have heard about 30,000 deaths in one district of Malabar in a few months. Not 3,000 but 30,000 deaths. What was the cause? It was due to cholera. All these deaths were brought about by cholera, not plague. Fortunately Malabar was free from plague. There was cholera raging for many months. And what is cholera due to? Starvation brought about diarrhoea and that developed into cholera. So all these 30,000 deaths in one district of Malabar were due to starvation, but this fact was not given publicity in the press. Unfortunately for us, although we happen to have a paper like the *Hindu* which is the best managed paper in India, this fact was not laid strong stress upon even by that paper. So far as the ceded districts are concerned, our friends have spoken about it. And though I belong to Trichinopoly which fortunately is not a deficit district and we are prepared to send paddy, jowar and other grains to other districts, we are prevented from doing so. The same is the case with Tanjore. Godavari and Kistna are the other two districts in Andhra and the same difficulty stands in their way. Therefore Indians are not in a position to solve their own problem for want of their own Government. And so far as Bengal is concerned, many of our colleagues might have read the speech of the Premier of Bengal Sir Nazimuddin. He as Premier levels this charge against the Central Government and it is not a charge by an irresponsible non-official like us but by the responsible Premier of Bengal. He says that the Central Government did not act up to their promise. Having promised that they would give 8 lakh maunds to Bengal they gave only one-tenth of that. Yet, so far as the military are concerned, so far as their own agents are concerned, so far as other Governments are concerned, they are allowed to make money out of this. When Indians are dying for want of food, these persons,—and not only Indian merchants but also Government,—have made money and they do not come forward and say that they have not done it; even if they do say that they cannot substantiate their statement. The Food Member has been challenged by certain speakers; I want to see what kind of reply he is prepared to give them.

Sir, before I close I shall recite one Persian couplet which is appropriate to the occasion. The poet says:

"Bi tars az ahe mazlooman ki hangame dua kardan

Ijabat az dare Huq bahre istiqbal mi dyed."

"Be afraid and tremble; when the tyrannised people lodge a complaint against you, (i.e., the Government, profiteers and hoarders), to the divine power, acceptance goes in advance and takes those complaints to God."

It is the state of affairs which Government, the profiteers and hoarders should be afraid of, otherwise they will have to hold themselves answerable before the Divine Tribunal.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde (West Coast and Nilgiris: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, the Foodgrains Policy Committee have given several reasons in their report as affecting the supply position. The first reason given is shock due to

the eastern theatre of war. I wonder what they mean by it. If they mean that all the food supply dried up as soon as there was shock of war in the eastern front, I do not know what would happen to a great country like Russia which has been maintaining a length of 1,200 miles of war front and facing the enemy for more than 27 months. If it means that on account of Eastern war front some denial policy had to be undertaken by Government and these by boats, roads and houses had to be destroyed and villagers had to be left to find shelter and food for themselves, I certainly agree that it is a very good reason.

The second reason that is advanced is "political troubles". I do not know who is the father of this political trouble. Is it His Majesty's Government or the Government of India or the people? If all of them are responsible then the Government of India must thank themselves. Political troubles are not new in this country; they have been existing even before this war was declared and they will exist even after this war comes to a close. Therefore it is meaningless to say that the food situation has become very severe on account of political troubles. If they mean that there were some few derailments of trains here and there, they ceased long ago; they were not in Bengal; and the Bengal famine, the Orissa famine, and the famine in some parts of Madras Presidency were all subsequent to and long after these sporadic derailments of trains. On the other hand, several Members have challenged the Government of India, specially the Transport Member, by alleging that wheat was lying in the Punjab continuously for several months together without being moved, but he has not chosen to give a proper reply. Definite dates were given, definite quantities of wheat that were lying at different railway stations were given, but still he has not chosen to reply. Sir, may I bring my own personal experience to the notice of this House? I take one meal a day out of wheat and one meal out of rice; and it is now eight months since my house has seen wheat. If transport is not responsible for not carrying wheat to the district of South Canara, who else is responsible? And it is only about three weeks back that I was supplied by the Collector of South Canara with half a maund of wheat.

There is the question of sugar. Our country is self-sufficient so far as sugar is concerned; rather we produce more. But is it not a general complaint that sugar is not properly and equitably distributed? When I mentioned this matter to the Collector of my district he said the Railways were responsible and they were not bringing sugar to the District. I will give you my own personal experience. For the last 18 months my household has seen only 2 lbs. of sugar—I am not exaggerating. I refused to pay the blackmarket price and so I had to go without sugar.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Then in that case the Railways must have brought sugar to your district.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Most certainly, they ought to have. But my experience is.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): May I inform the Honourable Member that the sugar movement programme is very well up-to-date.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: It may be, but what I am telling you are hard facts. The Food Member is an Indian. I very much sympathize with him. He is an honest and straightforward man, but he is made a scapegoat by three departments of the Government of India and they are the War Transport, the Finance and the Home. I am going to support this statement from what I submit hereafter.

Sir, returning to the subject, it must be admitted—and it is admitted in this Report—that transport was responsible for not carrying food grains in time. This country was mortgaged long long ago for the sake of this transport. A large number of them are called 'State Railways' and they are expected to feed the people of this country, and it is no satisfaction to this House, which has been supporting every year the Railway Budget, to say that they had no wagons. I know where these wagons have gone; I know where our rails have gone. They went to supply food in Iraq and Iran. And these Railways failed to supply food to the people of my country.

and [Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde] said that the next reasonable expansion of currency will be dealt with this last. Before that the following reason is given: "The depression in the period was probably eating less than was requisite for full efficiency." It means that there are a large number of people in this country who are living on the margin of starvation. When did this blessed Government come to know about this? Was it only when thousands of people starved to death in Bengal that this Government came to know that there are a large number of people in this country who are living on the margin of starvation. Sir, this was a patent fact. Great men in this country, as well as outside this country, have pointed out that it is the British Government in this country which is responsible for reducing the people to poverty. Professor Radhakumud Mukerjee has written a very valuable book on this subject. According to him more than 30 per cent. of the people of this country live on the margin of starvation, and this blessed Government now comes to know after several thousand deaths in Bengal, that famine is due to the fact that many people were living on the margin of starvation.

Sir, attempt is made in the report to put the blame on merchants, on cultivators, and on consumers. The report says that these people are hoarding and would like to take each class separately. But who is responsible for this hoarding, how this hoarding came about, what is the reason behind this hoarding? Not a single Member on the Treasury Bench has given reasons why hoarding came about. Sir, it has come about on account of the deplorable policy pursued by the Finance Member. The prices were rising—I will give you figures. From 1911 onwards there was never a fall in any market. Certainly, it encouraged traders to make profits, it encouraged consumers to hoard a little quantity—just enough for a week or two weeks' maintenance—and it is a natural consequence when the prices were rising. Sir, it is false to say that cultivators are hoarding. I would like to know whether they have got any definite report on this matter. This House is entitled to know from the Government in which province they found that cultivators were hoarding. I would like to know whether this Government at any time cared to define what is 'hoarding'. Did they care to make it an offence?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes, they did.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: When was it, Sir?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Anti-hoarding Ordinance was passed.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: When was it issued?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: In 1941.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Sir, I know of cases in connection with the control of Foodgrains Ordinance. I would like the Member concerned to ask for the reports as to how many cases of hoarding were reported by traders, as to how many prosecutions were made in different districts in India, how many of them were withdrawn by the Collectors of districts and what were the reasons for withdrawing. If you want to know, I can tell you. I know of cases in which when people contributed to the war fund, prosecution were withdrawn.

An Honourable Member: In Bengal that happens everyday.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: What then is the use of these Ordinances, Sir? I want definite figures. Let us have them by the next Session. How many cases were reported? how many were filed, how many were withdrawn and in how many cases sentences were awarded? Sir, I have heard the officers who were in charge of these prosecutions say: "What shall we do? The Government is likely to withdraw these cases." I am not exaggerating. I am a lawyer, I know facts and I will not exaggerate, but put them as they are. I request this Government once more to see that figures are collected. Then they can see for themselves how far they succeeded by this Ordinance. I do not see my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, who made a big point yesterday. He

said: "The cultivators must be encouraged, must be given a profit, a big profit, a large-profit". Sir, I would like to know whether there is any expert in the Government of India, or anywhere in the world, who can fix the price of rice or wheat and say this is the basis on which you can find the price and this is the fair price of rice and wheat. Instead of publishing such voluminous reports, I would have appreciated if they had given the basis on which we could arrive at a fair price for rice or wheat. They do not do that. On the other hand they say that provinces are going to fix ceiling prices. The ceiling price should not be high everywhere, people who are concerned with the fixing of prices should not make room for large profits. It is meaningless to say powers are given to the provinces for fixing ceiling prices without giving basis for it. I say that at the time of fixing prices certain considerations should be taken into account.

Now, for instance, for a long time the Government claimed that they would support agriculture and that they would give money to grow more food. It is a patent fact that of the 34 lakhs of acres which were brought under cultivation a large area of it was only a conversion from cotton to rice cultivation. It is false to say that 34 lakhs of acres of waste lands were brought under cultivation of foodgrains. I would like to know at least from the provinces through the Central Government as to how much each province spent on the programme of Grow More Food campaign. We heard long lectures and pious talks. That is all bluff.

Further in the recommendations I find that due provision should be made for supplying water so that immediately more food could be grown. I know, Sir, that in my province of Karnatak, the Tungabhadra project was undertaken long ago. Commissions were appointed. Ministers have come and gone, and today there are districts and districts that are lying waste for want of water.

The next point is the question of manure. I would like to know from the Government how much they have spent in getting manure to the villages.

My friend Sir Cowasjee Jehangir said that cultivators were being taxed less. Their taxes were not increased and whereas the tax on industries had been increased. I am sure he is quite ignorant of the fact. I would tell him that in this country if it were not for the agricultural tax none of the Provincial Governments could be sustained. We pay in relation to the total revenue 8 to 10 annas in the rupee. Whereas in England and in every other country in Europe the maximum land revenue is two annas in the rupee. Still my friend says the agricultural tax is low. But of the total area under cultivation in this country 62 per cent. of it is governed by the Ryotwari Law. This law means that every tenant or cultivator who has cultivated the land, irrespective of the area, has to pay fifty per cent. of the net income he gets from that land. Does he mean to say that still the agriculturists are not paying enough? They are paying enough.

When agriculture was at its lowest ebb, in this very House, I remember, I wanted that rice that is imported from Burma should be taxed. What did this Government do? They taxed the broken rice; as if the merchants could not import whole rice and break it up. I challenge the Supply Member just to see what is the tax they collected. This tax was useless. Nothing was collected because it came from Rangoon and whatever broken rice came to India no tax was paid on it here.

This was the treatment given to the rice-growing people. If you take the population of the cultivators, you will find that 2/3rds of that population grow rice and 2/3rds of the population are rice eaters.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Sri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde: Therefore, my submission is that when the price is going to be fixed, due care must be taken of all considerations relevant to the question. The cultivator's interest must be considered before any decision is taken.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 18th November, 1943.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 18th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

POLITICAL DETENUS AND CONVICTS IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

272. *Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state the number of political detenus and political convicts who were arrested in the Madras Presidency and are now in various jails of the Presidency and also in jails of other Provinces?

(b) Are all the political detenus given family allowances, and if so, at what rate?

(c) Is there any discrimination made in fixing the family allowances to detenus, and, if so what are the reasons for such discrimination?

(d) Is any increase made in the family allowances to the detenus owing to the present abnormally enhanced prices of foodstuffs? If so, what is the rate of increase? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The terms "political detenus" and "political convicts" used by the Honourable Member have no precise meaning. If by these terms, he is referring to persons detained and undergoing imprisonment in connection with the Congress movement, then the totals for the Madras Presidency, as on 1st October, 1943—the latest date for which figures are available—were 584 and 1,351, respectively. These totals doubtless include any Madras prisoners detained in jails in other Provinces, but I have no separate information as to their numbers.

(b) Family allowances are granted by the Provincial Government only in cases in which they are considered necessary, and their rates vary according to the circumstances of each case. I have no information of the allowances actually granted in Madras.

(c) I am not clear what the Honourable Member has in mind; I am aware of no discrimination.

(d) It is open to the Provincial Government to increase the allowance in any case in which they consider it inadequate.

DISCRIMINATION IN RELEASING POLITICAL DETENUS AND CONVICTS.

273. *Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu. (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state if it is a fact that discrimination is made in releasing detenus and convicts on parole? If so, why?

(b) Are the detenus and convicts who are released on parole paid by Government railway fares from the places of detention to their homes? If not, why not?

(c) Is it a fact that family allowances of detenus are stopped for the period the detenus are on parole? If so, why?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have no detailed information regarding the practice in Provinces. As far as Chief Commissioners' Provinces are concerned, however, the answers to the Honourable Member's question are as follows:

(a) Convicts are not released on parole. Security prisoners may be temporarily released when in the opinion of the Chief Commissioner considerations of humanity render this desirable such as, for instance, critical illnesses of near relatives. The release is, however, subject to such conditions as security may require.

(b) Each case would be considered on its merits. So far no such application has been made in Chief Commissioners' Provinces.

(c) No.

DAILY RATIONS FOR POLITICAL DETENUS AND CONVICTS.

274. *Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state if there is any increase in the daily rations for detenues and convicts owing to the present abnormal prices of foodstuffs? If so, what is the rate of increase? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The fact that the price of foodstuffs has risen is not, of course, any ground for increasing the scale of prisoners' rations. In Ajmer, Coorg and Baluchistan, a scale of rations is prescribed for convicts. In the case of both convicts and security prisoners in the Delhi Province, in respect of whom diet is based on a daily cash allowance and not on a ration scale, the allowance has been increased and is now more than double the former rate. There appears to have been no corresponding increase in the diet allowance of security prisoners in Ajmer, but the increase in the cost of foodstuffs there has doubtless been far less than in Delhi. There are no security prisoners detained in the other Chief Commissioners' Provinces. As regards the practice in Provinces, this is a matter for Provincial Governments and I have no information.

DEVASTATION DUE TO FLOODS IN MADRAS.

275. *Mr. G. Rangiah Naidu: Is the Honourable the Home Member aware of the devastation and distress in the city of Madras due to the recent heavy floods caused by the heavy rains? If so, what help do Government propose to afford to relieve the distress?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes. The matter is primarily the concern of the Provincial Government who have not, so far as I am aware, asked the Central Government for help in relieving distress.

CONTINUANCE OF EXPENDITURE ON A. R. P. IN SIND.

276. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member be pleased to state whether, in view of the favourable turn for the Allies in the war in Russia and the Middle East, the expenditure on A. R. P. measures in Sind will be continued as in the last two years or curtailed progressively to vanishing point within a limited period?

(b) If an enemy air attack on Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur or Jacobabad is considered too remote, what steps have been taken or are under contemplation to disband the A. R. P. organisation there?

(c) How are the A. R. P. personnel and material being disposed of, considering the negligible nature of the danger of an enemy air attack on any part of Sind?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: (a), (b) and (c). The whole question of reducing expenditure on A. R. P. in areas where it can be safely reduced is under consideration and the Government of India are in close touch with Provincial Governments in this regard.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Is there any danger in Sind for continuing this?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: It would not be in the public interest to answer that question.

EVACUEES AND REFUGEES IN INDIA.

277. *Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban: (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a census of the evacuees and refugees in India is being undertaken? What is the total number of such evacuees and refugees from Burma, Malay and other enemy occupied countries? How many of them are Europeans, Indians, Burmans, Anglo-Burmans and Anglo-Indians?

(b) Is anything being paid to them by way of maintenance? If so, what is the total expenditure? Is there any difference in the scales of allowances given to the nationals mentioned above? Is this expenditure met by His Majesty's Government or the Government of India? If by the Government of India, what are the reasons for doing so?

(c) How many Indian evacuees and non-Indian evacuees, both official and non-official, from Burma, Malay and other enemy occupied countries are at

present employed as Gazetted Officers under the Government of India and the Provincial Governments?

(d) What measures have hitherto been adopted to utilise the services of the evacuees of all classes? Do those measures apply equally to Indians and non-Indians? If so, what are the reasons for the disparity between Indians and non-Indians receiving employment under the Government of India? Are any measures being proposed to remove this disparity?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: (a) A census of evacuees is being taken during the current month. The information asked by the Honourable Member with regard to the number of evacuees of various nationalities from each enemy occupied country will not be available until the tabulated results of the census are ready. As at present estimated the total number of evacuees is approximately five lakhs. The number of European British and Foreign evacuees in India is 10,464.

(b) Government have sanctioned a scheme of financial assistance to evacuees of all nationalities and the total expenditure on Indian evacuees is estimated to be between Rs. 7 and 8 lakhs every month. The scales of allowances prescribed by the Government are based on the pre-evacuation income of evacuees and are applicable to evacuees of all nationalities alike. As regards incidence of cost, Indian and Anglo-Indian evacuees are paid for from Indian revenues; European British subjects from all countries except Burma are paid for by His Majesty's Government, and Burman and Anglo-Burman evacuees from Burma and Europeans ordinarily resident in Burma are paid for by the Burma Government. The cost incurred for foreign allied nationals is ultimately debited to Governments of the countries whose subjects they are.

(c) and (d). The information asked for in part (c) is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House. In the meantime Government have no information whether any disparity exists. All measures designed to assist refugees to find employment apply to Indian and non-Indian alike.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Have any evacuees been employed in Sind in any official jobs?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: I have no information on that point.

RATION ALLOWANCES FOR INDIAN EUROPEAN MEMBERS OF INDIAN ENGINEERS (DEFENCE OF INDIA) UNIT.

278. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the War Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) whether he proposes to request the Army authorities to grant equal ration allowances to the Indian and European Members of the Indian Engineers (Defence of India) Unit;

(b) whether it is a fact that King's Commissioned Officers in the Indian Engineers (Defence of India) Unit get various stores like clothings and drinks at concessional rates; and

(c) if Government propose to afford similar facilities to the Viceroy's Commissioned Officers, if not, why not?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Ration allowance in lieu of rations is only granted to Other Ranks of the Defence of India Units when employed on Railways. It is based on the value of the rations to which the individual is entitled. Domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians are entitled to the British scale of rations which is more expensive, since more of the articles composing it have to be imported.

(b) and (c): As far as clothing is concerned King's Commissioned Officers do not get free issues but are permitted to purchase at Officers Shops at the current vocabulary price plus departmental charges. There is no question of concessional rates. Viceroy's Commissioned Officers are not so permitted because they are clothed free by the State and all replacements are free. As regards other stores and drinks the position is that up to now no personnel of these units have been eligible to draw canteen stores from Canteen Services (India) installations but arrangements have now been made for them to do so at the same scale as the equivalent ranks in the Army.

SALE OF GOLD BY RESERVE BANK TO THE PUBLIC.

279. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

- (a) whether Government had been consulted by the Reserve Bank prior to its offering gold for sale to the public;
- (b) the policy of the Government in regard to such gold sales;
- (c) whether such gold sales are intended to bring down speculative activity in the bullion market or to act as a check on inflation;
- (d) whether the Government of India or the Reserve Bank have imported this gold from abroad; if so, from what country; or whether they are selling gold out of the stocks of gold held in this country by the British Government or by any other foreign Government;
- (e) if the gold that is offered is purchased by the Government of India or by the Reserve Bank, at what price the purchase is made;
- (f) if it is a fact that the gold that is offered is from the stocks held by the United Kingdom Exchange Utilisation Account; if so, what price the Account gets for this gold, and to whom the margin, if any, goes; and
- (g) if it is a policy of the Government of India to acquire gold from other sources and sell it in the country, whether Government have examined the possibility of buying gold in the United Kingdom at the London market rate of sh. 148 per ounce and selling the same to the Indian public?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Government do not consider that it would be in the public interest to give the information asked for.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: On the whole question? Are not the public interested?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The public may be extremely interested, but I have said it would not be to the general advantage to answer these questions.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Why do Government say that?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: For reasons which I think are not very difficult to understand.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask if the public are not interested in knowing whether the Indian Government is benefitting by this sale or some other government is benefitting by this sale?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: There are many points which the public would be very interested to know, which cannot be revealed currently without damage to the public interest.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does the Honourable Member hold out any hope that he will be able to make a statement on these points when he makes his budget statement?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I would not like to be specific about the time at which I should be able to give information on this matter, but I do hope that I shall be able at some to do so.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Will it affect your budget in any way?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That would be giving information; but I may say that it does not.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: May I ask whether Government does not realise that if they gave information, speculators will be really frightened and the public reassured?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That consideration always arises, but one has to decide what on the balance will really be in the interests of the country.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: And the balance is against giving information?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is Government's conclusion at this moment.

MUTUAL AID PLAN OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT.

280. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

- (a) whether his attention has been drawn to an article appearing in the *Economist*, dated the 26th June, 1943 (page 823), in which, in regard to the

Mutual Aid Plan of the Canadian Government approved by the Canadian Parliament, it is stated that "Speaking of Canadian goods provided through Britain, to other British Dominions, India, the British Colonial Empire, certain Middle-Eastern areas and Russia, Mr. Ilsley made two points, (1) that Canada now proposed to deal directly with these countries, and (2) that Canada felt that the Canadian source of this assistance should be clear to the countries receiving it";

- (b) whether the Government of India have examined the implications of this statement as well as of the various clauses of the Mutual Aid Act relating to the repayment of obligations as well as trade policy and fiscal freedom of the country entering into agreement with Canada under this Act;

(c) whether the Canadian Government have approached the Government of India for the establishment of a direct relation between India and Canada for the supply of Canadian goods to this country; and

(d) whether he proposes to place on the table figures for:—

(i) the Canadian goods provided to India through *Great Britain* for the years 1939-40, 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43; and

(ii) the Canadian goods, if any, directly provided to India for the same years?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) We are awaiting further information on the subject.

(c) No.

(d) These statistics are not available and could not now be compiled.

LEASE-LEND OBLIGATIONS INCURRED BY INDIA.

281. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that negotiations between India and the United States of America in respect of the Master and Reciprocal Agreements under Lease-Lend have been suspended for the time being? If so, does he propose to clarify the position in regard to Lease-Lend obligations incurred by India, and the position of the reciprocal aid given by this country in terms of provisions and equipment and other services to the forces of the United States of America stationed in the country?

(b) What is the exact nature and the amount of obligations incurred by India in respect of Lease-Lend goods received in the country since November, 1942, that is, since India was declared eligible for Lease-Lend aid?

(c) What is the liability of the Government of India in respect of Lease-Lend supplies received in the country, how is liability allocated as between United Kingdom, China and India, and on whose behalf the Lease-Lend goods have been received in the country?

(d) Are the Government of India, while keeping accounts, showing under a distinct head in their books, the amount of aid received on Lease-Lend account from the United States of America through the United Kingdom, and that received from the United States of America directly?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a), (b) and (c). Negotiations for a direct Mutual Aid agreement between India and the United States of America are in suspension. The remaining points were covered in the last budget speech and in my statement in the House on 17th March, 1943. I hope to make a more up to date statement in my next budget speech.

(d) No. This is unnecessary since the comparatively few Lease-Lend stores that are received through the United Kingdom are such as would be provided free by His Majesty's Government to India under the Financial Settlement and no liability is assumed by India.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask whether the Honourable Member will confirm that the expenditure incurred by the Government of India with regard to reverse Lease-Lend exceeds what the Government of India may have received from the United Kingdom or the United States?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Confirm that it exceeds? I certainly deny that the cost of reciprocal aid debitable to India has exceeded the estimated value of Lease-Lend aid received by India.

Sardar Mangal Singh: When are negotiations likely to be resumed—these talks about Lease-Lend?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I cannot say.

PARTICIPATION OF INDIA IN THE ALLIED MONETARY CONFERENCE.

282. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of India have been invited to participate in the Allied Monetary Conference which is to be held to discuss the American, British and Canadian Monetary proposals, and to arrive at a Post-war Monetary Agreement or Scheme;

(b) whether the Government of India have taken cognizance of the various opinions expressed on the American, British and the Canadian Monetary proposals by economists and other public men;

(c) whether the Government of India have given their full consideration to the views expressed on these proposals by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry; and

(d) whether he proposes to state the names of the personnel which the Government of India have selected to represent India at the forthcoming Monetary Conference?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to the reply I gave to his question No. 238 on the 6th August last. No arrangements have yet been made for the holding of an Allied Monetary Conference.

(b) Yes.

(c) The views expressed on the proposals by all the interests which have been consulted will receive due consideration.

(d) No selections have yet been made.

REVISION OF THE FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT OF 1939 BETWEEN INDIA AND GREAT BRITAIN.

283. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether the reports that are current in the country that discussions for the revision of the Financial Settlement of 1939 between India and Great Britain have taken place between the two Governments are correct; and

(b) whether any correspondence has taken place between the Government of India and His Majesty's Government on this subject?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) No.

(b) No.

ARREST OF MR. RAGHUNANDAN SARAN.

284. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mr. Raghunandan Saran, former President of the Provincial Congress Committee, Delhi, was arrested in September, 1942, at Dalhousie where he had been lying seriously ill for several weeks;

(b) whether it is a fact that he has been ever since in detention;

(c) whether it is a fact that he was sent to the Mayo Hospital, Lahore, in May, 1943, for diagnosis by specialists;

(d) whether it is a fact that massage formed the integral part of the treatment prescribed for him by Khan Bahadur Dr. Mohammad Yusuf, Mayo Hospital Specialist;

(e) whether it is a fact that Government refused to bear the expenses for this treatment upon which he gave it up as a protest; and

(f) whether it is a fact that his neurotic condition has progressively deteriorated and is causing anxiety to his relatives and friends; if so, what action the Delhi Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The person named was arrested in Dalhousie early in September, 1942. His health at the time was not good but he was not seriously ill.

(b) Yes.

(c) He was transferred from the jail in which he had been detained to the Mayo Hospital in Lahore in May last and for most if not all of the subsequent period has been in that hospital.

(d) Yes.

(e) Full information in regard to this part of the question is not available here, but it is known that in August last the Punjab Government gave him permission, as a special case, to employ at his own expense a specialist in Yogic massage.

(f) In view of the fact that his condition did not appear to be improving in hospital, orders for his release were issued by the Chief Commissioner of Delhi on the 3rd November.

TREATMENT METED OUT TO DELHI DETENUS IN PUNJAB JAILS.

285. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all Delhi detenus now kept in the Punjab Jails are made to live in the General Ward of the Mayo Hospital when sent there as indoor patients, like 'C' Class Prisoners; if so, why; and

(b) whether it is a fact that while as indoor patients they are not allowed to meet even their fellow detenus; if so, the reasons for the same?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) and (b). Information has been called for from the Punjab Government and will be laid on the table in due course.

MEDICAL TREATMENT OF PROFESSOR N. K. NIGAM.

286. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Professor N. K. Nigam, M.A., who was detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules from Delhi is suffering from intestinal tuberculosis and is lying seriously ill in the Mayo Hospital, Lahore;

(b) whether it is a fact that an application was sent by him to the Chief Commissioner, Delhi, for permission to be privately treated by Dr. N. C. Joshi of Delhi; and

(c) if the answers to (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, what action Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The person named is believed to be suffering from a tubercular complaint and was recently transferred under the orders of the proper authorities in the Punjab from the jail in that Province where he was detained to the Mayo Hospital, Lahore. It is understood, however, that the treatment prescribed for him in hospital can be just as well given in jail and that the hospital authorities have recommended that he should be returned to jail. It is clear that he is not seriously ill.

(b) He applied to the Chief Commissioner in January last to be retransferred to the Delhi jail with a view to his treatment by a private medical practitioner of his own choice, but the application was not granted.

(c) His health will continue to be carefully watched.

RELEASE OF CONGRESS DETENUS OF DELHI.

287. *Mr. N. M. Joshi: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the cases of the Congress Detenus of Delhi have been scrutinised by Government with a view to releasing such of them whose detention was no longer justified; if so, the action taken as a result of scrutiny;

(b) whether it is a fact that, barring a few, almost on all persons released as a result of scrutiny various conditions have been imposed restricting their movements as well as asking them to report themselves to the Police stations in their wards thrice a week;

(c) whether it is a fact that the persons asked to report to the police stations thrice weekly include Shrimati Brij Rani, a lady; and

(d) whether it is a fact that this order is adverse and is widely resented by the public and has been strongly criticised by the local Press; if so, if Government propose to withdraw the same?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Yes. As a result of this scrutiny 41 security prisoners have been released from detention by the Chief Commissioner since August 9th, 1948.

(b) Restrictive orders of various kinds have been served on the majority of the prisoners so released. Most of these orders contain provisions prohibiting the prisoner from taking part in political meetings and processions and requiring him to report at intervals to the local police station.

(c) Yes.

(d) The order has been relaxed and she is no longer required to report to the police station.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask what was the machinery which was used in reviewing the cases of these detenus?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: They were reviewed by the Chief Commissioner himself.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member explain the utility of asking these people to report themselves at the police station—the principle on which this condition is based?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: That is quite an ordinary precaution to take in cases of this kind; at any rate, it allows the person more liberty than he would have enjoyed had he continued to be detained. A similar provision, for instance, exists in the corresponding Defence Regulation in Great Britain, that a person may be required to report his movements periodically. There is nothing unusual in such a requirement.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I ask the Honourable Member to substitute surveillance by the police instead of asking these men to go and make a report at the police station? Will it not conduce to better results?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I doubt very much whether persons themselves would prefer the police coming and prying into their houses.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Are people being detained merely for investigation, against whom there is nothing definite?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I do not quite understand the Honourable Member's question. Does he refer to the Delhi prisoners?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: In Delhi as well as outside. People are detained simply for investigation?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: They are not detained merely for investigation. They are detained only in cases where there is reason to suppose that their liberty may have to be restricted.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: But for investigation alone I am asking?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: It does not appear to arise out of this question, but I have already answered that question. They are not detained for investigation alone, but it is only in cases where the individual person is suspected.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know whether the cases of persons on whom restraint orders are served are reviewed from time to time?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes.

Sardar Mangal Singh: When was my case reviewed last?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

ADVISABILITY OF TRANSFERRING DELHI DETENUS FROM PUNJAB JAILS TO DELHI JAIL.

288. ***Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state whether Government propose to consider the advisability of transferring all Delhi Detenus to the District Jail, Delhi, to enable them to get the treatment of Security Prisoners to which they are entitled according to their classification and which has been denied to them hitherto in the Punjab Jails, or alternatively, to ask the Punjab Government to give these detenus the same treatment as was allowed to Security Prisoners in 1940 in the Punjab Jails in all respects? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No. The Government of India have laid down certain principles regarding the treatment of security prisoners and I am satisfied that, as a result of recent correspondence with Provincial Governments, these principles are now generally accepted in all Provinces including the Punjab. In matters of detailed treatment, Central Government prisoners accommodated in Provincial Government jails must continue to be treated in accordance with the provincial rules.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the jail in Delhi is still very overcrowded so that it is necessary for the prisoners in Delhi to be sent to the Punjab?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, Sir. That is not the reason for distributing prisoners. But Delhi has the advantage of the whole Punjab jail system and that gives an opportunity of grouping prisoners in different jails according to the kind of reasons for their detention or imprisonment.

RESTRICTIONS ON INTERVIEWS WITH DETENUS.

289. ***Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state which Provincial Government, if any, has yet been withholding permission for interviews to detenus?

(b) What are the existing restrictions regarding interviews for detenus detained under the orders of the Central Government and do Government intend to relax them?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Interviews are forbidden to Congress security prisoners in the Punjab; in the United Provinces, interviews were, except in special cases, refused to all classes of security prisoners, but I understand that the question is at present under further examination by the Provincial Government. In the remaining Provinces interviews are ordinarily allowed to all classes of security prisoners.

(b) Central Government security prisoners are ordinarily permitted one interview per fortnight if in Class I and one interview per month if in Class II. In the case of prisoners detained in connection with the Congress movement, however, interviews are restricted to one per month with members of the prisoner's family on personal and domestic matters only. Government have no present intention of relaxing these restrictions.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Will the Honourable Member write to the Punjab Government that they should allow interviews to the Congress security prisoners?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: We have already corresponded with the Provincial Governments on these matters and the Punjab Government must be allowed to make their own arrangements.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Has the Government of India particularly asked the Provincial Governments to permit interviews to the Congress security prisoners, or have they simply written to them?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Government of India have suggested the matter for the consideration of the Provincial Governments and intimated that there was no objection to it if it suited the provincial system of administration.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know if the Punjab Government have given any reply to that letter? Have they refused to accede to that suggestion, or they are still considering?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have said in answer to a question the other day that they are not yet in a position to see their way to do it.

RE-ARREST OF MR. JAIPRAKASH NARAIN.

290. ***Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta:** Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the circumstances which made it possible for Mr. Jaiprakash Narain to escape from prison several times in the course of the last two years;

(b) whether the newspaper report about his rearrest is true;

(c) what special arrangement, if any, has been made for his detention; whether he is detained under strong military guard;

(d) whether he is now kept in the underground cells of the Red Fort in Delhi;

(e) whether he is allowed all the facilities that are usually allowed to political prisoners; and

(f) the present condition of his health?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Most of this question relates to matters that are the concern of the Provincial Government, but I will give such information as I can.

(a) Mr. Jaiprakash Narain's only escape from prison in recent years was from the Hazaribagh Jail in Bihar in November, 1942. The escape was effected with the aid of accomplices.

(b) Yes.

(c) I am not prepared to disclose the arrangements which have been made for his detention.

(d) It would not be in the public interest to disclose his present place of confinement.

(e) Yes, subject to the necessity for securing his absolute seclusion.

(f) He is reported to have some kind of skin disease, but is otherwise in good health.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask whether the reward that was offered by the Government of India for the apprehension of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain has been paid?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I am unable to answer that question.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know if Mr. Jaiprakash Narain is being given medical treatment for the skin disease?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Yes. He has been looked after like any other security prisoner.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if it is a fact that third degree methods are being employed against such a prominent personality as Mr. Jaiprakash Narain and allegations have been made in the Punjab Assembly to that effect? Will the Honourable Member either affirm or deny that statement?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have already denied those allegations in this House.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Has any inquiry been made into the allegations?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Punjab Government have already denied them.

DETENTION OF CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

291. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state the reasons for keeping secret the place or places of detention of the Members of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress, and why their relations are not allowed to interview them?

(b) Is it a fact that at the outset, the Home Department of the Government of Bombay assured the relatives of the aforesaid Members of the Working Committee now in detention that they would be allowed interviews and other facilities as soon as things quietened down? If this be a fact, why has this assurance not been implemented?

(c) Is it a fact that some, if not most, of these Members of the Working Committee in detention are in a bad state of health? If so, what may be the reason for withholding all information regarding them?

(d) Is it a fact that Mahatma Gandhi has been in correspondence with the Government of India since August last? If so, what are the subject-matters of such correspondence?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Because the Government of India have no desire to advertise the place or places of detention and consider that the persons in question should be effectively secluded.

(b) No.

(c) No. The Government of India receive regular weekly reports regarding the health of the Members of the Working Committee in detention and it is generally satisfactory.

(d) I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply given by me to Mr. Gupta's question No. 311 during the previous session; I have nothing to add to this.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether it is not a fact that the health of Sardar Vallabhai Patel has not been good for some time?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: How does the Honourable Member know that?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Sardar Vallabhai Patel is permitted to write to the members of his family and the subject of his health is one on which he is not prohibited from writing. May I ask the Honourable Member to reply to my question?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member seems to possess information on the subject.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What does the Honourable Member mean by stating that the condition of their health is generally satisfactory?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: In generality, they are enjoying good health.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: In specific cases, they are not. Is that the implication?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: They have their ups and downs like all human beings. They are generally in good health.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: In individual cases, they are not enjoying good health?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have already said that there are minor ailments in individual cases but there has been no serious illness among them and they have very good hospital facilities where they are.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to my Honourable friend's answer to part (d) of the question, is it a fact that one of the subjects on which Mahatma Gandhi has addressed the Government or the Governor General is in connection with the food situation in which he has made certain suggestions.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I would refer the Honourable Member to my answer to part (d) of this question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I want a specific answer as to whether this is not one of the topics on which Mahatma Gandhi has addressed the authorities.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have already said in answer to part (d) that I have nothing to add.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member said nothing and therefore he has nothing to add. I want a reply on the specific point whether Mahatma Gandhi has addressed the authorities in regard to the question of dealing with the food situation.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member should understand my attitude from my reply to his present question and the reply to the previous question to which I have referred him.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member's attitude is not a mystery to us.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Why don't you give a straight reply?

(No answer.)

RULES FOR PURCHASE OF FOODSTUFFS FOR FIGHTING FORCES.

292. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state the substance of any rules that may be in operation relating to purchases of foodstuffs for the fighting forces in India with the object of securing economy in price and preventing procurement of foodstuffs, including foodgrains, meat, vegetables, fruits and dairy products at unreasonable prices?

(b) What is the nature of the organisation of the machinery that has been operating in Bengal during recent months for the purchase of the various articles of food mentioned above for the fighting forces, and what checks and controls have been operating thereon for the purpose of securing economy in expenditure and preventing fancy prices being paid for food articles?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the general impression prevailing throughout Bengal that the present famine conditions have been accentuated partly by the recklessness that characterised the purchase policy of the fighting forces, and that apart from the case of foodgrains, a comparative scarcity prevails almost throughout the Province in the matter of supplies of vegetables, common fruits and dairy products, and that their prices have risen abnormally due to purchases made by agents on behalf of the fighting forces (including non-combatant personnel) at high prices?

(d) Is the Honourable Member in a position to place on the table any statement made by any audit authority, or other responsible officials, indicating the nature of control exercised in this matter in recent months in Bengal?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Foodgrains for the Defence Services are obtained from the Food Department and the question of the rules governing their purchase should have been addressed to the Honourable Member in charge of the Food Department. Fresh meat, vegetables, fruits and dairy products are purchased by the army direct on a contract basis, and the guiding principle is that the lowest tender is accepted after comparing this with the current market rates.

(b) As regards the organisation for the purchase of foodgrains, the question should have been addressed to the Honourable Member in charge of the Food Department. As regards the organisation for the purchase of vegetables and dairy products, special local purchase officers have been appointed to ascertain local resources of fresh articles and to consult freely the civil authorities in regard to such stocks and the prices to be paid.

(c) I am not aware of the impression referred to by the Honourable Member, nor is that impression, if it does exist, founded on facts. No rice for the fighting services was purchased in Bengal during the current year, while the policy adopted by the military authorities for the purchase of vegetables and dairy products is aimed at controlling a rise in prices by checks such as those mentioned above, though a certain rise is, in the circumstances, inevitable. Apart from this control, some portion of the demand for potatoes for the army in Bengal is met by importing dehydrated potatoes from outside Bengal. Moreover, the military authorities have undertaken cultivation of extensive areas throughout Eastern India for the production of potatoes and fresh vegetables. The seed in each case has been specially imported by the military authorities and the gardens have been cultivated either by military personnel or through contractors at certain fixed, but normal rates. Thus the Army to a large extent is self-supporting as regards potatoes and fresh vegetables, leaving the normal produce largely untouched for the civil population. Instructions have also been issued that when utilising local resources the effect of excessive consumption on future supplies, particularly poultry and eggs, must be carefully considered.

(d) I am making enquiries from the audit authorities and will lay the result on the table of the House in due course.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to the answer to part (a) of the question, will the Honourable Member care to explain what he exactly means by 'contract basis'. Do I take it that there is a contract for the supply of the stuffs that he has mentioned operating throughout the province of Bengal or are there individual contracts that operate in each local area and in respect of which there is a separate contract and supply agency.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The military local purchase organisation in Bengal consists of six local purchase officers with a Chief Local Purchase Officer of the rank of Colonel at Army Headquarters. Local purchase is done not by means of one contract but by means of a series of agreements made for varying periods with the suppliers.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to indicate approximately the profits which such contracts allow to the contractors?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am afraid I have not got the details with me.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Will the Honourable Member kindly indicate the local areas where this vegetable production is being carried by the Eastern Command?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I think the areas are throughout Bengal, I can obtain detailed information for the Honourable Member if he so desires.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: How did the Military acquire the land required for this purpose. Was it land in occupation of private parties before the military authorities began to utilise this land?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Some lands existed in unit lines and in some cases seed was supplied to private individuals for growing vegetables in their gardens.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I want to know how the land was supplied?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: There are some unit lands in Bengal and certain spare land was available there belonging to the army.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What crops used to be raised in these lands before the Military took them over?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am afraid I cannot say.

APPOINTMENTS OF ASSISTANT ENTOMOLOGISTS.

293. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) whether the Federal Public Service Commission had advertised in August last and called for applications for the appointments of first and second Assistant Entomologists; if so, the particulars of the recruitment;

(b) the contents of advertisements of the Federal Public Service Commission for the said posts;

(c) whether it is a fact that the said advertisements had been prepared by the Department of Education, Health and Lands and published in the Gazette without any change;

(d) the total number of applications received, and the number of applications from Muslims for either of the posts;

(e) the number of candidates called for interview with their nationalities and creed;

(f) the number of candidates who were M.Sc. in Entomology and also secured diploma or degree of A.I.A.R. after two years continued practical course at Pusa College, and the number of such Muslim candidates;

(g) the total number of candidates as well as the number of Muslims of the qualifications in part (f) above not called for or refused interview;

(h) the names with qualifications of candidates granted interview for either of the posts;

(i) the names of the candidates or candidates selected for either of the posts by the Federal Public Service Commission; and

(j) the names of the candidates appointed to either of the posts?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The question should have been addressed to the Department of Education, Health and Lands.

DELAYED ENFORCEMENT OF THE DELHI MUSLIM WAKF ACT.

294. *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the editorial of the Urdu Weekly *Payam* of Delhi, dated the 23rd October, 1943; if so, the reason for not enforcing the Delhi Muslim Wakf Act by the 9th October, 1943, the last date for its enforcement as stated by him in reply to a starred question put by Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani in the last session;

(b) whether the versions in the said editorial are correct; if not; what the true version is;

(c) whether the Provincial Government have given any indication that they propose to nominate any of the sitting members of the Fatehpuri Masjid, Juma Masjid or Anjuman Moidul Islam, Delhi;

(d) whether the Provincial Government have made any rule prescribing disqualifications for members for election, appointment, co-option or nomination under sub-sections (f) and (g) of Section 9 of the Act; if so, what; if not, why; not; how the Returning Officers will be guided; and

(e) whether it is a fact that one Mr. Shafi Badi has served a notice or sent a note or resolution on his behalf as well as on behalf of Muslims of Delhi asking the Chief Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Secretaries of Municipal Committees to refrain from allowing any person disqualified under sub-sections (f) and (g) of Section 9 to stand as a candidate for election or appointment, drawing particular attention to the disqualification of the sitting members of the three Committees (Fatehpuri Masjid, Juma Masjid, and Anjuman Moidul Islam) superseded under Section 25 of the Act for their mismanagement, as well as of the members of the Fatehpuri Masjid who have been removed by the order of the Subordinate Judge, Delhi, which was confirmed by the High Court, Lahore;

(f) what action the said officers have taken on receipt of the said requisition or notice; and

(g) whether it is a fact that the whole Muslim public of Delhi is perturbed at the news that some of the sitting members of the said superseded bodies, as referred to in the said editorial, are going to be appointed as members of the Wakf Majlis?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) I have seen the editorial. The Act came into force on the 5th October, 1943.

(b) Government are not in a position to confirm or deny the activities which the article attributes to certain persons but as far as the Chief Commissioner is concerned, it is unlikely that he will make up his mind about the persons whom he will nominate until after the elections are complete.

(c) No.

(d) Section 9 of the Act is self-contained. The question of framing rules supplementing it does not therefore arise. In the event of any objection being made against any candidate, the Chairman of the meeting or the Returning Officer, as the case may be, has to follow the procedure laid down in Rules 5(n) and 21, respectively, of the Delhi Shia Majlis-i-Aukaf and Delhi Sunni Majlis-i-Aukaf Election Rules of 1943 published in Part II-A of the *Government of India Gazette*, dated the 9th October, 1943.

(e) A letter was received by the Chief Commissioner from Mr. Bari, but there was no indication that it was sent in representative capacity.

(f) None.

(g) Government are not aware of any such general feeling.

RESTRICTIONS ON RELEASED DELHI SECURITY PRISONERS.

295. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to say if it is a fact that the security prisoners of the Delhi Province who were released recently, are required to report their attendance at the police station? If so, are the restrictions imposed enforced only in the Delhi Province or any where else also?

(b) What restrictions are imposed after the release of a security prisoner?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member is referred to my answer to Mr. Joshi's starred question No. 287. Restrictive orders applicable to persons residing in Delhi are not, of course, enforced elsewhere.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Is it a fact that Government have imposed conditions of restrictions upon those persons against whom nothing has been found and who did not take part in the movement?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, Sir.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I know if it is not a fact that Ram Charan Aggarwal of Delhi, who was detained and who has now been released, is asked to report thrice a week to the police station?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I must ask for notice of that.

BIHAR DETENUS UNDER DEFENCE OF INDIA RULES.

296. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to say how many persons have been detained under Rule 26(b) and Rule 129 of the Defence of India Rules in the Province of Bihar?

(b) How many of them have been released up till now?

(c) How many of the persons wanted to be detained under Rule 26(b) of the Defence of India Rules are still absconding?

(d) Is it a fact that different policy is being followed by different Provincial Governments with regard to the release of detenues?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The number of persons of all types detained under Defence Rule 26 in Bihar from the beginning of the war up to September 30th, the latest date for which figures are available, was 501. I have no information as to the numbers detained under Defence Rule 129.

(b) The Provincial Press Adviser announced at a Press Conference on November 5th that 88 persons had been released.

(c) I have no information.

(d) No. The matter is not one of general policy but of the merits of each case. As I have stated before, Provinces have cases of detention under constant review. No person is detained longer than in the judgment of the Province concerned is necessary.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I ask whether it is not a fact that in Bihar detenues are released very meagrely?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I am unable to answer that question. That is a matter for the Provincial Government.

VICEROY'S RELIEF FUND COLLECTIONS FOR BIHAR EARTHQUAKE SUFFERERS.

297. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the total amount collected in the Viceroy's Relief Fund in aid of the Bihar Earthquake sufferers?

(b) How much was distributed as free gift, and how much as loans to be paid back to the Fund?

(c) How many loans have been repaid?

(d) What is the amount of the balance of the Viceroy's Relief Fund at present, and how is it administered?

(e) Do Government propose to apply the balance of the Fund for the relief of the food distress in the country?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) to (e). The Governor General in Council is not concerned with the administration of the fund.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I know who is responsible for the administration of this Fund?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I understand that it is administered by a Central Committee appointed by His Excellency the Viceroy and a Provincial Committee appointed by His Excellency the Governor of Bihar.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Are these Committees still in existence?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have no exact information on the point.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will Government obtain the necessary information with regard to this?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, Sir. As I have already said, the Government of India are not really concerned in this matter.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: May I ask who can say as to what has become of the amount at the disposal of this Fund?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member can address himself to those who are responsible for the administration of the Fund.

Mr. Hoosenbhoy A. Lalljee: May I know, Sir, how this question has been replied by the Home Member when it was addressed to the Finance Member?

(No answer.)

PRINCIPLES FOR CLASSIFICATION OF PRISONERS.

298. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the principle for classifying prisoners in three divisions; and

(b) if it is a fact that persons of high social status and lawyers who had been detained under the Defence of India Rules have been placed as prisoners in the III division?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) The classification of convicted prisoners, to whom I presume the Honourable Member is referring in this

part of his question, is based partly on differences in the standard of living and partly on the nature of the offence. Thus prisoners accustomed by social status, education and habit of life to a superior mode of life are classified either as Class A or Class B. The distinction between these two classes usually depends on the nature of the offence, prisoners convicted of offences involving violence or moral turpitude not being admitted to class A. Other prisoners fall into Class C.

(b) There is no Division III for security prisoners detained under the Defence of India Rules, except in certain special cases for *goondas* and persons of that type. So far as I am aware no lawyers or persons of high social status have been placed in this class of detention.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I could not follow the latter part of the answer. Is it a fact that the lawyers are placed in Third Division?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I said not so far as I am aware.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable Member find out that actually there are several lawyers and big zamindars in Third Division?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Not unless they have been classified as *goondas*.

PERSONS DETAINED AND CONVICTED IN BIHAR DURING THE LAST POLITICAL MOVEMENT.

299. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of persons detained and convicted in Bihar in connection with the last political movement in the country;

(b) if it is a fact that the number of such detained and convicted persons in Bihar has not decreased ever since the movement was at the highest pitch;

(c) if it is a fact that in provinces other than Bihar large numbers of persons detained and convicted have been released;

(d) if it is a fact that there has been no report recently of any act of sabotage or any instance of subversive activity in Bihar; and

(e) if Government propose to follow the same policy in Bihar in the matter of release of political prisoners as in other provinces?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Up to September 30th, which is the latest date for which official figures are available, the total number of such persons detained under Defence Rule 26 was 453 and the total number of such persons convicted was 10,801.

(b) The number of persons convicted has not decreased nor, of course, could it decrease except by successful appeals, which do not appear to have been numerous. On the other hand, the number of convicted persons still undergoing imprisonment on the 1st of October was only 5,322, as regards persons detained the number had fallen by July, 1943, but there was some increase owing to apprehended trouble in August. I expect there will again be some decline in future figures.

(c) and (e). As explained in my reply to the Honourable Member's question No. 296 the practice is the same in all Provinces but the number of persons released varies from Province to Province. I have no reason to believe that convicted persons have been released in any Province except as a result of appeals or on expiry of their sentences.

(d) No. The latest information from Bihar shows that the atmosphere is not yet normal and that the volume of unlawful activities is still considerable.

UNIFORMS OF THE INDIAN PERSONNEL OF W. A. C. (I.).

300. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken to remedy the defects in the uniform to be worn by the Indian personnel of the W. A. C. (I.).

(b) whether the department have considered the feasibility of adopting for the Indian personnel of the W. A. C. (I.) dress similar to what is prescribed for women officers of the I. M. S.; and

(c) why there is such a great disparity in the uniform allowance between women officers of the I. M. S. who are given Rs. 600 and the W. A. C. (I), who are given an initial allowance of Rs. 240 with a recurring allowance of Rs. 80 per annum?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) The question of changes in the uniform of the W. A. C. (I) has been considered and opinion among officers and auxiliaries has been sounded. The general feeling is that no change is necessary, but standard sandals are being approved as an optional article of dress in lieu of shoes.

(b) The dress prescribed for Indian personnel of the W. A. C. (I) is similar to that prescribed for women officers of the Indian Medical Service. The only difference is that the Indian Medical Service may wear shirt blouses with *saris* in lieu of jackets, whereas the W. A. C. (I) wear bush shirts with *saris* in similar circumstances.

(c) The initial uniform allowance of Rs. 600 authorised to women officers of the Indian Medical Service is required to last for the whole of their service and approximates to the allowance given to male officers. The uniform allowance for W. A. C. (I) is arranged on a more economical basis initially, but will become more favourable after 5 years' service.

INADEQUATE SIKH REPRESENTATION ON CANTONMENT BOARD, KASAUJI.

301. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** Will the Honourable the Defence Member please state if it is a fact that the representation of the Sikh Community in the Cantonment Board, Kasauli (Simla Hills), is most inadequate? Has any representation been received from Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Kasauli, on the subject? If so, what action has been taken in this connection?

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: The information is being collected and a statement will be laid on the table in due course.

LOCATION OF W. A. C. (I.) HOSTELS.

302. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** (a) Will the War Secretary please state whether W. A. C. (I) hostels are located near the camps of British Other Ranks?

(b) Have complaints been received of the B.O.Rs. trespassing into the premises of W. A. C. (I)?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) As far as is known, the only case is that of the Irwin Stadium where the W. A. C. (I) hostel is situated about a quarter of a mile from British Troops quarters.

(b) No, Sir.

MANUFACTURE OF OPIUM ALKALOIDS FOR MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS IN INDIA.

303. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if he is aware of any difficulty experienced by pharmaceutical manufacturers in India, in getting opium alkaloids like Codeine, Morphine, Heroin, etc., which are essential ingredients for the manufacture of several medicinal preparations?

(b) Do Government propose to allow the manufacture of opium alkaloids in the country by private agencies, as is being done in Great Britain and America the Governments of which countries are also, like that of India, signatories to the International Opium Conventions? If not, why not?

(c) What is the total requirement of opium alkaloids of the chemical and pharmaceutical industries in India, and how much of these requirements is met by the Ghazipore Factory? What have been the supplies of this factory during the first three months of the current year, 1943, and during the months thereafter, separately?

(d) How and when do Government propose to overcome the shortage of opium alkaloids in this country?

(e) What have Government done so far in releasing opium alkaloids to Indian manufacturers for the manufacture of essential drugs? Have suggestions to this end been received from organisations of manufacturers such as the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

(f) Are Government aware that there are several manufacturers, possessing necessary plants and technical staff who are prepared to undertake the manufacture of opium alkaloids under Government control? If so, are they going to be allowed to manufacture the same?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f). I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to question No. 186 on 15th November, 1943.

(c) The information has been called for and will be placed on the table of the House in due course.

QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUED BY INCOME-TAX DEPARTMENT TO INDIAN FIRMS OF AUDITORS.

304. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the Income-Tax Department have issued a questionnaire to Indian firms of auditors through an assessee requiring them to furnish an exhaustive list of all the books of accounts maintained by the assessee?

(b) Has such a questionnaire been also issued to European firms? If not, why not?

(c) Are Government aware—

(i) that for replying to such a questionnaire a staff of not less than half a dozen persons will have to be maintained by the auditors; and

(ii) that such a procedure would not only put the Indian auditors to extra expense but might also at the same time encourage commercial firms to employ non-Indian auditors?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have called for a report from the Commissioner of Income-tax, Bengal, and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS OF INDIA IN RESPECT OF OPERATIONS OF THE EAST ASIA COMMAND.

305. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether there is any basis for the recent Press Reports to the effect that as a result of the creation of the new East Asia Command efforts may be made to impose additional financial burdens on India by the revision of the existing financial settlement between India and the United Kingdom or otherwise?

(b) What would be India's share, if any, in the cost of reconquering Burma?

(c) Do Government propose to press the case of India on His Majesty's Government in order that an inequitable agreement may not be imposed on India?

(d) Have Government received any representation in this connection from the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta? If so, what are the replies of the Government to the objections raised by the Chamber in this regard?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The Government of India have received no proposals from His Majesty's Government for a revision of the Financial Settlement.

(b) The Honourable Member's attention is invited to the reply which I gave to Mr. Neogy's question No. 48 on the 21st September, 1942.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, but in view of the answer I have just given to part (a) of the Honourable Member's question, most of the points represented do not arise.

APPOINTING OF SEPARATE EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OF INCOME-TAX.

306. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state if the Government of India recognise that in the interests of justice, the executive and the judiciary should function independently of each other?

(b) If the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, why has not this policy been maintained by Government in the case of Appellate Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax?

(c) Do Government propose to take steps to arrange for the transfer of such officers to either the Law Department or the Federal Court, as has already been suggested by representative commercial bodies including the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I would invite the Honourable Member's attention to the reply given by me on the 19th February, 1942, to a Resolution moved by him on the 12th February (pages 340-341 of the Assembly Debates) as also to the reply given by me on the 12th February, 1943, to a similar question asked by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai.

MUSLIMS AS METALLURGICAL INSPECTORS.

307. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the War Secretary please state the total number of Metallurgical Inspectors, and the number of Muslims therein.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The total number in employment under the War Department is 24, of whom one is a Muslim.

LIABILITY FOR COST OF DOUBLING THE BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY METRE GAUGE LINES FOR MILITARY REASONS.

308. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state whether the cost of doubling the existing Bengal and Assam Railway Metre Gauge Lines in certain Zones, for which tenders have been recently invited by the Engineer-in-Chief, War Works, Saidpur, is to be borne by the Government of India or by His Majesty's Government?

(b) In how many other instances, in the case of each Railway, have additional lines been or are to be provided primarily for military reasons?

(c) Have the Government of India taken any steps to see that the cost of such expansions is debited to His Majesty's Government and not to the Indian Railways, in view of the fact that they are primarily dictated by requirements of the Allied Military strategy against Japan?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The matter is still under consideration.

(b) It is inadvisable for security reasons to state separately for each Railway the number of instances in which additional lines have been or are to be provided primarily for military reasons. There are, however, a number of such instances.

(c) As indicated in the answer to part (a) the incidence of the cost of these measures is under consideration. Such expenditure as is debitable to His Majesty's Government in accordance with the principles of the Financial Settlement will be recovered from that Government.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

RECOGNISED FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AND NEWS AGENCIES.

36. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the names of Foreign Correspondents and News Agencies recognised by the Government of India for publicity?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: A statement giving the required information is laid on the table.

STATEMENT SHOWING NAMES OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS AND NEWS AGENCIES RECOGNISED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA FOR PUBLICITY.

- Correspondents.*
1. Miss C. K. Cumming.
 2. Mr. W. E. Fisher.
 3. Mr. Jack Shepley.
 4. Mr. Milliard Sheets.
 5. Mr. W. W. Vandivert.
 6. Mr. J. Holburn.
 7. Mr. R. W. Cooper.
 8. Mr. W. G. Burchett.
 9. Mr. Ian G. Fitchett.
 10. Mr. P. N. Ball.
 11. Mr. S. W. Emeny.
 12. Mr. Martin Moore.
 13. Mr. E. A. Kennard.
 14. Mr. Petr Gladyshev.
 15. Mr. Jacques Marcasse.

16. Mr. Preston Crover.
17. Mr. T. H. Wiant.
18. Mr. F. L. Martin.
19. Mr. John Morris.
20. Mr. W. L. Briggs.
21. Mr. A. T. Steele.
22. Mr. Martin Herlihy.
23. Mr. A. R. Humphreys.
24. Mr. Stanley Wills.
25. Mr. Victor Thompson.
26. Mr. Graham Stanford.
27. Mr. I. Lang.
28. Mr. Jevons Yu.
29. Mr. P. J. Wynter.

30. Mr. E. D. Cardner.
31. Mr. J. E. Brown.
32. Mr. F. Tillman Durdin.
33. Mr. Alex Small.

34. Mr. John G. Dowling.
35. Mr. Ernest Hauser.
36. Mr. D. V. Tahmankar.
37. Mr. V. J. Jurgens.

News Agencies.

1. Tass Agency of Moscow.
2. Agence Francaise Ind.
3. Associated Press of America.
4. United Press of America.

5. Reuters.
6. Central News Agency of China.
7. International News Service of U. S. A.

CREATION OF POST OF AN ADDITIONAL DEPUTY PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER.

37. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the justification for creating the post of an Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer, and how the present incumbent was appointed to it?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The post of additional Deputy Principal Information Officer was created to cope with the increase of work in the Bureau of Public Information, due to the war.

The present incumbent of the post was appointed by promotion.

QUALIFICATIONS, ETC., OF THE ADDITIONAL DEPUTY PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER.

38. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting please state the qualifications both academic and journalistic of the Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer and the pay on his first appointment to the Department?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) Academic qualification—B.A. (Hons.).

(b) Journalistic qualifications—Assistant Editor, *Indian News Service*; London, Sub-Editor, *Hindustan Times*; Correspondent; *British United Press*, *Statesman*, *Times of India*, *Civil and Military Gazette*, *Pioneer*, *Sunday Standard* and *National Herald*.

(c) Pay on first appointment in the Bureau of Public Information—Rs. 400 p.m. in the time scale of Rs. 400—20—500—25—600 as Assistant Information Officer.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

CONVICTION OF MR. P. R. PATHUR UNDER THE PEGGING ACT IN DURBAN.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice from Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh of two motions for the adjournment of the business of the House. I would like to know which of them does he wish to move?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammedan): I wish to move the second one.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): By this motion for the adjournment of the business of the House he wishes to discuss the grave situation that faces Indians in Durban on account of the enforcement of the Pegging Act as evidenced by the recent conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur, Secretary, Natal Indian Congress.

I think this Pegging Act was passed some time ago, even before the last Session.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: That is true.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Besides, there have been two discussions on this Pegging Act. The first discussion took place during the last Session and then we had another discussion in connection with the Reciprocity Bill. I should like to know from the Honourable Member whether he expected that this Act which has been passed would not be enforced?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: It was not enforced till now.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I hold that the motion is not in order.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

ILL-TREATMENT METED OUT TO MAULANA HUSSAIN AHMAD MADNI AND OTHER MUSLIM SECURITY PRISONERS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next motion is in the name of Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury. He wants to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the assault and rude treatment meted out to four Muslim security prisoners, including Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni, who were dragged out from the *Janamaz* and belaboured by jail warders under the orders of Mr. Gordon, Superintendent of the Naini Central Jail, which act interferes with the right of worship and prayer of Muslims and which is contrary to the generally accepted rules concerning treatment of security prisoners.

I want to know if the Honourable the Home Member can give any information on this.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member): This matter has nothing to do with the Government of India. Treatment of prisoners in jail is entirely a provincial subject.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I know that. But is the Honourable Member in a position to enlighten the House as regards the allegation.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I have heard nothing about it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The administration of jails is the concern of the Provincial Government and it cannot be called into question here. The motion is not in order.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury (Assam: Muhammadan): One word, Sir.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): No, you cannot argue.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE FOOD DEPARTMENT.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the Assembly that the following non-official Members have been elected to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects in the Department of Food:

- (1) Mr. Jannadas M. Mehta,
- (2) Choudhury Muhammad Hussain,
- (3) Pandit Nilakantha Das,
- (4) Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt,
- (5) Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait,
- (6) Mr. Hooseinbhoi A. Lalljee,
- (7) Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya,
- (8) Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad Shahban,
- (9) Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi,
- (10) Mr. C. P. Lawson.

ELECTION OF A MEMBER TO THE COUNCIL OF THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE, BANGALORE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the Assembly that Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad has been elected to represent the Assembly on the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

MOTION RE THE FOOD SITUATION—concl'd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Before the House deals with the motion relating to the food situation in India, I should like to know whether any agreement has been arrived at regarding the time-limit for speeches, whether there is to be any time limit.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): It has been agreed amongst the various Parties that the time-limit today should be thirty-five minutes.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam (Surma Valley cum Shillong: Non-Muhammedan): I am opposed to this arrangement. We have not been given any chance to speak at all.

[18TH NOV. 1943.]

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The House will now resume discussion of the motion relating to the food situation.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I would not have thought of participating in this debate for reasons quite obvious, but for the fact that certain references have been made to the administration of the Food Department during the period I was in charge. Sir, I would like the House to understand the facts that were before us at that time. I am not underrating the importance of death from any causes, but the answer which the Honourable the Food Member gave the other day disclosed that in January, February, March, April May and June, 1943, the monthly average mortality in Calcutta was less than the average of the preceding five years. In the month of January it was less by 958, in February it was less by about 689, in March by 820, in April by 933 in May by 358 and in June by 234. In other words if there was to be an attitude of complacency there would be at least a plea in these facts for the Department of Food. There was an apparent calm in the Province except through the reactions of the political discussions on the ministerial issue. At that time, and may I say for a long time to come, many would hardly believe that Bengal was almost facing a great disaster. It was difficult for me at least to make many believe that there was going to be an impending crisis in Bengal. But so far as the administration of the Food Department is concerned, there was absolutely no complacency. In spite of the fact that the mortality figures were low, we realised that there was going to be a crisis. We had found that free trade had failed, that the basic plan did not function, that nothing else could be devised within the time we had and for the time being except a general agreement amongst all the Provinces to take all means available for the greater supply of grains from surplus to deficit areas. We took every steps with a view to take available grains from surplus to deficit areas in circumstances which I fully described in my last speech. We called the Food conference on 5th, 6th, and 7th July. The Government of India came to an immediate decision. There was for the time being an agreement on the part of surplus Provinces to supply as much as they agreed to supply to deficit areas. Sir, that was no time for argument on my part as to whether they could or could not supply more. I would have been happy to get as much as I could get in the circumstances, and that was the attitude that I took. But, no, something more had to be done. We had to face the future. With a view that there might be a concerted co-ordinated plan in evolving a future policy, we took steps to appoint a long range plan committee and steps were taken immediately after the Food Conference was over for the Gregory Committee to meet from day to day till its deliberations and its report are before the country. Sir, I had realised at that stage, on going into the entire mechanism of purchase, supply and distribution that the purchase and transport of supply to the Provinces have been rather ill-related. It was no wonder that it was so; grains had to be purchased in a distant *mandi* in the Punjab and had to be supplied to the distant part of Travancore and Bengal. We therefore immediately took steps to get all co-ordinating authorities, purchasing, distributing and transport and other organisations to meet at Lahore. On the 5th, 6th and 7th July the Food Conference was held and on the 8th July, the Gregory Committee had its first sitting and on the 10th we rushed to Lahore to expedite the best possible arrangement for the transport organisation and to see to the quickening of supply. We took steps to make arrangements for storage in the different parts of India. There were other circumstances and limiting factors which I will not repeat today because I have given a full description of all these in my last speech and thereafter. As I gave indication, we tried our level best to arrange the import of food grains from abroad and took steps to bring it to the notice of His Majesty's Government the urgency and the need for greater food supply from outside. All this took us up to about the end of July. From the 26th July till about the 10th August the Legislative Assembly was sitting and then on the 10th August, the Food debate took place when I placed the circumstances then known to

me before this House. Without attempting to shield any of the facts. I tried to show that the Government of India, ever since the war, tried its level best to forestall and forewarn everybody. I tried my level best but in spite of the best efforts some of the things did not function. Miscalculation, if you wish to call it, you may. But the fact was that the Government of India from the very beginning tried their level best with a view to have a concerted and co-ordinated policy for India as a whole. In this connection I am reminded of a certain speech of mine at Krishnagar, which Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi has referred to. I am not usually accustomed to mislead the public in my public speeches. I am alleged to have said that Bengal has no deficit. I could never have said that. As a matter of fact I gave a warning in 1937 to everyone, Government and the public, that Bengal is a perpetually deficit province and any one who has studied my little book will find out that I quoted facts and figures, which I have in my memory even today, to show that Bengal is a perpetually deficit province and will probably be so for many years to come, unless adequate steps are taken.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Has not the Honourable Member disowned some of the conclusions that he himself drew from those figures in his book?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No. All I say is that in certain cases my figures were an overestimate but the over-all picture, namely, that it is a deficit province, stands and I still stand by it. And I knew exactly the 1942 crop. Sir, I should like to know what steps were taken by those in power in Bengal in 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942,—whose acts some Honourable Members have tried to defend here—to see that Bengal has greater production. It is no use saying today that there have been mistakes. There have been mistakes by each and every one of us but there is no doubt also of the fact that the persons in authority there did not take adequate steps.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): You were also a Minister; what did you do in 1937?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I was not a Minister in 1937.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: What did you do in 1935 and 1936?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Then again, Sir, reference has been made to the export of foodgrains, and my Honourable friend Mr. Ismail Choudhury seriously suggested, expecting that as a Member of the Central Legislature a voice like that would go all over India and abroad, that the U. K. C. C. has denuded India of all foodgrains by exports. I should have expected a more serious statement.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghaznavi (Dacca *cum* Mynensingh: Muhammadan Rural): To a certain extent it is correct.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is not correct to any extent. I have got figures of the last 17 months with me and I can say that the U. K. C. C. did not take a single grain except probably a 100 tons for Persia and Iraq.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Sir, when the Honourable Member was speaking on the last occasion

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member is not giving way.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, I have no time before me. I am an optimist and also a fighter and I am prepared to argue my case. As a lawyer I have never been trained to argue without facts and I have never made a public speech without facts.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member read Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas's minute appended to the Gregory Committee's Report on this point?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not saying anything on that point. I should say that the complacency was not with those who were in the Government of India but with those who were engaged in violent contentions on political issues while provinces were facing economic disaster. On

[Sir M. Azizul Huque.]

many of the issues at least so long as I was in charge I had to take decisions almost at a moment's notice without even having had the advantage of a five days' debate in the Central Legislature on the food question. The fact is that we were all living in a climate of much political opinion but little of economic opinion in the country. Much was made by those who would take anything to beat the Government for the mistakes of the past. Sometimes, as I have said, whether you call these mistakes or miscalculations, we might remember that these have not been deliberately done. They are ordinary incidents of human life, incidents which occur in spite of ourselves, and we might remember the well known saying of Mr. Churchill that we are often helped by our mistakes and injured by our most sagacious decisions.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): You are quoting a very bad authority.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am at least happy that I will not take the help of my Honourable friend to quote my authority.

Sir, there have been various references made to the cloth control scheme, particularly by my friend Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. As you have ruled that a detailed discussion of that is not within the subject-matter of this debate, I will refrain from speaking on it. But Mr. Mehta can come into my room and examine the samples of standard cloth now available all over India, and I have before me a list which has been promulgated with effect from June and July last of the prices of standard cloth and grey shirting.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir on a point of order, is the Honourable Member entitled to speak on standard cloth?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): No, I think that subject should not be discussed.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I was only replying to the point raised here but will not say much except to point out to Mr. Jamnadas Mehta that the price per yard is not Rs. 3-8-0 but 6 to 12 annas.

Sir, reference has been made to the necessary steps that ought to be taken with a view, to ease the food situation by various other control measures. I have on occasions more than once referred to the several control schemes that are functioning in the department of Industries and Civil Supplies. Honourable Members have now before them the Drug Control scheme, the Anti-Hoarding and Anti-Profiteering scheme, and I am glad to say that already there is a visible tendency towards lowering down of prices.

An Honourable Member: It is no use.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is only people who speak in a vacuum who say that it is no use. But if you know facts it will be possible to find out instances, and I say categorically without fear of contradiction, that here in this very city of Delhi the price of a number of articles has come down in the last few weeks.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Sir, may I interrupt the Honourable Member? I seemed to hear the Honourable Member say that the amount of grain exported by the U. K. C. C. was something like 100 tons. May I know the total amount of foodgrains that was exported?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I referred to that in my last speech. The Honourable the Food Member will be able to say what has been the actual export.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Is it the case that only 100 tons were exported through the U. K. C. C.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes, for the last 13 months so far as rice and wheat are concerned.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does the Honourable Member's total figure include exports on Government accounts, figures which were refused to be given to this House by his predecessor?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have not said anything about Government account; that is for the Honourable the Food Member to deal with. It is only with reference to the U. K. C. C. with which I am concerned.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-official): Sir, may I ask one question with regard to the Anti-Hoarding Ordinance? In that Ordinance the Government of India leave it to the courts to decide what a reasonable price is. Why should not the Government of India themselves fix prices for these articles?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I should have expected Mr. Joshi with his long experience to speak on facts. If he will read the anti-hoarding law he will find that Government laid down 20 p. c. as the profit for every commodity except with reference to such commodities where the Controller General fixes a higher price.

Sir, I do not like to take more time of the House except to claim that we have been taking all possible measures to introduce control in various articles and I do hope that some time later we will be able to show on facts and figures the results of the various steps that have been taken in the Industries Department.

Sir Henry Richardson (Nominated Non-official): Sir, in the first place I think I should make clear the attitude of this Group towards the various amendments which are before this House. As my colleague, Mr. Lawson, said 12 Noon. previously in this debate we consider it inconceivable that the terrible food shortage which is now being experienced in certain parts of this country should be permitted to fade from our memories with no more permanent record than the report of the Food Grains Policy Committee to guide us in the future and to supply us with data for protective measures. We are particularly anxious that there should be no interruption in the measures which are being taken to remedy the situation. We do not wish that the executives either at the Centre or in provinces should be engaged in defending themselves or in supplying a mass of evidence, which a proper enquiry will necessarily entail at a time when they must be fully employed in feeding the people. Also there is no doubt whatever in my mind that any procedure which will introduce a political trend to the problems before us would be a grave mistake. There are no politics in starvation and I feel quite certain that there is no political party or faction which has any other wish than that the present distress should be dealt with with the least possible delay. There is no political party that would profit by the distress of the people, nor would any political faction gain prestige by failing to employ every effort in the alleviation of suffering. It is a common characteristic of all the amendments that are before the House that parties require such an inquiry to be made. There is variation as to the type of inquiry, but I sincerely hope and believe that the main intention is to protect the people in the future rather than dilate upon the past or pillory those who have been confronted with what was clearly a most difficult and unprecedented situation. For this reason, an inquiry of the nature of a Royal Commission seems to us to be the most applicable and while we see difficulty in making specific suggestions as to the composition of such a Commission, there seems to be no reason why at a suitable time in the future such a Commission should not be appointed and after making full inquiries, submit a report which would point to deficiencies in the present system and make suggestions for future guidance.

If we had been consulted in an endeavour to frame an agreed amendment, we would have suggested one on these lines.

"That this House is of opinion that at a suitable date an enquiry should take place to examine the whole question of the food shortage in India and in particular in Bengal. The enquiry should be conducted by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission and its personnel should be completely outside the field of Indian politics. Its terms of reference should cover a full examination of the present food shortage and the making of recommendations to prevent the recurrence of the existing distress."

It must not be thought, however, that because I have spoken first on the question of inquiry we in this Group feel that nothing is to be done in the meantime. There is much which must be done here and now, by the Central Government, by the Provincial Governments and by the public and I think the main task of this Assembly in the present debate is to indicate to Government exactly what they think is to be done. Fortunately we are not without a blue

[Sir Henry Richardson.]

print; the Gregory Report which has already been characterised by this Group as a remarkable production sets forth certain lines of action. A considerable measure of support has been obtained from all quarters to the proposals in that Report and the important thing is to stick to these proposals and implement them without further hesitation or chopping and changing. Let us briefly consider two or three of the most important of those recommendations.

The most important of all is the proposal that while procurement should be left to the provinces, the Centre should make itself responsible for the allocation of surpluses and for indicating to surplus provinces how much they can be expected to make available. In this connection I would draw particular attention to the statement in the summary of the proposals that "public opinion will not tolerate a 'hands off' attitude by the Centre and in consequence the Centre cannot accept any situation which will involve its having responsibility without power". When this subject was last debated in this House we in this Group brought this question forcibly to the notice of the Central Government and we want to ask today whether they are satisfied with the measure of co-operation which they are receiving from provinces and, if not, what steps they propose to take in the matter. We cannot accept a situation in which the Central Government of this great country has to say—we cannot feed the people of India because this or that province will not co-operate. Nor do we believe indeed that any province will maintain an attitude of non-co-operation provided it is made clear that control of supply and prices of food is not being treated in isolation, but as part and parcel of an all-India system of general price and supply control. It is not surprising that a great agricultural province should hesitate to make grain available for other provinces at reasonable prices when its own cultivators have to pay unreasonable prices for other necessities of life. You cannot effectively control the price of grain—and have the cultivator behind you in doing so—unless at the same time you control the prices of all the main necessities of life. Let me instance in this connection the excellent start which has been made in this direction in the control of price of cloth. There too, in the early stages, several Provincial Governments were not so helpful, but their objections were overcome and a system is now working which has in fact considerably lowered the price of cloth and improved its distribution in many areas. What has been done in the case of cloth can be done, and must be done in the case of other necessities of life; whatever difficulties may be raised either by Provincial Governments or by the trade, those must be overcome in exactly the same way that the Industries and Civil Supplies Department has overcome the difficulties in the case of cloth.

It may be said that in the case of cloth, control was comparatively easy because production is highly centralised. It was wise for the Government to gain their experience first in a commodity where control was comparatively easy. But having gained that experience, they are bound to go on to deal with other commodities where control presents more complex problems. Because one control is easy and another is difficult, that does not mean that any Government worthy of the name can neglect the difficult ones. When these controls have become general and the cost of commodities other than grains has been brought within reasonable bounds no province which cares for the good opinion of the world will have any further excuse for not making grain available to the rest of India plentifully and at prices according with the general level.

Procurement is essentially a provincial problem and indeed to be more accurate, it is essentially a village problem. Whatever may have been the mistakes in the past, if Government is to gain control over the grain harvest that control must start from the field. Experience has shown that if the crop is allowed to pass without check into the hands of dealers or middlemen it becomes virtually impossible to trace it. We find ourselves today in the position where Government had no accurate knowledge of what stocks exist or where they exist, nor do we even know what is coming forward. At no time

in this country have crop or stock statistics ever existed in any very satisfactory form, but what is most perturbing is that in many parts of the country those statistics are in a worse state now than they were some years ago. We have seen how in the past year different figures have been put forward by the various agencies of the different Governments and none of those figures has had any solid foundation.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall (Member for Railways and War Transport): Question.

Sir Henry Richardson: In the absence of figures and records of any real value the only thing is to start at the beginning with the commodity itself. Procurement must begin when the crop is harvested or even whilst it is still standing. Unfortunately, in some of the Provinces most concerned, for example the province of Bengal, there is no revenue machinery comparable to that which exists in areas such as the Punjab and the difficulty of starting with the crop in the field is, therefore, enormous.

It is perhaps hardly too much to say that the administration in the province of Bengal has no mechanism adequate to cope with this task and it is for this reason that we greatly welcome the assistance of the military in this matter.

If, however, procurement is to be successful, the most important thing is to allay panic and remove from the mind of the agriculturist the fear that even he will go hungry. It is also important that he should be made to realise that high prices will not last for ever. This can best be achieved, as far as Bengal is concerned, if Government will announce that Calcutta would be fed by imports from outside the province so that the food stuffs in the mofussil will be available for mofussil needs. I do believe that the solution of the problem of free flow is mainly psychological and clear information regarding the danger of loss to the food hoarder in view of the greatly increased production is important. I would also emphasise the great danger of exaggerating the dangers and extent of the present trouble. The effect of a commonly held belief upon the actions of the agricultural population needs to be experienced to be understood. The press have rendered good service in drawing attention to the present troubles in Bengal and in urging Government to take action, but there is danger in exaggeration both in speech and in writing. I even heard an Honourable Member of this House indicate the other day that one quarter of the population of Bengal had been eliminated by famine. The magnitude of the present catastrophe must not blind us to the absurdity of such an estimate: indeed if it were even approximately true, there would be no food problem in Bengal this year. What is needed for the agriculturist is the confidence that he can safely dispose of his produce and the certainty that he will be able to purchase with the proceeds of such sales more of his normal needs. He must be in a position, moreover, to invest his money and to provide for his future and here an enormous field of advance is open to enterprise and energy. For generations, cultivators in many parts of India have been burdened with debt; here at last is a chance, if they are wise, to make a new start, to become creditors rather than debtors and to learn those habits of thrift which in other agricultural countries of the world are the most stable foundations of the State. I would like to see a future established whereby the agriculturist will have easy access to farm implements, improved seeds, good housing, good education, medical benefits and the many other vital needs which have hitherto remained unsatisfied.

I have spoken of the cultivator as the person whose psychology must be carefully considered if the problem of procurement is to be solved, but there is another way in which we need the help of the cultivator. We not only want him to sell his produce, but we also want him to produce the maximum possible. It has been argued in some quarters that the cultivator is a shrewd business man and will, without any instigation from Government, produce as much as he can at a time of high prices. That may be true, but the capacity of the cultivator to grow is limited by many factors some of which are not within his control; seed supply, marketing facilities, roads good enough for the transport of his goods, irrigation—all these are factors vitally affecting production. If they

[Sir Henry Richardson.]

are to be brought into play, the governments concerned have two tasks before them; firstly they have to provide all these facilities as far as possible and secondly they have to make the cultivator realise that they have been provided and are available. In many parts of India the "grow more food" campaign last year was seriously hampered by the inadequate arrangements made for the provision of seed, while in other cases the seed arrived too late to be of any use. It may be that the Provincial Governments' normal agricultural staffs are not adequate to this task—if so, they must at all costs be strengthened. But the "grow more food" campaign is not only a matter for the cultivator. It is a matter in which those who live in towns—or at any rate those who are well to do and have spacious compounds—can play their part. For myself I shall not be satisfied until I see that in every compound and in every garden flowers have been replaced by vegetables. It is within the knowledge of many of us how greatly the allotment movement in Britain assisted the process of feeding the people both during the last war and in the past 4 years. That method is equally applicable to many parts of this country. Do not let us think that this is a matter for Government alone. It is a matter for every individual Member of this Assembly and I suggest that each one of us should regard it as his bounden duty to set on foot in his own town the movement for growing vegetables or other forms of food in every available plot of land. The result achieved by the "grow more food" campaign last year was something of which Government has every right to be proud, but what was good enough for 1942 is not good enough for 1943.

So far I have spoken of procurement and production. But when all is said and done the fundamental problem in the food situation today is that of distribution. If the food of India were distributed equitably there would be no shortage of any consequence, but under present conditions when the power of the purse is the controlling factor, distribution is in fact inequitable. This is likely to happen in any country which is without great reserves of food which can be transported from place to place as local shortages develop. After the lucid and detailed account given by my honourable friend Mr. Kirby, it is unnecessary for me to emphasise the fact that there can be no remedy for the present state of affairs without the adoption of rationing on the widest possible scale. If rationing could be applied to every inhabitant of this country there would be no problem, but that, of course, in the rural areas is a physical impossibility. There is however nothing impossible about putting into effect rationing schemes in the towns throughout India. I understand that the general intention is in the first place to ration towns with a population of more than 100,000 people. This is all to the good, but the process must not stop there. Many of the smaller towns stand in need of a system of rationing just as much as the larger towns. I should like also to emphasise the point already made that a particular province cannot dispense with rationing merely on the ground that it is a surplus province. No town anywhere in the world is a surplus area and the mere fact that a town is situated, say, in the Punjab rather than in Bengal cannot constitute a logical reason for excluding it from the rationing system. Our view is that Government has already hesitated far too long in applying rationing to towns in this country. Let us hope that the period of hesitation is at an end and that the intentions which have now been announced will be carried into effect as quickly as possible. I do not under-estimate the magnitude of the task involved and I realise fully that at any rate in some provinces the present administrative machinery is hardly adequate to cope with the work involved. That, however, cannot be accepted as a reason for not embarking on rationing; on the contrary it is a reason for strengthening and where necessary, expanding the administrative machinery. I wish to put the utmost possible emphasis on this point for in my view rationing is not just an expedient to carry us for the next few months; we are not dealing with a purely temporary emergency which will be at an end when the *Amam* harvest has been

gathered in. We are dealing with a problem which is likely to continue for some years to come. As my Honourable friend, Mr. Gwilt, pointed out there is a world shortage of food and the demands from the devastated areas after the war will require the utmost human endeavour to meet them. India, which is more nearly self-sufficient in food than many countries in the world, will have to make every effort to live on her own resources and this can only be done if a sound system of rationing is introduced now and maintained until the period of world shortage is over. Even if as a result of great exertions in the "grow more food" campaign India found herself abundantly supplied with foodstuffs in the years to come, she too would have a duty to the rest of the world; and if by a proper system of rationing she could in due course contribute to relieving the misery of other starving nations, it would be in keeping with that high place which she should occupy amongst the nations of the world. Here again there may be a tendency to feel that rationing is Government's job. It is the job of Government, but Government can never do it satisfactorily if public opinion is not behind them. Even in advanced countries introduction of rationing presents many difficult and bewildering questions to the ordinary householder. Those questions will arise with double force for the illiterate inhabitants of the towns of India and it is here that we as protectors of the public interest can play our part. There is no question of party politics here. It is a matter of life and death to every one in this country. Success depends upon the combined efforts of all and a special responsibility devolves on the representatives of the people to inform public opinion and to assist in removing those doubts and perplexities which will arise from time to time in the mind of the ordinary man. If the public as a whole is not prepared to submit to rationing or some inconvenience for the sake of the whole community then no Government can save a country of this size.

I turn now to hoarding. In time of war the first problem of an army is to know its enemies and we too, on the home front, have to know who is for and who is against the best interests of the country; and foremost amongst the enemies of India today are the speculators, the profiteers and the hoarders. There are many varieties of hoarders. There is the householder who, without any anti-social motive, but fearful for the future of himself and his family, lays by larger stocks than usual. When such are numbered in millions the danger must not be forgotten. I am at the moment far more concerned with that arch enemy of India, the man who hoards for profit, the man who will not sell because he hopes that the necessity of the multitude will bring him greater profits in the months to come. It is no use pretending that this class of man does not exist, nor do I think any Honourable Member of this House will be disposed to take that view. One of our first tasks then must be to root out the hoarder, to let him know that he is an object of hatred to his fellowmen. This is a matter in which the Government and the public both have a responsibility and it may be that each will have to stimulate the other to greater activity. Mr. Gwilt in his speech asked the Honourable the Food Member if he could relate any instance where a stringent sentence had been imposed for a food offence since the beginning of the war. The hopeless inadequacy of the sentences inflicted by courts for such offences has reduced the law almost to a farce. Let us not however think that we can put the blame for this entirely on Government. Why is it that magistrates do not impose heavy sentences for these offences. Is it not a fact that, throughout the world, sentences imposed by magistrates for particular types of crime reflect the state of public opinion with regard to those crimes, and is it not true that magistrates impose lenient sentences for food offences because the public conscience has not yet been sufficiently roused against those offences. Every member of this House must make it his business to stir up strong public feeling against those who seek to profiteer at a time like this. Do we not all know that for every case in which a food offence leads to prosecution there are a dozen or more cases in which nobody bothers to lay information or in which the local authorities for reasons of their own do not bother to take action? Let us fan public indignation to such a

[Sir Henry Richardson.]

name that magistrates will not dare to impose lenient sentences and that local authorities will not dare to fail to prosecute. The condemnable action taken the other day by the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court in enhancing the fines imposed by lower courts in the city in a dozen profiteering cases will, I hope, provide the stimulus required by the other courts concerned. It is to be considered whether in cases of this kind it should not be obligatory on the court to impose a sentence of imprisonment. In Britain where rationing is worked with incredible smoothness and efficiency, the slightest offence has led to prosecution and indeed there have been many cases where innocent and unintentional contravention of rationing laws have led to prosecution and severe sentences.

I have spoken of hoarding and before I leave this subject I must refer to a complaint of an unusual kind made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy. It is not often that a capitalist is accused by a politician of taking too much care of his employees, but Mr. Neogy blames many employers because they saw the difficulties which were coming and made up their minds that those employees for whose welfare they were responsible should be provided even at great expense to the employers.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): And it is at the cost of the lives of others.

Sir Henry Richardson: Mr. Neogy is disturbed because many employers have thought it their bounden duty to purchase rice at the market prices with the full knowledge of the authorities in order to be able to provide their labourers with food at a fraction of the cost.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: That is my complaint—"with the full knowledge of the authorities".

Sir Henry Richardson: I listened for 4½ days to my Honourable friends and to my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, without interruption. I have no time to go into argument with him. I hope he will listen to me.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I should not like to interrupt a written speech.

Sir Henry Richardson: I was saying, many employers have thought it their bounden duty to purchase rice at the market prices with the full knowledge of the authorities in order to be able to provide their labourers with food at a fraction of the cost. Could capitalist oppression go further! I suspect Mr. Neogy is particularly anxious to force us into condemnation of some administration or other and to suggest that because we had no confidence in this Government or that Government we adopted what he apparently regards as a form of hoarding. Let me tell Mr. Neogy that when an intelligent employer is concerned with the food supply of his labour force he is not thinking in terms of politics. What would Mr. Neogy say if on the other hand an employer were to say: this is the responsibility of Government; let me draw my profits and not be bothered with this question of rice and *atta*. (Interruption by Mr. Neogy.) The plain fact is that the last year has been a period of uncertainty; that the policies of the Central Government and Provincial Governments have changed from time to time and that the employer did not feel certain that his labour force would be fed unless he himself undertook that responsibility. Sir, if the worst charge that can ever be levelled against capitalists in this country is that they have made certain that their labour force would be fed, I for my part shall not blush. May I put this matter in another way? The great industrial concerns whose foresight has so much disturbed Mr. Neogy have built up sound scientific rationing systems and have acquired great experience in that process. It may well be that the organisation so built up and the experience so acquired will be of value to the provincial authorities who now have to extend the same principle and carry out rationing on a wider scale. I need hardly say on behalf of those whom I represent that this organisation and experience will be fully at the disposal of those on whom the responsibility for general rationing will fall. It is far from their intention to maintain inequality of supply between those for whom they are responsible and the general public.

A charge was also levelled from another quarter against European owners of flour mills to the effect that profiteering was occurring between the supply of the raw material and the milled product. Inasmuch as certain European-controlled industrial concerns may be interested in the production of *atta* I may point out that the price of the raw material, the milling cost and the price of the finished product are all officially controlled.

Mr. President, it has become almost customary of late to say that the eyes of the world are upon India. But if ever there was an occasion or a subject in respect of which that could be truly said it is this occasion and the subject that we are now discussing. The civilised world stands horrified at the tragedy which is now being enacted in this country and at the same time finds itself bewildered by the spectacle of widespread death from starvation in a land which has not so far suffered the devastation of war. I feel, Sir, that we in this country, whether we be Indian or European, are on trial and that we shall be judged at the bar of history largely by our success or failure in coping with the food situation in India today. If we could maintain that India depended for her food supply mainly on imports then failure would not necessarily condemn us. But when we have to admit that if every person in this country could take his fair share and only his fair share of the shortage there would be no serious trouble, then we in fact admit that the problem is one which we and we alone can solve. In time of war it is futile to hope that we can escape some degree of suffering and hardship; the question is, have we amongst us enough civic sense, enough feeling of mutual inter-dependence and enough determination to share the common burden, to ensure that the food supply of India shall be equitably distributed. During this debate and the discussions in the country we have heard much of constitutional difficulties, of the division of power and responsibility, of transport problems of the failure of this Government or that Government and of a dozen other contributory causes of our present difficulties. But underlying all these factors there is something more fundamental. Our food problem can be solved if and only if we are prepared to put aside all dissensions, all doubts, all sectarian interests and to say that India shall be fed. This consummation cannot be achieved unless each one of us in this House is prepared to use his influence in the country, to mobilise public opinion in support of every action required by Government, to set his face against profiteering and speculation and to say that he will bend his strength and his energies from now onwards to the task of seeing the people of this country do not go hungry. Sir, we in this Group are prepared to dedicate ourselves to this task and I have no doubt that however much different members or parties may disagree as to this amendment or that amendment, on this single main issue there can be no controversy. The people of India must be fed; in the face of death there can be no disunity.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): I have listened to as much of the debate as I could spare the time for and I have listened with very mixed feelings indeed. At times of crisis, when feelings run high, when we are faced with tragedies occurring, such as we have never dreamt would occur in our country, it is only natural that Members reflecting the opinions of their constituencies in any Parliamentary Assembly should express themselves in terms of indignation and should try to throw the blame on the Government of the day. But even making allowance for this natural phenomenon, even making allowance for this natural trend I have wondered whether some Honourable Members at least have not exhausted all the vocabulary of vituperation that they are capable of so far as this or that Government or this or that individual is concerned. I say I am wondering whether they have exhausted it, because there are depths which I possibly could not plumb and it is too hazardous for me, with some speeches awaiting this House, to say that all the vituperative epithets they are capable of have been exhausted.

I do not wish, in connection with a question like this, to merely put forward justifications on behalf of the Government of India. It is not right with

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]

a calamity of this kind facing us that any Member on the Treasury Bench should stand up in self-righteousness and say that this thing has been done and that thing has been done and therefore we have done the best we can. Even if it were true, we have to take a broader view of the things and see what defects have been found and how we can remedy these defects. It is the future, the constructive side of the work and the remedial portion of our endeavours that one should concentrate one's attention on but having said that, let me also, in view of the tone of the debate and the trend of the discussions review very briefly what has been done by the Government in the past, partly because it would give a completely incorrect picture of the position of the Government, if challenges that have been made during the last four days were to go unanswered and more especially because I for my part feel that certain conclusions can be drawn from our own experiences of the past which may be a guide for our attitude and conduct in the future.

Some Honourable Members have suggested that there was no policy on the part of the Government of India ever since the war broke out, that they have been callous, that they have been inconsiderate, that they have been inefficient, that they never foresaw these difficulties would arise and that at the 5th year of this war, Government stands condemned with no policy of any kind towards so serious and critical a question as the food problem of the country. I venture to state that nothing can be farther from the truth, that Honourable Members, at least those who have spoken in this strain, have either got a short memory or have not cared to follow the proceedings of Governments and Governmental bodies, of conferences and committees, of decisions that have been arrived at, of ordinances that have been issued, of measures that have been promulgated and steps that have been taken from time to time. An impression is sought to be created that for the first time the food question was reviewed when the first Food Conference was held and the matter was thought of only when the Food Department was opened. Let me say that the food question was considered from the date when the war broke out.

On the 3rd September, 1939 hostilities broke out. On the 9th September 1939, a delegation of authority was made to Provincial Governments, giving them power to control the prices of various foodstuffs and necessities of life, foremost among which was the foodgrains. On the 18th and 19th October 1939, within six weeks after the outbreak of the war, the first Price Control Conference was called. That Price Control Conference dealt primarily with foodgrains, the present name of the *avatar* of that conference being the Food Conference.

It will be an entirely erroneous impression that is created in the country or will be created in the country if, as I said before, it was considered that the food question was dealt with only by the Food Conferences properly so called, that have been summoned from time to time this year. At that time, let me point out to Honourable Members that we were going through a period of depression; agricultural prices particularly were in a depressed state and when this Price Control Conference was summoned, Honourable Members in this Assembly, gentlemen, who have now come forward with advice, outside this Assembly, commercial bodies, Federations and so on were all unanimous that there should be no control of prices so far as foodstuffs were concerned, that the agriculturist was going through a very bad time, that the depression he had to pass through was critical so far as his finances and his position was concerned and that Government should not lay its unhallowed hand on the agriculturist, so long as he had not retrieved the position which he has a right to expect by the gradual rise in prices. It was my duty and privilege to go through all the commercial papers of the day and taking the resolutions of all the commercial bodies, I venture to say without fear of contradiction that there was not a single exception to the theory that was put forward that agricultural prices must advance and must advance very considerably and that Government should not control these prices. Sir, the echoes of that controversy have been heard even during this food debate, and some Honourable

Members have got up and said that the agriculturist should not be touched even now, that the prices that are ruling now should not be touched. There have been whispered voices—sometimes, unabashed voices on other occasions, which have said that the control of prices should not be made on agricultural products even at the present time.

Well, Sir, I will proceed to state briefly what happened later. The Government of India was not satisfied that at that time any price control was essential for foodstuffs, though they had delegated the power to the Local Governments to control any sudden and sharp rise of prices which was unjustified in any particular urban area, which meant profiteering by the middlemen. The Bombay Government was one of the first Governments to take advantage of that delegation and within a few days after the outbreak of the war, the Congress Ministry, which was then in power, enforced those orders. But Congress Ministry or no Congress Ministry, the policy of the Bombay Government has all through been one, on the one hand, of trying as far as possible to help the agriculturist to realise a fair price for his products and on the other hand to take into account the interests of the consumer and see to it that bloated prices and profiteering prices do not prevail in the market.

I should like to single out the Bombay Government for this far-sighted policy throughout and whether the Government of India stands in the dock rightly or not, let us at least say that one Provincial Government, if not more, has throughout this four years' period had the foresight to see that these things were prevented as far as possible. (An Honourable Member: "Not during the first year".) During the second year, 1940, there was a sudden relapse in price. The advance that took place since the war broke out did not sustain itself and prices came down to some extent. In this connection I should like to say that the prices of these two cash crops, jute and cotton, have had an inordinate effect on the prices of other agricultural commodities from time to time and we have had to control the price of jute and cotton from time to time so as to see that agricultural crops are maintained at a proper and fair level of prices. Other Price Control Conferences were held from time to time and in the year 1941, the second year of the war or at the beginning of the third year of the war, it became apparent that some of these foodgrains were reaching a level of prices which was disturbing and unfair to the consumer. Wheat in particular had gone up by over a hundred per cent. The index of prices in September and October 1941 showed that over the price on the 3rd September 1939, wheat had reached a level of 207 per cent., that is, 107 per cent. more than what was prevailing at the outbreak of the war. The Government of India considered that this was a level at which there must be an arrest to further progress or further elevation in prices. They issued a warning that if the prices were to rise still further, they would impose a price control and they would take the necessary measures to see that that price control was carried out throughout the country.

On the 5th of December 1941—I want the House to mark the date, because it had nothing to do with the Japanese invasion—the price control order on wheat was fixed, fixing the price of wheat at Rs. 4/8 per maund at Lyallpur as against the pre-war price of Rs. 2/2 per maund.

Now, Sir, it was easy to fix the price of wheat on an All-India basis by the Central Government for this reason that wheat is produced only in three provinces, namely, the Punjab, the United Provinces and Sind. The parity of prices of wheat in these three provinces was more or less the same. There was a difference of 2 to 4 annas in the Lyallpur and Hapur wheat and between Lyallpur wheat and the price prevailing in the main market centres of Sind. It was, therefore, possible, having taken this fact into consideration, for the Government of India to prescribe controlled price for the wholesale markets in these three areas for wheat and to advise the Provincial Governments to follow up the retail markets with prices of this wholesale market, giving allowance for the normal trade commissions and for the freight rates that would have to be provided for in the distribution of this wheat to various other provinces. Then,

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]

Sir, on the 8th December came the Japanese entry into the war. In January we realised that this would be a serious disturbing factor. In February 1942 the next Price Control Conference was called in.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: What is the present prevailing price at Lyallpur and Hapur? Is there any difference?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Yes, Sir, there is a great deal of difference. The difference is about Rs. 2. At any rate, the Food Member will correct me later if I am wrong. The parity is gone. There is no parity between the Sind wheat and the Lyallpur wheat and between the Lyallpur wheat and the United Provinces wheat. That is one of the reasons why I am stating briefly the history of the case. In February 1942 the next Price Control Conference was called. If you prefer, you may call it the Food Conference because in these Conferences food was the essential subject that was discussed. It was pointed out then that Burma was in danger of invasion and that the Burma rice may not come in on which we were dependent to a large extent in certain parts of India, particularly in Travancore and Cochin and on the West Coast of Malabar where cheap rice was required by the people living there, who, in their turn, had exported to their more fortunate brethren abroad the paddy and rice that was grown in those areas.

So, the question whether rice should also be controlled was taken into consideration. All the provinces that were rice growing pressed at that time that the time had not yet come for controlling the price of rice. The index of price of rice at that time was 150 to 160, that is to say, it was 60 per cent. more than what it was at the beginning of the outbreak of the war in September 1939. We had taken action with reference to wheat when the index price had gone beyond 100 per cent. more than what it was at the beginning of the war. The rice producing provinces, those who were safeguarding the interests of the agriculturist, the representatives of the Governments because those Conferences were attended by the representatives of both States and the Provincial Governments, said that the time had not yet come for price control being established on rice. The Government of India pointed out that though it may not have been necessary at the time, they foresaw that the time would soon come when, due to the conditions of scarcity owing to the stoppage of imports from Burma, there will be a sharp rise in the price of rice and they advised the Provincial Governments to look-out and to report as soon as possible what the conditions were in each of their provinces so that steps may be taken to control the price of rice also.

In the meanwhile, the Government of India realised that the deficiency which would arise on account of this stoppage of imports from Burma must be taken note of. Rangoon had not yet been occupied and therefore up to the very last moment when it was possible to do this steamers from Rangoon were got over to Calcutta without going long distances to Madras and they were laden with as much rice as we could have in them. Thus we tried to get as much Burma rice as we could. Then, Rangoon fell in February. Other parts of Burma were not yet taken by the enemy and this Government, which has neither the wit nor the wisdom to foresee things and which is callous to the interests of the people, according to some Honourable Members, immediately thought of...

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): According to all Honourable Members.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I give some credit to some Honourable Members and I still give that credit to some Honourable Members in spite of the assertion of my friend.

Now, Sir, the Government of India felt that whatever rice could be lifted from Burma before it was fully occupied should be lifted in the interests of the country. We arranged in March and April a shuttle steamers service between Akyab and Chittagong, steamers which would go to Akyab and get back

to Chittagong at the shortest possible time and remove all the rice that was available. It did not matter whether it was paddy or rice and whether it was milled or unmilled. We decided to lift all the rice that we could, before ever anybody thought that there would be this serious shortage of rice either in Bengal or in any other area. The Government of India did everything possible to get this rice or paddy from Burma.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: How much did you get?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I have not got the figures.

Some Honourable Members: You got absolutely nothing.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: What is the good of Honourable Members saying 'nothing' when they know nothing.

Some Honourable Members: Then, give us the figures.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The fact that I am unable to give the figures does not disprove the truth of my statement. I am speaking here as a responsible Member of the Government of India having been in charge of the subject and knowing what was being done.

Some Honourable Members: Whose representative are you?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: It is in keeping with my friends' usual talk. Other Honourable Members can also talk in the same strain as the Honourable Members opposite, but it would lead us nowhere.

In April 1942 the next Price Control Conference was arranged. The position of rice was reviewed. Though the index figure had not changed, it was clear to the Government of India that a sharp rise was inevitable and scarcity conditions would soon prevail. Now, rice is not a grain or a foodstuff which can be treated in the same way as wheat. As I said, there are only three provinces which produce wheat and the parity of price was more or less the same and the same ceiling price for wheat can be fixed. That could not be done with reference to rice. Rice was of local circulation, of regional circulation. The varieties of rice are far too many and the price in one region varied very widely from the price in other regions. These considerations were put before the Price Control Conference and it was agreed that the price of rice should be controlled regionally by Regional Boards which were composed of representatives of Governments in that region. The Eastern Region is composed of Bengal, Assam, Bihar and parts of Orissa. It was decided that the Regional Board that was constituted in that region should recommend to the Government the price of rice which should be fixed and the Government of India should approve of that price. Similarly, Madras, Travancore, Cochin and Mysore should form the Southern Region where one price should prevail. Other Regional Boards were similarly constituted and powers were given to these Boards to specify the price at which rice and other foodgrains should be sold. Further for the purpose of co-ordinating these prices as between one regional border and another, making it possible to prevent wide fluctuation of prices between one regional border and another, the assistance of the Central Government should be invoked to ratify these prices and to even off any wide divergencies that may arise by purely Regional Board fixations. Having done that, in May 1942, the very next month the Food Grains Control order was issued by the Government of India against hoarding and against profiteering, requiring wholesale dealers and retail dealers to take out licenses.

I P. M.

The plan was this. Every wholesale dealer must have a licence from the Provincial Governments concerned. He should disclose stocks that he had received from the agriculturists, he should disclose the persons to whom he has distributed on retail basis to retail shopkeepers and in that way, the Provincial Governments will be able to trace from the stage when the crop comes out of the agriculturist to the town to the retail stage the movement of these food products and so keep control of these food products. Under the Ordinance which was issued, powers were necessarily given to the Provincial Governments and the State Governments concerned. Some Provincial Governments adopted this Regulation, others did not adopt. One Honourable Member suggested

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]

that only in December (or January) 1943, this sort of power was given to the Provincial Governments. It is not so. Long before any crisis was thought of, this Ordinance was issued on 5th May 1942. It is referred to in the Appendix to the report of the Food Grains Policy Committee and under this Ordinance power was given completely to the Provincial Governments to license wholesale dealers in various other kinds of foodstuffs and to follow up the movement of these commodities from market to market, from merchant to merchant, which is one of the best ways of dealing with any hoarding that may take place so far as the commercial community is concerned.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): How many Provincial Governments were under section 93 administration at that time?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That is a matter which is well known to my Honourable friend. If my Honourable friend means to suggest that some section 93 Provinces also did not carry out this Ordinance, then he is perfectly right.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: What were you doing?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: He was doing his best.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I do not want to give the obvious reply to that question. My Honourable friend knows from his experience that sometimes he is as powerless as I have been with reference to matters of that kind and with reference to matters that do not lie in my hand.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: My question was not with regard to the Honourable Member himself personally. What was the Government of India doing?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Government of India was asking the Provincial Governments to enforce these things. The Government of India was drawing the attention of the Provincial Governments to it. But the Provincial Governments sometimes came forward with the plea that they were arranging for the staff, that it would take some time before it can be enforced, that they have not yet recruited the staff. Even now some Provincial Governments come forward by saying that rationing cannot be introduced from the 15th of this month, that rationing should be postponed to the 15th of the next month, some other Provincial Governments say, we are still making arrangements and that the rationing should be further postponed to the 15th of the third month and so on and so forth.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: My question was this. The Provincial Governments were shilly-shallying and dilly-dallying, what action did the Government of India take?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Now, Sir, let me follow the course of events which I was narrating.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: If it is secret or confidential I do not want you to disclose it.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): In his great knowledge, he does not know it.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I accept this impeachment of my Honourable friend if he feels quite sure that he knows anything of the facts.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I am.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Now, Sir, what happened. I have stated these facts to show the policy that was being pursued. Later, in December of last year owing to the great agitation from some of the Provinces, the price control on wheat was lifted. The prices shot up, the price control on other commodities could not be uniformly levied in all the Provinces. Some Provinces like Madras and Bombay felt the real need of this price control and went ahead with price control in their own areas, but the first single price control which was issued on an all-India uniform basis was lifted and the prices shot up sky high.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Under pressure from whom?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: From the Provinces.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Which Provinces?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Now, Sir, let me say my own experience of the greater tragedy that is happening in Bengal today. There has been too much of concentration on the fact that there is not enough grain going into Bengal and much of the debate on this and on the last occasion has concentrated on how much grain, or how much foodstuffs went to Bengal. I feel, Sir, that even a more vital question is the price at which it was available to the consumers in Bengal or in any other area. If there is starvation, if there is death, it may happen that starvation and death are taking place in the midst of plenty, that the purchasing power of the man in the street is not equal to the occasion and cannot rise to the levels at which foodstuffs are being sold.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): Who is responsible?

Some Honourable Members: Inflation, inflation.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: There is no use of the Honourable Member talking of who is responsible. I will tell you who is responsible. The Government of India may be responsible, the Provincial Governments may be responsible, the profiteer may be responsible, the hoarder may be responsible, but I know definitely of one set of persons who are responsible that is, those persons who went about in the Provinces to the agriculturists telling them not to sell their foodstuffs, telling them that the Japanese may invade their homes at any time, telling them that their houses will be in danger, that their property will be taken away.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): In view of your present inability to supply food, was it wrong on the part of the Congress to tell the people not to sell grains?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member cannot interrupt.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Telling them that they would be starved, going to people from door to door and telling them that currency was of no use to them whatsoever, telling them to stick to their foodgrains and their food products and asking them to hoard. I say many people may be responsible, but I know definitely one set of persons who are responsible and who brought about this calamity, and if there has been a pre-concerted famine in this country as has been alleged, if there has been a pre-determined famine in this country as has been stated by some Honourable Members, if there has been a plot and a plan to bring about this ruination of the peasants in Bengal and these disastrous conditions in Bengal, I know of one group of persons who obviously had a preconceived, preconcerted and pre-determined plan and brought about this deplorable state of affairs.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I protest against this insinuation. He is quite unjustified in making these unfounded charges.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: My Honourable friend does not even know whom I am referring to and I do not know why he is assuming that his group is being referred to.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: I know that the Honourable Member is referring to some of my countrymen.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: They are also my countrymen.

I do not want to be dragged into all these criminations and recriminations.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Who started it?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Let me come to the constructive side of the proposal in the very short time at my disposal. I want to get back to this proposition which I was alluding to. On the basis of all the facts that I have stated, we must get back to the position of statutory price control all over India for all kinds of foodstuffs. Nothing will save

[Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.]
the situation unless that is done. The Government of India, the Provincial Governments, the representatives of the people, Members of the Legislative Assembly, everybody who is interested in the stable position of food supply in this country, rich and poor, must all unite in this one policy that there must be price control for all food grains. Let us not hear of any objections from any source whatsoever, however important it may be, however weighty it may be. Let us not listen to the siren voice of those who plead in the name of the agriculturist. I am all out for the agriculturist to get a fair deal, I am all out in the fixation of price to see that the agriculturist is fairly treated, but we must come to the decision that the price control on all the food grains, statutory price control all over the country is the first essential.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: But Government till now failed to control effectively. You must make it more effective.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: We should try to retrieve the position that we had in August 1942 when prices were more or less balanced, when there was no scarcity and when there were not these losses. And I should like to take this opportunity of thanking two of my friends at least who have referred to the work that I did. I claim nothing for myself; that was the work of experts in the Government of India, it was the work of the Government of India. And if in August 1942 we were able to keep up the prices strictly under control there is no reason why with an equal determination we should not be able to keep that up. The second essential on which I should like to speak is an essential which was referred to by my Honourable friend the Leader of the European Group; he referred to the need for rationing. Let me tell you that I am quite convinced that rationing in the rural areas is not possible in this country; but I am equally convinced that rationing in all urban areas, in all municipalities whether the population is 100 thousand,—you may start with 100 thousand if you like,—or whether the population is 20 thousand, in all municipal areas it is not only possible but an absolute essentiality to any scheme of proper procurement and proper level of prices for foodstuffs. That is my personal opinion and I shall to the best of my ability put forward that opinion wherever I can and with whatever force and emphasis I can do it.

Now, Sir, this question of rationing has been construed in a very peculiar way by surplus provinces and by deficit provinces. Some surplus provinces say that in their areas where they have plenty they are prepared to send whatever is surplus to other areas outside; and why should they ration themselves in either the urban parts of their areas or in any other part of it? I venture to say very respectfully to these surplus provinces that it is an entire misconception of the food position. We talk of equal sacrifices, of equality of sacrifices. To send your surplus product at a price which you can command is no sacrifice at all in my opinion; and surplus provinces which try to take credit for having sent so much are not entitled to any credit at all. After all every merchant, every commercial man, tries to keep up his mercantile contacts and tries to keep up the best customers he is accustomed to deal with; and what are you doing but trying to keep up your commercial contacts if as a surplus province you are sending out your surplus to other provinces? The question of sacrifice, the question of equality of sacrifice arises when you are willing to tighten your belt. I agree that my Honourable friend over there (Mr. Abdul Qaiyum) cannot tighten the belt to the same extent that I can; but if you are willing to tighten your belt let us tighten it proportionately at least, and surplus provinces also should introduce rationing, only perhaps on a more liberal scale than other provinces and other areas.

Let me say one last word. There has been a great deal of talk about inflation. It is a matter on which the Finance Member can speak with authority. But I shall speak only of my experiences in the United Kingdom. Inflation has gone on in the United Kingdom just as it has gone on in this country.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: No, no.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: If by inflation is meant the extent of note issue it is as much in the United Kingdom as in this country; because at the present day the Bank of England has issued £1,000,000,000, of currency notes against a backing in its issue department of less than a million pounds of gold. The Fiduciary Act has been thrown overboard and completely abandoned for the period of the war. There is no backing even of external sterling,—such backing as we have in our rupee issue,—for the note issue in the United Kingdom. All this issue is there; but there is strict rationing, strict price control. However much money you may get you cannot spend more than this limited amount. The goods that you can get are rationed; the prices at which you can get the goods are also rationed. It is not merely foodstuffs: you cannot get furniture. You can only get utility furniture either if your house is bombed or if you are going to marry another wife. That is the position in the United Kingdom; and under those conditions the purchasing power of the people is limited though they have got plenty of cash and currency notes in their hands. What do they do there? After having purchased to the limit that they are allowed under the law they have necessarily to put it in savings bank accounts or invest in war bonds. The Navy Week is started and 200 million pounds are forthcoming in war loans, the Army Week is started and 165 million pounds are coming in loans. People are trying to invest in Government bonds; and therefore I say that apart from all other methods by which inflation can be countered, one effective method of countering it and the one method by which it has been countered in England is the fixing of prices and rationing of goods for all people, wealthy or poor. These are the lines on which I believe that we should now try to get back to the position that we were in last year and try to supplement our efforts to improve the food situation.

Sir, one last word I should like to say. During the discussions both inside the House and outside I felt that there were occasionally unnecessary political issues imported into the consideration of this question; even economic issues are complicated by the fear on the one side that some high political issue is going to be indirectly admitted by agreeing to a certain economic truth or that some political lesson is to be drawn from the economic considerations that prevail at the present time. Let me say frankly that some have gone about saying that this economic situation has proved that the geographical unity of India is unbreakable. We shall not enter into any of these issues; you will be hiding your heads in sand like an ostrich if you think that by these subtle arguments you will solve all such grave issues; they have still to be faced by the country and have still to be solved by mutual discussion and mutual agreement. And I shall be hiding my head in the sands of prejudice like an ostrich if I feel that these issues can be solved by these subtle methods. They are not going to be; therefore let us cast aside all ideas of trying to make political theories out of what are economic facts today, economic facts that arise and have to be solved under the present constitution. Nobody is going to be bound by what is done today so far as the future is concerned. There are a hundred ways of solving these problems.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I hope you will take some measure or step by which you can at least impress it upon Lord Hailey and that great journal the *Times* of London.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: I hope, Sir, that what I am saying in this House, specially if this debate is to be transmitted elsewhere, will have that effect, and I know that Lord Hailey is a very careful student of Indian debates. But I am saying that these things should be kept aside. Let us try to solve this critical situation without trying to overreach each other on political issues which have to be settled later. And by so doing we shall probably save the lives of millions of people in Bengal and we will be doing justice to ourselves and to our country.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

Dr. P. N. Banerjéa: The heart-rending scenes which I have witnessed with my own eyes in Bengal and the terrible tales of woe which have reached my ears from various parts of that province beggar all description. Even the feeble attempts which were made by conscientious and honest observers have been characterised by Government officers as over-dramatization. Now, Sir, it appears to me that the tragedy is so gruesome and grim that no over-dramatization of it is possible. The truth is that Bengal is passing at the present moment through a very severe crisis, the severest that has occurred in living memory and the severest that has occurred since 1771. But in spite of this the Government have not used the word 'famine' with regard to this great crisis. They have deliberately avoided that term. From the Secretary of State down to the village chowkidar every officer has attempted to avoid the use of that term, and why? The object evidently was and has been to minimise the extent and severity of this disaster. Besides, in order to minimise the gravity of the situation, the Government have manipulated statistics to suit their own purpose. *The Statesman*, a newspaper owned and edited, not by Indian agitators, but by respectable European gentlemen, wrote on the 20th of October thus:

"A time has come when the Indian and British publics should receive from the authorities a clearer statement about famine mortality in Bengal."

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): There is none representing the Food Department here.

Dr. P. N. Banerjéa: I resume my seat and I will remain seated until the Food Member comes. It is no use continuing my speech in the absence of the Food Member.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): He ought to have been here. I apologize to the House for his absence. I have sent for him, and in the meantime I will take note of the points.

Dr. P. N. Banerjéa: I had to resume my seat for two minutes and I will get extra two minutes.

The Statesman in its editorial article writes further:

"Efforts thereto have not been aided by Government's occasional bouts of agoraphobia during which attempts were made to keep statistics hidden from popular view."

So there has been a deliberate attempt to conceal the facts, and *The Statesman* further remarks:

"That the figures given by Mr. Amery in the British Parliament were inaccurate and were nearly 11 times less than the truth."

Sir, I am afraid *The Statesman* in regard to this part of its article has erred on the side of moderation and circumspection. The fact is that Mr. Amery's statement was hundred times less than the truth. My own estimate of the death-roll in Bengal is that several lakhs of persons have already died of starvation and diseases consequent thereon and that at least 50,000 persons are dying every week.

Now what can be the object of manipulating the statistics in order to minimise the gravity of the food problem in Bengal. Evidently, it was to hoodwink others. But whom could the Government hoodwink? They could not hoodwink the people of Bengal or other parts of India because they had visible demonstration of the distress and of death. Whom else could the Government hoodwink? Could they hoodwink the enemies of Britain? No. Japan and Germany have more accurate information than Britain herself. Could they hoodwink the United States of America? No. The Senators of that country came to this country and they gave on their return a very dismal picture of the situation prevailing here. Could they hoodwink the British public and the British Parliament? Not even that. An important debate took place in the British House of Commons the other day and it was pointed out there that the situation in India was very bad. So in spite of all their efforts, the Government of India have failed to deceive other people. They have only deceived themselves, and it is their own ostrich-like policy which has greatly aggravated the

situation. The situation would not have gone completely out of hand if they had not deliberately tried to minimise its gravity.

What else did the Government do? The Government did not merely minimise the gravity of the situation, but they gagged the press. They did not allow the press to publish statistics with regard to the death-roll or to write articles which might give some picture of the great tragedy that was being enacted. Sir, one of the notable instances in this regard was the order which was served on the editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* asking him not to write anything about the Bengal famine. This order went further and said that nothing was to be written on the fact that such an order had been issued.

Sir, I have carefully read the article which is regarded as the offending article in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* dated the 28th September and headed "A Note of Warning". There is nothing in this article that deserved this treatment and the editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, being a self-respecting man, has since refused to publish editorial articles. So that is how the press has been gagged in regard to publication of news relating to this great famine.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Is it news or views?

Dr. P. N. Banerjéa: Both news and views.

Now, Sir, when the debate took place in the British Parliament, Mr. Amery quoted certain figures with regard to starvation and he dealt with the causes which led to this famine. Many of the British newspapers wrote articles saying that Mr. Amery had come very badly out of the business. But Mr. Amery did not care for this censure which was passed on him. Twenty-five years ago, Mr. Austen Chamberlain, who was then the Secretary of State for India and in whose time the Mesopotamian muddle took place, thought it honourable on his part to resign his post: but Mr. Amery has done nothing of this kind and sticks to his office like a leech under the protection of another Tory Diehard. Evidently, the traditions of British public life have greatly deteriorated during the last quarter of a century.

Sir, what has been the general effect of this policy of concealing facts? The general effect has been, so far as the Government of India is concerned, their slackness in taking any active steps to cope with the famine; and so far as Britain and the Allied Nations are concerned, if the truth had been told more vigorous help might have come from them. Thus the ostrich-like policy of the Government of India has been the main cause of the gravity of the present situation.

Now what is the character of the present famine? Some Members of this House have described it as a man-made famine and in the British House of Commons also the same thing was said. But I go further and say that it is not only a man-made famine but it is a Government-made famine. I am supported in this view by the contents of the White Paper which has been

(At this stage Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw Dalal endeavoured to interrupt but Members exclaimed, "Order, Order.")

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Order, order. He does not give way.

(Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw Dalal resumed his seat.)

Dr. P. N. Banerjéa: This White Paper says that there was actually no shortage in the production of foodgrains in this country and the little shortage of rice which was in Bengal could have been supplemented by imports from the other provinces and from countries abroad. Therefore, Sir, this famine is nothing but a Government-made famine. The responsibility belongs entirely to the Government.

The question may be asked: Which part of the Government is to blame? The Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, has tried to throw the whole blame on the Government of Bengal. I am no defender of the Government of Bengal. I know that a great deal of favouritism, incompetence and dishonesty prevails in that province, but it would be going too far to say that the Government of Bengal alone is responsible for the debacle. The Government of India and the Secretary of State are equally responsible for having brought about the present

[Dr. P. N. Banerjea.] situation. I find as evidence of this view that in May 1943 the provisions of shipping for food supplies to India was stopped by the Secretary of State with the concurrence of the Government of India. My Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque, made a very vehement and fighting speech a few minutes ago, in the course of which he said that he did not know, nor did the Government of India know, what the situation was at that time. He tried to show that as there was no rise in the death figures before May, the situation was normal. But is death the only criterion with regard to a famine? Is not death from starvation the last stage of suffering? He did not know that prices were soaring high and that prices had already reached 400 per cent. above the normal.

Now with regard to the statistics regarding the death-roll, questions were put to Sir Azizul in August and even at that time he said that if the Government of Bengal thought it desirable to collect the statistics they would do it; it was no business of the Government of India. Further we find that the Honourable Sir Azizul Huque made a speech at Krishnagar in the month of May in the course of which he said that the prices were sure to fall considerably within a week. Now how many weeks and how many months have elapsed since then? And have prices come down?

Sir, another defender of Government's inaction is Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, who spoke only about price control but said nothing about supply. Every person who has a little knowledge of economics knows that price control can never be made effective unless you have control of supply. Did he not know that supplies were insufficient at that time and even at the present time supplies are insufficient, and that on this account price control has proved ineffective? Only a few weeks ago, Sir Thomas Rutherford, the Governor of Bengal, said that one of the reasons why the Famine Code could not be applied in Bengal was that there was not a sufficient supply of food-stuffs. As a matter of fact as there is no sufficient supply of foodstuffs, the relief that is given in Bengal amounts to less than half of what is provided in the Famine Code. All these factors should have been taken into account by the members of the Government of India. They say they were not sitting in an attitude of complacency. But if there was no complacency, why did they not take adequate steps to meet the situation before it became too late?

Now, as for the exact share of the blame which should belong to the three parts of the Government, that is a matter for expert inquiry. My own view is that there is only one Government in this country, and that is the British Government in India. Provincial autonomy is a sham. You can override the Provincial Governments at any moment you like, and the Central Government is subordinate to the Secretary of State for India. Therefore, whatever the blame, it attaches to the British-Indian Government. As regards the details they have to be found out by an expert body of persons, and several amendments have been moved in this House suggesting the manner of appointment of such a body. A Royal Commission has been suggested in one of the amendments; a committee of inquiry has been suggested, consisting of an accountant general and experienced judges and administrators, in an amendment moved by a member of my Party. In fact, all of us are agreed that an inquiry must be held and that it must be independent and impartial, otherwise it would be useless.

What have been the chief characteristics of the Government policy in the past? It seems to me that extreme thoughtlessness and lack of foresight were the chief causes, when the famine was already on the horizon; criminal negligence when the famine had already begun; bungling and mishandling in the later stages of famine; and corruption and inefficiency throughout. These have been the characteristics of Government action or inaction with regard to this famine. If it had not been for the sins of omission and commission on the part of the Government, the famine would either not have occurred at all, or if it had occurred it would not have assumed such serious proportions as it has now assumed.

Sir, how has the present situation been brought about? It has been brought about by various devices: the first was the stage of the denial policy when foodgrains were removed from certain districts of Bengal in order that they might not fall into the hands of Japan; and along with this all boats were destroyed which might have conveyed the food from one part of the country to another. Then, large purchases were made by Government or on Government account by contractors who bought things not at the market prices, but at enormously enhanced prices. And what was the result? The result of that was that the prices went on soaring. There was an incentive to the contractors to buy at high prices because their commission was fixed not on the basis of quantity but on the basis of the prices at which those commodities were purchased.

Sir, on top of all this, the Government themselves made profits. Our thanks are due to the Governments of the Punjab and Orissa which came to our rescue, but did not make any profits. The United Provinces Government has said that it has also made no profits. The Sind Government has frankly admitted that it made some profit for the welfare of its own people. But what about the profits made by the Government of Bengal and by the Central Government? Sometimes ago, some Members of this House compared the attitude of the Government of India to that of Nero of unhallowed memory. They said that the position of the Government of India was the same with regard to the famine as that of Nero in regard to the burning of Rome. But there is a difference. Fiddling is an innocent pastime; whereas making profits on the prices of foodgrains among a population which was starving, is no pastime; it has much graver consequences. Therefore, the offence of which the Government of India and the Government of Bengal were guilty was far graver than that of Nero of Rome.

When the famine was in full blast, what did the Government do? No adequate measures were taken for relief for a long time, and when relief measures were adopted, they were adopted in a very inadequate and insufficient manner. Our best thanks are due to the charitable organisations which did their best to help the people in distress; but their work was hampered in a variety of ways. The Government has recently taken another step. That step is the forcible removal of destitutes from Calcutta. What was the manner in which this policy was carried out? The most inhuman and cruel. I have personal knowledge of the fact that wives were separated from their husbands, that babies were separated from their mothers; and all this has led to disruption of thousands of families. And what has been the object of this forcible removal from Calcutta? The Government view is that this policy has been undertaken in order to prevent deterioration of the health of the people of that city.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: What was the object of separating wives and babies?

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: All that was done in a haphazard manner. There was no plan, there was no definite programme, and things were done in the most careless and autocratic manner. What was the object of this removal policy? The ostensible object was that the health of Calcutta should not deteriorate. But there are people who suspect that the real object was again to minimise the gravity of the situation. If only the mortality figures that were published in the papers for Calcutta were reduced, then Government would be able to say that the famine had been brought under control. If that be the real object, I cannot but say that that is the greatest disgrace on the Government of Bengal and on the Government of India.

I do not deny that during the last few weeks strenuous efforts have been made by the new Food Member and the Transport Member. But I am not satisfied with their comparative figures. They must take a vow unto themselves that they are determined to kill the demon of famine which has devoured so many persons in the past and is threatening to devour many more in future. Unless they do that, a mere improvement in the situation will not be of much help. As a matter of fact, there has been no real improvement in

[Dr. P. N. Banerjea.]

the situation. The death-roll is still mounting and the distress is growing worse every day.

What about remedies? When the debate took place in last August, I made some definite suggestions both with regard to long-range policy and with regard to short-range policy. If these suggestions had been carried out there would have been a great improvement in the situation. But that was not done. Even now, if these suggestions are given effect to there will be a considerable improvement in the situation before long.

I should like to emphasise a few points on which the Government should concentrate their attention at the present moment. They should vigorously import foodgrains, not only from other parts of the British Empire, but from abroad, because it has been recognised in America that the allied nations also are responsible to some extent for this famine in this country. Larger imports should also be made from the other provinces. Then, there should be an equitable distribution as between all the districts of Bengal, and for that purpose I suggested in August that a provincial food council should be appointed. I again urge the adoption of this measure. I further urge that adequate transport facilities should be provided and if necessary the war needs of the Government should be subordinated to the needs of the food situation, for unless the food situation is properly handled the war efforts of the Government will be greatly impeded. Lastly, I suggest that the Government of India must undertake full responsibility for the procurement and distribution of food supply in Bengal.

Before I conclude, I should like to say a few words about the *Aman* crop, which is the principal crop in Bengal and which is due to be harvested in December.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Only two minutes more, Sir. If the Government adopts its old policy of trial and error, if the Government tries again to experiment with the lives of the people, then a greater disaster awaits Bengal. I would therefore suggest to the Government that the *Aman* crop which is expected to be a bumper crop should not be handled by the Government. The needs of Calcutta and the industrial areas should be supplied by imports from the other provinces and from abroad, while the bumper crop of the province should be left with the cultivators and the local people. If, on the other hand, the Government tries to handle the situation it is bound to fail. As has been pointed out by several speakers, the machinery of Government is very defective and there are many practical difficulties in the way of avoiding corruption and inefficiency.

Sir, the food of the people is too sacred a thing to be touched by the impious hands of an inefficient and corrupt Government. Therefore, I suggest.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member must conclude now.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I therefore suggest that this should be left alone—the bumper crop which is expected and which is not due to any effort on the part of the Government. It is a gift of God. Let not God's gift be snatched away from the mouths of the starving people. The Government of India have been guilty of many sins and crimes in the past in its behaviour towards the people of India. If the Government now stands between a kindly Providence and the hungry millions of the country, then there will be a great disaster. Millions of people will die and the sin and crime of the Government will be the greatest ever recorded in history.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Sir, we are meeting and discussing the food problem of this country under the shadow of a great calamity, a calamity which is responsible for the loss of a very large number of lives in the fair and fertile province of Bengal, a calamity which is likely to cast its shadows, not only in the immediate future but for a long long time to come, a calamity which has to be combated and

effectively brought under control. Here, I have to speak for the Congress Party, a party which consists of the elected representatives of a very large number of people in this country. In the absence of very valued and esteemed representatives of the people in my Party, trusted colleagues who have been put in prison without any trial and are rotting behind prison bars for a number of months—as a result of the action of this irremovable and irresponsible executive, it has fallen to my lot to put the peoples' point of view before the House and the country.

Sir, we are told that we are in the midst of a great crisis, let us not indulge in a search for scapegoats, let us forget all that has happened in the past. Let us concentrate on the future. We have even had suggestions from the Leader of the European Group that it would not be politic or advisable to have an inquiry immediately but at some time in the future, because at present our energies should all be concentrated on combating the famine which is playing havoc with the people of Bengal. Sir, there may be something in all these suggestions but the fact remains that we have to state the truth and to bluntly state the truth. The question before the House is who is responsible for this appalling state of affairs in this country. I am not a believer in Royal Commissions or commissions consisting of commoners or lords coming from a distant country. I believe in the people's commission. I know the feelings of the people of this country. I can read their hearts. I can see the glow in their eyes and I can say without fear of contradiction, in spite of Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar and all his group of colleagues, that in the eyes of the people of this country, the Government of Great Britain which is primarily responsible for the government of this country and their henchmen and agents in India sitting right opposite are responsible for this great calamity which has resulted in an enormous loss of life, a loss of life in comparison with which the loss of lives in all the battlefields of the world in the present war pale into insignificance. It is quite clear to us that it would be futile and it would be hardly proper for us to ask these very people who are guilty to appoint a Royal Commission at some distant time to come and whitewash their acts or apportion blame between the various agencies of this octopus which is responsible for depriving us of our liberties.

Now, Sir, it has been stated by my Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque, in his speech that there were miscalculations and that there was bad judgment but there was no deliberate design on the part of the Government—and that this was more or less an act of God and that we should forget and forgive and concentrate on the future. Now, I have a quotation from the speech of Mr. Amery who is responsible for the government of this country, if not to the people of this country, at least to the British Parliament and speaking as early as January last year, Mr. Amery said this. I will first give a quotation from the recent debate in which Mr. Amery made a confession which, if true, means that the Government, of which Mr. Amery was a member, was fully conscious that India was in the grip of a famine and that they refused to take adequate and proper measures to combat that famine in good time. Here are some of the extracts from the speech and with your permission, I will read them to the House. These are published in the *Hindustan Times* of the 6th November. Mr. Amery says:

"If we are to judge the situation as a whole and in its proper perspective we must remember that what threatened India a year ago was a widespread, possibly universal famine. If members will look at the notes in section 5 of the White Paper on the position of areas other than Bengal, they will realise the extent to which that menace was averted or brought within narrow limits. For that credit is duly given in the notes to the administrative action taken by the provinces and States concerned."

Now there was an interruption in the course of the debate from one Mr. Cove, a Labour Member, who said:

"I am not trying to score any debating point but I have a quotation from Mr. Amery in January this year in which he said there was no fear of any famine of any kind whatever, that everything was all right as far as India was concerned and that there was no cause for a great alarm of any kind."

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]

Now, Sir, that the situation was clearly foreseen cannot be denied and there can be no two opinions about it. Even in the course of the debate which recently took place on the Indian food situation in the House of Lords, Lord Huntingdon stated:

"Why in a situation which was foreseen a long time ago and was developing for months, did not the Central Government of India take the profoundest measures before the famine reached this disastrous extent and the situation became completely out of hand."

Referring to Mr. Amery's remark at Birmingham last week that the dangerous possibilities of the situation were fully realised soon after the fall of Burma and Singapore, Lord Huntingdon said that this happened some time ago, why were none of the measures advocated in the Gregory report put into operation. If the dangerous implications of the situation were realised, then there can be absolutely no reason and justification for this callous negligence, this criminal neglect on the part of the British Government and their agents in India to take timely and adequate measures to protect the lives of the people of this country, I say that they have not been able to protect the honour, the self respect and the freedom of the men and women inhabiting this country; but at least it was their duty to protect their lives, to enable them to eke out a wretched and miserable existence, as the bondmen of the British nation.

Now, Sir, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar got very excited and he tried to whitewash the Government. There may be some parts of that Government which it may not be possible to whitewash at all. He had a fling at the Congress. But he did not have the courage to say that it was the Congress who advised the small landholders in India not to part with the grains on which they depended for their very existence, for the existence of their women and children. He did not have the courage to say so, in the manner of all those who are associated with this Government, people who do not represent anybody, people who cannot face even ten of their countrymen in an open meeting, people who have no constituency and who have been selected for their past record of services to the cause of Imperialism for their betrayal of their country and for holding opinions which are distasteful to the majority of the people of this country. That such a man should rise and have a dig at the Congress is a thing which cannot be tolerated. What was wrong with the opinion which the Congress gave to the people of this country. The Congress leaders were in touch with the pulse of the people. They know how the people live their lives in their humble homes scattered in seven lakhs of villages in India. They know the real condition of the villages. They knew that the Government machinery was likely to break down. They knew that there would be maladministration and maldistribution and inflation, that there would be rise in prices. As has been stated by the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, this is a case of starvation in the midst of plenty. The Congress leaders knew that such a thing was going to happen and that it would be beyond the reach of an average agriculturist to pay for and buy the grains which were hoarded or were available in the bazars in India. Therefore, they gave that advice to those people not to part with their grain on which they depended for the necessities of their life. What was wrong with that advice? If the Congress leaders had not given that timely warning to the poorer sections of our countrymen, the conditions in Bengal and in other parts of India would have been much more appalling. It was that timely advice which has prevented these people from being overtaken by a more serious catastrophe than has befallen them as a result of the maladministration of this Government.

Now, Sir, what have the Government of India been doing here. They say that they have a plan. It is news to me that they have a plan. What is that plan? They did not set up their Department of Food till December 1942. They even frequently changed the Members in charge of Food. Sometimes they have a basic plan. Sometimes they have a revised basic plan, sometimes price control and then at the instance of a panicky Provincial Government which lost its nerve they removed the price control and then the

famine spreads to areas nearer Bengal, like Orissa, Bihar and Assam. Was this the plan which you had? I submit this was the only Government among the United Nations which had absolutely no plan and which kept on experimenting and bungling from time to time with the lives of the people who had been entrusted to their charge. Therefore, it is clear that the responsibility is primarily that of the British Government and of the Government of India who are their agents in this country.

Then, Sir, an attempt has been made from what I have read about the White Paper—I have not seen it—and from what I have read of it as appears from the debates in the House of Commons that it must have been obviously based on the information supplied by the Government of India. They have tried to throw all the blame on the Provincial Government to prove that provincial autonomy or whatever shreds and remnants that were left of it is a farce and to make out a case in favour of the continuance of the present system which is very much to their liking.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Against self-government for India.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Now, Sir, how can the unfortunate Provincial Government be blamed? I am not holding any brief for the Provincial Government nor do I hold any brief for the individual Ministers. There can be corruption here and there among the higher officials and mostly among the lower officials, and probably amongst some Ministers. That is a matter of inquiry, but as far as the primary responsibility is concerned, that was of the Central Government. Now, who is responsible for the monetary and financial policy of this country? Who is responsible for regulating exports and imports of this country? Who is responsible for controlling the means of communication in this country? Who is responsible for enunciating and ruthlessly enforcing a denial policy on the unfortunate and luckless people of Bengal? The answer to all these questions can be one and one only, and that is that the Central Government is responsible for all these things. You are responsible for inflation. You knew very well that as a result of war, as a result of the submarine action and as a result of the absence of shipping the imports into this country were fast dwindling. You knew very well that India was not self-sufficient in the matter of food. You had statistics also to that effect. Even before the war India had been importing something like 2½ per cent. of what was needed to feed her own population. You knew very well that ships were not available and that the imports were dwindling. But you have been harping on the fact that you had stopped the exports. Why did you not stop the exports much earlier? You knew when the war had started that the imports would practically disappear. Why did you not stop the exports when the war started? It is no use now trying to get credit for something which you should have done three or four years earlier. The stopping of exports does not mean so much now when the imports have practically disappeared. On the other hand, you have to offset the fact that the imports into this country have disappeared.

Now, Sir, when I say that the Provincial Government is responsible only to a minor extent, I wish to state that the Central Government interferes with the provinces only when it suits it but when things go wrong, it takes shelter under the Government of India Act. It was the Central Government which discouraged the Provincial Governments from building food stocks in 1942. And after having allowed unco-ordinated control in the Provinces, they suddenly lifted up the control and the effect was disastrous for the eastern regions. Then, may I know whether it is or it is not a fact that it was the agents of the Central Government, the Munitions Department, the Military Department, the labour forces connected with the Military Department, the evacuees, the U. K. C. C. who were buying right and left in Bengal? What could the poor Provincial Government do? It was the activities of these agents of the Central Government which practically reduced what was left of provincial autonomy to a farce. The Provincial Government could not help it. It could just look on.

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]

Now, you did not have any comprehensive plan. In all other countries, when the war started, their National Governments sat down, deliberated and consulted their experts and they had some sort of a comprehensive plan for the duration of the war in order to see that troubles like the shortage of food with which you are afflicted in this country did not affect the people inhabiting those lands. Now, is it or is it not a fact that practically 97 million acres of uncultivated land are lying useless in India? What efforts or attempts were made by the Central Government to bring into cultivation these 97 million acres as against the 200 million acres which are actually under cultivation?

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Grow vegetables in your gardens!

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: As if the Indian peasants eat vegetables! When I heard the speech of the Leader of the European Group, I was reminded of a story and I do not mean any disrespect to him. When he stated, why not grow beetroot, cucumber, cauliflower and such other vegetables, it reminded me of a story which I had heard as a child. When there was a famine in the good old days, the King's daughter said: "Why don't they eat *Pulao*, *Kababs* and things of that kind?" Therefore, these gentlemen have no idea that as far as the poor Indian's food menu is concerned, such a thing is not even heard of by the majority of people living in this country. So, the growing of cucumber and other vegetables is not going to end the famine.

Now, Sir, the next point which I wish to make out is that the measures which have been taken, after the disastrous consequences of famine have become apparent, by the Government of India are hardly sufficient to meet the situation. They are only temporary palliatives. What is required is a long-term, well-planned out, policy, a policy which is planned out in advance. Here I would like to say that you cannot have a long-term policy in this country based on the opinions expressed by economic and other experts, rationing experts, etc., who are being imported in ever increasing numbers into this country. I have been a student of economics and I know that you cannot divorce economics from politics and that there is such a thing as nationalism in economics. If you are going to have economists to give advice as to how to plan and to look ahead, why don't you have a number of Indian economists who ought to know something about their country and who can be depended upon and whose advice will be in the best interests of this country, instead of getting all sorts of so-called foreign experts. If they are such very good experts, I am surprised why their own country should spare them at a time when their own country was involved in a terrible crisis. I won't say much about Dr. Gregory because I have been his student.

Sir, it is a well-known fact that India has been deficient and has been an importing country in the matter of food. We have our industrial population which is rapidly growing. If the Government had any sense of responsibility, they would have at the outbreak of the war started a plan for self-sufficiency, cent. per cent. self-sufficiency in the matter of food for this country. That self-sufficiency is a thing which can be achieved in practice by bringing all these 97 million acres of land, which is lying fallow, under cultivation. It is really a pity that while millions of people in Bengal should be starving for want of food, only next door in Assam, two million acres of land and perhaps much more, which can be brought under cultivation, have not yet been brought under cultivation so far, in spite of the fact that it is a well-known fact that Government knew long before that India was not a self-supporting country in the matter of food. We have that vicious line system and other systems operating in this country and it is really a pity that while there should be millions and millions of acres in Assam and other parts of the country lying uncultivated the people in Bengal should be starving next door. The fact that the Government had absolutely no plan to cope with the situation can also be made clear from one other fact, namely, their method of procurement. In the matter of procurement they allow all these middle-men, profiteers, hoarders, people who are responsible for black markets, to

go and buy from the cultivators without any effective control. In fact, they hand over the food which is the main stay of the people to thieves, robbers and exploiters and then they set about catching them, which is an impossible thing. Why not buy direct from the producers in the field? Why not bring about a law that any man who owns land and who produces crops beyond what is needed for his own family should be compelled to sell the crops to the State at a certain reasonable price? Why not have your own shops, Government controlled shops, Government granaries where such grain could be stored which is taken direct from the producer. I can tell you that in the State of Kashmir long before the war started and when there was no fear of shortage of foodstuffs—and Kashmir State depends entirely on rice and once the crops fail, then there is considerable trouble in the country and it is impossible to run the administration—long before the war started they had their granaries full in Srinagar. Every agriculturist is bound to sell compulsorily one-fourth of his produce to the State which stores it in the Government granaries. The Government have got a list of people who do not own lands, they know how many people live in each particular house who do not own lands and if any person who owns lands applies for a ticket to purchase rice from the Government granary, he is not allowed to do so. The State knows how much each householder consumes every month and any person who does not own land can get a ticket, it is called *chandi*, and take it to a Government shop and buy rice. Even now,—when there is so much starvation in other parts of the country, even now in Kashmir rice sells at eight seers to a rupee. Why can't you have some such mechanism in this country and buy the produce from the producers in their fields and store them in Government granaries and then sell them direct to people who do not own lands. While you have such a system, you should also see to it that these big landlords who have grains much more than are needed for their own use and for the use of their tenants or for the members of their own family, they should not be allowed to retain the surplus. They should be rationed out and the rice should be compulsorily purchased by the State and sold to the people.

Now, Sir, the time at my disposal is limited. I am not going to say anything about the causes of this famine nor have I been able in the limited time at my disposal to make many constructive suggestions which can be very usefully put into practice for avoiding famines, the like of which has taken place in Bengal and playing havoc with the people. There was some talk, on the part of Government Members, especially the Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque, about mobilising public opinion in this country. I think other Honourable Members also talked of mobilising public opinion in this country. Now, Sir, how can you mobilise public opinion where the Government of the country does not reflect the will of the people. Here you have a Government which acts in a manner which is to the utter distaste of the vast majority of the people in this country, a Government which cannot be removed by the elected representatives of the people, a Government which is not responsible to the people from whom it is recruited, a Government which is at once irresponsible and irremovable. Sir, it is really a pity that a country which boasts of democracy and is fighting for freedom of all nations, a country, the spokesmen of which are never tired of talking against Fascism or Nazism and other 'isms' which have reared their ugly heads in modern times, we are told that, in these countries an individual has absolutely no voice in the administration, there is no freedom of speech, no freedom of association, it is really strange that Great Britain, while professing all these high sounding principles, should set up a Government in India, a country inhabited by 400 millions of people which is not only irresponsible but irremovable, a Government which is really a cross between Nazism and Fascism and which is utterly disliked by the people in this country—how can you have co-operation with such a Government, do you deserve co-operation? How have you treated the people in this country? You say that you have no public co-operation for your war effort. You have been responsible for repression, a repression before which the repression alleged to have been practised by the Nazis and the Fascists pales into insignificance. Now, Sir, I see

[Mr. Abdul Qaiyum.]

that the Honourable Member who is responsible for immobilising public opinion is fast asleep in this House, I will not wake him up. But who is responsible in this year, 1943, for keeping thousands of Indians, patriotic Indians, whom the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar had the effrontery to abuse, people who represent the masses of this country, people from whom the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar may have the right to differ, but the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar cannot forget that they are patriots who are liked by their countrymen and whatever may be our difference of opinion, after all they are suffering for a great cause, the cause of freedom of India and freedom of the Indian people. Therefore it does not lie in the mouth of the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar to ridicule these patriots. If you want co-operation, if you want to mobilise public opinion, if you are true to the principles for which you allege you are fighting this war, then it is the duty of the Government of this country and the Government in England immediately to set free Mahatma Gandhi and all those people who are rotting without trial behind the prison bars to enable the people of this country to come to some sort of understanding to set up a Government which is liked and is acceptable to the large parties and peoples inhabiting this country. Will you do it? You do not even allow them even to come together. Perhaps you feel that the ground will slip under your feet if only these people are allowed to negotiate and meet each other. How long are you going to prevent people from coming to a settlement amongst themselves? How long are you going to play this game of setting the Muslim League against the Congress and the Congress against the Muslim League. I warn you how long are you going to play this game? I warn you that the time is not far off when like the people in Lebanon, where the people—the Muslims and the Christians—have combined to fight the De Gaullite brigands whom you have set up to put down the national aspirations of the Lebanese, similarly the people in this country, the Muslims and the Hindus and all other people, will rise against you and turn you out. You ask Mahatma Gandhi to withdraw the August Resolution! What is wrong with the August Resolution. That resolution stands. It expresses the will of the people of this country. It will never be withdrawn. If you think that you will suppress revolution in this country, you are entirely mistaken. There will be revolutions and more revolutions and there will be even greater revolutions until the time comes when the British people are forced to withdraw from this country and a truly national and responsible Government is set up in this country. With these words, I close my speech.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Sir, this is one of the most painful occasions when I have had to participate in a debate under the shadow of thousands dying. The motion before the House is that the food situation be taken into consideration and there are various amendments which are tabled before the House. Now, Sir, in order to take the food situation into consideration, I think the House will agree with me that it will be failing in its duty, if we have only to examine with such materials as one can get or as will be made available, because as non-official Members we have not got all the secrets of the Government in our possession. With such materials as we have and we can get we have to form our judgment as to the responsibility of Government in this matter. I was rather surprised to hear from Sir Henry Richardson who ought to know the traditions of Parliamentary Government better than anyone else that it is no use indulging in recriminations. Do you call this recrimination when the Government in charge of the country is responsible? Who is the real thief has to be found out but the Government of the country is responsible for the safety of the lives of the people, and that is a fact which nobody can deny. You may say that five thousands are dying per day or ten thousands are dying per day: that is a matter of mathematics. But can anybody deny that fact that thousands have died and even today they are dying of starvation? That fact remains, and the further fact also remains that thousands that have not actually died have suffered. Do not forget that category of people; they have suffered

to such an extent that it will take a long time before they can ever get to the normal condition of life.

Now, do you expect us to say that nothing very much has happened? Let us see what we can do in order to put right this appalling state of things which we have been witnessing every day. Sir, in any other country where you have a Government that can only exist with the will and sanction and the approval of the people there will be no need for any commissions or any inquiry. I ask you this question, and I particularly ask the Leader of the European Group, supposing in England a few hundred people had died or were dying every week of starvation,—let alone a few thousands,—would Churchill's Government be able to stand on the Treasury Benches for 24 hours? And here we are calmly and coolly told about recrimination and so on. It is our misfortune that we are living under a system of Government which is irremovable and irresponsible and, I would add, thoroughly incompetent to handle any big issue. And further they are tied down and fettered by their master, the Secretary of State and the India Office. What can you expect these people to do? This country of 400 million souls is governed virtually by two men; one is the Viceroy and Governor General and the other is the Secretary of State for India. I asked the Honourable Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar what he did. He pleaded, as if that was a personal remark against him as an individual, that he had many difficulties and so on and so forth. Yes, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, I fully realise and you know it,—I am not disrespectful but am only criticising your status and the constitution of this Government,—your status is that of a person in charge of a department with a glorified title which entitles you to sit on those Treasury Benches. You are not a Cabinet Minister and you do not know what is happening. You are not consulted; it is only when it pleases the Governor General to take you into his confidence that you come to know and then you offer your humble advice and after that you are dismissed. I realise that position. This is a constitution and a form of Government which has no sanction and will of the people or their approval of any kind behind it and in every sense of the word completely bureaucratic, and having behind it the strength of penal laws and Ordinances and ultimately the machine gun. How can a Government so constituted ever function efficiently when there is a grave crisis? It is all right in normal times when files are passed and red-tapism goes on; but let me tell you that this Government will never be able to stand any great crisis. What is the use of your blaming others? I have not the slightest intention of making any political capital out of this and I want to avoid it completely. But you say that the Provincial Government of Bengal did not do this, that and the other thing; you say that the Governments of the other provinces were not helpful and willing to co-operate with each other. And you say of course that the Government of India were simply the acme of perfection; everybody else may be responsible but not the Government of India nor the Secretary of State for India. I want to know what the Government of India did, and let us examine it. Sir Azizul Huque in his speech today and also in his previous speech which I have read with great care and attention gave us the information that they appointed a Food Conference in 1939. There was a Food Conference in 1940, there was a Food Conference in 1941, there was a Food Conference in 1942, and there was a Food Conference in 1943. I was very pleased to hear that. With your Food Conference in 1939, with your Food Conference in 1940, with your Food Conference in 1941, and with your Food Conference in 1942 and your Food Conferences every year, what is the result? The net result is that thousands are dying.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Hundreds of thousands.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: It is no use blaming the Provincial Government, or Governments. I am not here to defend them. May be that they were negligent, may be that they did not do their duty, but, Sir, how can any Provincial Government possibly deal with the situation? You look at every other civilized country in the world: Can the Provincial Government deal with inflation and the financial difficulties, can the Provincial Government deal with the question

[Mr. M. A. Jinnah.]

of exports and imports, can the Provincial Government deal with the transport inside this country, can the Provincial Government deal with the shipping, can the Provincial Government, or Governments, stop or deal with the operations of the Government of India for military purposes? I am giving you these few instances; there may be others. How can the Provincial Governments deal with these various things? Have they got the power and control all over India, have the Provincial Governments got the control and the power of fixing the prices, have the Provincial Governments got the power or authority of procurement, have the Provincial Governments got the power to ration all over? True, Bombay did it. And let me tell you about Bombay. Bombay is not out of danger. Let me tell you. A man in the street knew this in December last. Before that of course it was very difficult for the ordinary man to realize although some knew before that that there was danger. The Government itself knew that this was a very serious thing. But before I deal with Bombay, may I, in between, point out what did the Government of India do, for at present I am dealing with the Government of India.

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

Till December 1942, there was no Food Department. It was only in December 1942 that Mr. N. R. Sarker, who was also the Commerce Member, was given this portfolio, and the Department of Food was set up. Mr. Sarker resigned and from February to May there was no Member; no Member at all. Who was doing the business? The Secretary and the all-powerful apostle of a system of Government much worse than Fascism and Nazism, the all-powerful single dictator—the Governor General. What did he do? Nothing from February to May. In May we were able to find out a suitable man. Sir, it took us from February to May to find out a suitable man whom this Department could be given, and I congratulate my Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque, that he was the choice.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: They made their choice very soon!

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: But he was also holding the Commerce portfolio.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Industries and Civil Supplies also.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I do not know exactly what were the reasons but all that I know was that all these departments that he was holding were beyond his human capacity and if something was not done then we might lose him altogether. So in August 1943 it was transferred to Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava—the fairy godmother. And this fairy godmother says 'take the food situation into consideration'; and this fairy godmother says 'I shall not be satisfied so long as famine and distress exists'. I hope not. What wonderful statement the Honourable Member has made. I will deal later with what he is doing now.

Sir, I was dealing with Bombay. It was known to the man in the street as far back as December that the food situation was very serious in this country; it came home to us in Bombay. And, Sir, it was very fortunate that the Governor of Bombay himself was fully alive to and fully in touch with the situation.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: It was different in my province.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: I say, it was our good fortune that the Governor was fully alive to the situation, and naturally so. At that time I had the honour to point out certain things to him, because the situation was very serious in Bombay. I can give you one instance: When I went back from Delhi in December 1942 and when I reached my house immediately three of my servants came to me and said that they had nothing to eat for three days; they could not get any food. All that I could do was to immediately attend to them. So it was known to the man in the street—that was my point. The Governor then came post-haste to Delhi and made whatever battle or fight that he had to go through. I do not know what happened, but one thing that I do know is

that he came fully fortified and somehow or other he secured the co-operation of the Central Government. Now, you will say 'How is it that the Governor of Bombay did it; we were prepared to help him. Why didn't other provinces do it?'. This is exactly the charge against you. Unless somebody comes and goads you, and unless somebody comes and tells you that you are living in a fool's paradise, and unless somebody comes and tells you that this is your responsibility, you will not see or wake up to your sense of responsibility and you will not go away from your musty files in which you are absorbed. Perfectly true, I am not defending any Provincial Government at all. They have got their responsibilities. But I say what could they have done except to come to you and tell you 'Look here, if you don't move—and you have not moved—if you don't move, the results will be terrible, dreadful'. But what were you doing? Therefore, Sir, it seems to me that you cannot possibly get away from

this charge against you and that you have been guilty of gross negligence: that you have failed to discharge your duties and your responsibility as you ought to have. That is not my view, but Mr. Pethick Lawrence who opened the debate in the House of Commons said in conclusion 'that the Secretary of State has failed to discharge his responsibility' and as I do say this is due mainly to inflation: his concrete suggestion was 'that you should now take measures and meet this danger of inflation by means of taxation and loans'. He represents the Labour Party, a responsible speaker, not a back-bencher.

Another prominent figure in the political life of England, speaking on behalf of the National Liberal Party, Sir George Schuster said:

'They should all keep before them one purpose—to strengthen the arm of Lord Wavell. This soldier had achieved his most brilliant successes when all odds were against him and difficulties he always turned into opportunities. If these were the conditions under which he worked best, he could not have been sent to a more suitable place than India.'

Sir George Schuster said there was a failure to take adequate and comprehensive action. It was a story of half measures and vacillation.

Sir George Schuster could not find in the White Paper that rice was ever seriously mentioned or discussed at any food conference until December 1942.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: That is no correct. Sir George Schuster is the same old George Schuster who was Finance Member here.

Mr. M. A. Jinnah: Excuse me you are wrong. He said it is not mentioned in the White Paper: not what is your correct information. He said in the White Paper it appears. Referring to the question of inflation and the various financial problems, he asked whether the India Office had thought that the financial problems were going to be all important all throughout the war. He felt the situation had not been faced up to and that the responsibility that rested in London had not been fully discharged—I would add that the responsibility that rested in India was not fully discharged, or far from that—if Mr. Amery and the India Office were to be purely passive and merely to say yes to any demand that came from India, what was the object of that great office and of money that have been sent to the staff? He thought that the House was entitled to an answer. He felt Mr. Amery had a heavy responsibility to the House in this matter which he had not fully discharged.

Therefore the two speakers on behalf of the two recognised parties have condemned the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery in the language in which I have put before you.

How much more is your guilt? And what do we find, Sir? As late as last January Mr. Amery says that everything is O. K. Practically it came to this. Everything is all right. There is no fear of any famine of any kind. Don't bother. The Secretary of State for India, making this statement on the floor of the House before Parliament! May I know on whose authority did he make it? Who supplied him with the information in January 1942 which enabled him to make that solemn statement before Parliament? I cannot imagine that a man in the position of the Secretary of State for India would ever have made

[Mr. M. A. Jinnah.]

such a statement unless he was very sure or so informed by the Government of India.

Well, Sir, I do not want to go into the various details, as I cannot do it within the time. Now we come to the question of facing this situation, but before I deal with it let me say one thing. As far as—shall I use the word—the guilt, or crime, or the gross negligence of the Government as it is constituted today is concerned, we are powerless and under the constitution we can do nothing. But I want to tell the Honourable Members here that helpless as we are under the constitution, as a forlorn hope and in despair we say, and this House ought to say—let me tell you I am not supporting the amendment of the Muslim League because it is a League amendment, though it is a most comprehensive amendment—to those who want to understand that we think and we hold this Government *prima facie* guilty of gross negligence and that they have failed and they have shown no grip or foresight and they are guilty of the colossal failure to discharge a responsibility that is imposed upon them. Instead of defending yourself as advocates, instead of the Secretary of State for India defending himself and this—what shall I say—Government which is incompetent, a Government which is incapable of meeting any crisis, of facing any big issues, a Government essentially bureaucratic in its mentality, in its character and in its own blood, now instead of defending themselves, you should throw down your arms; do not try to throw blame on this and that and the other; you know it; and if you do not know this much, then God help you! You know it, that the main responsibility was yours and you are paid to discharge it and amongst the other scapegoats that you want to find out, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar has added one more. This is the first time that it has been suggested even indirectly: the insinuation was clear—he did not name it, but he did mean that there was a party which acted in a manner which made it more difficult for you to formulate a policy which would have prevented this appalling disaster. Are you really serious about it? If it is true that there is a party—mind you here is no question of politics—if the Government of India thought that here is a party that is playing this game—may be out of bitterness, may be out of ill-will, may be on political grounds—but if you came to that conclusion that there was an appreciable number of people here who were doing this, may I know what action you took? Why did you not openly say that in this matter this is happening? One thing is certain now. I can tell you now on the floor of this House, so far as the Muslim League is concerned, so far as the Mussalmans are concerned, we do not wish to introduce any political issue or make capital—political, financial or any other capital, out of this; we know one thing: our countrymen are dying. We know there is danger. Remember that you have not got over it. And let me tell you that if the monsoon fails, I do not know what will happen. It is no use saying that this is God's act. God has not yet intervened, but He may, and therefore be prepared even to meet the intervention of God. It is no use saying "It is our enemy's action." Yes; the enemy has done his worst; the Burma market has gone; but what did you do? I want to know. There is nothing of any substantial kind of scheme or result or even prospects of any big results. Nothing. For four years you have been pottering about; for four years you have been trifling with this question. Can you point out to me and say "This is what we did"? What is this, but like arguments for the defence which is false. Mr. Amery in the House of Commons says "Oh, the British Government has built up a magnificent canal system which has now even made India monsoon-proof". He is not content with that past history and the glory of the great work of Britain, but he says that one of the causes of this famine is the increase of population from 50 to 60 millions. I want to know—I do not know what has happened to Mr. Amery—either it is done merely to fool the people, for propaganda; that is the only interpretation I can put upon it: how can any sane man stand before another intelligent man and say that this famine or this starvation and death is due to the increase

in population in ten years of fifty millions? Surely these 50 millions have not descended upon this earth, this blessed country, in a day or in forty-eight hours. What is this argument? If the population was increasing, I suppose it increased gradually; it did not happen in one day. Surely this benign Government, these guardians and trustees of our life and property should have made some arrangement as they went on increasing. No, Sir. This is to my mind adding insult to injury. I have done with this part of the question.

I now come to this other part. What are we to do? We cannot allow ourselves to be side-tracked and diverted from the main issue; and here, speaking on behalf of the Muslim League, I can assure you that we are prepared to give you every possible assistance, notwithstanding the fact that we condemn you, that you are not only guilty of failure in the discharge of your duties, that you have treated every party with contempt and you kept every party at arm's length and somehow or other deliberately designed that no party should be allowed to co-operate with you—and you want to run your own show—notwithstanding all that, notwithstanding the differences that we have, believe me they will not stand in our way of giving you the fullest co-operation for the purpose of saving those who are dying, for the purpose of giving nourishment to those who are on the point of death, and that we should see for the future in the name of humanity, that this does not recur. Today you stand—say what you like and do what you like—before the bar not only of the public opinion in India, but of the whole world, condemned because the foreign propaganda is going on and because you have failed. Now, let us redeem at least your character which is almost lost; and above all, let us save those who are dying and those who may die in the future: do something definite, something clear, something concrete, effectively and quickly.

I am afraid I have taken more time—I do not want to take up any more of the time of the House. Now, see what you have done between the months of August, September and October, these three months? You have done a great bit with success. May I know how you were able to do it when you were pottering for four years before? Could you not have done this before what you have done in three months or four months? What is the answer to that? Why did you not do it? Perhaps I can only surmise that it is not this fairy god-mother that has come to our rescue. What can he do after all? Perhaps it is the hand, the military hand, which believes in action and not red-tapism, that may have helped this wooden, ante-diluvian and incompetent Government to action.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member): For the first time in the history of this House has one subject been debated upon for five days, and, Sir, no less than 51 Members have taken part in it. The average attendance, I believe, has been in the region of 100, so that more than fifty per cent. of those present have participated in the debate. Sir, the importance of the subject warrants this, and I am very glad indeed that the House has taken so much interest in this all important subject of food.

I wish to congratulate the House on the very useful suggestions which many Members have made, and to assure them that these suggestions will receive the earnest consideration of the Government. I have listened myself to the debate with the utmost interest, care and sympathy as I have been most anxious to ascertain the views of my colleagues, the Members of this Legislature. Sir, that is the reason why I have not wanted to impose any restrictions of time. I have given them five days and I take it that the House is satisfied that every opinion has now been placed before the Government.

Let me also assure the House that I fully share the feelings about the tragic sufferings prevailing in Bengal. I have seen with my own eyes heart-rending scenes in Calcutta and its environments, and I do not wish to minimise the gravity of the situation. I can well understand why Members who represent the people of Bengal should be so perturbed over the entire situation, and I fully sympathise with them. Sir, I beg Honourable Members to

[Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava.]

believe me when I say that I feel the same as they do; I am really distressed over the entire tragedy.

Having said that, it is not my intention to answer to the charges that have been levelled against the Government. We could probably produce a defence, and a good one at that, but I think it would be out of place here. What we are concerned with now is the present and the future. I am very glad that every section of this House is agreed on this view. The voice of the suffering humanity in Bengal and elsewhere bids us that we should cease to pursue arguments which can bring no relief to the afflicted and the hungry. There is no food in them, and my main concern at the moment is to feed the hungry.

In moving my motion for consideration I gave a businesslike account. It was not couched in exaggerated language at all. I did not indulge in platitudes, but I gave a businesslike account of what had been done by the Government of India to relieve the situation since the House last met. When in August last my Honourable friend, Sir Azizul Huque approached me with the request that I should take over the food portfolio I confess that I hesitated to do so. I was only too conscious of my own limitations and of the gravity of the then prevailing situation in the country, and particularly in Bengal. I think the bravest man might have been appalled by the task and it was only out of a most compelling sense of duty to my country that I ultimately acceded to the request.

What did I do after assuming this grave responsibility? The first task before me was to give the Bengal Government the supplies with which they could administer relief, namely, food and medical requirements. These supplies had of necessity to consist of foodgrains obtained from outside.

I will ask the House to remember that the months of August, September and October are months when even in normal times the flow of grains coming to the market is at its lowest ebb. I paid a personal visit to Calcutta and to the Punjab. Thanks to the co-operation of the railways and of the Punjab Government, we have succeeded in sending to Calcutta very substantial quantities of foodgrains. When I took over the food portfolio Calcutta was reported to have only a few days' stock of food. I want Honourable Members to consider what would have been the position to-day if these foodgrains had not been supplied.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: The Honourable Member ought to reply and not make a fresh speech.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am replying. I quite realise that I am replying. I am replying to some of the charges made.

Today, Sir, besides the daily arrivals of foodgrains for meeting the current requirements, Calcutta has more than a month's reserve on its hand. As a result of unremitting efforts during the last three months, the supply position has materially changed, so much so that now I think grain is reaching every nook and corner of Bengal. I make bold to say that the balance has changed and the question of public medical aid, clothing and so on have assumed even greater significance. (*An Honourable Member:* "Since when?") During the last three months. I have invited the most urgent attention of my Honourable colleagues, the Members for Public Health and Civil Supplies to this aspect of the question. In this connection I would make a most earnest appeal to this House and to the wider public to give as many old clothes as they can spare for the use and relief of the poor destitutes in Bengal in the coming winter.

As to Bengal, I may give the House certain figures of the amount of foodgrains which we have sent. The figures of the port of Calcutta show that from January to October, 1943, the total exports amounted only to 12 thousand tons, out of which 8 thousand tons were pulses which were not presumably of Bengal origin. As against this, the Central Government have put into Bengal nearly six lakhs of tons of foodgrains of different kinds. Since July 15th, she has

received 3 lakhs of tons. Sir, I claim that this is no mean achievement. (*An Honourable Member:* "Have the prices come down?") Yes. They have come down very appreciably and very satisfactorily. The original basic quota was 793 thousand tons up to March 1944. Between now and the end of December, we intend to put in another one lakh and 20 thousand tons at least. Railway statistics show that 100 thousand tons entered Bengal during the period of free trade, an expedient which was adopted to save Calcutta and it did save Calcutta.

Now, Sir, it is believed that the Central Government has been callous to the needs of Bengal. In this connection I would like to say that the Government of India have given large sums of money to Bengal in the form of loans and advances totalling I believe, 12 crores of rupees, not to speak of 63 lakhs for the "Grow more food" campaign. I wish to assure the House that we have given assistance and we will continue to give assistance but the salvation of Bengal lies in that Government putting its own purchase and enforcement arrangements in order in which task it will receive every possible assistance from the Centre.

Now, I would like to say a word or two on malnutrition. I am only too keenly aware of the dire effect of malnutrition and starvation on the general health of the population. As a temporary and immediate step I have been able to secure through generous releases of stock from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and South Africa and from the Defence forces considerable quantities of milk powder and condensed milk for mothers and children. The quantity which we expect to get is some 3-million tins. In consultation with my Honourable colleague in the Department of Education, Health and Lands and with the public health authorities, I am making special inquiries into the steps that are necessary and possible to minimise the effects of famine. In this connection I must refer to the fact that it is not possible for me to replace deficits in rice with equivalent surpluses of rice from other areas. Some adjustment in diet by the utilisation of foodstuffs which may at first be strange to the people is essential and I must urge the medical profession and rationing authorities throughout the distressed areas to study carefully and demonstrate to the people how best to use the alternative foodstuffs. At the Centre here, we shall study the same problem and circulate all the information and advice which we can lay hands upon. I believe that the result may well be a change of habit which will in the end prove beneficial to many classes and to the introduction of better balanced diet in many areas where the reform has long been needed. In this process, with care and ingenuity, rationing schemes, as they become developed and stabilised, can be made to play an important part. I would request that all who take an interest in and have a knowledge of dietary and nutritional matters will study this aspect and send us their advice and suggestions.

Sir, I now turn to medical aid and what has been done in that direction. A reference was made by Sir Frederick James to the great need for medical relief in Bengal. I entirely agree with him. I understand from my colleague, the Education Member, that all possible steps are being taken to assist the Bengal Government in the provision of medical relief. The military authorities are also doing a great deal. They have made available one 1,200-bedded hospital, one casualty clearing station and 2 field ambulances and they have also made available the services of a large number of army doctors. I think the number is about 100 including 10 experienced hygienists for medical relief and epidemic work. The services of 29 doctors and 10 Public Health Inspectors have been obtained from the Government of Burma. The military authorities have also supplied for the medical treatment of starvation cases one million vitamin capsules and a consignment of one million vitamin capsules has also been received from His Majesty's Government by air. An expert clinical research unit appointed by the Nutritive Advisory Committee of the Indian Research Fund Association has considered the clinical problems arising in the treatment of starvation cases and has made recommendations in regard to diet treatment.

[Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava.]

Sir, reference has been made in the course of the debate to the export of grains. I have already given the assurance elsewhere that the export of grains has been practically stopped. The question of exports outside India has been under the constant examination of the Government of India who have tried to progressively reduce these exports so as to permit only the bare minimum requirements of the neighbouring countries like Ceylon, the Persian Gulf and Saudi Arabia who have a large Indian population. The total exports of all foodgrains from India have been progressively reduced from over 9 lakhs of tons in 1937-38 to 379,000 in 1942-43. During the first seven months of the current financial year, April to October, the total exports have amounted to about 80,000 tons, the bulk of which were in the earlier months of the year in fulfilment of the past commitments in respect of Ceylon. Exports of all foodgrains have completely stopped since last July. No export is now allowed. I repeat that emphatically. There is no truth whatsoever in the reports which have been given wide publicity that a large consignment was exported from Calcutta to South Africa.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: That was three months ago.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am not aware of any exports within recent months. The total exports of rice from Calcutta since January to date have amounted to only 2,737 tons, of which 2,000 tons were for the Persian Gulf in January and 737 tons for the requirements of Indian crew on ships.

Sir, I find a reference has been made to the alleged large scale exports of foodgrains by the U. K. C. C. The Government of India are fully informed of all exports by the U. K. C. C. which are subject to a licence. The only export of foodgrains made by the U. K. C. C. were small quantities of wheat for the Persian Gulf and that was early in 1942. I can categorically assure the House that no exports of foodgrains have been made by the U. K. C. C. since July 1942.

Now, Sir, I turn to imports. So far as imports are concerned, we have as our target the amount specified by the Foodgrains Policy Committee and I shall neglect no efforts or opportunity of any kind and description to press upon His Majesty's Government the implementation of that programme. The problem, as has already been stated, is mainly, if not entirely, one of finding shipping. The whole of the available shipping in the hands of the United Nations is regulated and moved according to carefully concerted plans which must of necessity be formulated long in advance. When a new demand is made on the shipping allotted to a particular area, it means the re-allotment of tonnage and the movement of vessels to the area where the new demand arises. That movement takes time. Such adjustments have already been made by His Majesty's Government and the results are now seen in the steady arrival of grain ships in Indian ports. Those that have arrived are but a small beginning of a movement which, I am assured, will continue for several months to come. I am not prepared to jeopardise the safe arrival of these ships by disclosing details of their ports of loading or of their destinations; nor can I disclose the volume of tonnage allotted to this purpose. I think the House will agree that this would be information which our enemies would very much like to know. But I repeat that what has arrived to date represents but a small beginning of movements about which I am already assured.

Sir, some Members from Bengal have referred to the question of the procurement of the *aman* crop. I wish to assure them that we have been in closest consultation with the Government of Bengal about the purchase of *aman* crop.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: We suggested non-purchase of *aman* crops.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am coming to that. Our conclusion is that we should, if possible support the confidence of the public and assist the Provincial Government by going to the utmost extent possible to take the needs of Calcutta out of the Bengal market. In other words, the Centre might undertake the obligation of meeting the needs of Calcutta and

isolate Calcutta from the rest of Bengal. Figures are being worked out and I have every hope that we shall be able to announce a decision to this effect in the very near future. Our ability to do so must necessarily depend on the willingness of every administration to make the necessary foodstuffs available.

As regards the *aman* crop procurement or non-procurement, as my Honourable friend would call it, it follows that if full effect of these additional supplies to Bengal is to be realised, confidence restored and prices lowered and normal movement resumed, the offtake from the rural markets should be and must be reduced to the barest minimum. I am working out a scheme on these lines.

Sir, something has been said in the course of the debate with regard to the denial policy which is alleged to have led to the present famine in Bengal. Sir, it is true that there were certain measures dictated by military necessity in 1942 when there was real danger of invasion and this contributed to the present difficulties of Bengal. I admit that. But the facts are as follows. Though in April 1942, it was decided to purchase surplus stocks of paddy and rice in vulnerable coastal districts and remove them to the interior of the Province, the Government of India advanced money to the Government of Bengal, after allowing for 12 months consumption and requirements of seed. Actually only 50 per cent. of the estimated surplus was purchased. That amounted to about 17,500 tons of rice and 20,000 tons of paddy. That is to say, in terms of rice, the total was 30,719 tons and of this quantity 2,437 tons were released for Ceylon and the entire balance was consumed in Bengal. Judged even against the deficient rice crop of last year in Bengal of 7 million tons, the quantity involved was negligible.

As regards the boats, a large number, about 25,000 were removed on payment of compensation by the Government of India from Bengal coastal areas in April and May 1942 to reception centres further inland. Undoubtedly this action must have caused hardship and a sense of insecurity in the limited area to which the order applied. But the greatest care was taken to limit the effect to the absolute minimum required by the emergency. Extensive use of country crafts for essential agricultural purposes or communications has always been allowed on temporary permits, especially for moving the *aman* crops of 1942-43 and the return of all these boats is now being freely permitted.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: The boats which were removed?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Yes. They are being permitted to be returned.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Were any boats destroyed?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I am unable to give any reply. In fact no boats are now being held by the military authorities under the denial policy. Every effort was also made to find alternative employment for the fishermen affected by these orders.

May I now say a word about the military consumption about which a good deal of misunderstanding seems to prevail. I noted that my Honourable friend Sir Frederick James pointed out waste in the rations of army personnel and dependents and also what my Honourable friend Mr. Frank Anthony said about the proportionate consumption by the army in comparison to the general population. A cut of 4 oz. was made in the rice rations of the army out of a total rationing of 1 lb. 8 oz. The War Department, as I believe, my Honourable friend Sir Frederick James is aware, have already under enquiry the matters to which he drew attention at Bangalore. Moreover, instructions have been given that where the various scales of rations are found to be more than is needed, the troops are to underdraw their rations and on no account should waste food. An example of such an order is Army Instruction No. 209 of 1943. It reads: "Commanding officers will ensure that no waste of foodstuffs is allowed and any item of scale now sanctioned which cannot be consumed will be underdrawn to the extent necessary". The present scale of rationing is considered no more than adequate by the military medical authorities. Officers commanding units are however fully aware of food shortage and I am sure will keep their eyes open for instances of waste. The need for

[Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava.]

doing so has been stressed in a pamphlet and instructions on food wastage have already been issued by the local military authorities. I am confident, Sir, that if any specific instance of waste is brought to the notice of the G. H. Q. action will be taken at once.

Something has been said in the course of the debate as regards the profits alleged to have been made by the Government of India and I would like to answer the charge. The reference I take it was to the pool price charged by the Government of India. There was never any intention to make

any profit from this pool price as I will explain. The pool price charged by the Government of India for wheat supplied from the Punjab was fixed in May, 1943, when the actual average cost f. o. r. station of despatch as intimated to the Food Department in respect of the first 81,500 tons of wheat purchased by the agents of the Punjab Government for export to the deficit areas worked out to Rs. 11-6-1 per maund. To this was added an element to cover the commission paid to the purchasing agents, the cost of administration of the Central Government and the supplying province and a margin to cover small fluctuations. Taking all the factors into consideration the pool price was fixed at Rs. 11-10-0 per maund. An assurance was however given that it was not the intention of the Government of India to make any profit out of the grain purchasing schemes, and if at the end of the operations the accounts showed a profit after adjustments had been made in respect of the cost of administration and losses, etc., the Government of India would be willing to pass the profit on to all consuming units in proportion to their respective offtake for the whole period. In pursuance of the undertakings given by the Central Government to all administrations the accounts of the wheat transactions have been examined already. Although all the final bills of the agents have not been received yet and the final figures are not available, it appears likely that the pool price of Rs. 11-10-0 would leave with the Central Government a substantial profit. From the accounts available the actual average cost of the wheat supplied under the old arrangement works out at Rs. 10-13-4 per maund on gross weight. Adding commission charges payable to agents, the bank charges and the cost of administration and a small amount for losses the pool price was recently fixed at Rs. 10-15-0, per maund on gross weight of bag weight f. o. r. station of despatch. This price has been given retrospective effect and the Controller of Food Accounts has already been asked to pass on credits to the receiving administrations at 11 annas a maund on quantities received by them. When the accounts have been completed they will be reviewed as a whole and further credits will be passed to the receiving administrations if it is found that the Central Government are still left with a profit. The preliminary figures, however, do not indicate that any substantial sums will be available for distribution in the way.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: What was the profit made by the Bengal Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will come to that.

Reference has been made to profiteering or alleged profiteering by the Provincial Governments as well as trade interests. I do not desire to be drawn into recriminations. I have answered the charge that has been made against the Government of India, and I have already exercised and shall continue to exercise strict control on the imposition of unjustified surcharges. Government's policy has been clearly stated to the Provinces in this matter and will be enforced.

As regards the alleged profits by the millers in Bengal I have appointed already,—and publicly announced the appointment,—a special commission containing an expert accounts officer to go into the existing charges, to report upon them and make recommendations regarding the retail prices which should be fixed by the Government of Bengal.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): What is the present milling difference?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I cannot give way just now because my time is limited.

Sardar Mangal Singh: It is Rs. 5 per maund at present.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will now say a word about the mortality figures. The difficulty in obtaining accurate mortality figures has been commented upon and has itself caused the Government of India grave concern. The duty of collecting the figures in normal times rests with the village chaukidars and *panchayats* in Bengal. Their returns are collected by the Assistant Director of Public Health in the districts who in turn compile them and make them over to the Bengal Government's Director of Public Health. The process is slow and far from accurate. In times of emergency such as the present its inherent defects are obvious, but I have heard so far no suggestions as to how all at once a new and accurate system can be created and set to work. To expect the agency which exists to make accurate reports distinguishing deaths from starvation from other deaths is clearly not possible. But the Government of Bengal have made a survey from all the districts in October, and the result showed roughly 58,000 deaths due to starvation and disease combined with under-nourishment. I hold no brief for these figures; the statistics are admitted by the district officers to be very approximate estimates; but I must say that the figure of 16 million given by my Honourable friend Mr. Abdur Rasheed Chaudhury is clearly a gross over-estimate which bears no relation at all to the facts and can itself be based on no statistics worth the name.

Sir, I made a careful note of the speech made by Mrs. Renuka Ray regarding voluntary organisations and the difficulties which they have experienced. I acknowledge the work done by these organisations and I am very grateful to women particularly who have been doing such useful work, and I will give them every possible help.

Sir, I now turn to the demand for enquiry. The course of the debate makes it clear that there is a widespread desire for some form of authoritative enquiry into the famine in Bengal: its origin, causes and its remedy. I fully recognize the depth and sincerity of the feelings which have given rise to that desire. I am prepared to accept that an enquiry of full authoritative character may be desirable but I must make it perfectly clear that I am absolutely opposed to any enquiry at the present time.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: What do you mean by 'present time'?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: . . . or in the immediate future for many reasons. I doubt indeed whether it would be practicable to constitute at the present time a committee or a commission of adequate weight and status to deal with a question of this importance without calling away from urgent duties men who can ill be spared.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: You mean you will do it after the war is over.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Even if that consideration be not correct, the mere statement that an enquiry is about to be held, and even more the holding of that enquiry, cannot fail to distract Ministers and other officers from their present duties and engage all energies which ought to be and must be, for sometime to come, directed solely towards the relief of the famine conditions.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: Not the Executive Councillors.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: . . . the rehabilitation of the people, and the effective administration of food control. I fear also, Sir, that it would at the present time increase bitterness of feelings or at least revive and keep alive recriminations and militate against that concentration in common effort which is so essential to the solution of the food problem. (Interruption.) We are still in the middle of the battle and we cannot tell what its outcome will be. Our position is not that there cannot and must not be any enquiry. Far from it. But while we are still in the midst of the emergency and the crisis is upon us and is still continuing, it is clearly not

[Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava.]

possible to determine when is the most appropriate or the earliest practicable time for the enquiry to begin.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: After all the evidence has been destroyed.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We cannot decide to what exact points that enquiry must be directed, nor, in consequence, can it be said what form the enquiry should take, or who should conduct it. These points cannot be decided now.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra: Before you do that all people must die.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We are still in the critical stage of our struggle and we do not know what will be the result. The amendments which have been moved reveal by their own diversity the force and logic of what I have just stated. They have advocated more than one type of enquiry, including that of a Royal Commission.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): You accept any one of them.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: As to the proposal of a Royal Commission, I cannot say what will be the views of His Majesty's Government, because it rests with them to nominate the commission.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: We know that.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: So far as the Government of India is concerned we are convinced that no form of enquiry would be appropriate to the end in view unless it was so constituted and conducted as to be above and outside politics, constructive in its approach to the problem and directed to secure administrative improvement and practical measures to prevent a recurrence of famine, and to minimize its effects. I have no desire, as I have said before and I repeat it now, to baulk or avoid enquiry. Indeed I am prepared to state that had an amendment in the terms described by my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Richardson, been before the House I should have been prepared to accept it. His amendment, so far as I can recall, would have provided for an enquiry at a suitable date into the food shortage in India and in particular in Bengal. It was to have been conducted by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission of which the personnel was to be completely outside the field of Indian politics. Its terms of reference would have covered full examination of the present food shortage and it would have made recommendations to prevent a recurrence of existing distress. Such an amendment, Sir, I repeat, would have been acceptable to me.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Food shortage only?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: But I regret that I cannot accept any proposal which demands that an enquiry be held now, which specifies the precise constitution of the committee, or its terms of reference, or binds me to institute an enquiry within a specified time. Government will, therefore, vote against the amendments which would lead to that effect.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: All the amendments?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I hope, Sir, that I have made my position clear.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): You say that only non-moved amendments will be accepted.

Sir Henry Richardson: Why did you not agree before?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: The time has not come when it is in the larger interests of the country to commence an enquiry. The time has not come when either its constitution or its terms of reference can properly be determined. I hope, Sir, that on this statement of the Government's position, the movers of the amendments will see fit to withdraw them.

One word more, Sir, and I have done. I would like to stress to the House that we have a definite policy and we are working to that policy.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur cum Orissa: Muhammadan): That policy has failed.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We are trying our level best to save the country from disasters of the kind which have overtaken it. I would like to make it perfectly plain that the Government of India are committed to an All-India policy which they have every intention of enforcing. Sir, we hope we shall have the co-operation of all concerned in that policy, but if that co-operation is not forthcoming, we shall carry out that policy by the over-riding powers which we possess. Sir, in this policy there are seven cardinal points, and I would like to enumerate them for the information of the House:

(i) Prohibition of exports—we are committed to that;

An Honourable Member: To that we agree.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava:

(ii) Procurement of imports;

(iii) The association of the public with our work, and I can assure my Honourable friends that the Members of this House will have the first preference in all such matters;

(iv) The extension of urban rationing;

(v) The rigid enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order;

(vi) Improvement of the procurement machinery; and, lastly,

(vii) Price control.

Sir, I look to this House today and henceforward to give me their unqualified support in the execution of this policy without fear or favour. I rely on my friends here to give me what support they are capable of.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: When shall we express our opinions on this? Had he spoken before we could have said something.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have only recapitulated what I said in my first speech. I wish to assure the House that in the charge which I hold, so far as I am concerned I am working in a missionary spirit. I do not spare myself. I know that the country is in dire distress at the moment and I hope before soon the clouds will lift. So far as I am concerned, I say to myself, "Thou hast the right to work but never to demand the fruit of it as thy reward".

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Will the Honourable Member give us an assurance about the control over distribution. What about his Central control of distribution in all provinces?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: That is covered by the All-India policy. We shall control everything.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: He has spoken about rehabilitation. Have you got any policy or are you considering it?

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: The Honourable Member stated that the Government of India had given 12 crores to the Government of Bengal in the form of advances and loans. May I know how much of this amount was spent to give effect to the denial policy of the Government?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I cannot give the information off-hand.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: You answer my question about rehabilitation.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: We have the matter under consideration.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There are a number of amendments. I wish to put the amendment moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, which is second on the list, to the vote first. The amendment is:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

'and having taken into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distress parts of the country.

[Mr. President.]

This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate steps for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into and report *inter alia* on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death-rate resulting therefrom:—

- (a) the cause of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organization in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

With this amendment is the amendment moved by Mr. Essak Sait, which reads:

"That in the amendment moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan after the words 'Royal Commission' the following be inserted:

'composed of independent and impartial persons, majority of whom shall be Indians commanding the confidence of the peoples of India'."

Mr. Deshmukh has an amendment to the amendment of Mr. Essak Sait, which reads:

"That in the proposed amendment by Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait and others to Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan's amendment for all the words beginning with the words 'composed of' and ending with the words 'peoples of India' the following be substituted: 'composed of elected members of the Assembly and the Council of State with a Judge of the Federal Court as Chairman'."

I do not think the House will find any difficulty in following the amendments;

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I accept Mr. Essak Sait's amendment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know what the Honourable Member means by accepting. It is for the House to accept or reject.

I shall now put to the vote Mr. Deshmukh's amendment first, the question is:

"That in the proposed amendment by Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait and others to Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan's amendment for all the words beginning with the words 'composed of' and ending with the words 'peoples of India' the following be substituted: 'composed of elected members of the Assembly and the Council of State with a Judge of the Federal Court as Chairman'."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I shall now put Mr. Essak Sait's amendment to the vote; the question is:

"That in the amendment moved by Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan after the words 'Royal Commission' the following be inserted: 'composed of independent and impartial persons, majority of whom shall be Indians commanding the confidence of the peoples of India'."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Now I put the main amendment of Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan to the vote as amended; the question is:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end: 'and having taken into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country.'

This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate steps for the appointment of a Royal Commission composed of independent and impartial persons, majority of whom shall be Indians commanding the confidence of the peoples of India to enquire into and report *inter alia* on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death-rate resulting therefrom:

- (a) the cause of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation from time to time;

THE FOOD SITUATION.

- (c) the suitability of the administrative organization in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and effect of the present famine on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—26.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.
Ahsan, Mr. Muhammad.
Azhari Ali, Mr. Muhammad.
Choudhury, Mr. Abdur Rasheed.
Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.
Fazli-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Shaikh.
Habibar Rahman, Dr.
Ismail Khan, Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad.
Jinnah, Mr. M. A.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.

Lalljee, Mr. Hooseinbhoj A.
Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.
Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.
Nauman, Mr. Muhammad.
Piaré Lal Kureel, Mr.
Raza Ali, Sir Syed.
Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.
Siddiquee, Shaikh Rafiuddin Ahmad.
Siva Raj, Rao Bahadur N.
Umar Ali Shah, Mr.
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.
Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana.
Zia Uddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

NOES—41.

Abhyankar, Mr. N. G.
Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
Anthony, Mr. Frank R.
Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
Bentham, The Honourable Sir Edward.
Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
Cnapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
Daga, Seth Sunder Lal.
Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
Greenfield, Mr. H.
Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
Hutchings, Mr. R. H.
Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haidar.
Ismail Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
James, Sir F. E.
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.

Kamauddin Ahmad, Shams-ul-Ulema.
Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
Lawson, Mr. C. P.
Maxwell, The Honourable Sir Reginald.
Miller, Mr. C. C.
Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami.
Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
Richardson, Sir Henry.
Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
Spear, Dr. T. G. P.
Spence, Sir George.
Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad.
Stokes, Mr. H. G.
Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N.
Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
Thakur Singh, Major.
Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
Tyson, Mr. J. D.
Wakely, Mr. L. J. D.

The motion was negatived

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next amendment is that of Mr. Neogy; the question is:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

'and having taken into consideration this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the famine in Bengal and to afford adequate relief to the other distressed parts of the country; and this Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that steps be taken for the appointment of a Committee, consisting of eminent economists and experienced judges and administrators and an Accountant General, under the chairmanship of a lawyer who has held high judicial office in India, to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the continued prevalence of famine conditions in Bengal and the unprecedented death rate resulting therefrom:

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of foodgrains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present famine on mortality rates;

[Mr. President.]

(f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
(g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

(While the Division Bells were ringing)

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: May I say something, Sir? I ask your permission.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I cannot allow any statement now. The debate has been closed; the division is going on.

(The Division was not pressed.)

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next amendment is that of Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta; namely:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

"and having done so this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and other parts of India and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the situation including the stoppage of further inflation of currency. This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee consisting of fourteen with eight elected members of the Assembly, four elected members of the Council of State and one Accountant General with the Chief Justice of the Federal Court as Chairman be appointed to enquire into and report on the following points relating to the economic distress prevailing in the country—

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of foodgrains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present distress on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the younger generation; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

There is an amendment to that by Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh; the question is:

"That in the amendment by Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta for the words 'younger generation' occurring in clause (f) the word 'people' be substituted."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I now put Mr. Jammadas M. Mehta's amendment as amended. The question is:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

"and having done so this Assembly views with grave concern the tragic situation prevailing in Bengal and other parts of India and recommends to the Governor General in Council to adopt immediately more vigorous and effective measures to cope with the situation including the stoppage of further inflation of currency. This Assembly further recommends to the Governor General in Council that a Committee consisting of fourteen with eight elected members of the Assembly, four elected members of the Council of State and one Accountant General with the Chief Justice of the Federal Court as Chairman be appointed to enquire into and report on the following points, relating to the economic distress prevailing in the country—

- (a) the causes of the present distress;
- (b) the degree of effectiveness of the steps taken to prevent or remedy the situation with particular reference to the systems of procurement, transport and distribution of foodgrains, as well as price control, that have been in operation from time to time;
- (c) the suitability of the administrative organisation in charge of famine operations;
- (d) the adequacy or otherwise of the relief measures adopted by Government, specially in the light of experience of the management of previous famines in India and the actual results achieved so far in Bengal;
- (e) the accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics and the effect of the present distress on mortality rates;
- (f) the steps to be taken to counteract or mitigate the effects of starvation and malnutrition upon the people; and
- (g) the measures to be taken to prevent a recurrence of the present trouble in any part of India."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—5.

Das, Mr. Ananga Mohan.
Das, Pandit Nilakantha.
Joshi, Mr. N. M.

Mehta, Mr. Jammadas M.
Sant Singh, Sardar.

THE FOOD SITUATION.

NOES—41.

Abhyankar, Mr. N. G.
Ahmad Nawad Khan, Major Nawab Sir.
Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.
Anthony, Mr. Frank R.
Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.
Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.
Bewoor, Sir Gurunath.
Chapman-Mortimer, Mr. T.
Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.
Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.
Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.
Greenfield, Mr. H.
Griffiths, Mr. P. J.
Gwilt, Mr. E. L. C.
Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.
Haidar, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.
Hutchings, Mr. R. H.
Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haidar.
Ismail Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.
James, Sir F. E.
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.

Kamaluddin Ahmad, Shams-ul-Ulema.
Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.
Lawson, Mr. C. P.
Maxwell, The Honourable Sir Reginald.
Miller, Mr. C. C.
Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.
Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami.
Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.
Richardson, Sir Henry.
Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.
Spear, Dr. T. G. P.
Spence, Sir George.
Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad.
Stokes, Mr. H. G.
Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N.
Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.
Thakur Singh, Major.
Trivedi, Mr. C. M.
Tyson, Mr. J. D.
Wakely, Mr. L. J. D.

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next amendment is that of Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall. The question is:

"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

"and having considered the appalling condition prevailing all over the country this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a Committee consisting of the officials and non-officials to enquire into the matter with a view to suggest measures for guarding against the recurrence of such catastrophe in future and also with a view to the possibility of affording immediate and effective relief to the suffering people by adopting the following remedial measures:

- (a) opening of free gruel kitchens in the worst affected parts;
- (b) opening of public orphanages;
- (c) opening of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto in important towns and stopping beggary;
- (d) assuming of control over the public hotels meant for the proletariat class and regulating and fixing reasonable rates thereof;
- (e) centralising the control of poor houses and industrial factories attached thereto and financing them from government money and funds from public charity; and
- (f) controlling all public and charitable funds and authorising only responsible bodies to collect funds for the purpose."

The motion was negatived.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next amendment is that of Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury.

Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury (Assam: Muhammadan): Sir, I do not want to press my amendment*.

The amendment was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, the 19th November, 1943.

*"That to the motion the following be added at the end:

"with a view to set up a Committee of Enquiry of Central Legislature with elected majority to enquire and report on the breakdown of His Majesty's Government in India inasmuch as the Government of India and the Provincial Governments lost their foresight, sense of responsibility and sense of primary duty to protect human life and failed to handle food situation properly with the result that thousands have already perished for want of food and thousands are still dying for want of food in different parts of the country and specially in Bengal."

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 19th November, 1943.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) in the Chair.

MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Zahid Husain, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

DISTRICT BOARD TAX LEVIED ON WAGES OF RAILWAY STAFF.

309. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some railway staff are required to pay the District Board tax levied by such boards on the wages earned by people residing in such boards' limits;

(b) what compensation railway employees are given for payment of such taxes when they are posted to such stations in the interests of Railway service and when the scales of pay for them are fixed on the uniform rates on the entire Railway; if none, why; and

(c) if Government propose to introduce a legislation to exempt their employees from the payment of local taxes; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) None, because all employees have to pay taxes to which they may be subject.

(c) For reasons already given on the floor of the House by Sir Andrew Clow on the 13th February, 1941, in opposing the Bill moved by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, Government are not prepared to introduce the legislation suggested by the Honourable Member.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What is the Honourable Member prepared to do for the sake of his employees? Does he want that their employees should pay two taxes on their wages, one to the District Board and the other to the Finance Department?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think that they do pay two taxes, but they must be prepared to pay the same taxes as other members of the public are liable to pay.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member save them from paying two taxes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think it is the case of paying two taxes.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If an employee has got to pay one tax to the Finance Department, has he still got to pay the other tax?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The two taxes are quite distinct. I think the railway employees are precisely in the same state as the other members of the public.

ATTACHMENT OF PROPERTY OF CERTAIN RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AT GHAZIABAD FOR REALISING DISTRICT BOARD TAX.

310. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether he is aware that the property of certain employees residing in the joint Railway colony of the East Indian and North Western Railways at Ghaziabad was attached by the civil police for the recovery of the District Board tax?

(b) Is it a fact that no such tax was leviable in the town of Ghaziabad?

(c) Is it a fact that formerly the Railway colony was included in the limits of the Ghaziabad Municipality? How has it been included in the District Board limits?

(d) What services does the District Board render to the residents of this colony? Is it a fact that water and conservancy arrangements are made and paid for by the Railway Administration?

(e) What relief do Government propose to give to the employees in the matter of payment of the District Board tax at Ghaziabad and other places where such taxes are levied? If none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) A portion of the Railway colony was at the request of the Railway employees included within the limits of the Ghaziabad Municipality in 1928. Subsequently in 1931, finding that this was not in the interests of either the Municipal Board or the Railway Administration it was excluded and brought within the limits of the District Board.

(d) The District Board do not render any special or direct service to the Railway employees residing in the Railway colony. The water and conservancy arrangements are made and paid for by the Railway Administration.

(e) None, because all employees have to pay taxes to which they are subject, but the General Manager has asked the United Provinces Government to use their good offices with the District Board to ensure recovery in instalments.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know why these people do not get any amenities from the District Board when they pay all their taxes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They do probably get certain amenities, but the conservancy charges are paid for by the Railway Administration.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I understood the Honourable Member to say in reply to part (e) of the question that these people do not get any help from the District Board. Will the Honourable Member say what help is given by the District Board?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should prefer to have notice of that question, but I am informed that certain amenities are open to them.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I request the Honourable Member that this question as well as the last question are of such an importance that they should be enquired into?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They have been enquired into. In fact, there was a debate on the same subject in 1941, in which the Honourable Member then in charge of the portfolio made a full statement as to the reasons why the railway servants could not be exempted from paying the dues to which the general public are liable.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Does the Honourable Member think that he is barred from revising the decision because his predecessor has said something?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. The Honourable Member asked that it might be looked into; it has been looked into at great length and I have carefully studied the debates of the time.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is this colony not in the railway precincts and therefore it is not liable to the Municipal taxes? Is it not a fact that water and light are provided by the railway authorities for this colony? Will the Honourable Member inquire whether besides water and light charges there are any other charges which the Municipality is charging?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. I do not think Government is prepared to support the principle that railway servants should be exempted from taxation to which other members of the public are liable. That would not be equitable.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Next question.

BLOCK ON THE PROMOTION OF STATION CORRESPONDENCE CLERKS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

311. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the percentage of Grade II posts to Grade I on the North Western Railway for:

(i) Office Clerks in each Divisional, Extra-Divisional and Headquarters Office, separately; and

(ii) Station Correspondence Clerks?

(b) If the percentage of the latter class is considerably lower as compared to the former, what steps are proposed to be taken to increase the same? If none, why?

(c) Is it a fact that Station Correspondence Clerks perform similar and responsible duties like Office Clerks? If so, why is the percentage of higher grade posts meagre for them? If the reply to first portion be in the negative, what is the difference in duties and responsibilities of the two categories of staff?

(d) Is it a fact that great discontent prevails amongst the Station Correspondence Clerks owing to clogged channel of promotion, and that they have submitted a representation on the 15th September last? What action has been taken in the matter? If the Honourable Member is not aware of it, does he propose to make enquiries?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) (i). I have no information in such detail. For the railway as a whole the percentage is over 100.

(ii) 33 per cent. for the railway as a whole.

(b) None, as it is not considered necessary to take any further action in the matter.

(c) The responsibilities of Office and Station Correspondence Clerks of the same grade are approximately the same. The number of posts in the various grades are determined primarily on the requirements of the work to be done. The last part does not arise.

(d) I am aware that some staff consider themselves aggrieved and I have now seen the representation, a copy of which was attached to the question. The representation is addressed to the General Manager who will doubtless deal with it. The reply to the last part is in the negative.

FIXATION OF LOWER PAY FOR GRADE I GUARDS IN KARACHI DIVISION, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY, ON ABOLITION OF THAT GRADE.

312. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that several Grade I Guards in the Karachi Division of the North Western Railway, who are in receipt of wages of about Rs. 60 per mensem have, on abolition of their posts, been fixed on Rs. 36 in stationary appointments? If so, why?

(b) How is it proposed to reconcile this with the former Railway Member's reply to part (e) of my starred question No. 25, asked on the 31st January, 1938, which was laid on the table of the House on the 23rd February, 1938, and published on page 1025 of the Assembly debates for that day, to the effect, that a Guard on appointment in a stationary post is given the credit of his mileage allowance in fixing his pay?

(c) Is it proposed to rectify the anomaly referred to in part (a)? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a), (b) and (c). I have called for information and a reply will be laid on table of the House in due course.

LARGE NUMBER OF FREE PASSES ISSUED TO APPLICANTS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

313. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to his reply to my question No. 195(b) (iv), given on the 4th August, 1943, and say if he considers the issue of 299 free passes to fill in 35 vacancies reasonable in these days of heavy traffic? If not, does he propose to issue instructions to reduce the number of free passes in such cases?

(b) Is it a fact that the practice on the North Western Railway before the constitution of the Railway Subordinate Service Commission was that free passes were issued up to the extent of four times the vacancies advertised for each community?

(c) If the reply to (b) above is in the affirmative, does the Honourable Member propose to see that the same practice is followed by the Railway Subordinate Service Commission?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I do not consider that any appreciable strain is imposed on traffic facilities by the action referred to. The second part does not arise.

(b) It is understood that on the occasions when passes were issued in the past, the numbers were about twice the vacancies filled.

(c) No.

CONTROL ORDERS FOR SALE OF RAW HIDES IN PUNJAB.

314. *Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state if Government have issued any control orders for the sale of raw hides in the Punjab, specially in Lahore, during the last six months or before? If so, when? What were the rates fixed? Was it also ordered that hides would only be sold to some particular firms? Will copies of such orders be laid on the table for the information of the House?

(b) Is there any post of Chief Inspector of Hides? What are his duties and powers, and who is the present incumbent?

(c) Is it a fact that the Chief Inspector of Hides went to Lahore sometime back and visited the godowns of some of the firms dealing in hides and skins, and gave them an oral order to clear their stocks at once or they would be liable to be seized by Government, that at their request to give them a written order to that effect, he threatened them with prosecution under the Defence of India Rules and thereupon the firms sold off their stocks to the tanning firms at decreased rates, sustaining thereby heavy losses?

(d) Is it a fact that in October last not less than eight renowned firms of Lahore dealing in hides and skins made a joint representation to the Secretary of the Supply Department regarding this incident and asking for the clarification of the control orders of the Government for their future guidance in their business, but no answer was sent to the signatories?

(e) Was an enquiry made on the said representation? If so, what was the result? If no enquiries were made, do Government propose to institute an enquiry now, and to communicate to the signatories and to myself the real position in regard to the Government control order for the guidance of the hide dealing firms and also the final findings regarding the allegations made against the said Chief Inspector?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) No. orders controlling the sale of raw hides in the Punjab have been issued.

(b) There is no post of Chief Inspector of Hides in the Supply Department.

(c) Two Assistant Industrial Planning Officers visited the Lahore market in September and had discussions with hide merchants in order to persuade them to sell hides to controlled tanneries who were short of supplies. The officers explained to the merchants that under certain circumstances recourse could be had to action under the Defence of India Rules. Government do not consider that sales actually made by hide merchants to controlled tanneries involved the former in loss.

(d) and (e). Yes. A representation has been received and is under consideration.

OVERCROWDING OF TRAINS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

315 *Sardar Sant Singh: Has the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member been drawn to the overcrowding of trains on all lines over the North Western Railway? If so, what steps are being taken to remove the congestion?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, but the problem is one common to all Railways in India and in other countries at War. In this connection I

would refer the Honourable Member to the proceedings of the recent meeting of the Central Advisory Council for Railways on the 16th November, 1943, at which he was present.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST A TRAIN EXAMINER AT PATHANKOTE, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

316. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if any complaints were received against one Train Examiner for bribery and harassment of employees of the Loco Traffic and Carriage Department of Pathankote on the North Western Railway? Was any resolution received on this subject passed by the United Union of the North Western Railway Workers? If so, what action has been taken on the same?

(b) Is it a fact that the President of the Union and the members of the Local Area Council were victimised instead?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes, and the complaints are under investigation. As regards the second and third parts, I have no information.

(b). No.

STOPPAGE OF RAILWAY TICKETS FOR STATIONS ROUND NANKANA SAHIB.

317. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Railways been drawn to an order passed by the Punjab Government under the Defence of India Rules stopping the issue of tickets to stations all round Nankana Sahib between the 7th and the 17th November, 1943? Is it a fact that the annual fair of Guru Nanak's Birthday which is held at Nankana Sahib falls within these dates? If so, have the Railway authorities lodged any protest against this action of the Punjab Government?

(b) Did the Railway Administration consult its law officers as to the legality of the order on the point whether a provincial administration was authorised under the Defence of India Act to pass such an order against a department of the Government of India?

(c) Is it a fact that the Sikh community is highly agitated over this? If so, what steps did the Honourable Member take to get this order cancelled?

(d) What was the income of the Railway Department during the last three years on account of this fair? Who will bear the loss due to this order?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the question of a protest does not arise as the restriction has been imposed at the request of the North Western Railway.

(b) Yes. I shall refer the Honourable Member to sub-clause (a) of Clause 1 of Rule 85B of the Defence of India Rules.

(c) The strong feeling of the Sikh community has been conveyed to the Government of India by the Punjab Government. The matter is, however, one for settlement between the Provincial Government and the Railway Administration concerned. I might add for the information of the Honourable Member that similar restrictions have had to be imposed for all important melas.

(d) Information regarding the income on account of the fair in previous years is not available. As regards the question of the loss, this does not arise as in the present conditions of other important and urgent demands on rail transport, Railways are unable to cater for this traffic.

Sardar Sant Singh: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that restrictions were placed on the railways at the request of the Railway Department by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: At the request of the North Western Railway.

Sardar Sant Singh: Did the North Western Railway administration request the Provincial Government to issue an order, prohibitory order under the Defence of India Rules, upon themselves that they should not do a certain act?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I cannot remember the exact details but my recollection is that the North Western Railway administration wrote first to the Railway Board and I think the Railway Board either asked them to get into touch with the Provincial Government or the Board themselves got into touch with the Provincial Government.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is the Honourable Member aware that Rule 85(b) of the Defence of India Rules specifies a person or class of persons that can be prohibited from travelling while here in the notice—I can give the Honourable Member a copy of the notice if he has not got one—the order issued to the Railway Administration was, not to issue tickets from certain stations. How does it fall within the Defence of India Rules that I quoted? Did they consult the Honourable the Law Member about the legality of the notice issued by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has raised an interesting point and I shall be glad to look into details if the Honourable Member would supply me with them.

NON-EMPLOYMENT OF URDU-KNOWING CLERKS IN BERAR SUB-POST OFFICES.

318. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that at a great number of Sub-Post Offices in Berar no Urdu knowing clerks are employed, and that this causes great inconvenience, delay and even loss in accepting and issuing money orders, registered letters and parcels; and

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, whether he proposes to take necessary action in the matter?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) and (b). It is probably the case that at a great number of sub-post offices in Berar no Urdu-knowing clerks are employed. I have, however, to point out that under clause 263 of the Indian Post and Telegraph Guide, money orders are required to be written in the local Indian language, which in the case of Berar is Marathi. It is not possible to provide clerks conversant with all languages and scripts that may be used by any section of the population in any area and the post office provides clerks who are conversant with the local Indian language, that is to say, the language recognised by the Local Governments as the local court language and script.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Is the Honourable Member aware that a large number of people speak and write Urdu in Berar and will he look to the convenience of such people?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I am quite prepared to ask the Postmaster General, Central Circle, to post clerks who know Urdu, if such clerks are available, to certain offices where there may be serious inconvenience to the public.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Is Urdu included in the local languages?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: No, Sir, Urdu is not declared as the local language by the Local Government.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Are Government aware that a large number of Gujrathis inhabit Berar and they also feel inconvenience for lack of Gujrathi-knowing clerks in post offices and will the Honourable Member introduce Gujrathi-knowing clerks also?

(No answer.)

BIAS AGAINST POSTING OF MUSLIMS, ETC., AS SUB-POSTMASTERS IN CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE.

319. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state whether certain proprietors of rented post office buildings in the Central Circle prevail upon the Postal Superintendents not to post Muslims or Christians or Harijans as Sub-Post Masters, and that this operates against the rights of these communities?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to issue instructions to the authorities not to allow such objections to prevail?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) and (b). I have no information but have called for a report from the Postmaster-General, Central Circle.

APPOINTING OF URDU SCHOOL TEACHERS AS BRANCH POSTMASTERS IN CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE.

320. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the desirability of issuing instructions that Urdu School teachers in the Central Circle should receive equal treatment with others in the matter of appointments as Branch Post Masters?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters. Under the rules school masters are eligible for appointment as Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters provided their character and antecedents are found to be satisfactory. Government have no reason to believe that Urdu school masters are being treated differently from other school masters in the matter of appointment as Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters in the Central Circle. A copy of the question is, however, being sent to the Postmaster-General, Central Circle, for information and such action as he may consider necessary and for report.

DESIRABILITY OF INTRODUCING MAIL MOTOR SERVICE BETWEEN AMRAOTI AND DARYAPUR.

321. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the desirability of introducing a Mail Motor service between Amraoti and Daryapur in place of the present arrangement which causes great inconvenience to the public?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I am sending the suggestion of the Honourable Member to the Postmaster-General, Central Circle, for taking such action as he may consider suitable.

FACILITIES FOR JUMA PRAYERS IN THE CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE.

322. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the issuing of orders to make it possible for Muslim employees of the Central Postal Circle to attend Juma prayers on Fridays?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: General standing orders on the subject of the grant to Muslim Employees of the Posts and Telegraphs Department of an hour's leave on Fridays already exist and they apply to the Central Circle also.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Is he aware that inspite of these orders they are not permitted to offer Juma prayers?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: The grant of such leave of absence is, and must be, in the case of certain offices, subject to the exigencies of public business. In an administrative office, where work can be held up, this is possible, but in post office, telegraph office and telephone exchange, especially where they are small ones, this is not always possible.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Does the Honourable Member know that performance of Friday prayers is obligatory upon every Muslim?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: If the Maulana says so, it must be so.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Will the Honourable Member look into the matter if I bring definite cases to his notice?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I shall certainly look into it.

FACILITIES GIVEN TO OUTSIDERS FOR ESTABLISHING DISTILLERY, ETC., IN BALUCHISTAN.

323. *Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) whether monopoly and other facilities for a certain period have been given to some persons outside Baluchistan to establish a distillery in Baluchistan;

(b) whether similar facilities have been given to outsiders for fruit canning and preparing Ephedrin; and

(c) whether people in Baluchistan were given facilities to take up this work either by advertising in Baluchistan or by other means and by calling for tenders; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

RAISING OF GOVERNMENT INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE, QUETTA, TO DEGREE COLLEGE STANDARD.

†324. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) whether the number of students in the Intermediate College Section of the Government Intermediate College at Quetta has reached 120; and

(b) whether, in view of this evidence of very keen demand for higher education, Government propose to raise it to the standard of a Degree College, especially as it involves no extra expenditure on buildings, and a further expenditure on additional staff is expected to be covered by the extra fee to be collected for the degree classes?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: This question should have been addressed to the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands.

ANNUAL RECOGNITION GRANTED TO DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN BALUCHISTAN.

†325. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state whether he is aware of the fact that the year to year recognition granted to Denominational Schools in Baluchistan operates as a bar against the betterment of educational facilities in such schools and whether Government propose to accord permanent recognition to such schools in Baluchistan?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: This question should also have been addressed to the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands.

PAUCITY OF MUSLIM OFFICE SUPERINTENDENTS, ETC., IN CIVIL DEPARTMENTS AT QUETTA.

†326. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the ten Office Superintendents in the various civil departments at Quetta only one is a Mussalman;

(b) whether it is a fact that at a recent selection of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of land customs, the Revenue Commissioner in Baluchistan selected only one Muslim out of the seven selections made by him; and

(c) whether, in view of the fact that 96 per cent. of the population in Baluchistan comprises of Muslims and, in view of the need for encouraging the spread of education among them and the need for absorbing educated young men, he proposes to reserve, as far as possible, all provincial services in Baluchistan for Baluchis only, and to reserve a proportionate number of appointments for Muslims in Baluchistan in accordance with their population?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No. '10 out of 20 such posts are held by Muslims.

(b) No. There was a recent selection of Sub-Inspectors of Customs when 2 out of 5 selected were Muslims.

(c) The Local Administration, in making appointments to all provincial Services, gives special consideration to local candidates but cannot be expected to reserve appointments if suitable candidates are not forthcoming.

ABSENCE OF STATION NAME BOARDS IN URDU ON CENTRAL PROVINCES RAILWAYS.

†327. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware of the great inconvenience caused to Urdu knowing public by the absence of Urdu name boards on stations on the Central Provinces Railway? Does he propose to issue an order that name boards in Urdu be put up at these stations?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My attention has not previously been drawn to the inconvenience referred to by the Honourable Member, and I am

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner being absent.

forwarding a copy of the question to the General Manager, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, for such action as he may consider necessary.

PROJECTS OF NEW ROADS COMPLETED BY BIHAR GOVERNMENT FROM THE CENTRAL ROAD FUND.

328. ***Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Road Fund lying unspent with the Government of India to the credit of the different provinces;

(b) how many projects of the new road construction have been completed, by the Bihar Government with the Central Road Fund up to now;

(c) if any amount of the Central Road Fund has been spent by Provincial Governments for the repair of roads under the local bodies;

(d) if Government are aware that the inter-district and inter-provincial roads are being used very heavily for military movements, and that the maintenance of such roads in proper condition is beyond the financial capacity of most of the local bodies; and

(e) if the answer to (c) and (d) be in the affirmative, the amount spent over the roads maintained by the local bodies in Bihar, and, if the answer be in the negative, whether Government propose to authorise the Provincial Governments to spend a sum out of the Central Road Fund for the maintenance of roads under the local bodies?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) Rs. 1,18,48,369 at the close of the year 1942-43.

(b) 16.

(c) Certain sums from the Central Road Fund have been spent by a few Provincial Governments for the repair of roads, but the Government of India have no information as to whether any of such roads were under the Local Bodies or not.

(d) Government are aware that the traffic on some roads in certain areas has increased due to the war. They have no information, however, as to whether the maintenance of the roads is beyond the financial capacity of any Local Bodies.

(e) As regards the first part, no amount has been allotted out of the Provincial allocation from the Central Road Fund for the maintenance of roads in the Province of Bihar. As regards the latter part, no sums from the Central Road Fund can be allotted for maintenance in view of the decision taken by the Standing Committee on Roads on a recommendation made by the Transport Advisory Council and ratified by the Provinces that debits of the cost of maintenance to the Road Fund allocations should be discontinued.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Has the Honourable Member obtained any information from the Government of Bihar whether they spent any amount for maintenance of roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: It is not necessary, because, as I said, no allotment has been made to Bihar for maintenance of roads.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that no allotment has been made to the Government of Bihar for maintenance of roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: No allotments have been made for maintenance of roads.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: But the Honourable Member said in some part of his answer that a few Provincial Governments have spent certain sums from the Central Road Fund for the repair of roads under local bodies.

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: In some Provinces, yes; but Bihar is not one of them.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: In view of the fact that some Provinces have spent, will the Government of India ask the Bihar Government if they have spent any amount, or if the Government of India is prepared to allow them to spend out of this road fund for the roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I have already stated that it has been decided by the Standing Committee for Roads that no allotment from the Central Road

Fund allocations should be spent on the maintenance of roads. The particular instances I mentioned were in the past, but a decision has now been taken that the Central Road Fund is for the construction of new roads and not for the maintenance of roads which is a responsibility of the Provincial Governments.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Do I understand that since Government issued instructions no Provincial Government has spent any amount on roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Not from the Central Road Fund allocation.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Then in view of Government's statement that there has been heavy traffic on account of military movements, do Government propose to allow the Provincial Governments to spend their funds on roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: That is a matter between the Provincial Governments and the local bodies. Our decision was that the maintenance of roads is the duty of the Provincial Government or of the local bodies who own those particular roads; and even if there is increased use of such roads, maintenance is still the duty of the particular bodies which own them.

EXPORT OF WOOL TO BASRA FOR RUSSIA.

329. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) With reference to the reply to starred question No. 270 asked by Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon on the 12th August, 1943, with regard to export of wool to Basra for Russia, will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to say whether Government have considered the notice and the contract form of Messrs. Cox and Kings Limited, Karachi (Agents)?

(b) Are the terms of these documents substantially or virtually the same as for shipments to the United Kingdom? If not, how do they differ?

(c) Is it a fact that the difference was that the wool was not to go to the United Kingdom?

(d) Is it a fact that shipments according to the above documents were made on the consignment basis and under the same terms of business as for the shipments to the United Kingdom, that these shipments have been accorded the wool control prices of Liverpool, and that the prices have to be appraised by the Wool Control in the United Kingdom on the sample forwarded to them?

(e) Do Government in consideration of these facts propose to revise their opinion, and to get the shippers their due? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: This Question concerns the Honourable Member for Commerce and should have been addressed to him.

FACILITIES FOR MANUFACTURE OF MANURES OR FERTILIZERS.

330. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state if Government have given any orders, or granted any facility, to any firm or firms in India for the manufacture of manures or fertilizers?

(b) If the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, what are the quantities for which orders have been placed, and what is the nature of facilities thus granted in the case of each firm?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Have Government come to any decision on the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee on this subject which is to be found on page 22 of the report?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Government have not yet come to any decision on the question of how this ammonium sulphate or mechanical fertilisers should be produced, but they have taken steps and have consulted the industry and are consulting certain Provincial Governments.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am not concerned with the general question just now, but have Government considered the specific recommendation made by this particular Committee and have they come to any decision?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The particular recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, if I remember it aright, is that it is necessary to get or manufacture chemical fertilisers in the country to a certain extent—the figure is mentioned there. I think generally Government agree that it is a desirable thing to do.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am afraid the Honourable Member has not read that part of the Foodgrains Policy Committee's report to which I referred. They definitely recommended the giving of necessary assistance and facility for the importation of plant required for the manufacture of ammonium sulphate to the extent at least of 3½ lakh tons a year and they further said that earliest action should be taken in this matter.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Sir, I do not think I was so far out in my reading of the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee. The question of getting plant or recommending import of the plant depends on who is to work the plant, how it is to be worked, where it is to be located, what facilities there are with reference to electric power for the working of the plant and whether the plant can be got on Lease-Lend or on other considerations. The whole question is under examination and that is what I was referring to.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I know whether Government are going to give their particular attention to the recommendation that action in this matter should be taken without the least possible delay?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Action has been taken without the least possible delay. On the 28th September there was a conference convened of the persons who were interested in the manufacture of ammonium sulphate along with certain Provincial Governments. Their views on the question of the possibility of this manufacture have been taken note of. Certain firms have been consulted as to what technical staff they have got to enable them to manufacture this plant; the Electricity Commissioner has been asked to furnish details of the amount of spare electricity that may be available when these plants are set up; and inquiries have been made as to what kinds of plant are available in the United Kingdom or the United States of America. These require some time and when the information is gathered the Government of India will be able to make up their mind as to how to proceed in this matter.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to give even an approximate idea as to the time which they will take over these cogitations?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is free to make any kind of ironical statements. I can only answer as a Member of the Government of India.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: There is no ironical statement here; "cogitation" is a perfectly parliamentary expression. Is it a fact that considerations for certain vested interests stand in the way of the Government of India coming to an early decision in this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: What does the Honourable Member mean by vested interests?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member knows perfectly well what I mean; let him not pretend that he does not know.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is, as usual, completely wrong in referring to any vested interests in this connection and in saying that those interests stand in the way of the Government of India coming to a decision.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member is, as usual, impertinent.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is, as usual, making insinuations.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I repeat that the Honourable Member is, as usual, impertinent.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order; that is unparliamentary.

PROMOTION OF GUARDS FROM GRADE I TO GRADE II ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

39. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that rules in force on the North Western Railway in 1928-29 for promotion of Guards from Grade I to II, provided for passing of the departmental examination, and that several such persons were promoted to Grade II in the Karachi Division of the North Western Railway in 1929 and 1930?

(b) Is it a fact that a large number of Guards were reverted in 1931 owing to the general economy campaign, and that some of them were reposted to Grade II in 1935, while others were asked to requalify for the departmental examination through the Walton Training School? If so, why?

(c) What is the specific provision in the Railway Board's training rules for subordinates issued in 1929 under which the old departmental examinations are cancelled, and is there any discrimination in the application of rules to individual employees? If so, why?

(d) If the reply to the last portion of part (c) be in the negative, is it proposed to review the case of Guards referred to in part (b) above, and to exempt them from re-examination? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the Selection Committee which was held at the time these guards were considered for re-promotion to grade II decided that while some were fit for re-promotion others were not fit. In the case of the latter, it was ruled that they should undergo training in the Walton Training School.

(c) Departmental examinations are instituted by railway administrations who are competent to alter or cancel them. Government do not consider that the action taken was discriminatory.

(d) Government are not satisfied that any action is necessary but are prepared to look into the case further.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD FOR RECRUITMENT TO SUBORDINATE SERVICE ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

40. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the educational standard for recruitment to certain posts in the subordinate service on the North Western Railway has recently been lowered from second division Matriculation to that even of failure to secure second division by few marks? If so, why?

(b) What is the equivalent standard for candidates referred to in part (a) who reside in provinces where Matriculation Examination results are not declared by divisions?

(c) Is it proposed to extend the same concession to provinces referred to in part (b) above for those candidates who failed to pass the Matriculation Examination by a few marks? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) As stated in the reply to part (e) of Mr. H. M. Abdullah's starred question No. 194, asked on the 4th August, 1943, the North Western Railway have lowered the qualification to Matriculation III Division for some posts.

(b) When the results are not declared by divisions, it is obvious that divisions cannot be prescribed.

(c) No; failure to pass in the II Division by a few marks indicates that the candidate had passed in the III Division, i.e., passed the Matriculation Examination. It is not proposed to lower the minimum qualification laid down by Government.

DELIVERY OF TELEGRAMS AT SHAHDARA, DELHI, THROUGH POST OFFICE.

41. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department please state if it is a fact that telegrams addressed to persons in Shahdara, Delhi, are delivered through the Shahdara Post Office and not by the Telegraph Office? If so, why?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Telegrams addressed to persons in Shahdara, Delhi, are delivered by the staff of the Delhi Head Post Office. The Honourable Member has probably in mind telegrams addressed to Delhi-Shahdara North Western Railway Telegraph Office. Such telegrams are according to Railway Rules delivered by the railway staff within station limits, but if the addressee is living outside the station limits, they are transferred to the Sub-Postmaster, Shahdara Post Office, who sends them out for delivery by the postman at the next postal delivery. The question of opening a Telegraph Office in the Shahdara Post Office is, however, being examined.

PERSONS DEALT WITH UNDER SECTION 5 OF ACT VI OF 1941 IN DELHI DIVISION OF NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

42. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the number of persons dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 since the 1st April, 1941, in the Delhi Division of the North Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The total number of passengers dealt with under the Section referred to by the Honourable Member in the Delhi Division of the North Western Railway was 13,904 during the period 1st April, 1941 to 30th September, 1943.

RUNNING ROOM ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPRESSED CLASSES STAFF ON STATE RAILWAYS.

43. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the particulars of arrangements in the Running Rooms for the use of the staff recruited from the Depressed Classes on the State-managed Railways? If no arrangements are made for the comforts of the said staff, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

EYE TEST FOR TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

44. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is a fact that the Travelling Ticket Examiners on the East Indian Railway are tested in eye sight in Group "C" of the Regulation? If so, what are the reasons for examining their Inspectors in a higher Group?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to a Supplementary Question part (b) of starred question No. 98, asked by Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto, M.L.A., on the 29th July, 1943.

BAN ON BROADCASTS OF URDU TALKS BY THE ALL-INDIA RADIO.

The language problem of All-India Radio Hindustani news bulletins and other announcements has been examined in great detail keeping in mind the listeners criticism and the principle that All-India Radio news bulletins should be as widely intelligible as possible without splitting them into Hindi or Urdu. The changes affected have been of the following types:

- (1) Where there is an almost insoluble controversy over the two alternatives, one Hindi and the other Urdu, the original in English is retained if it is more intelligible or at least as widely understood as either of the two renderings.
- (2) Where the English original does not possess this advantage, doublets are used.
- (3) In all other cases, the most widely understood word is used.
- (4) Where each of the two alternatives has a sectional application, the selection is restricted to the section for which it is most appropriate.
- (5) Phrases coined by All-India Radio where they are easier to understand than their current equivalents are retained.
- (6) Words which are considered to be offensive by one community or another have been discontinued.

Information promised in reply to parts (a) and (b) of starred question No. 113, asked by Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad on the 29th July, 1943.

WORKING OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL WAR FRONT

(a)

A PLEDGE

Because I am proud to be a citizen of India I solemnly pledge myself to stamp out defeatism and suppress alarmist rumours; to face and defy every peril threatening India's national honour and security, and to work day by day in the sure and certain hope of Victory.

A SUMMARY OF THE WORKING OF THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT UP TO THE END OF ITS FIRST YEAR.

GENERAL.

When the Front was founded on March 11th, 1942, its initial objects were to maintain public morale and to make people realise that the war was India's war. As time went on, however, it was realised that the maintenance of morale could not be divorced from activities connected with the practical needs of the people and in many provinces now the tendency is for the Front to develop more and more its practical activities and to make them the focus round which its propaganda can radiate. In a number of provinces, Village Defence Parties have become an important part of the work of the Front and there are few sights more inspiring than the keenness of the Village Defence Parties in the Madras Presidency. In other provinces the National War Front has been assisting in matters connected with the food shortage and again in other provinces the maintenance of law and order has been considered as one of the most important activities of the Front. Right at the time of the inauguration of the Front, the Punjab gave the lead in this matter and announced its intention of working largely in practical directions; that lead has now been followed in many provinces.

The Provincial and District organisation of the National War Front has now attained impressive proportions and the expenditure on it in British India alone will amount to about Rs. 45 lakhs in the current year. For the first time there exists in India now a powerful and extensive organisation available for non-political propaganda in the national interests. It may be that an organisation of this kind can be of the greatest value after the war in the work of reconstruction and nation-building and it is therefore of the utmost importance that the Front should continue to keep itself aloof from party politics of any kind.

The Front may be said to have passed through three phases during the past twelve months. Up to August 1942 was the period of organisation, then followed a difficult time during which the Front had to stand the strain of the Civil Disobedience Movement, while from the beginning of this year onwards the period has been one of steady growth in both extent and influence and of greater attention to practical activities. There is little room for doubt that in troubled areas it has exercised a steadying influence during the last few months. One hopeful sign is that its critics are on the alert, that a good deal was heard about the Front in recent sittings of the Assembly and that no mistake on the part of the N. W. F. propagandists is allowed to pass unnoticed. The first function of a propaganda organisation is to get its material read and the volume of criticism that comes in from time to time on particular points in our pamphlets, advertisements, etc., leaves no room for doubt that the Front fulfils this function.

THEMES AND CAMPAIGNS.

The objects of the National War Front throughout the year have remained as defined by His Excellency the Viceroy in the following words:

"The object is to do everything possible to help and maintain public morale: that is to say, to strengthen the war resistance of the people, to eradicate all elements to undermine it; and in particular to counteract fifth-column activities of all kinds, including especially all talk, thought, writings and rumours likely to produce a defeatist mentality; to inculcate faith, courage, and endurance; and to consolidate the national will to offer united resistance to Nazism and Fascism in every shape or form, whether within or without the country, until their menace is finally overthrown."

The particular themes presented have, of course, varied from time to time. Chief among them have been the following:

"This is India's War"—"The power of the Axis must be broken"—"Victory lies ahead but we must work for it"—"India's honour must be maintained"—"This is India's industrial opportunity"—"Defend India's ancient culture"—"Suppress rumours for they destroy strength"—"Build India's defence forces to secure victory to-day and to maintain India's freedom hereafter".

Early in the year the principle emphasis was on the theme that an Axis victory would make life intolerable, but of recent months the tendency has been to concentrate on the positive side of the picture and to turn people's minds to the thought of future greatness and prosperity, if the Allies win. This phase of the campaign has been focussed around the slogan "Through Victory to Freedom" and there is evidence that this particular appeal has been to some extent effective. It seems clear that any war propagandist must take the forward view, and deal with the positive advantages to be reaped after victory rather than the evil side of defeat.

In the Punjab a great deal was done by the Front in connection with the Defence Loans Campaign and all over India the National War Front is now giving more attention to a Savings Campaign. It seems obvious that the spiral of rising prices and rising wages must be checked if morale is to be kept up; and so a Savings Campaign is one of the most important functions of the National War Front.

MEETINGS.

Meetings play an ever increasing part in the work of the National War Front. Exact figures as to the number of meetings held are not available but the reports received regarding meetings for the last quarter alone show that they exceed 2,000. The scale on which such meetings are held is illustrated by the following details from certain provincial reports.

Bombay.—300 meetings were held in the month ending 15th January 1943 and it was estimated that the attendance reported for 207 of these meetings was nearly 67,000. In the ensuing months 168 public meetings were held and the estimated attendance reported for 147 of these meetings was about 48,000.

Bihar.—201 meetings were held in the first quarter of 1943 in the rural areas, and in addition to the war, such topics as high prices, shortage of rice, etc., were discussed.

Other provinces report similarly.

Red Cross Week provided an admirable occasion for the holding of meetings in various provinces and in one province 82 meetings were held on "Red Army Day" in conjunction with the Indian Federation of Labour. Melas, fairs and even weddings have all provided opportunities for the holding of meetings.

VILLAGE DEFENCE PARTIES.

These parties in one form or another have been very successfully linked with the National War Front in Bihar, Madras and Assam. A beginning has also been made in the Punjab and on a much smaller scale in Bombay. In some provinces the parties have been used to guard railway lines and elsewhere they are reported to have done good work in preventing dacoities or sabotage.

LITERATURE.

Much literature has been put out; in fact writers are working at high pressure producing all kinds of leaflets, pamphlets, etc. Of all our recent material the item which has aroused public attention most is the pamphlet "Why can't he mind his own business?" which was reproduced very widely in the press and gave rise to a considerable volume of correspondence both in the press and through the post. The theme of this pamphlet was "No one can be a good National War Front worker unless firstly he is a nationalist in the sense of wanting to see India free, secondly he realises that the war is India's war, and thirdly he is prepared to take the forward view which justifies the use of the word Front". The success of this pamphlet suggests useful lines of approach in future.

ADVERTISING.

Throughout the year advertising has played an important part in the activities of the Front. It is true to say that the National War Front advertising campaigns have received more wide-spread attention than any previous propaganda campaign in this country. The volume of criticism on points of detail makes it abundantly clear that these advertisements are very widely read and the nature of the criticism in some cases makes it clear that the advertisements have got under the skin of even those who are opposed to the activities of the Front.

In recent months we have avoided undue emphasis on Japanese atrocities and dwelt more on the destruction of things precious to India which would result from a Japanese victory. This line of action seems to have been appreciated.

On the mechanical side of the work, the location of the Creative Publicity Unit in Simla and the transfer of the principal Copywriter from that Unit to the direct control of the National War Front Central Organisation have brought about big improvement and the present system is working well. During the year as a whole, faulty translation was perhaps the principal defect in our advertisements. There has been improvement in this respect recently.

ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN.

In some provinces excellent work in this direction has been done—Bihar and Bengal have been particularly active and the experience gained there suggests that this activity should be taken up more widely.

FOOD CAMPAIGN.

During the second half of the year under report, the National War Front took over the running of publicity on behalf of the Food Department of the Central Government. This publicity fell into three categories:

- i. The "Grow More Food" Campaign;
- ii. The "Informative" Campaign;
- iii. The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.

The "Grow More Food" Campaign.—This has on the whole produced very encouraging results. It can of course be argued that rising prices by themselves would have been

sufficient to stimulate increased cultivation, but reports from many quarters lead to the conclusion that the success of the movement was at least partly due to the intensified propaganda carried out. In some provinces the main campaign was run by the provincial governments and the part of the National War Front was confined to backing up their efforts. In other provinces, the campaign was mainly a National War Front concern. Particular attention was also given to a "Grow More Vegetables" Campaign. This proved far from an easy campaign to handle, but the results have not been unsatisfactory.

The "Informative" Campaign.—The main purpose of this campaign was to remove the many misconceptions in the public mind as to the cause of the present trouble. In particular, it was designed to make people understand that India in normal times is very nearly self-sufficient in the matter of food and that the loss of imports from Burma had been more than made up for by increased cultivation. Another aspect of this Campaign was that relating to informing the public when more grain came in from abroad. On the whole, this "Informative" Campaign cannot be considered to have been a success. The Campaign itself seems to have been planned and conducted on right lines, but at any rate in some parts of the country the breakdown in the distribution system made it very nearly impossible to convince people that there was in fact sufficient food in India.

The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.—The object of this campaign was to make people regard the hoarder as a genuine public enemy and it was hoped that it would be possible to pillory offenders who had received deterrent sentences. Unfortunately, in many cases of food offences, extremely light sentences were passed. To give undue publicity to this fact would merely have defeated our purpose, and so many of the plans which had been prepared in this connection had to remain unfulfilled. Generally speaking, it has to be admitted that in the food campaign—with the exception of the "Grow More Food" division of it—circumstances were too strong for us.

A fresh campaign is now under preparation, but this will be mainly concerned with supporting rationing schemes in those towns where they are introduced—the "Grow More Food" Campaign will of course be continued.

WAR SERVICES EXHIBITIONS.

The National War Front has also been concerned jointly with the Military authorities in the organisation of War Services Exhibitions in various centres. These Exhibitions have proved most successful. The crowds attracted have been far beyond what was expected and there are reports from many impartial sources to show that the effect produced had been very marked. There is indeed general agreement that this is perhaps one of the most effective of all our methods of propaganda.

PROPAGANDA VANS.

A good deal of attention has been given during the year to propaganda in villages by means of propaganda cinema vans. This method has been fully justified by results and a very considerable extension of it has only been prevented by the extreme difficulty of obtaining the necessary equipments now.

SECTION II—THE PROVINCES.

There is no room here for a detailed report from all provinces; a few superficial words and one or two quotations of interest will be as following.

ASSAM—SURMA VALLEY.

The National War Front has made considerable headway in the Valley and one of the main features of the work in this area has been ceremonial meetings on a large scale. These meetings have been held in several places with addresses by the Premier and there is no doubt that they have been very effective. In one of these gatherings alone, it was estimated that over a lakh of people were present.

ASSAM—ASSAM VALLEY.

The Assam Valley has not been as active as the Surma Valley. Interesting features of the work have been posters which were taken to meetings and explained to audiences. The Provincial Organiser of the Surma Valley has now taken over charge of both the Valleys and there are already signs of improvement.

BENGAL.

The National War Front has taken a considerable step forward in the province. This is due in no small measure to the complete change in the methods of the N. W. F. At one stage the Front was organised on what local authorities described as "subversive lines". This policy has, however, been changed and considerable attention has been given to open and ceremoniously impressive propaganda. Meetings have been held on a considerable scale and in one district 33 public meetings and 147 Group discussions were held in one quarter. Pictorial publicity exhibitions have also been held in various places and attracted much interest. A paid agent has been employed to go round from town to town attending courts and offices singing songs, repeating slogans and distributing pamphlets and leaflets. He is accompanied by sandwich men displaying posters. National War Front workers did a lot of excellent practical help in connection with the organisation of relief to the evacuees who left Calcutta in panic last December.

Special attention was given to rumours at the time of the Japanese air raids, when squads moved about daily listening to rumours obtaining the official reply wherever possible and then contradicting rumours. Valuable work has been done by the District Leader of Birbhum in the matter of kerosene, sugar and rice supplies in his district. A "People's Stores" with four branch shops has already been started in the towns. It was a National War Front worker in Chittagong, Kabir Hossain, who first caught hold of the Japanese pilot whose plane was brought down at Chakfirani and prevented him from burning himself alive or making his way out of Chittagong into Akyab.

Bengal has had a setback due to the acute food situation. Wherever, possible, the help has and is being given, but the Provincial Organisation has felt, it is working against terrific odds, when the food situation has reached a stage where men's minds can attend to nothing else.

MADRAS.

The work in the Madras Presidency has been described in an excellent pamphlet produced by the Provincial Organiser. The Standard of work in the Madras Presidency is very high and from personal visits, it is obvious that the message of the National War Front has got home even to rural people. During a visit to village primary schools, it was interesting to note that the students were able to give intelligent answers to simple questions about the main features of the war.

The appointment of lady lecturers has been one of the interesting features and it is the first time that propaganda has been carried to the hearths and homes of women in the Presidency:

"These women are kept in the dark as to how the present war is thrust on the British Government. In fact they have wrong ideas about it. When they are told of a lady lecturing to them they come in large groups (sometimes in hundreds) to hear of the war and its causes. Groups of ladies are addressed in houses of some leading men in the localities. They are found to be very eager to hear of the atrocities committed by the Japs in China and Burma and they begin to hate them now. Some, in these localities, are under the wrong impression that the Japs (if they occupy India) will distribute about 4 acres of land to each family and thus help the people to live more comfortably when they come, but when these ladies are told of their (Japs') cruel and evil designs on India they seem to change their opinions."

An original idea has been the experiment of making oil lamps which burn vegetable oil or kerosene from salvaged army tins. These lamps which are sold at a very low cost bear the National War Front symbol and initials.

BIHAR.

The Front in Bihar continues to be energetic and it is interesting to note that in the Council of State a few months ago a member from Bihar paid independent tribute to the Front and described the way in which some of its activities were already beginning to change village life.

The introducing of the system of Raksha Dals has proved most successful and useful in guarding railway lines and controlling unruly elements. The two following extracts are of interest:

The district leader for Manbhum reports: "A band of robbers were trying to break through the house of Babu Nanda Rai of Village Nawagarh on the night of 22nd September 1942. But thanks to the Village Leader and Party, they forthwith hurried to the spot and drove them away".

Again, he says: "The thief was caught red-handed at Tunturi on the 26th December 1942; crimes have really been checked and people are appreciating the activities of the Village Defence Parties".

The counteracting of rumours is an important part of the Front in this province and the following rumours give some ideas of what the Front has to contend with:

i. The Japanese have attacked Calcutta and are advancing further inland;
ii. The British aeroplanes cannot fly as high as Japanese ones and then, they only fly when the Japanese planes leave the place;

iii. Britain has leased out India to America and has therefore ceased to have any interest in the country and American troops and their Ambassador are here to safeguard American interests;

iv. Another current rumour is that small coins are scarce because Indian mints are making coins for Australia;

v. Australia has surrendered to Japan, and again that Adra Junction a rather important junction on the B. N. Ry. would be bombed.

The National War Front can claim to have helped considerably in counteracting with success the many rumours that have been current throughout the province.

A. Marathi District.—Work in this area suffered badly at the time of the last Civil Disobedience movement, but when the feeling created by the movement died down, progress began to be made.

Village Defence Parties have been formed by the National War Front Organisers. Leaders of selected villages have been given training for a week or two. The Front in this province has been closely concerned with the work in connection with the food problem. It is encouraging to learn that the Advertising Campaign has proved successful.

B. Hindi Districts.—In the Hindi districts, many meetings have been held mainly in rural areas and in important towns such as Jubbulpore, Bilaspur and Saugor.

The Publicity vans have been used considerably and film propaganda has proved of much interest.

Considering the difficulties during the first year, it is fair to say that this province has justified itself.

UNITED PROVINCES.

At one time the tendency in this province was to concentrate on written or visual propaganda rather than on meetings, but a change of policy became necessary due to paper shortage. Oral propaganda has been considerably intensified and 100 whole-time workers are now employed as lecturers and organisers.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work in this province is the fact that labour propaganda is being carried on mainly by labour leaders. The success of this propaganda is based chiefly on the establishment of workers' clubs.

PUNJAB.

The Provincial Organiser in the Punjab has developed the system of public meetings to a very high degree. Many districts work out regular monthly programmes covering all tahsils, all arrangements being made in advance. Festivals of all kinds produce a crop of meetings, while others are made to fit in with the touring of the cinema publicity vans. One activity of interest in the Front in the Province of recent months has been in connection with hoarding and the food situation. In one district the N. W. F. collected the necessary cash and grain for the opening of a depot for the sale of cheap flour to the poorest members of the community.

BOMBAY.

Importance has always been attached to meetings in the Bombay Presidency and in one quarter alone over 697 meetings were held. The National War Front made itself responsible for the local arrangements for the Red Cross Week meetings, while in other districts, the district leaders co-operated with the Collectors in this matter. Durbars of village and police officers also provided good scope for National War Front propaganda and even wedding parties were persuaded to interrupt their gaieties to listen to N. W. F. speakers.

A reception was given in honour to the crew of the "H. M. S. Bengal" and members of the crew were encouraged to narrate their remarkable experience of the fight.

The Front has played an important part in the province in dealing with the food situation.

Another feature of interest is the hiring of a stall in an industrial exhibition in Bombay where N. W. F. posters have been exhibited and workers of the Front have given talks on the aims and objects of the Front. A military jamadar was stationed at the stall to give information about the prospects of the fighting services and it is said that a good response has been received.

Another interesting development is the holding of elocution competitions in the districts of Kanara under the auspices of the Front. The subjects for these competitions were in one case "The evil effects of sabotage" and in another case "The dangers of panic". In view of the widespread fondness for oratory in India, this is a method which might perhaps be used effectively in other provinces.

SIND, N. W. F. P., DELHI, AJMER-MERWARA, COORG AND BALUCHISTAN.

In all these provinces the National War Front movement has gone ahead. Meetings, Grow More Food Campaign, Teachers' Training Courses, the editing of a paper or bulletin and cinema vans have all put in work according to the local conditions in each province.

Conditions in Baluchistan are somewhat different from those in other parts of India and the scheme of the National War Front was not found suitable to the province except in urban towns. Work was therefore taken up on the following lines.

"On 15th April the Agent to the Governor General addressed a gathering of selected representatives of important tribes from all parts of Baluchistan including the Kalat, Lasbela and Kharan States at a tea party at the Residency which was also attended by His Highness the Khan of Kalat and senior officials and briefly explained the objects of the National War Front. At this meeting the tribal representatives reaffirmed their whole-hearted association with the cause of the Allied Nations, their unwavering loyalty and

determination to continue loyal and active cooperation and gave assurance to further the objects of the National War Front amongst their tribesmen. In rural areas the tribal leaders who enjoy a considerable measure of autonomy in the administration of their affairs on the basis of well recognised tribal responsibility have acted up to their promises, and done good work in keeping their illiterate tribesmen informed of the progress of events, countering wild rumours and anti-British propaganda and generally exercising a stabilising influence.

"In Urban areas the movement is flourishing."

SECTION III—STATES.

It is quite impossible to give any general picture of work in the States for the stages which have been reached very tremendously from State to State. This variety is due not only to the fact that the States did not start at the same time, but also to the fact that some had and some had not publicity or information departments to begin with. It was recognised that work in States would depend largely on personal contact with those who could provide stimulus and ideas, and for this purpose, in addition to the two officers of the Central Organisation, two Regional Officers have been appointed. A very considerable amount of touring has been done by the four officers thus now available and there is evidence that in a number of States the Front is active. There is, however, a great difference between some States who show themselves willing to spend money on war propaganda, and others which seem to think that propaganda can be done for nothing. Speaking generally, it may be said that so far only the surface has been scratched and it would not be true to say yet that we had succeeded in generating any real positive enthusiasm for the war in areas where it did not exist before.

One of the most useful developments has been the tour in Western India of the Kathiawar War Service Exhibition Coach—a large third class coach converted into an exhibition, equipped with loud speaker, 16 mm. projector, gramophone records and looked after by a staff consisting of lecturers, a bard, three musicians and the necessary technical staff. The programmes have been given in Gujarati and it is estimated that during the course of two months, five lakhs of people saw the exhibition. It is to be noted that while the States Branch made the original suggestion, H. H. the Maharaja of Morvi shouldered the main burden and it was in most respects a purely Kathiawar project. In view of the success of the exhibition we propose to do more of this kind of thing.

SECTION IV—WORK AMONG WOMEN BY THE LADY ORGANISER.

This is on a small scale at present. The success of this activity had depended entirely on the individual work and the personality put out by Begum Shah Nawaz. Proposals are under consideration for enlarging the Women's Organisation, as at present more women helpers are essential to take up some of the work from the Lady Organiser. She has visited most of the provinces of India from Assam to Bombay and Karachi to Madras, making contacts and speeches wherever she went both in British India and the Indian States.

The expenditure incurred on the National War Front is shown in the Annexure.

K. T. BEHANAN,
Central Organiser.

(b)—Statement showing expenditure incurred during 1942-43 on the working of the National War Front Scheme.

	Rs.
1. N. W. F. Organisation in Provinces	17,21,005
2. N. W. F. Propaganda vans	6,94,838
3. N. W. F. Advertising	8,45,142
4. N. W. F. Expenditure in Administration	64,117
5. Board of Advisers	986
Total	33,26,088

NOTE.—Figures for expenditure for the year 1943-44 are not available as yet.

STATEMENT

Railway Employees subject to Payment of Wages Act, 1936, who have been awarded the punishment of "Fine" during the last 2 years.

1	Name of unit	Regtl. No.	Name.	Designation.	Rate of pay.	Nature of Offence.	Amount of Fine.	Parent Rly.	Remarks.
		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	108 I. R. O. Coy	23671	J. L. Few	Welder	Rs. A. P.	I. A. A. Sec. 39 (b)	Rs. A. P.	N. W. R.	
2.	109 I. R. O. Coy	24753	Thomas M.	Fitter	60 0 0	" 39 (f)	3 0 0	M. & S. M. R.	
3.	"	24915	Dass M. A.	Station Master	61 0 0	" P.D.	2 0 0	S. I. Rly.	
4.	"	24569	Daniel N. A.	Fireman	100 0 0	" 27	40 0 0	S. R. Rly.	
5.	"	24640	Swami Dass E.	Driver	100 0 0	" 39 (f) I.P.D.	25 0 0	M. & S. M. R.	
6.	"	24530	Briggs F.	Fireman	144 0 0	" 2	30 0 0	Mysore State	
7.	"	24974	Bhury L. R.	Boiler Smith	100 0 0	An act prejudicial to good order	30 0 0	M. & S. M. R.	
8.	112 I. R. Control Gp.	{ 20611	N. Ezekiel Cochran	Clerk	109 11 0	I. A. A. Sec. 39 (f) 1.	2 8 0	E. I. Rly.	
9.	"	{ 20619	Do.	Clerk	100 0 0	" 2.	50 0 0		
10.	"	20592	E. Ezekiel	Clerk	100 0 0	" "	10 0 0		
11.	"	20589	William Francis	Clerk	100 0 0	" 30 (f)	10 0 0		
12.	"	20580	Moses Praxlan	Clerk	100 0 0	" 31 (c)	15 0 0		
13.	"	20501	A. Gregory	Clerk	100 0 0	" 39 (f)	25 0 0		
14.	"	20625	Dayot Gansalves	Clerk	100 0 0	Disobedience.	13 0 0		
15.	"	20588	C. A. Ghose	Clerk	100 0 0	An act prejudicial to good order	50 0 0		
16.	"	20578	Nasim Hyam	Clerk	100 0 0	I. A. A. Section 39(b).	20 0 0		
17.	"	{ 20593	Joseph J.	Clerk	100 0 0	" 1.	3 0 0		
18.	"	20624	Do.	Clerk	100 0 0	" 2.	3 0 0		
19.	"	20536	Bertinn Herbert	Clerk	100 0 0	" Neglect to obey General Orders	50 0 0		
20.	"	20590	Gerald William Santo.	Clerk	100 0 0	I. A. A. Sec. 39 (f)	13 0 0		
21.	"	20618	Leand D' Rozario	Clerk	100 0 0	" 39 (f)	13 0 0		
22.	"	20542	Robert Dirk, Salvadas	Clerk	100 0 0	" 39 (b)	20 0 0		
23.	139 I. R. O. Coy	122830	E. D. Statham	Clerk	100 0 0	" "	13 0 0		
24.	140 I. R. O. Coy	122832	W. C. Savyell	Clerk	100 0 0	" 30 (d)	25 0 0		
25.	141 I. R. O. Coy	135997	Bland G. J.	Fireman I.	176 0 0	" 32 (f)	25 0 0		
26.	146 I. R. O. Coy	28263	Hony Earnest Wright.	Guard Grd. II.	200 0 0	" 39 An	10 0 0	M. & S. M. Rly.	
			A. Arundass	Clerk	120 0 0	" act prejudicial to good discipline.	7 days pay for- forfeits, Rs. 14/6/-	B. N. Rly.	
			Ferdenandez V. L.	Fireman	57 0 0	I. A. A. Sec. 30 (d)	10 11 0	E. I. Rly.	
27.	147 I. R. O. Coy	129476	E. V. Ried	Driver III	133 0 0	" 30 (c)	8 0 0	B. A. Rly.	
28.	149 I. R. O. Coy	36120	Bopindra Nath Roy	Driver III	140 0 0	" 28 (c)2	50 0 0	N. S. Rly.	
29.	"	35847	Surnath Narayan Roy	Clerk	173 0 0	" 2	5 9 0	E. I. Rly.	
30.	H. Q. R. O. Op. No. 1	28208	T. M. Janki Ram	Boilermaker	100 0 0	" 39 (f)	10 11 0		
31.	"	30303	C. L. Ling		167 0 0				

Information promised in reply to starred question No. 252, asked by Mr. Muhammad Nauman, on the 9th August, 1943.

PERSONS RECRUITED IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.

(a) 23 in the E. B. Rly. Zone and 47 in the A. B. Rly. Zone.

(b) E. B. Zone, 20 Hindus, 2 Muslims, 1 Anglo-Indian; A. B. Zone 32 Hindus, 5 Muslims, 10 Anglo-Indians.

(c) The posts filled by the 20 Hindus and the 2 Muslims in E. B. Zone were advertised in the following newspapers:

- (1) Statesman.
- (2) Amrita Bazar Patrika.
- (3) Star of India.
- (4) Assam Herald.
- (5) Time of Assam.
- (6) Assam Government Gazette.
- (7) Bihar Government Gazette.
- (8) Azad.
- (9) Ananda Bazar Patrika.
- (10) Two upcountry papers.

The other posts were not advertised. One was filled by application to the Bengal National Labour Service Tribunal; the others which were technical posts had to be filled urgently and so could not be advertised.

(d) In the case of the posts which were advertised selection was made by duly constituted Selection Boards.

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 2, asked by Shams-ul-Ulema Kamaluddin Ahmad on the 9th November, 1943.

ALUMINA IMPORTED DUTY FREE.

The total quantity of alumina imported into India, up-to-date, free of customs duty in pursuance of the concession announced in the Government of India, Commerce Department Resolution No. 6-T./Sim./40, dated the 20th July, 1940, is about, 3,280 tons.

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 27, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali on the 12th November, 1943.

CONFISCATION OF RATIONS OF CERTAIN GORAKHPUR WORKSHOP STAFF ENJOYING WEEKLY REST

(a) There is no restriction against the workshop staff of the O. & T. enjoying their weekly day of rest at their villages.

(b) Yes, if the villages are in United Provinces.

(c) Government understand that some staff were accosted by the Police and their grain confiscated but no one was arrested. It is understood that as a result of representations by the Railway, the United Provinces Government have agreed to the men taking small amounts of food grain provided every case is covered by a certificate. No further action is necessary.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

INSUFFICIENCY OF WOOD FUEL AT THE DELHI CREMATION GHAT.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to say:

(a) if it is a fact that for want of necessary quantity of wood fuel the dead bodies are not properly burnt at the Delhi Burning Ghat;

(b) if it is a fact that the supply of wood fuel for burning dead bodies has been inordinately curtailed so much so that dead bodies are being thrown half burnt and even unburnt;

(c) if Government are aware that apart from the scientific value of burning dead bodies, those who burn dead bodies do so as a religious duty enjoined by their scriptures and non-fulfilment of this duty is a great hurt to their religious feeling;

(d) if it be a fact that dead bodies are thrown half burnt and unburnt, whether Government propose to take steps to ensure against the fouling of water and spreading insanitary condition to the detriment of general health of the people; and

(e) if Government propose to look into the matter and allay the rising feeling of the Hindu public in this matter?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a), (b) and (d). Owing to the imposition of a ban on the export of firewood from the Punjab by the Punjab Government the quality of firewood on sale in Delhi was inferior and the price higher than usual and this must have affected the firewood supplies at the Burning Ghat also, but so far as Government have been able to ascertain at short notice the position is not so bad as is suggested in the question.

(c) Government are aware of the public feeling in regard to this matter.

(e) At the instance of the Government of India the Punjab Government have, for the time being, permitted the export of firewood to Delhi and it is understood supplies have begun to come in during the past few days. This should improve the position.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Is it a fact that a deputation waited upon the Director of Civil Supplies, Delhi, who arranged for the supply of 400 maunds of *seesum* and *neem* only whereas they require only *dhak* and *keekar* wood for the purpose?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid that question ought to be addressed to the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies. I have no knowledge of this deputation.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: As the matter is pertinent to this question I should like to know if it is within the Honourable Member's knowledge that people require *dhak* and *keekar* wood for the purpose but those are never supplied to them.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have no knowledge of that. The difficulty about this question is that it only partially relates to my Department and partially we have to rely on the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies for an answer.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Does the Honourable Member propose to obtain information as regards the scarcity of these two kinds of fuel and the necessity of the people regarding them?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I shall certainly pass on the Honourable Member's question to the department concerned.

RESOLUTION RE RECRUITMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES TO THE KEY SERVICE OF THE ARMY.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

Sir, the Resolution is a very simple one. It relates to a subject which can safely be regarded as non-controversial. Today, to our greatest disappointment, we find a varied policy followed by the Provincial Governments; whereas one Provincial Government is willing to go far ahead, another Provincial Government is not prepared to move. I can quote the instance of my own province: In many districts of my province recruiting authorities issued printed hand-bills that only particular castes should be recruited as soldiers—I mean to say, as combatants—and that the Scheduled Castes should not be recruited as combatants except as labourers. Many Scheduled Castes of my province applied for emergency commission but they were not called even for interview. It is very easy for the Provincial Governments to reject the Scheduled Caste candidates on one ground or the other. They are rejected on the made-up excuse of incompetence and physical unfitness. There are many other grounds on which their cases receive no consideration by the Provincial Governments. By Provincial Governments I mean the Provincial recruiting authorities.

Sir, the object of my resolution is to know the definite policy of the Government of India in the matter of recruitment of the Scheduled Castes in the Army, in order to remove certain doubts which have arisen, having regard to the answers which have been given by the Provincial and the District recruiting authorities. I want to know the clear and definite policy of the Government in this behalf in order that it may not be possible for the provincial Governments to have their own policy. I admit that there may be no bar for the

Scheduled castes to enter the military services but because there is no definite policy which has been declared by the Government of India, the Provincial Governments have been following their own policy. The other day I received a letter from one Mr. Sri Hari from Madras that there also the difficulties are the same. I shall read out a few lines from his letter dated 10th November, 1943. He says:

"In this connection I furnish below, for your information, that many of our young men are not selected for Commissioned Officers in the Army for the main reason, it is stated, that they have not got, social status. Hence it should be stressed and made clear that no consideration in regard to the social status of our candidates should be made when interviews or selections take place, in view of the fact that our castes are scheduled on account of their being deprived of their social and economic status."

Sir, what a ridiculous question that the Scheduled Castes should have social status. If they had social status there was absolutely no need for their separate representation and for their special consideration. They have been deprived of their social, economic and political status long before and the Government should not ask that they must have social status while recruiting them for the Army.

Sir, the Scheduled Castes have to face the same difficulties in the Punjab. A few days ago, my Honourable friend, Mr. R. R. Bhole, M.L.A., Bombay, who is one of the four persons who have been selected by the Government of India to carry on propaganda abroad, told me that when he visited Ambala, a district in the Punjab, many Depressed Class leaders, and many other Scheduled Caste persons who had grievances, went to him and told him that *Balmikis* and *Chamars* and many other Scheduled Castes were not recruited in the Military. Only if they returned themselves as *Mazhabi* Sikhs they were recruited in the Military, but not as *Balmikis* and *Chamars*.

Sir, if that be so, it becomes the duty of the Government of India to clearly state their policy and should at once issue a statement of what they wish should be the uniform policy of Provincial Governments. It should not be left to the Provinces themselves to have their own policy, but the Government of India should issue mandatory directions to the Provincial Governments that there should not be any bar to the Scheduled Castes to enter military services and that special consideration should be given to their cases. Sir, in the absence of such a policy, there is great danger of Provincial Governments having their own way. If the Government of India really want to improve the status of the Depressed Classes, I would request them respectfully to declare their policy in clear terms.

Now, Sir, I shall let you know very briefly the importance of the military service. Sir, the military Service plays an important role in the regeneration of a people. The military service gives a people an important place in the body politics. Political status brings economic salvation in its wake. Social status follows as a necessary consequence of political and economic status. I may make it clear that military services carry with them not only official and administrative authority but also political influence and social prestige. No greater injustice can be done to a community than if that community is deprived of its due share in the military services.

Sir, the Scheduled Castes are the descendants of the original inhabitants of India. Though designated as "untouchables", their forefathers were the rulers of this land. They lived and thrived in this land before the advent of the Aryans. There were many warriors and kings amongst them. The ancient history will provide ample evidence to show that they were a very brave and courageous people. I shall quote a few lines from two authorities. Though I can quote passages from many eminent scholars of Sanskrit but I shall quote a few lines only from two authorities. The literature of the Aryans themselves bears sufficient testimony to this fact. Sir William Hunter in his book "A Brief History of the Indian People", writes thus about the aborigines:

"We hear of wealthy *Dasyus* or non-Aryans; and Vedic hymns speak of their 'seven castles' and ninety forts. The Aryans afterwards made alliance with non-Aryan tribes; and some of the most powerful kingdoms of India were ruled by non-Aryan kings."

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

Sir, we are often told that we possess no social status; that we are cowards; that we are not a bold and brave people. It is because we have been reduced to such a position. But we were a very brave and courageous people in our early life. Our ancestors were civilized and cultured people, rather more civilised and cultured than the Aryans. Mr. H. G. Rawlinson, in his book "India—A Short Cultural History", says that the aborigines or the non-Aryans were probably more civilized and that they dwelt in castles and strong cities in considerable luxury. As most of the historians tell us, and many other persons who have studied ancient history will bear me out that it took a very long period for the Aryans to dominate the aborigines. Sir, the Scheduled Castes are the descendants of those aborigines whom after a long period of struggle the Aryans by treacherous means and secret designs reduced into more or less reluctant submission. Sir, they are, as I have already said, not cowards, but a brave and very courageous people. Their's is an instance how persistent, ruthless oppression can degenerate a ruling race.

Now, I shall come to the past services of the Scheduled Castes in the Army. Sir, when the Britishers first settled down in India they were treated by the Hindus and other communities as untouchables for a considerable period of time. No community in India liked to associate itself with the Britishers. The Hindus hated them just like anything. My community was the first community to associate itself with the British people. My community was the first community to get itself enlisted in their armies. My community was the first community which fought on the side of Lord Clive in the Battle of Plassey which laid the foundations of the British Empire in India. Sir, my community has rendered important and distinguished services to the benign Government. The army of the East India Company mostly consisted of *Mahars*, *Chamars* and other low castes. The old Bombay Army almost entirely consisted of *Mahars*, *Chamars*, and persons of humble origin who have many deeds of unchallengeable valour and courage to their credit. What I say is not without grounds or basis. I quote a few lines from the History of the Bombay Army by Sir Patrick Cardell. He says:

"They took also the outcaste races of Chambarhs or tanners, Far-rashes, and in particular Mahars or Parwaris. The last-named pre-Aryan, perhaps pre-Dravidian, race, now outside the pale of strict Hinduism, but once predominant, and in the opinion of some (though improbably) the donors of their name to the whole of Maharashtra, formed a large element in the Bombay regiments. Their gallantry is shown, to take only one example, by the frequency of their names on the monument at Koregaum, and it is not without significance that Richard Burton, himself an officer in a Bombay regiment, took a Mahar as a typical Bombay sepoy. In spite of their lowly origin many Parwaris became Indian officers by sheer merit and good conduct."

The *Mahars* also rendered valuable services abroad. I want to point it out to you that Hindus never liked to go abroad. It was a part of their religion not to cross seas as it has been made clear by many old scripts and religious books; but the depressed classes never hesitated to go abroad. Their martial qualities can best be judged from the following lines from the History of the Bombay Army by Sir Patrick Cardell. He says:

"The services of the Bombay Army have, however, never been confined to the Peninsula of India. There was much fighting overseas and on the seas at that period, and the Marine Battalion furnished detachments for the cruisers of the Bombay Marine which then constituted the Indian Navy. These Marine sepoys were engaged in many naval conflicts, both with the pirates of the Indian coast and the Persian Gulf, and with the French ships of war. It is impossible not to mention the conduct of a detachment of the battalion which had been captured on the Company's cruiser *Aurora* by two French frigates. It was the custom of the French to try to induce their prisoners to enter their service, and in this they were successful with a large number of the Irish recruits, and even with some of the sailors, as well as with some Bengal and Madras sepoys. When the Bombay sepoys refused to abjure their allegiance, they were shown the captured Bengal and Madras sepoys in French uniforms, enjoying luxuries: whereupon the Bombay Marine soldiers answered by abusing the traitors who had forgotten their military oath, and deserted their colours, and such effect had their noble example upon these men that, overcome with shame, a large body of them threw down their arms and quitted the ranks. After this the Bombay men were very severely treated, and some of them were wounded. It is pleasing to note that a special medal was given to each man of the detachment who returned to Bombay: and it may be observed that of the seventeen men so honoured, twelve belonged to the afterwards

despised Parwari race the remaining five being Muhammadans of the Bombay Coast."

The *Mahars*, *Dhusia* and other low castes have proved themselves to be very courageous and bold persons. They greatly helped the Britishers in the suppression of the mutiny as the following lines will show:

"As a striking instance of individual loyalty the conduct of a small party of the Marine Battalion serving on the Indus river steamers at Multan may be mentioned. This party of eight men was acting as a Treasury Guard when the 26th Regiment of Bengal Infantry mutinied. They successfully protected their charge and killed twenty-six of their assailants. These eight men were all Parwaris, the humble race known in civil life as *Mahars*."

Our leader, nay, our prophet, the Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar belongs to the same *Mahar* caste. Besides, one of the most heroic and brilliant achievements in the annals of the Army, as Tod, the historian of Rajasthan called it, is the heroism displayed at Mangalore in 1783. The Bombay Government has erected a monument at Koregaum with the names of the fallen. It is interesting to note the castes of the 49 men of the 2nd/1st Regiment whose names are recorded. Of these 49, 22 appear to have been *Parwaris* or *Mahars*, 16 *Mahrattas*, 8 *Rajputs* and other Hindus and 2 *Muhammadans*, one either a *Muhammadan* or an Indian Jew. Sir, I can quote many authorities to show that the scheduled castes were recruited in the beginning when British rule was established in India. General Briggs says:—

"They are faithful, truthful and attached to their superiors, ready at all times to lay down their lives for those they serve, and remarkable for their indomitable courage. These qualities have always been displayed in our service. The aborigines of the Karnatik were the sepoys of Clive and Coote. A few Companies of the same stock joined the former great Captain from Bombay and helped to fight the Battle of Plassey in Bengal, which laid the foundation of our Indian Empire. They have since distinguished themselves in the Corps of Pioneers and Engineers not only in India, but in Java, in Afghanistan, and in the celebrated defence of Jalalabad. An unjust prejudice against them grew up in the native armies of Madras and Bombay, produced by the feelings of contempt for them existing among the Hindus and Muhammadan troops. They have no prejudices themselves; they are always ready to serve abroad and embark on board ship; and I believe no instance of mutiny has ever occurred among them."

Colonel Dixon's report, published by the Court of Directors of the East India Company, portrays the character of the *Mahar* tribes with admirable minuteness:

"He dilates on their fidelity, truth, and honesty, their determined valour, their simple loyalty, and an extreme and most touching devotion when put upon their honour. Strong as is the bond of kindred among the *Mahars*, he vouches for their fidelity in guarding even their own relatives as prisoners when formally entrusted to their care. For centuries they had been known only as exterminators; but beneath considerable handling of one Englishman, who honestly set about understanding them, they became peaceful subjects and well disciplined soldiers."

In the United Provinces, the *Pasis* and the *Haburas* are also well known for their courage. They may be turned into good soldiers through reclamation work.

Sir, it is a matter of great regret that the community which was the first to associate itself with the British people; which was the first to come to their rescue, which was the first to get itself enlisted in the British Army; which was the first to fight on the side of Lord Clive in the Battle of Plassey and to lay the foundation of the British Empire in India; should now be debarred from military service. It is the height of absurdity, the height of cruelty, the greatest tragedy that the world has ever witnessed, or that any community has ever faced.

Now I wish to say something about the policy of the Government with regard to the recruitment of the depressed classes in the Army. On the establishment of the British rule in India the members of the depressed classes were recruited in the army. There was no such bar for the depressed classes in the beginning, but when the British Government was fully established in the country, with its civil administration, they were gradually debarred from the military services. Regarding the Army the policy of the Government has been steadily retrograde. Professor J. Coatman, C.I.E., in an article in the *Asiatic Review* in 1933, writes as follows:

"For, from our earliest days in India and until very recently indeed untouchables were recruited for military services . . . and it will be long enough before conditions are such as to allow them to enter that service at all freely."

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

It is indeed a matter of pity that the army in India is built upon the caste system. Only those people who belong to the higher castes are recruited in this service. Mr. J. C. Curry in his recent book "The Indian Police" remarks:

"A firm principle in the social life of Indians, whether Hindu or Muhammadan in India, is the right of the higher castes and classes to rule the lower. To an Indian there is something almost morally wrong in the subordination of a man of high birth and position to a man from a lower rank of society. As has already been mentioned, men of the menial classes have been debarred from enlisting as constables or as combatants in the Indian Army. (There have been battalions of Mahars—one of the depressed classes—but they were disbanded.) The rank and file of the Indian Army or the Police would strongly object to the presence of a washerman or a potter in their ranks. Mahars and other similar castes have been enlisted in certain very rare and special circumstances, but not without difficulties created as a result. It is certain that the enlistment of a sweeper or a shoe-maker would cause a mutiny among either Hindus or Muhammadan troops."

This has been the policy of the Government up to now. Sir, the administrative difficulties arising from the objection of high caste Hindus undoubtedly exist, but it is highly deplorable that a social evil should be allowed to influence the Government in restricting the employment of the scheduled castes in the army.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): You have not been refused: why were you refused?

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: I will say that the Honourable Member himself knows that the scheduled castes have been refused admission into the military service and I do not need to give a more elaborate explanation for it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I do not know it at all.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: In spite of devising ways and means of counteracting its mischief in public bodies as well as in public services, the Government is perpetuating caste in India by giving larger power to certain communities and by excluding others from that power. The Government has always adopted a policy of non-intervention in social and religious matters and the maintenance of *status quo* in this respect, but the time has come for a revision of that policy. Now, when the war has reached the gates of India and the gates are almost open, it becomes the duty of the Government to see that the scheduled castes are freely recruited in the army. It will not only improve the status of my community but it will also strengthen the defence of the country. Today, I want to make it clear that millions of people of our community are working in mills, factories and other industrial concerns, and are producing war material of every kind for the successful prosecution of the war. It is the duty of the Government to reward them by throwing open the military services to them and by providing special facilities for their recruitment in the army. A number of scheduled caste regiments can be raised from all provinces. It will greatly strengthen the defence of the country.

Sir, the scheduled castes have already suffered a lot at the hands of the caste Hindus; they were enslaved physically and mentally. If the Government is also going to adopt the same policy of repression and indifference, the future generation will never forget the injustice that the British Government will be doing to the scheduled castes. So, it is better that the military service should at once be thrown open to the members of the scheduled castes.

Sir, many of our young men are anxious to get themselves enlisted in the army. There are many able, well-educated, efficient and well built young men in my community who are ready to give up their lives for the cause of the British Empire and the United Nations, provided they are given a chance. In the beginning there may be many shortcomings; there may be many defects in their administration; but after some time they are bound to prove efficient, able and strong soldiers. To day, the Sikh community is considered to be a martial community; but I ask the Government, was it a martial community at the time of Guru Nanak? It was purely a religious community, it was purely a religious sect, and it was Guru Govind Singh and the other Sikh Warriors who turned it into a martial community. If I suppose or even if I admit that scheduled castes do not belong to the martial community, it becomes the duty of the Government to see that it becomes a martial

community. It is not only in their interest, but it is in the interest of the Government themselves to allow them to enter the military services. Sir, I urge the Government to have a beginning. If there is no beginning today there shall never be a beginning tomorrow. Especially now when the war has reached the gates of India and the gates are almost open, the Government should, at once declare their clear policy towards the scheduled castes and should issue mandatory directions to the Provincial Governments that the scheduled castes should be freely recruited in the army. With these words, I move the Resolution.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Resolution moved:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution that has been placed before the House. It is hard to believe that even in these times there is some discrimination in the appointment of Indians to the Army. No doubt we on this side know that there has been discrimination, but so far as Government is concerned, so far as the policy of the Government is concerned, we have always been told and made to believe that no discrimination of caste or creed in appointment to any posts is permissible or is being done. But we have just now heard the facts which go to prove that there is discrimination; and it is because discriminatory policy has been adopted, although never permitted by the declarations made by the Government, that we, the Indians, have suffered not only in our own country but in the world at large. If, today, we are suffering a great deal in South Africa or in other European countries, it is because in this country our countrymen are treated as inferiors. When I charge the Government, I should certainly say—and my Hindu brethren will forgive me for saying—that we do feel that the Hindu community as such have done injustice to a class of their own. This discrimination that has been going on for many many years, I was told by many Pundits, was not according to religion; but I would not go into that. Far be it from me to claim that I know anything about the Hindu religion; but the time has come when we all must not only preach but practise in our own interests.

It may be said because we have not been treating our brethren of the soil as equal human beings, therefore we are being treated in the world at large as subordinates and inferiors. The root cause may be there, however, we cannot tolerate any sort of inferior position, which unfortunately has been assigned to us because we are Asiatics, it is also advisable that we should put our house in order in this respect at once. When I have said that, it does not lie with the

12 Noon. Government to make any such discrimination. In fact, Government cannot say this because they have invariably said that they cannot make any discrimination. In fact, it is the fault of our Government who have allowed these things in this country and outside. It is because of that that we are suffering at present and I hope we will have today from the Government spokesman a definite declaration that there is no discrimination at present and there will be no discrimination in the future.

Sir, I can also say this that I have also tried to learn something about the Bombay Command of the olden days. I did this in order to find out how far the Indians have contributed towards the making of the British Empire in Africa and Asia particularly. I found from the old records that for a number of years the Government of India had the Bombay Command and that army was stationed at Aden, Mombassa, Natal, Colombo, Singapore, Hongkong and Shanghai. It was the Government of India who paid for them and that Command consisted mostly of the people from the Bombay Presidency, including a large number of Mahars. I am proud to say that the old records show, as my friend has pointed out, that they acted as well as anybody else. I may tell my Honourable friends from the Punjab that, were it not for Lord Kitchner who took fancy to the North Western Frontier defence and to the people of the North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab, there would have been no such thing as martial and non-martial classes pleaded before us.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Why are you afraid of them?

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: I am not afraid of you. It has already been proved that whether it is a Bombay Mahratta or a Bombay Mussalman or a Pathan from the Punjab or a Sikh from the Punjab or even a Bengali or a Madrasi, they are all as strong and as brave and as courageous as anybody else. I may go further and tell my friend that they have proved themselves as good as the British Army if not better or any foreign army and while the records of their achievement are often showed that of the poor Indians are seldom or never mentioned. We would certainly like the Government to give more chance in the army to the members of the scheduled classes who have unfortunately been kept back and who have been deprived the facilities for higher education, commercial education and industrial education owing to their poverty. Today, they seek employment in the army for two reasons. One is that they want to join the army as others and the other reason is that they want to show that they are as brave patriotic and courageous for the protection of their country as anybody else. If that is the position, it will create for the Indians a high place in the world at large which they have so far been unfortunately denied. I think it is the bounden duty of the Government not only to accept this Resolution but to declare that there is no discrimination, not only in the key positions but even for the highest position, that could be attained by a soldier. All these posts will be thrown open not only to the Hindus and Muslims but also to the *Mahars* and *Chamars* or anybody else born in India.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmakh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution. The Government has been charged by the Mover of the Resolution with ungratefulness. He says that he has helped you to build your Empire in this land and he has narrated to you how he has helped you. Then he wants to know what have you done for him for shedding his blood on the battle-field for establishing your Empire. You have shut him out from the army. If we were to consider what the policy of the Government was in 1940, it would be evident that it was not only the untouchables who were shut out but there were many other communities, such as, the Indian Christians, who were not absorbed in the army. When I put questions about them, I was told that they were being absorbed to draw maps. Similar was the treatment of other communities. It is not only the scheduled classes who were treated as untouchables but there were certain Provinces which were treated as untouchables. For instance, excepting Bombay and the Punjab, there was no other province from which any recruitment was made and I brought this fact to the notice of the Government. It was only when the Axis powers started coming nearer and nearer to India that they started recruitment from the other provinces. In spite of the requests of the Governors of Madras and Bengal and even when a Resolution was unanimously passed in the Bengal Assembly, no recruitment was started in those provinces. It is not only the scheduled castes who were treated as untouchables but even the Maharashtra Brahmin community was treated as untouchables till the year 1941. I frequently brought that matter to the notice of the Government; and in my province I started an agitation to admit this community which had no bar in social status. My friend is only referring to the social status as a bar. So far as the Brahmin community was concerned, no question of social bar could have been advanced. They were already well-advanced in education and socially and economically they were all right. The Government has a policy which it has never disclosed and it is but right on the part of my friend to ask the Government to say what their policy is in respect of the depressed classes.

Now, Sir, let me say that it is no good harping on the point of untouchability. When the army is to be thrown open to all, it is no good to harp on the old ideas and to fix any guilt on the Hindu community. As a matter of fact, I have told you that there were many untouchables and it is merely to side-track the issue, when it is said, that the touchable communities are against the untouchables. It is for the Government to lay down their policy and to

state explicitly what they are going to do. When the Government is primarily responsible for the army, why should they shut out this particular community from the army? It is not fair; it is not just to blame the Hindu community in general when they are doing their level best to ameliorate the conditions of these classes. As a matter of fact, on a very extensive scale they have tried to do away with the untouchability. You know very well that it is not the Hindus who are primarily responsible for shutting out the members of the scheduled castes from the army but it is the Government who want to make the caste Hindus scapegoats for everything they do. I should, therefore, suggest to my friend to rest his case on justice. I agree with him that every person, never mind to what caste he belongs, if he is medically and physically fit, should be recruited and if he is fit educationally also and has acquired the necessary experience, he should be made an officer. You cannot say that, because a certain person belongs to a particular caste, he should be given preference. No. That I will not say. In the case of every candidate, whether he belongs to the depressed classes or the Anglo-Indian or Christian or Brahmin community or the Sikh community, who wants to be enlisted, it must be proved that he is quite fit to be enrolled. What I complain of is that no community, as a community, should be shut out from the service, whatever community it may be. I have, therefore, great pleasure in supporting this motion.

Let me tell you this, that the depressed classes were not considered untouchables or unfit to enter the army even during the time of the Peshwas. Those who know the history of the Peshwas know that they were Brahmins and though the Brahmins were a fighting class, they were shut out by this Government for political reasons and no other reasons from the army. The Peshwas never shut out this untouchable community from entering the army. As a matter of fact, there were officers who belonged to this particular class. It is therefore just on my friend's part to demand that no community should be shut out from any office and his specific demand is that members of his community should not be shut out from the army and I say that no community should be shut out. As I have said, I have great pleasure in supporting this motion.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): I rise to support this Resolution. The policy followed by the Government of India in recruiting the personnel for the army has been a very wrong one from the very beginning. On this occasion I do not wish to refer to that aspect of the policy, namely, to confine the recruitment to what are known as the martial races. Recently in this war, I am told they have begun to recruit the personnel for the army even from what were known before as the non-martial classes. But, Sir, to deny the right of serving in the army to the depressed class people is not only a wrong policy, it is not only an injustice but it is a discreditable policy on the part of the Government of India. The Government of India is showing only ungratefulness to those very people with whose help they established their empire in this country. When the British people started to raise their army first, they could not get men for their army from what are known as the touchable Hindu classes, because there was the army of the Peshwas. There were the armies of the other Hindu kings. They could not also recruit the Muhammadans because there was the army of the Moghul Empire for the Muhammadans to join. They could get only people from the depressed classes at that time. I am told they first tried to get people from Africa, the Negroes, but somebody suggested to them that the depressed classes of this country are badly treated by the Hindus and if they tried to enlist people from the depressed classes, it is possible they may be able to get men for their army and it is thus that the original army of the Britishers in this country was recruited from the depressed classes. They helped the British people to have an army and also to establish their kingdom here but the British people are well known in Europe as the perfidious Britain. That is the name by which the British people are known in Europe. The depressed classes helped them to establish an empire. The empire was established. Their need was served and then the British people

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.] thought that they should expand the army and other people in the Empire began to join the army. The Mahrattas joined, the Muhammadans joined and perhaps the Brahmins also joined in smaller numbers.

An Honourable Member: They joined the Secretariat.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In order to please the Mahrattas and the Brahmins the British people stopped the recruitment of the depressed classes. Those classes who joined the army at this time had wrong notions about social status and they were not willing to mix with *Mahars* and other depressed classes and therefore the British people, in order to please the Mahrattas with whom they had to fight first to establish their empire here, stopped recruitment of the depressed classes. I consider this as not only ingratitude but it is a blot on the British character itself. I, therefore, think that the British people should remove this blot at the earliest possible time and they should make an attempt to restore the depressed classes to their original position. The reasons why the Mahrattas refused to join the army was this. According to the notions of the time, they were considered to have a big social position. The depressed classes had joined the army earlier than the Mahrattas, with the result that the men belonging to the depressed classes had become officers, subedars and so on and when the Mahrattas were recruited, the depressed classes were officers and the Mahrattas did not like it and when they complained, the British people were weak enough or ungrateful enough to listen to that complaint.

Now, Sir, the Government of India cannot complain that the depressed classes are non-martial races. They fought their battles in order to establish the empire of the British people in this country. They could not be said to be non-martial. It is true that if the British people had enlisted the depressed classes, there would have been some complaint but the British people must stand by the people who stood by them in their difficulty and they cannot for the sake of pleasing the touchable Hindus punish the depressed classes. I would like to tell the British people that if they consider that the difficulty of associating together the touchable and untouchable classes can only be got over by keeping the depressed classes out, they are very unfair. They must find some way of recruiting the depressed classes to the army. During the last war, I am told a small attempt was made again to recruit a few battalions for the army and the history of these battalions shows that they fought very bravely. During this war, some small attempts are being made. I am told that in the beginning the depressed classes were offered what are known as the labour corps. The Government of India thought that they wanted some men for this corps and they thought that the depressed classes who had helped them to establish their empire in this country were not good enough for the regular army. So they offered the depressed class people employment in what are known as the labour corps. Naturally the depressed class people who had fought and were a martial race did not like to join the labour corps. I am told in Bombay they are trying to form some regiments and there are about four battalions formed in Bombay. But these four battalions are not enough for the depressed classes who form at least one-fourth of the population of this country. If they form one-fourth of the population, the proportion of the depressed classes in the army should at least be one-fourth. What are four battalions? They are a flea-bite.

I would therefore like the Government of India, first, to tell us what attempts they have made to restore the depressed classes to their original position, how far they have recruited in this war from the depressed classes for the various arms of the army, and what further steps they propose to take to accelerate the pace, and to expedite the complete recruitment of the depressed classes for the army. Then I would like the Government of India to tell us if there are difficulties regarding education and other difficulties, what special steps they are taking to see that the depressed class people are recruited not only to the rank and file of the army but also to the commissioned ranks. I have no doubt that if the scheduled classes are left to compete with the other classes in securing commissions in the ordinary way they will not be able to

get them on account of their educational backwardness. I therefore would ask the Government of India to take special measures to give special facilities to the members of the untouchable classes so that there will be some persons from the depressed classes who have got education. The real solution of the problem in my judgment as regards the appointment of depressed classes to the officer rank is to give them special facilities, and those special facilities must be very generous. If you give niggardly facilities, they are not enough. I know in my province of Bombay Government gives some kind of small scholarships to the depressed classes boys. But those scholarships are not of much use. For instance, the depressed class people are the working class people and small poor agriculturists. If you give a boy a scholarship of Rs. 2 or 3 to go to a school, his parents are not willing to spare him, because the boy may go to school and get Rs. 2 or 3 scholarship, but those Rs. 2 or 3 are not quite sufficient. The parent finds it more economical and more profitable to engage the child in looking after the cattle or doing some work on the field. Therefore, the scholarships must be of a sufficient amount so that the parents will find it profitable to send the boy or the girl to the school instead of engaging them either on the field or in looking after the cattle or asking them to do some other work. These scholarships to be given must not only enable the child to pay for the fee and books, etc., but the scholarship must be sufficient at least to feed the child and to the extent to which the child helps the family, also to help the family. This is the only method by which you can get a sufficient number of students from the depressed classes to attend educational institutions. I would therefore like the Government of India to give very generous and special facilities to the students belonging to the depressed classes so that they can rise higher. I know several people coming from the depressed classes who join school and when they pass matriculation they are unable to go to the college because the parents expect them to maintain the family. In such a case the student must not only get a scholarship which is enough to feed the student, but the student must be able to help the family. There is no other way of securing proper education for the untouchable classes who are a very poor class of people. I would therefore urge on the Government of India to take all the necessary measures. First, Government should recruit these people for the army and not mind the jealousies or the prejudices of the touchable Hindus. The depressed classes are large enough to recruit your whole army from. If the other classes do not join, it does not matter, your depressed classes will form your whole army as once they did.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only one minute more.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In the Punjab the depressed classes are not recruited, but if a depressed class man calls himself a Sikh he is recruited, and Government thus indirectly help the conversion of these depressed classes to Sikhism. The Sikh population is being increased by this method—a depressed class man cannot join the army if he calls himself a depressed class man, but if he declares himself to be a Sikh he can join the army.

An Honourable Member: Or a Muslim.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The Government of India may be interested in increasing the population of Sikhs, but this is a wrong method to do so. Leave it to the Sikhs to spread their religion, but do not help the Sikh religion by this device. I therefore feel that the Government of India should take prompt measures to do justice to the untouchable classes.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution which was moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Piare Lall. I entirely agree with him in the arguments that he advanced in support of the Resolution. Without wasting the time of the House I may immediately go to the question of recruitment of the depressed classes, not merely to the ordinary ranks but to the commissioned ranks as well. So far as soldiers are concerned, I know that the depressed classes are being tempted

[Kao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

to join the army by the recruiting officers telling them that they will be taken as soldiers. We know also that once they are recruited, they are being sent to the non-combatant lines, and many of them in that respect were deceived when they found that actually they had to work in non-combatant lines like hospital corps, labour corps, etc. I have myself received many complaints from those who have joined, that they have not been treated properly in these hospital corps and these labour corps. So that I would suggest to the War Secretary to see, in the first place, that for the recruitment of the scheduled classes to the army ranks they must have as recruiting officers members of the scheduled classes—that is the most important thing—and secondly, that at the time of recruitment, the scheduled classes are definitely informed that they are being recruited either for the combatant line or for the non-combatant line. It is a fact no doubt that when first the Britisher formed his army in India the scheduled classes joined the army in large numbers, and for very good reasons. Those reasons, I know are perfectly legitimate and natural. They were in the position that they could not help helping the Britisher in the formation of these armies. They were merely driven on to the lap of the Britisher on account of the rigid caste system that was perpetuated by the Hindus, and it is no question of gratitude. I do not think this House can extract gratitude from persons who do not feel like being grateful. But the depressed classes not merely joined the early armies as combatants, but they also helped the army in so many other ways.

In those days, there were Divisions of infantries and cavalries, and in the matter of cavalries they should have so much equipment, so much saddlery and so on. I know that all those people who joined to help the British army to get all that equipment were depressed classes whether they were *Chamars*, *Mahars* or *Adi-Dravidas* or as we call them in our parts, the *Chukklars*. They did all this work. Even today, in Secunderabad we actually find a colony of those people who helped the cavalry, who are called the 'polishers' and these people are even today experts in their line. The British army knows and the army records show that nobody can displace them in that work. Unfortunately, on account of the mechanization adopted, recently all these people were thrown out of work and consequently today they are all unemployed and going through great distress. But I have no doubt that such people are ready and willing to join the army in the combatant line. It is also true that in the early days, they not merely joined as soldiers, but as specialists in this cavalry and saddlery work. Some of us went also as mess contractors behind the armies trying to supply food, particularly to the officers of the army. In those days, I think even today, you cannot expect the caste Hindus to touch beef and ham and bacon and things like these. So, it was necessary that they had to recruit from among the depressed classes who took up the work of catering to these officers. I know some of my ancestors were themselves big mess contractors in Bangalore, Secunderabad and many other cantonment areas. What is more, they not merely went as mess contractors generally but also as private valets to officers in the army. They not merely went to cantonments, but they went far beyond the overseas battlefields and in the fighting line. At any rate, I know of one man whose case will be interesting to hear. He was in Bangalore. He was a very very old man and I think he is dead now. He was a valet to Mr. Churchill when he was a subaltern in the Fourth Hussars at Bangalore. He related to me a very interesting story. That old man accompanied Mr. Churchill to Malakand expedition. Mr. Churchill was taken prisoner for over a month. But this old man was waiting in his tent for more than a month for the return of his master, watching day and night. He was looking anxiously for the return of Mr. Churchill. One day Mr. Churchill returned to the tent when this old valet was surprised to find his master back. He told me, and I distinctly remember the graphic description which he gave me, that as he pulled out the coat off from Churchill's back

he found that between the skin and the coat, there was a thick layer of dirt with fleas and insects.

Another work which they undertook was as doctors, sub-assistant surgeons, military surgeons in the army because in those days—even though now-a-days—it is a common thing to have high caste Hindu doctors—in those days high caste Hindus won't touch their own dead bodies. It was left to the scheduled castes to do the dirty job, trying to learn operations, dissecting dead bodies and so on. I know as a matter of fact that some years ago, there were great number of doctors among scheduled castes not merely in the military line but also in the civil line, but today we find that the number of depressed classes is getting gradually decreased on account of the policy adopted by the Government. In these respects, we, the scheduled castes, have been helping the army and so, I want the War Secretary to see that rules are so framed for the recruitment of depressed classes not merely as soldiers, as principal combatants in the army, but to see in all this manner that I have indicated, namely, in the matter of recruitment as soldiers to the combatant line, in the matter of recruitment to the catering line and in the matter of recruitment to the doctor's line, that special attention is paid in those rules for the recruitment of scheduled castes because these were the lines in which they were taken in the original army.

Then, Sir, with regard to the appointment as commissioned officers, I had the good fortune of serving on two or three Central Interview Boards, mostly at Poona. I know they have fixed rules and regulations for recruitment to the ranks of commissioned officers in the Indian army, as they are called the land forces, to the Indian Navy and also to the Indian Air force. No doubt the modern army requires a lot of educational standard, particularly mathematics and so on. We have often been able to send up men with such qualifications as have been prescribed in these rules and regulations. Actually in practice, I found, that most of the candidates were excluded. I can quote one or two instances. There was a European gentleman, I would not mention his name, and this gentleman asked a particular candidate what was his father. The poor boy quite innocently and may I also add quite honestly, said that his father was a petty farmer. Then the next question that was asked was, what was his income. The boy said that his father was earning about Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month. The gentleman, said, "All right". I anticipated the mind of that gentleman in asking these questions and I took upon myself the responsibility of asking this boy a counter question, after the gentleman had finished his question. I asked him: "Have you heard of General Timoshenko". The boy said: "Yes, he is a Russian General". I again asked him: "Do you know anything about him"? The boy replied that so far General Timoshenko was the best General who has come out successful among the United Nations. Again I asked the boy if he knew from which family General Timoshenko came. The boy said he did not know but guessed "probably he came from the family of a cultivator". After the boy went away, we considered among ourselves whether the question about the status of father was important. The European colleague of mine said "The boy's father must have some status". I differed from that gentleman and I was no doubt over-ruled by the majority. Then, there was another gentleman on the Interview Board, an Indian. I do not know whether fortunately or unfortunately, he came from the Punjab. He turned round to ask another student some questions and as soon as he was asked to go, this gentleman said, "Look at this boy, he has no military background". I did not know how to tackle this gentleman. I asked him, "what do you mean by military background? Is it merely the size of the man, you want long noses or tallness"? Then, I reminded my colleague of what a certain high placed military officer in India told me, a very high placed officer indeed when I tackled him on this problem of not recruiting people from South India, particularly the depressed classes. He told me that generally south Indian recruits are increasing from day to day

[Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

for the simple reason that a modern army is getting mechanised and in a mechanised army you want more brains than muscles. I reminded that Punjabi gentleman that so far as modern army is concerned, I think that that particular boy who appeared before me, a scheduled caste boy, had the amount of brains to carry on that work and therefore there was no question of military background.

So, Sir, these are the things that I would like to tell the War Secretary so that in the Central Interview Board, instructions may be given to the Members that they should not ask questions relating to so-called social status of the candidate or as to the fact of his having a military background or otherwise. If it is a question of military background, as my Honourable friend has clearly proved by way of statements that he read before you, I do not think there is any section of the population in India who have got such a military background as the scheduled castes and there can be no doubt about it whatsoever. With these words, I support the motion moved by my Honourable friend.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution in as much as it will give a status to millions of people in India. I am also glad that the Honourable the Mover who like myself comes from the United Provinces has moved it because, as every one knows, the United Provinces is the centre of all great movements in this country, and if my Honourable friend is lucky enough to get it passed here it will remain another landmark in the annals of this House and of the country as a step forward in the further progress of this country. In this country, Sir, it was profession which counted in many things. Not only the Pasis and Chamars who did menial work but among the Mussahmans people like weavers who can stand with us together and pray in the same mosque have not been enlisted because they were not considered by this Government as belonging to the martial classes. In like manner Saiyids and Shaikhs were not easily taken into the army. One of the depressed classes in my province is known as the Pasi class—the members of which are always selected by Government for watch and ward duty and for keeping security and peace; yet they are not considered fit for the army. Even now Government does not care for the progress and enlightenment not only of the depressed classes but also of Indians generally.

Every day we hear that all sorts of experts are coming to this country from England although there is no want of experts in India now on all kinds of subjects. At the same time I must say that there are differences among my Hindu friends themselves like castes and classes which have come as a legacy to this Government and they do not take the so-called non-martial races into the army. Even today in the army Indians do not attain to high positions like the Britishers; they are not made commanding officers, a complaint to which every one would subscribe. In fact the British Government should not take into consideration that there are any high castes or low castes or scheduled castes; there should be no such differences in any service. My friend was right in saying that for want of a definite policy the Provincial Governments too have not so far been able to enlist the depressed classes, and even from among the Muslims, people who carry on, as I said, the profession of weavers, etc., are not considered fit to be taken into the army, although we have no depressed classes among us. Therefore the Government of India should now declare that in every service including the army there should be no discrimination of any kind. Necessity, it is well known, is the mother of invention. Now it may be said that they are taking all kinds of people into the army under the stress of war when they are forced by necessity to do so but that should be no defence by Government as regards their general policy: because except for this war they would never have taken them. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, if I intervene at all in this debate I do so from a broader point of view than was expressed by the Mover of the Resolution. The Honourable the Mover based his case on the exclusion of certain classes from military service. I am one of those who believe and have been led to believe from studying the world situation as it is developing from day to day in this war that India will soon have to introduce compulsory military service for all classes. And from that point of view, whether it suits the British administration in India or not, the time has come when caste Hindus or scheduled classes should be included in that scheme of military training for all. We have discovered that Russia's admirable successes against the German onslaught are due to the fact that both girls and boys are given military training from their school days. Today it is a good sight to see that even Russian girls are operating bombers and fighters against those who have invaded their country. In the future world India cannot hold its own position till the same kind of military training is introduced for all classes in all provinces, irrespective of privilege or no privilege. My friend need not have advanced the argument that the Sikhs or the Punjabees hold a privileged position in the Army and they want to keep it to themselves so that it should not be invaded by any other caste people or any other province.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: I never said that.

Sardar Sant Singh: You implied that, and you had the same implication in your mind. So I need not support my Honourable friend in that argument.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: My point was different.

Sardar Sant Singh: I am coming to your point too. My Honourable friend referred to the Sikhs not being martial in the time when Guru Nanak came and preached his divine mission in this country. He is right there in the reading of the history. I do not deny that. But it was no Government that made them martial—he forgets that. It was not Government's patronization that converted the Sikhs into a martial race. It is because of certain qualities in the followers of Guru Nanak that they developed into a martial race not being rigid in their religion but being flexible they changed with the change in the constitution of society as it developed from time to time. Guru Arjun Dev was persecuted in a manner which bears no parallel in the history of any other nation. After that, when Guru Govind Singh, the 6th Guru, came to occupy the *gadi* of his forefathers he, as a boy, expressed a desire at the time of his installation, that he should be provided with two swords. One was the sword of spiritualism—*peeri*—and the other was the sword of politics—*meeri*—and he declared to the congregation assembled there that henceforth Sikhs must defend themselves against the tyranny of the administration of the time. He started a mental revolution. That mental revolution ultimately achieved the objects which Guru had foreseen. It devastated the Empire of the Mughals when they began to persecute and prosecute the Sikhs of the time. So, if the scheduled castes want to take their cue from the Sikh history they should take the cue from their traditions and from their love for the cause and the sacrifices they are always prepared to make for the cause, which has led them to the position which they occupy today. Putting it in the modern technique—I will ask Mr. Joshi to carefully try to understand me and appreciate me.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Carefully!

Sardar Sant Singh: . . . that it is the love of the cause and the preparedness to make sacrifices for the cause that makes a community self-confident and self-conscious. If scheduled castes want to come to their own, it is no good citing Clive and the foreigners that scheduled castes have been good, bad or indifferent in their career in this country. It is the confidence in themselves that will make them what we want them to be—a part of the Indian nation, which will play an important role in the future Indian history.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: How can we play an important role when we are not considered a martial race?

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, it is not right to say that a certain class of the depressed classes in the Punjab are recruited when they are converted into Sikhism, and thus Government is helping to preach conversion. Mr. Joshi is wrong there. If he has eyes to see and ears to hear he should go round in the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa (Interruption.) amongst low class people, and it will be found that they do not know how to keep their own social status in their own areas. Conversion is not merely a change of name; it is what we gave in the baptism—the *amrat* of Sikhs. If you have an experience of that, you will see how you are converted into a man. It is very easy to hit upon other people, but you must have that self-confidence which makes a nation or a people realize their own importance and their own position in the social status and in the international affairs.

Having disposed of this, I support this Resolution not from the narrow point of view which has been advocated here, but from a broader point of view, because I believe that the safety of India, the safety of people, living in this country, the safety of the hearths and homes of everybody in this country, lies in the military training. And that military training, together with the scientific inventions that have come into being in this war, should be imparted to everybody. I, therefore, support the Resolution on the grounds other than those given by the Mover of the Resolution.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The question be now put.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I wish to

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: I have been standing every time since the Mover of the Resolution

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Will the Honourable Member resume his seat.

The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Trivedi.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi (Secretary, War Department): Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Piare Lall Kureel Talib, moved his Resolution in words of great eloquence and earnestness. I cannot aspire to his eloquence but I will make the position of Government as clear as possible in the fewest words. I will say at once that I have very great pleasure in accepting the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend and supported from all sections of the House. The position which my Honourable friend seeks to obtain by his Resolution already exists at present. The army is not the monopoly of a few privileged classes. Military service is open to every class in the country and there are few, if any, of these classes who are not represented in the fighting services. There is not at present, and there will not be any discrimination against the scheduled classes, and I say this categorically. All candidates for the fighting services—whether in the ranks or for Emergency Commission—must, of course, possess the necessary educational and physical qualifications because we must have a first-class army and best officers available.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Talib, while moving the Resolution, stated that certain Provincial Governments had rejected candidates of scheduled classes for Emergency Commissions. I am rather surprised at the statement because Provincial Governments, as such, have nothing to do with the selection of candidates for Emergency Commissions. As my Honourable friend is aware there are Provincial Selection Boards in each province and I am reluctant to believe that any Provincial Board has rejected a depressed class candidate solely because he was a depressed class candidate, but I should be very glad if he will give me instances.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: I have got concrete examples to prove that.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I will be glad to go into those cases if my Honourable friend will give me the necessary information. My Honourable friend also referred to a pamphlet issued by a recruiting officer saying that certain depress-

ed classes were not to be recruited to the Army. I shall be very glad if he will bring that pamphlet to my notice, because it is not in accordance with our policy.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): May I suggest in this connection that from the time of the acceptance of this Resolution by Government, the word "Depressed" should no longer be employed with regard to these people.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am sorry Sir, that I used the phrase 'depressed classes'. Let me give some instances of the recruitment of scheduled castes in the army at present. We are raising Mahlar Infantry Battalions from the Central Provinces and Berar. There are certain Chamar Battalions raised from the United Provinces and the Punjab, mainly for Infantry, and there are Chamars in R.I.A.S.C. (A.T.) and Pioneers. Mundas, Hos and Oraons are recruited from Bengal and Bihar for the Bihar Regiment and Pioneers. Meghs are recruited from the Punjab for Infantry and Pioneers. There are Kabirpanthis from the Punjab for Infantry and Pioneers. There are Santhals from Bengal and Bihar mainly for Pioneers. There are Shilpkars from the United Provinces mainly for Engineers and Pioneers, and there are Kolis from the Punjab for Infantry. Among the Madras classes who are being recruited in all units, there are several thousands belonging to the scheduled castes. In addition there are a little over 2,00,000 persons belonging to scheduled castes enrolled as non-combatants from all provinces.

I will now turn to certain points raised by my other Honourable friends in the debate. My Honourable friend, Mr. Hooseinbhoj Lalljee, asked me to state clearly and categorically that there is no, and that there will not be any, discrimination against the scheduled castes. I give that declaration categorically and clearly here.

My Honourable friend, Rao Bahadur Siva Raj, made a number of useful suggestions which I will certainly take into consideration. One of his suggestions was that Government should appoint as Recruiting Officers members of the scheduled castes. I will certainly have that examined. He also made a suggestion that members of the scheduled castes should be informed at the time of recruitment whether they are being recruited for combatant or non-combatant ranks. If this is not being done at present, I will see that it is done. He also referred to his experience at the Central Interview Board, Poona. I do not myself know of the specific cases and I do not claim that the decisions of that Board are perfect. As the House is aware the old system of the Central Interview Board has been changed. There is a new system in operation and I can assure him that in these new Selection Boards, of which there are five in number, the candidate is judged solely on his own personality and on his own qualifications, irrespective of his parentage or his status, and merit is the sole passport.

Sir, I assure the House again that there is no discrimination at present against the scheduled castes and there will be none.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

The motion was adopted.

RESOLUTION RE REFORM OF THE CANTONMENT SERVICE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Deshmukh:

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly, in the interest of efficiency, economy, sound administration and justice to the Indian element of the Cantonments Department and Executive Officers' Service, recommends to the Governor General in Council—

(a) that without in any way touching the pay and allowances of the King's Commissioned Officers of the Cantonments Department, the existing Military Estates Circles be abolished forthwith, the Executive Officer of every Cantonment to be also the Military Estates Officer thereof;

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

(b) that the British King's Commissioned Officers thus released be appointed *Executive Officers cum Military Estates Officers*, of big Cantonments which without much financial inconvenience can meet half of their salaries;

(c) that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—950, and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules;

(d) that the present officers of the Cantonments Department and the members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service be amalgamated into one service, the service so amalgamated to be Class I Central Service, and the service either to be pensionable or a Contributory Provident Fund on the lines and terms of the Provident Fund established for the benefit of officers of the Indian State Railways to be constituted;

(e) that the new scales of pay for administrative appointments, *viz.*, the Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, the Deputy Directors, the Deputy Assistant Directors, etc., be Rs. 2,000, Rs. 1,600 and Rs. 1,250, respectively, when held by officers other than the King's Commissioned Officers;

(f) that subordinates and superannuated Executive Officers re-employed as Executive Officers be discharged; and

(g) that the future recruitment to the reorganised service should be (i) 60 per cent. of the vacancies by direct recruitment, *viz.*, through a competitive examination to be held by the Federal Public Service Commission separately for this purpose or along with the I.C.S. competitive examination or the Indian Audit Accounts and other allied services competitive examinations;

(ii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by promotion from amongst the specially qualified establishments of the Cantonments Department who should be at least graduates of a recognised University after consultation with the Federal Public Service Commission; and

(iii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by direct appointment of the King's Commissioned and Indian Commissioned Officers on the recommendation of the said Commission and in this case too the officers must be graduates of a recognised Indian or a British University."

I hope I will be able to do justice to this Resolution which it has been my lot to sponsor before you, Sir. This particular Resolution deals with the appointment of Executive Officers and their salary and how the services can be economically and efficiently managed.

Of the Resolution, clauses (a) and (b) make suggestions as to how the services can be run economically. Clause (d) suggests how the services can be amalgamated. The Cantonment Department and the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service can, by amalgamation, be even effectively managed by offering better terms for service, because the terms which are offered just now are not really sufficient to attract better type of men, and there is scope for amalgamation and managing both the services efficiently. Clause (e) contains suggestions to attract a better type of men for your services and for the management of these estates. Clause (f) is in the name of efficiency. There has been a complaint from this House that superannuated officers should not really be employed in the different Departments, for not only are they not able to manage the departments or their jobs efficiently, but they come in the way of men who could manage the same job efficiently and properly.

In part (g) we suggest the methods of recruitment in order to get competent and efficient men. The Resolution deals with the method of the appointment of Executive Officers in the cantonment areas, the salary to be paid to them, and it makes certain suggestions. It will be proper for me to put before this House certain facts. The Cantonment Act of 1924 was amended in the year 1936, and one of the most important amendments was section 12—the appointment of executive officers—which runs as follows: By the amended Act of 1936, the appointment is to be made by the Central Government or by such person as the Central Government may authorise; in other words, there was discretion formerly, before this amendment came into existence, and this amendment was made because this discretion was abused and was not exercised properly and therefore the House suggested this new method of appointment as to who should appoint these executive officers. Then, under section 280, rules were to be framed to give effect to the appointments of the executive officers in respect of salary and other things. This was done not by merely amending a few words, but putting in a distinct

clause which became law. Section 280 empowers the Central Government to make rules. Sub-section 2(vii) which is absolutely new is as follows:

"The constitution of a service of executive officers and appointment, control, supervision, conditions of service, pay and allowances, suspension, removal, dismissal and punishment of the members thereof."

The rules were drawn up but they did not come up for approval before this House. As a matter of fact very extensive power was given by Section 281 to the rule-making authority and as regards the effect to be given to the rules. Section 281(1) says:

"A rule under section 280 may be made either generally for all cantonments or for the whole or any part of any one or more cantonments. All rules so made shall be published in the official gazette and in such other manner as the Central Government may direct, and on such publication shall have effect as if enacted in this Act."

Now, the rules automatically, after they were published in this gazette, immediately came into force. Now, the person whom the Central Government has authorised to appoint these executive officers—that person who appoints these men—has not acted properly according to the intention of the legislature. The intention really was to Indianise the services, that was one intention; the second was to provide for better pay and other facilities and the method of getting recruits. I have already referred in my Resolution that the recruitment should be by the Federal Public Service Commission. In order that a better type of men should come into the service and there should be no preference given on the ground of any race or community, we have suggested all these things, that the person to be appointed should be a graduate either of an Indian or a British university. So far as educational qualifications are concerned, we want proper educated men to administer these jobs. Then, in order that there should be no communal or racial preference shown in the matter, I have advised that the recruitment should be made by the Federal Public Service Commission. As I have suggested in my Resolution the amalgamation of the two—the cantonment department and members of the cantonment officers' executive service—it will be found that there was no necessity either to create a separate department; but it was done; and my submission is that it was created by such rules as were drawn up to provide for certain British King's Commissioned officers. That is the grievance of the Indians. As a matter of fact these rules were so framed in spite of the intention of the Legislature because the Director wished to give preference to the persons belonging to his race.

Those are my contentions and this is what I have to submit. I hope this Resolution will be supported by other Members of this House, and will be accepted, in the interests of what I have said—justice and efficiency of this very service.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Resolution moved:

"That this Assembly, in the interests of efficiency, economy, sound administration and justice to the Indian element of the Cantonments Department and Executive Officers' Service, recommends to the Governor General in Council—

(a) that without in any way touching the pay and allowances of the King's Commissioned Officers of the Cantonments Department, the existing Military Estates Circles be abolished forthwith, the Executive Officer of every Cantonment to be also the Military Estates Officer thereof;

(b) that the British King's Commissioned Officers thus released be appointed *Executive Officers cum Military Estates Officers*, of big Cantonments which without much financial inconvenience can meet half of their salaries;

(c) that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—950, and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules;

(d) that the present officers of the Cantonments Department and the members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service be amalgamated into one service, the service so amalgamated to be Class I Central Service, and the service either to be pensionable or a Contributory Provident Fund on the lines and terms of the Provident Fund established for the benefit of officers of the Indian State Railways to be constituted;

(e) that the new scales of pay for administrative appointments, *viz.*, the Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, the Deputy Directors, the Deputy Assistant Directors, etc., be Rs. 2,000, Rs. 1,600 and Rs. 1,250, respectively, when held by officers other than the King's Commissioned Officers;

[Mr. President.]

(f) that subordinates and superannuated Executive Officers re-employed as Executive Officers be discharged; and

(g) that the future recruitment to the reorganised service should be (i) 60 per cent. of the vacancies by direct recruitment, viz., through a competitive examination to be held by the Federal Public Service Commission separately for this purpose or along with the I.C.S. competitive examination or the Indian Audit Accounts and other allied services competitive examinations;

(ii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by promotion from amongst the specially qualified establishments of the Cantonments Department who should be at least graduate of a recognised University after consultation with the Federal Public Service Commission; and

(iii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by direct appointment of the King's Commissioned and Indian Commissioned Officers on the recommendation of the said Commission and in this case too the officers must be graduates of a recognised Indian or a British University."

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): I rise to support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. In fact, I was one of the persons who gave notice of this Resolution to the Secretary, and it does not matter that in the ballot it was assigned to my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. I am practically also in the position of a Mover of the Resolution.

The gist and object of the Resolution appear from the wording of the motion itself and do not require any commentary to explain what is wanted. What I have to bring to the notice of the House on this occasion is that really the demands embodied in the Resolution arise from the circumstances under which the present Cantonment Act came to be placed on the Statute-book. The Cantonments Act of 1924 was amended by the Legislature in 1936, and in connection with the amendments sought to be introduced by the amending Bill certain speeches were made by the accredited representatives of the Central Government. I specially refer to the speech made by Mr. (now Sir Richard) Tottenham as Defence Secretary in moving the motion that the Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924, for certain purposes, as reported by the Select Committee for the second time, be taken into consideration. In that speech, in explaining the scope and objects of the amending Bill, the mover of that motion on the occasion said, among other things:

"Thirdly, there are provisions in the Bill which will replace the present military executive officers by a service of civilian executive officers who will be recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission and whose salaries, which will be considerably lower than the salaries paid now to the military executive officers, will be found in equal shares by Government and the Cantonment Fund."

That declaration by the Defence Secretary at the time on the floor of this House raised the hope that there was going to be an executive officers service for the cantonments throughout India which will be of a higher stamp because it was going to be recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission, and although the Honourable Member did say "whose salaries will be considerably lower than the salaries paid now to the military executive officers", he did not at the time convey to the mind of anybody hearing or reading that statement, that it would be so scandalously low, as I shall point out presently in the course of my speech, as to fail to attract the right stamp of men for the service of the cantonments as executive officers. In this connection I may be permitted to draw attention to the scales of pay which used to be at that time paid to the cantonment executive officers. Under the Act of 1924 the authorised strength of the cantonment departments was Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, 1; Inspecting Officers who are now Deputy Directors, 4; Executive Officers holding King's Commission, Class I, 21; Executive Officers holding Viceroy's Commission, Class II, 20—total 46. The rates of pay which were paid to the Executive Officers, Class I, were as follows:

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can continue his speech after lunch.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Three of the Clock, Sir Henry Richardson (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: Sir, before we adjourned for Lunch, I was saying that the grades of salaries of Cantonment Executive Officers under the Cantonment Act of 1924 were as follows: Captain Rs. 895, plus departmental pay of Rs. 125 on appointment and Rs. 150 on confirmation. Then of course, there are other details. Major Rs. 1,305 and Major after 5 years' service as such Rs. 1,435 plus departmental pay which was Rs. 200 after ten years' service in the Cantonment Department and Lieut.-Colonel Rs. 1,650 plus departmental pay according to the length of service in the Cantonment Department. These were salaries of Executive Officers when they happened to be King's Commissioned Officers. I may also indicate what the Executive Officers holding Viceroy's Commission got. A Viceroy's Commissioned Officer started with Rs. 400; with increments of Rs. 20 per year, he rose to Rs. 500 and for purposes of travelling allowance he was at par with King's Commissioned Officers. So, he was Class II officer but for purposes of Travelling Allowance, he was treated as Class I Officer. Now, these were the pays of Executive Officers under the Cantonment Act of 1924. In the amended Act of 1936, which was supposed to bring into existence an Executive Officers' Service recruited through the Public Service Commission the start of the Executive Officer was Rs. 150 and with increments of Rs. 5 a year, he rose to Rs. 250. Then there was an efficiency bar. After crossing that hurdle, he advanced at a comparatively rapid pace to Rs. 300 and of course there are selection grades and if a man continues in the service of a cantonment as Executive Officer for 60 long years which is unthinkable and impossible, he can get to Rs. 700. All this is mere eye-wash. The fact remains that these gentlemen were recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission. They had to start on the humble pay of Rs. 150 and have to function as Executive Officers and maintain the social status which they acquired thereby. They are left with only two alternatives. Either they must go about dressed in rags and eat whatever they can get, sharing it with their families or they must be corrupt. I think indirectly they are called upon to be corrupt, in order to maintain their position. Now, this state of things has been going on since the Government framed the rules under section 280 (cc) of the Cantonment Act. It is believed that Col. Patterson, the then Director, was responsible for the framing of the rules. He contrived to make it appear that he was giving the cantonments a very economic service and thereby was going to save a lot of money to the taxpayers but as a matter of fact, in other ways, he brought into existence another service, that of Military Estate Officers, which of course existed before but he put it on a broader basis. These Estate Officers were all King's Commissioned Officers, mostly Britishers. Of course they draw big salaries, just as I have shown by enumerating the salaries of Executive Officers. They now draw salaries which rise up to Rs. 2,500 and in the case of several Executive Officers of big cantonments like Secunderabad and others, I have got some details here, they perform duties both of Executive Officers and Estate Officers.

Now, we wish the Government to solve the problem of reorganising the Cantonment service in such a way as really to make the job of a Cantonment Executive Officer worth striving for, and to make it attract the right type of man to carry on the duties. I know that a number of gentlemen now occupying the position of Executive Officers were men who had been through the competitive examination of the Indian Civil Service and not having qualified for that service they were, as second best, given a chance to serve as Executive Officers by being selected for that post by the Federal Public Service Commission but some of them finding it impossible to maintain their position on the scanty pittance which was allowed to them, namely, Rs. 150 per mensem, had to leave that service later on. Therefore, in the Resolution which has been tabled, the whole matter has been put in such a way that nothing unfair will be done to any existing section of the service. Those members of the Canton-

[Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang.]

ment service who are King's Commissioned Officers will not suffer in any way in their status but in future the recruitment to the service will be on the lines suggested in this Resolution and the office of the Cantonment Executive Officer and the function of the Estate Officer can be usefully combined with economy to the funds and efficiency to the service and justice also to those who enter the service. In clause (c) of the Resolution, the prayer is that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—950 and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules. Now, that is a suggestion which will enable the Government, as my calculations show, to save nearly one lakh of rupees every year and yet the service will be improved both in quality and efficiency. You will have a better type of men for this very important job of Executive Officer and you will have men who can with credit to themselves and benefit to the Service and the interests concerned discharge the duties of Cantonment Executive Officers *cum* Military Estate Officers.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: I am finishing. I hope that this matter will receive serious and earnest consideration at the hands of the Government and the injustice which has so far been done to the Cantonment Executive Officers will be redressed.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this Resolution. The Resolution has already been explained by my friend, Mr. Deshmukh, and he has explained to the House each sub-paragraph of the Resolution. It seems to me that the intention of the Act which was amended was to improve the condition of the Cantonments. It cannot be denied that in some of the Municipalities, District Boards and Cantonment Boards there is much of corruption and also there is inefficiency. Perhaps the intention of the Act was to have the recruitment of the Executive Officer through the Public Service Commission. We know that persons who are recruited through the Public Service Commission have to pass a competitive examination and are generally men of better class. The intention of the Act was that there ought to be no racial discrimination. As has been explained by my friend, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, the higher posts in the Cantonments were the monopoly of the military officers and their salaries were very high. The intention of the Act was that there should be no racial distinction and also there should be no discrimination in the salaries. Whether the officers were Europeans or Indians, the salaries should be given on the same basis and they should be recruited through the Public Service Commission. It is now the policy of the Government to Indianise the various services. So, it was also clear from that Act that these Cantonment Boards will also be Indianised. At present the person who is at the head gets only Rs. 150. Now, what status and dignity will he have and what control and power can he possess? Therefore, I feel that the rules that have been made are wrong.

Now, we know from our bitter experience that when any statute is made and power is given to the Government to make rules, the rules generally are such as would not be acceptable to any reasonable man. We have an instance of it here. We know what the executive officer used to get before and what pay has been decided by the rules for him. The pay of Rs. 150 for the executive officer is too little and I think it is very wise on the part of the Mover and the Honourable Member who has supported him to propose that his pay should be increased. Whether they are Europeans or Indians, they should be brought on the same level, though, of course, preference should be given to Indians for Indianising the service. Besides, the Indians will understand the questions which affect the Indians better, such as, the questions that arise about the houses, giving the leases of the houses, removing people who are in the houses, cancelling the leases and so on and so forth. These are very important ques-

tions and the executive officer is responsible for them. Therefore, I submit that it is in the fitness of things that the rules should be revised.

As regards the communal distinction or racial discrimination, that also should go and the purity of the Cantonments Boards should be such that there should be no corruption whatever. This state of affairs you can have only when you give sufficient salary to the executive officers and also to their staff. The staff should also have sufficient salary so that they may not be exposed to the charge of corruption and such other things. I need not take any more time of the House because the object of the Resolution has already been fully explained. I whole-heartedly support the revision of these rules. They should be revised in the manner indicated in the Resolution that is now before the House. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, this Resolution has two objects. One is to reduce the tax-payer's tax and the money which the tax-payer pays towards these Cantonment Boards. The other object is that the Indians and Europeans should be made to draw on the same level. When in the year 1936 an amendment was brought before the Council of State, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief made a speech on the amendment of the Act of 1924. He said:

"The contents of the Bill are, I submit, sufficient evidence of the truth of this statement. We are replacing the old military Executive Officer by a new service of Civilian Executive Officers who will cost the tax-payer less and who will be recruited through the Public Service Commission."

That, I think, is a rule which will be welcomed by this House. As I said before, the object of this Resolution ought to be the same which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief stated in the Upper House in 1936. If it is looked at from that point of view, the suggestion is that the post of the Estate Officer should not be such that it may be difficult for the tax-payer to pay his salary. Of course Government have got tax-payers' money and they can spend it as they like. We cannot question them. But if the matter is considered equitably and honourably and conscientiously, it will appear that these two services, Estate Officers and Executive Officers services, should be combined into one. You may give sufficient pay to the combined officer. To say that we will have an Estate Officer, a European and an Executive Officer, an Indian sometimes and sometimes a European, this does not stand to reason. In one place you have two conflicting officers. I do not think it advisable in any way to have two officers for one and the same work. In fact they are discharging the same functions in the Cantonment. What is the function of the Estate Officer? If I want to build a house, the Estate Officer is to be referred to; if I want to acquire some land or do something like that, the Estate Officer is to be referred to. On the other hand there is a bazaar in the Cantonment, there are buildings and reconstructions and new buildings come in. This is the function of the Executive Officer to look to. The Estate Officer gets Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 3,000 whereas the Executive Officer gets only Rs. 150. As suggested in the Resolution you must appoint a competent man and mete out justice to everybody. That is my plea from the point of view of tax-payer's money. You ought to consider this point and fix the scale of pay which may be fit and proper for the two combined offices rather than merely Rs. 150. In the speech of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief sanitation and public health also was referred to as the concern of these officers in the Cantonment. If so, why have two different officers. It may be they might differ on certain points. Why have this conflicting authority in the Cantonments in India. For these reasons, I support the Resolution and I hope the Government will accept it.

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely (Government of India: Nominated Official): This Resolution makes a number of proposals for the reform of Cantonment service, which, taken together, amount to a complete reconstruction. Before I deal with the separate suggestions that have been made, I should like to draw attention to one point which seems to make it unwise and dangerous to effect any wholesale reform at the present moment in the Cantonment services. If we were to reform the Cantonment services now and were faced with the necessity of

[Mr. L. J. D. Wakely.]

effecting further possibly drastic changes in a few years, it would lead to dissatisfaction and probably confusion. Now, Sir, we do not know what the conditions affecting Cantonment service are likely to be after the war. We do not, for example, know what the size and lay out of the post-war army is likely to be. It follows from that that we cannot tell what the size and the number of cantonments which we shall have to serve will be. Another point that we do not know is on what terms Indian Commissioned Officers will be recruited into the army after the war. Therefore, it is difficult to judge at this stage what terms it might be fair to offer them if they were taken into the Cantonment service. There are a number of other factors of that kind which make it extremely difficult at this stage to say what an equitable arrangement after the war would be. For these reasons any thorough-going reform at this stage would seem to be unwise and untimely.

A point of which much has been made by Honourable Members who have supported this Resolution is that the scales of pay fixed after the amending Act of 1936 were too low. My Honourable friend, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, went so far as to call them scandalously low. He has quoted them in his speech and I need not repeat them. I think it has to be admitted that considering the responsibilities which are placed upon the Cantonment Executive Officers, they are low. That is not denied. At the same time when these reforms were introduced, there was a condition of acute financial stringency and the reorganisation which was carried out, had to be carried out more or less on a no-cost basis. Furthermore, although upon paper these rates might seem low, yet in effect, owing to the war, the pay which has been actually drawn by entrants into the Cantonment service has not compared unfavourably with what they might have drawn had they gone into some other service, say, the Provincial Civil Service. Owing to the war, promotion has been very much quicker than it would have been in normal times. Admittedly before the war, it might have taken a long time, possibly ten years or more, for an entrant into Grade II of the service to rise to Grade I on a higher rate of pay. But since the war, promotion has been very much quicker and the position now is that officers with as little as two years service are in fact officiating in Grade I of the service and drawing pay of Rs. 300 a month. In fact there are only ten officers at the present time drawing between Rs. 205 and Rs. 155 a month, that is the lowest possible scale. These are officers who have not passed their departmental examinations or have been passed over for inefficiency.

Another suggestion which was made, I think, by my Honourable friend Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, was that these terms were so unattractive that suitable entrants to the service have not been forthcoming. But that is not the case. Once the system of recruitment through the Public Service Commission was introduced, candidates of a very adequate standard were forthcoming. It was only because, as a war measure, Government stopped recruitment in 1941 that candidates are not still coming forward. I think, Sir, that if the service was thrown open again to candidates, then candidates with good qualifications would still be available. Recruitment was stopped as a war measure in order to keep positions vacant after the war for people who have rendered approved war service, and stoppage of recruitment was not in any way due to the fact that suitable candidates for recruitment were not available.

These are considerations which go to show that in fact the conditions of service are not as unfavourable as they have been made out to be. All the same, it has to be recognised that the position as regards pay and prospects of the service is not all that might be desired. The Government are now examining the position with a view to establishing improved prospects for the service and making it an attractive career. I cannot say what the results of that examination will be. I can only assure the House that an examination is being carried out.

Turning to the particular proposals made in the Resolution, clauses (a) and (b) suggest that the Military Estate Officers and Executive Officers services should be amalgamated into one and that the Executive Officers of big Cantonments should do the work of the Military Estate Officers as well. Sir, there is very great difficulty in the way of adopting any such suggestion at the present time, even if it could be contended that it might be a good measure in normal times. Since the war broke out a very great deal of requisitioning of land on behalf of the military services has taken place all over India. This means a considerable increase of work for the Military Estates Officer. In some cases land has been requisitioned several hundred miles away from the nearest cantonment and in view of that fact it would be quite impossible for one officer to run a large cantonment and in addition to look after large areas which have been requisitioned possibly at quite inaccessible distances from his headquarters. I believe that the experiment of combining the duties of the Cantonment Executive Officer and the Military Estates Officer was tried as long ago as 1924 but it was not found satisfactory because the Cantonment Executive Officer tended to disregard the interests of Government when they conflicted, as in some cases they were bound to conflict, with the interests of the Cantonment Board whose servant he was. However, Sir, where it has proved possible to combine the functions of Military Estates Officer and Executive Officer this has been done. It has in fact been carried out in six places,—Kohat, Wellington, Secunderabad, Karachi, Quetta and Dehra Dun. In these cantonments the Executive Officer is looking after the military lands which come within his jurisdiction. But elsewhere the cantonments are often very large and the lands which have to be looked after are a long way off from the cantonment; and in present conditions it is impossible to make one officer perform dual functions.

As regards parts (c), (d), (e) and (g), I have already explained that Government feel that this is not a proper moment for a wholesale reorganisation. They are, however, examining the question, as I said before, of what adjustments or improvements can be made. The only remaining part of the Resolution is part (f), in connection with which I should like to explain the position of these superannuated officers. As I have explained before, recruitment was stopped in 1941 as a war measure; and as a natural result of that and of officers already in the service being drafted into military service or retired or for other reasons there was a shortage of officers to some extent. One of the great difficulties of dealing with the cantonment cadre is that the size of cantonments varies from enormous charges, such as a cantonment with a perimeter of 25 miles like Rawalpindi to very small cantonments in which the work is certainly considerably lighter; and it seemed to Government that as a temporary measure during the war the best way of providing for the administration of these small places was to employ retired officers who were quite capable of doing the not very considerable amount of work involved. That, at any rate, explains why they were taken on, and I do not think that any other plan would have been more efficient or economical. In fact the officers that we have employed like this have, on the whole, according to Government's information, performed their duties quite satisfactorily.

Sir, I hope that I have said enough to explain why Government do not feel able to accept any proposal such as is made in this Resolution for a wholesale reorganisation of the Cantonment Service at the present time. They will, however, as I said before, look into the question of scales of pay and prospects as quickly as possible.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, this Resolution has been opposed on the ground that this is not the time to do anything to improve matters because there will be dissatisfaction in the services, and, if anything, the cost of managing this department would go up and it is not desirable that this should be done in war time. I should like to remind my Honourable friend that this Resolution has been brought forward here as a result of the dissatisfaction in the services. Would you have better work if your services are satisfied or if there is dissatisfaction? It has been said that the matter is under consideration and it may be

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

that the present scale may be revised. I suppose this need not wait till the end of the war. About other matters I do not know what the difficulties of Government are but so far as increments of pay are concerned, Government will be doing the right thing to increase them. I do not know that the cost of increasing the pay would be so high that Government would not be able to afford it. It has been said that people are coming forward and even the present pay is a decent pay; but I do not think that this pay is commensurate with the position. Even an ordinary skilled worker like a carpenter or mason can now earn about two or three rupees a day. What influence can the Executive Officer have if he has to deal with such men who are drawing very nearly the same pay? As regards other things I may not be in a position to say that this thing and that thing should or should not be done, but so far as the pay is concerned it should certainly be increased. If I get an assurance that at least this matter of pay will be immediately looked into, I am prepared to withdraw my Resolution.

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: Sir, I am not in a position to give an assurance that the matter will be immediately looked into if by that the Honourable Member means that results would be perceptible in what he would call a very short time, but I can assure him that Government are looking into the matter with such speed as they can.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: In view of that assurance, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

The Assembly then adjourned *sine die*.

Index to the Legislative Assembly Debates Volume IV—8th to 19th November, 1943

Promotion of Subordinates to Lower

CORRIGENDA.

In the Legislative Assembly Debates, November Session, Vol. IV—

(1) No. 1, dated the 8th November 1943, page 2, in the foot-note for "Anglo-Indi" read "Anglo-Indians";

(2) No. 2, dated the 9th November, 1943—

(i) page 51, in the subject heading to starred question No. 28, for "Messrs. H. R. Hutchings" read "Messrs. R. H. Hutchings";

(ii) page 81, in the subject heading to unstarred question No. 4, for "Department" read "Departments";

(3) No. 4, dated the 12th November, 1943—

(i) page 218, line 22, for "foodstuffs" read "foodstuff";

(ii) page 222, line 18 from the bottom for the word "hoarders" read "hoarder";

(iii) page 222, line 4 from the bottom, insert the word "so" between the words "be" and "rich";

(4) No. 7, dated the 16th November, 1943, page 368—

(i) line 22 from the bottom, for "made" read "made";

(ii) line 13 from the bottom, insert the word "shod" between the words "feet" and "with";

(5) No. 8, dated the 17th November, 1943—

(i) page 443, line 2 from the bottom, for "had" read "bad";

(ii) page 448, line 33, for the word "As", where it occurs for the second time, read "An";

(iii) page 451, line 34, for "Sir Frederick Jams" read "Sir Frederick James";

(6) No. 9, dated the 18th November, 1943, page 477, in the subject heading to starred question No. 278, insert "and" between "Indian" and "European".

IN NEW DELHI 1948.

Salaries of Appellate Commissioners and Appellate Tribunals under Income Tax Department. 292.

Special Press Adviser in Delhi and his staff. 284.

Students admitted to Dhanbad School of Mines. 416-17.

Subsidies to private studios for producing entertainment pictures. 289-90.

Supplies of iron, steel, cement, etc., to civil population and functions of Honorary Advisers of cement, iron and steel. 69-70.

Question (supplementary) re—

Affiliation of Forestry Training Institute of Dehra Dun to university. 55.

Control on paper other than newsprint. 53.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 48.

Expenditure on facilities for Muslim Haj Pilgrims. 242.

Import of American plants for manufacturing sulphuric acid. 351.

Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office Superintendents in the offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 174.

Pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes. 183.

Large number of free passes issued to applicants on North Western Railway. 545-46.

Method of recruitment of Income Tax Officers. 284.

Promotion of subordinates to lower gazetted service in Traffic Department, North Western Railway. 354-55.

Railway Board rules re Selection Boards for promotion to selection posts. 354.

Stoppage of pilgrim ships from carrying pilgrims to the Hejaz. 245-46.

ABHYANKAR, MR. N. G.—

Oath of Office. 1.

ACCOMMODATION—

Question re — for Railway police at Sukkur. 3-4.

ACCOUNT(S)—

Statement(s) (laid on the table) re certain Appropriation —, Audit Reports, etc. 441-42.

ACCUMULATION—

Question re — of steel supplies by Government of India. 18.

ACT(S)—

American Exclusion—

Question re The — and its effect on Indians. 177-78.

- Chinese exclusion—
Question re repeal of the — by the Congress of the United States of America. 178.
- Companies—
Question re companies permitted by the Controller of Capital Issues to be registered under the —. 116-17.
- Defence of India—
Question re examination by tribunals of cases of detenues and internees under —. 118.
- Delhi Muslim Wakf—
Question re delayed enforcement of the —. 487-88.
- Delhi Restriction of Uses of Land—
Question re administration of the —, etc. 411.
- Payment of Wages—
Question re—
Certain irregularities in the working of the —. 230-31.
Operation of the — on East Indian Railway. 414-15.
- Pegging—
Motion for adjournment re conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in Durban. 494.
- Reciprocity—
Question re framing of rules to enforce —. 55.
- Registration of Foreigners—
Declarations of exemption and Notification under the — (laid on the table). 297-99.
- VI of 1941—
Question re persons dealt with under Section 5 of the — in Delhi Division of North Western Railway. 555.
- ACTIVITY(IES)—
Question re — of Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia. 113.
- ADDITIONAL DEPUTY PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER(S)—
See "Information Officer(s)".
- ADDRESS(ES)—
Point of Order re motion proposing Communication of Formal — to H. E. The Governor General. 440-41.
- ADJOURNMENT(S)—
Motion for — re—
Alleged inhuman treatment to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 250-51.
Ruled out of order. 251.
Arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of Lahore. 250.
Ruled out of order. 250.
Banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84.
Ruled out of order. 83.
Continuance of Central Government's subsidy to Sind. 86.
Ruled out of order. 86.
Conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in Durban. 494.
Ruled out of order. 494.
Failure to consult the Legislature re agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. 84-85.
- Ruled out of order. 85.
Failure to give publicity to mortality due to starvation in Bengal. 84.
Not moved. 84.
Failure to implement their guarantee of independence to Lebanon by the British Government. 359.
Ruled out of order. 359.
Failure to take timely action for preventing acute food crisis in Bengal. 84.
Disallowed. 84.
Hungerstrike of political prisoners in Bhagalpur camp jail. 86.
Ruled out of order. 86.
Ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other Muslim security prisoners. 495.
Ruled out of order. 495.
Non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.
Adopted. 46.
- ADVERTISEMENT(S)—
Question re—
— as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 11-13.
— for recruitment of temporary clerks by Military Accounts Department. 287.
Policy regarding giving of — to Newspapers. 131-32.
- AGENT(S)—
Question re Indian —'s propaganda in the United States of America. 122.
- AGREEMENT(S)—
Motion for adjournment re failure to consult the Legislature re — for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. 84-85.
Question re—
— for fixation of maxima prices of jute by Indian Jute Mills Association. 17-18.
Lease-lend — between the United States of America and India. 115-16.
Master — between the United States of America and the United Kingdom. 290.
- AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (GRADING AND MARKING) AMENDMENT BILL—
See "Bill(s)".
- AHSAN, MR. MUHAMMAD—
Question re—
Muslim and non-Muslim apprentice Permanent Way Inspectors on Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.
Non-observance of quota of Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.
- AIR CONDITIONING SETS—
Question re compensation for — requisitioned from private owners. 352-53.
- AIR CONFERENCE—
See "Conference(s)".
- AIR FORCE—
Question re Indian Christians serving in the Army, Navy and —. 281.

- AIR FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Indian Army and Indian —" under "Bill(s)".
- AIR FORCE CONFERENCE—
Question re Report of the Commonwealth —, London. 355, 356.
- AJMER—
Question re kerosene scarcity in —. 438.
- ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Bill(s)".
- ALKALOID(S)—
Question re—
Inability of Ghazipur Opium Factory to meet demands for opium —. 291-92.
Manufacture of opium — for medicinal preparations in India. 491-92.
- ALLIED MONETARY CONFERENCE—
See "Conference(s)".
- ALL-INDIA RADIO—
Question re—
Ban on broadcasts of Urdu talks by —. 555.
Desirability of making more effective use of the — Service. 130-31.
- ALLOTTEE(S)—
Question re rules concerning "out of class" — in New Delhi. 68-69.
- ALLOWANCE(S)—
Question re—
Dearness — to the staff of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 289.
Equalization of rates of — for men and women under the Indian War Injuries Scheme. 68.
Lack of uniformity in granting overtime and night shift — of East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 172-73.
Rate — for Indian and European — of Indian Engineers (Defence of India) Unit. 477.
- ALUMINA—
Question re — imported duty free. 80, 563.
- AMALGAMATION—
Question re — of the Dibru Sadiya and the Jorhat Provincial Railways with the Bengal and Assam Railway. 174-75.
- AMBEDKAR, THE HONOURABLE DR. B. R.—
Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—
Motion for leave to introduce. 30.
Motion to circulate. 252-54, 256, 276-78.
- AMENDMENT(S)—
— to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules (laid on the table). 29.
- AMENITIES DIRECTORATE—
Question re Welfare and — and entertainment of Indian troops. 118-20.
- AMERICA—
Motion for adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of — to speak on India's War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.
Question re import of foodgrains from Australia and —. 409.
- AMERICA, UNITED STATES OF—
Question re—
Disabilities and restrictions affecting Indians in the —. 177.
Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act by the Congress of the —. 178.
See also "United States of America".
- AMERICAN EXCLUSION ACT—
See "Act(s)".
- AMERICAN PLANT(S)—
See "Plant(s)".
- AMONIA SULPHATE—
Question re imports of — and other synthetic fertilisers.
- AMRAOTI—
Question re desirability of introducing Mail Motor service between — and Daryapur. 549.
- AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA—
Motion for adjournment re banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the —. 83-84.
Question re banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the —. 285-86.
- ANGLO-INDIAN(S)—
Question re expenditure of — and Indian Railway apprentices. 175.
- ANTHONY, MR. FRANK R.—
Motion re the Food Situation. 398-401.
- ANTI-CORRUPTION DEPARTMENT—
Question re maltreatment of certain *Muccadams* at Quetta Station by —. 350.
- ANTI-CORRUPTION TRIBUNAL(S)—
See "Tribunal(s)".
- APPELLATE COMMISSIONER(S)—
See "Commissioner(s)".
- APPELLATE TRIBUNAL(S)—
See "Tribunal(s)".
- APPLICANT(S)—
Question re large number of free passes issued to — on North Western Railway. 545-46.
- APPLICATION(S)—
Question re Bombay Government's — for manufacture of sulphathiozol. 53-54.
- APPOINTMENT(S)—
Question re—
— of Assistant Entomologists. 487.
— of Managers of Government of India Presses, New Delhi and Calcutta. 424-25.
New — of officers in the Department of Information and Broadcasting. 297.
Selection Board for — in the office of the Comptroller of Assam. 286.
- APPRENTICE(S)—
Question re—
Expenditure of Anglo-Indian and Indian Railway —. 179.
Muslim and non-Muslim — Permanent Way Inspectors of Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.
- APPRENTICESHIP—
Question re Technical Schools maintained by Railways for — Training. 174.
- APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT(S)—
Statement(s) (laid on the table) re certain —, Audit Reports, etc. 441-42.
- ARABIA—
Question re—
Facilities for pilgrimage to — by land routes. 350-51.

Pilgrimage to — by land routes. 73, 182-83.

ARMY—
 Question re—
 Conditions of service of Railway servants employed in Transportation Units of the Indian —. 562.
 Indian Christians serving in the —, Navy and Air Force. 281.
 Stocks of foodgrains released from — reserves for civilians in Bengal. 82.
 Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the —. 564-79.

ARMY AND INDIAN AIR FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL—
 See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

ARMY RESERVES—
 Question re stocks of foodgrains released from — for civilians in Bengal. 129.

ARRANGEMENT(S)—
 Question re Running Room — for Depressed Classes staff on State Railways. 555.

ARREST(S)—
 Motions for adjournment re — of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of Lahore. 250.
 Question re—
 — of Mr. Raghunandan Saran. 480-81.
 Persons arrested and detained in Delhi under rules 26 and 129 of the Defence of India Rules, etc. 294-96.
 Re— of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 483-84.

ASSAM—
 Question re—
 Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and — and food position in India. 47-49.
 Selection board for appointments in the Office of the Comptroller of —. 286.

ASSAMESE—
 Question re—
 Bengali and Madras Officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office Calcutta, and — and Bengali Officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.
 Punjabi officers on Bengal and Assam Railway and — and Bengali officers on North Western Railway. 175.

ASSISTANT(S)—
 Question re—
 — of the Political Department appointed as Assistant Secretary in the Directorate General of Supply. 348.
 Muslim — reverted from the Food Department. 428.

ASSISTANT(S) INCHARGE—
 Question re Sections of Munitions Production Secretariat run by Superintendents and —. 184.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER(S) OF INCOME-TAX—
 Question re appointing of separate executive and judicial —. 492-93.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR(S)—
 Question re Sindhis as —, etc., in the Sind and Baluchistan Postal Circles. 173.

ASSISTANT ENTOMOLOGIST(S)—
 See "Entomologist(s)".

ASSISTANT PERMANENT WAY INSPECTOR(S)—
 Question re non-observance of quota of — on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY(IES)—
 Question re Assistant of the Political Department appointed as — in the Directorate General of Supply. 348.

ASSOCIATION(S)—
 Question re agreement for fixation of maxima prices of jute by Indian Jute Mills —. 17-18.

ATEBRIN—
 Question re manufacture of — in India. 54.

ATTACHED OFFICE(S)—
 Question re—
 Complaints against the quality of essential supplies for employees of the Government of India Secretariat and —. 286-87.
 Dearness allowance to the staff of the Government of India Secretariat and —. 289.

ATTACHMENT(S)—
 Question re — of property of certain Railway employees at Ghaziabad for realising District Board tax. 543-44.

AUDIT REPORT(S)—
 Statement(s) (laid on the table) re certain Appropriation Accounts, —, etc. 441-42.

AUDITOR(S)—
 Question re questionnaire issued by Income Tax Department to Indian Firms of —. 492.

AUSTRALIA—
 Question re import of foodgrains from — and America. 409.

AUSTRALIAN WHEAT—
 See "Wheat".

AVIATION—
 Question re Post-war development of Civil — in India. 355-56.

AVIATION POLICY(IES)—
 See "Policy(ies)".

AZHAR ALI, MR. MUHAMMAD—
 Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
 Motion to refer to Select Committee. 155.
 Motion re—
 Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 194.
 The Food Situation. 221-23, 339.

Question re—
 Action taken against Railway Servants for causing overcrowding of trains on North Western Railway. 188-89.
 Assistance in education of children of Railway employees. 188.
 Census taken by State-managed Railways of the travelling public. 188.
 Conditions of service of Railway servants employed in Transportation Units of the Indian Army. 562.
 Confiscation of rations of certain Gorakhpur Workshop Staff enjoying weekly rest. 189, 563.
 Creation of post of an Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer. 494.

Question re—

Delivery of telegrams at Shahdara, Delhi, through post office. 554-55.
 Expenditure on Government publicity. 132.
 Expenditure on the National War Front. 132-37.
 Eye test for Travelling Ticket Examiners on East Indian Railway. 555.
 Grant of increments for the period before confirmation to a State Railway non-gazetted servant. 25.
 Instructions issued by the Chief Medical Officer, East Indian Railway, regarding the staff reporting sick. 188.
 Issue of permits of wheat and other foodgrains by Sirdar Mehtab Singh. 418.
 Muslim demand of regulating promotions on communal basis. 25.
 Persons dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 in Delhi Division of North Western Railway. 555.
 Policy regarding giving of advertisements to newspapers. 131-32.
 Promotions to Ticket Checking staff on East Indian Railway. 188.
 Qualifications, etc., of the Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer. 494.
 Recognised Foreign Correspondents and News Agencies. 493-94.
 Rules for admission to the Government of India Press Room and for supply of Government Publications to Trade Unions, etc. 132.
 Rules for occupation of Railway Quarters and bungalows by Subordinate Staff on Oudh and Tirhut Railway. 189.
 Running Room arrangements for Depressed Classes staff on State Railways. 555.
 Superintendent of Industries, Delhi. 417.
 Trade Unions supplied with Government publications, etc. 438-40.

Question (supplementary) re—
 Attachment of property of certain Railway employees at Ghaziabad for realising District Board tax. 544.
 Coal supplies to various industries. 15.
 Facilities for Pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes. 351.
 Import of American plants for manufacturing sulphuric acid. 351.
 Misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway staff and vendors. 168.
 Price paid for imported locomotives. 177.
 Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65.

Resolution re—
 Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 576.
 Reform of the Cantonment Service. 585.
 Stabilization of Prices. 95-97.

AZIZUL HUQUE, THE HONOURABLE SIR M.—
 Indian Companies (Amendment) Bill—
 Motion for leave to introduce. 31.
 Motion to consider. 443-44.
 Motion to pass. 444.
 Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment) Bill—
 Motion for leave to introduce. 30.
 Motion to consider. 442, 443.
 Motion to pass. 443.

Motion for adjournment re failure to consult the Legislature re agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. 85.
 Motion re the Food Situation. 315, 496-99.
 Resolution re stabilisation of prices. 90, 93-95.

B

BAIRD SQUARE—

Question re desirability of closing certain passages in Havelock and —s, New Delhi. 244-45.

BAIRD SQUARE EAST—

Question re newly constructed E type orthodox quarters in the open space between — and Irwin Road in New Delhi. 244.

BALUCHI WOMAN(EN)—

Question re desirability of stopping sale of —. 6-9.

BALUCHISTAN—

Question re—
 Annual recognition granted to denominational schools in —. 550.
 Facilities given to outsiders for establishing distillery, etc., in —. 549-50.

BALWAIK, MR. V. G.—

Question re representation from — regarding war bonus to workers. 415.

BAN—

Motion for adjournment re banning publication of Bengal Govern's Order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84.

Question re—

— on broadcasts of Urdu talks by the All-India Radio. 55.
 — on keeping milch cattle in clerks' quarters in New Delhi. 412.
 — on the sailings of pilgrim ships from India. 73.

BANGALORE—

Election of a Member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, —. 195-95, 495.

BANK(S)—

Question re sale of gold by Reserve — to the public. 478.

BANERJEA, DR. P. N.—

Motion re—
 Election of a Member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. 195, 196.

Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 191, 193, 194.

The Food Situation. 200, 306, 310, 321, 334, 342, 359-60, 366, 367, 368, 382, 393, 504, 512, 514-18, 521, 525, 532, 533, 534, 536.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Current Luggage Rules on State-managed Railways. 21.

Detention of Congress Working Committee Members. 485.

Ordinance for distribution of foodgrains in Bengal through registered Co-operative Stores. 403.

Post-war Empire and International Aviation policy. 17.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 49.

Review by Government of India of the purchase programme of Supply Department. 19.

Resolution re stabilization of prices. 91-93.

Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to consider. 252.

BASIC PAY—
See "Pay".

BASRA—
Question re export of wool to — for Russia. 552.

BENGAL—
Motion for adjournment re—
Banning publication of — Governor's Order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84.

Failure to give publicity to mortality due to starvation in —. 84.

Failure to take timely action for preventing acute food crisis in Bengal. 84.

Question re—
Banning publication of — Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 285-86.

Causes of present food crisis in —. 418-19.

Censorship on publication of news about famine in —. 127-29.

Charges re profiteering in respect of food-stuffs supplied to —. 236-39.

Dearness of vegetables and fruits in —. 425-26.

Deaths due to starvation in —. 239-40, 437.

Deaths due to starvation in — and Assam and food position in India. 47-49.

Deaths in —. 231.

Distribution of food in — through Food Department. 404-05.

Feeding of labour engaged on military works in — by Military authorities. 80, 129-30.

Foodgrains imported in —. 408-09.

Government co-operation to non-official relief organisation in —. 64.

Increased death rate in Calcutta and other districts of —. 240-41, 437.

Not allowing Scindia Steam Navigation Company vessel to carry full load of food to — from Karachi. 225-26.

Ordinance for distribution of foodgrains in — through registered Co-operative Stores. 403.

Position of supplies of foodgrains in —. 79.

Rice, paddy, etc., carried to — by different Railways. 185-86.

Scheme for distribution of foodgrains in —. 235-36.

Steps for relieving food scarcity in —. 57-58.

Stocks of foodgrains hoarded by employers in —. 75-76.

Stocks of foodgrains released from Army reserves for civilians in —. 82, 129.

Supply and distribution of rice, wheat, etc., in —. 403-04.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in — at concession rates. 81.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Defence Department in — at concession rates. 139.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Finance Department in — at concession rates. 138.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Food Department in — at concession rates. 81-82.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Labour Department in — at concession rates. 81.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Posts and Air Department in — at concession rates. 184.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Railway and War Transport Departments in — at concession rates. 184-85.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Supply Department in — at concession rates. 184.

Supply of foodgrains to non-military employees of the War Department in — at concession rates. 138.

Supply of rations to fighting forces in — at concession rates. 138-39.

Supply of rations to the military in — at concession rates. 80-81.

Surplus wagons at Depots in coalfields of — and Bihar and raising of coal output. 357-58.

Transport of rice and wheat to — and distribution thereof. 433-34.

BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY—
See "Railway(s)".

BENGAL, GOVERNMENT OF—
See "Government of Bengal".

BENGAL NAGPUR RAILWAY—
See "Railway(s)".

BENGALI(S)—
Question re—
— and Madras officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and Assamese and — officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

Punjabi officers on Bengal and Assam Railway and Assamese and — officers on North Western Railway. 175.

BENTHALL, THE HONOURABLE SIR EDWARD—
Motion re the Food Situation. 282, 317, 334, 388-92, 393, 471, 501.

BERAR—
Question re non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in — sub-post offices. 548.

BEVERIDGE REPORT—
See "Report(s)".

BEWOOR, SIR GURUNATH—
Amendments to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles Rules—(laid on the table). 29.

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to circulate. 268-70.

Oath of Office. 1.

BHAGALPUR—
Motion for adjournment re hunger-strike of political prisoners in — camp jail. 86.

BHAGCHAND SONI, RAI BAHADUR SETH—
Motion re Food Situation. 457-58.

Question re—
Kerosene scarcity in Ajmer. 438.

BHUTTO, MR. NABI BAKSH ILLAHI BAKSH—
Question re—
Ban on broadcasts of Urdu talks by the All-India Radio. 555.

Letter-boxes removed by rioters and Postal Authorities during the recent disturbances. 24.

BIAS—
Question re — against posting of Muslims, etc., as Sub-Post-Masters in Central Postal Circle. 548.

BIHAR—
Question re—
Administration in — of the scheme for checking of profiteering in salt. 126-27.

Persons detained and convicted in — during the last political movement. 490.

Projects of new roads completed by — Government from the Central Road Fund. 551-52.

Surplus wagons at Depots in coalfields of Bengal and — and raising of coal output. 357-58.

Viceroy's Relief Fund, collections for — Earthquake sufferers. 489.

BIHAR DETENU(S)—
See "Detenu(s)".

BILL(S)—
Agricultural Produce (Grading and Marking) Amendment—
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment)—
(Insertion of section 12B)—
Motion to continue, adopted. 140.

Central Excise —
Introduced. 190.

Referred to Select Committee. 444-45.

Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment)—
(Amendment of section 100)—
Motion to continue adopted. 140.

Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment)—
Presentation of the Report of the Select Committee. 30.

Motion to consider. 278.

Passed. 279.

Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) —
Introduced. 30.

Motion to consider. 252.

Passed. 252.

Criminal Procedure Amendment —
Presentation of the report of the Select Committee. 30.

Motion to consider. 278.

Passed. 278.

Delhi University (Amendment) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Dissolution of Muslim Marriages (Amendment) —
Motion to continue, adopted. 140.

Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession) —
Petitions laid on the table. 29, 139.

Presentation of the report of the Joint Committee. 30.

Motion to circulate (as reported by the Joint Committee). 445-46.

Circulated. 446.

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal —
Motion to refer to Select Committee (withdrawn). 143-65.

Indian Army and Indian Air Force (Amendment) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Indian Boilers (Amendment) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Indian Companies (Amendment)—
Introduced. 31.

Motion to consider. 443-44.

Passed. 444.

Indian Evidence (Amendment) —
Motion to continue adopted. 140.

Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) —
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 140-43.

Referred to Select Committee. 143.

Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment)—
Introduced. 30.

Motion to consider. 442-43.

Passed. 443.

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) —
Introduced. 30.

Motion to circulate. 252-78.

Circulated. 278.

Mines Maternity Benefit (Amendment) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Motor Vehicles (Drivers) Amendment —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Muslim Kazis —
Motion to continue adopted. 140.

Reciprocity (Amendment) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

Victoria Memorial (Amendment) —
Introduced. 30.

Motion to consider. 251-52.

Passed. 252.

War Injuries (Compensation Insurance) —
Assent of the Governor General. 28.

BLAIR, MR. J. R.—
Question re resignation of —, I.C.S. 109-10.

BOARD(S)—
Question re—
Constitution of the Indian Soldiers —. 111-13.

Proposal for establishment of an Indian Coconut —. 55-56.

BOAT(S)—
Question re arranging a fast — for Haj pilgrims. 246.

BOILERS (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

BOMBAY—
Question re — Government's application for manufacture of sulphathiozol. 53-54.

BONUS(ES)—
Question re representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik regarding war — to workers 415.

BOSE, SUBHAS CHANDRA—
Question re activities of — in East Asia 113.

BRANCH POST MASTER(S)—
See "Post Master(s)".

BRITISH BALUCHISTAN—
Amendments to the — Motor Vehicles Rules (laid on the table). 29.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT—

Motion for adjournment *re* failure to implement their guarantee of independence to Lebanon by the —. 359.

BRITISH TROOP(S)—

See "Troop(s)".

BROADCAST(S)—

Question *re* ban on — of Urdu talks by the All-India Radio. 555.

BROADCASTING STATION(S)—

Question *re* — for Karachi. 122.

BUILDING(S)—

Question *re* allocation of cost of — new roads for military purposes. 290.

BUNGALOW(S)—

Question *re* rules for occupation of Railway quarters and — by Subordinate Staff on Oudh and Tirhut Railway. 189.

BURMA—

Question *re*—

Allocation of expenditure for re-conquest of — and Malaya States. 116.

Employment of South African White evacuees from — for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413-14.

Reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from —. 51.

BUSINESS—

See "Statement of —".

C

CALCUTTA—

Question *re*—

Appointments of Managers of Government of India Presses, New Delhi and —. 424-25.

Bengali and Madras Officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office —, and Assamese and Bengali Officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

Domestic coke supply in —. 13-14.

Increased death rate in — and other districts of Bengal. 240-41, 437.

Recommendations *re* new *musafirkhana* at —. 246.

Repatriation of destitute persons from —. 76.

Representation by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, —, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 427, 435-36.

CAMP JAIL—

See "Jail(s)".

CAMPAIGN(S)—

Question *re*—

Operations of the "Grow more Food" —. 428-31.

Outcome of the "Grow more Food" —. 436.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT—

Question *re* Mutual Aid Plan of the —. 478-79.

CANDIDATE(S)—

Question *re*—

Interviews and training of Punjabees in Punjabi language at Walton School, Lahore. 179.

Interview of — for the post of Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase. 169-70.

Minimum qualification for recruitment of — as upper division clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

CANTONMENT(S)—

Question *re* concert party disbanded at Ferozepore —. 120.

Resolution *re* reform of the — Service. 579-88.

CANTONMENT BOARD(S)—

Question *re* inadequate Sikh representation on —, Kasauli. 491.

CAPITAL ISSUES, CONTROLLER OF—

See "Controller of Capital Issues".

CASE(S)—

Question *re*—

— tried by the Anti-Corruption Tribunals. 118.

Examination by tribunals of — of detenus and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.

CASH—

Question *re* — and small coins received from sale of passenger tickets by East Indian Railway. 24.

CATTLE—

Question *re*—

Ban on keeping milch — in clerks' quarters in New Delhi. 412.

Representations in respect of slaughter of young and prime —. 234-35.

CEMENT—

Question *re* supplies of iron, steel, —, etc., to civil population and functions of Honorary Advisers of —, iron and steel. 69-70.

CENSORSHIP—

Question *re* — on publication of news about famine in Bengal. 127-29.

CENSUS—

Question *re* — taken by State-managed Railways of the travelling public. 188.

CENTRAL EXCISE BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

CENTRAL EXCISES AND SALT REVENUES, WESTERN DIVISION—

Question *re*—

Minimum qualification for recruitment of candidates as upper division clerks in the —. 283.

Minimum qualifications for recruitment of Hindus as lower grade clerks in the —. 283.

Muslim recruitment in the —. 283-84.

Percentage of and qualifications for Muslim recruitment in the —. 283.

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT—

Motion for adjournment *re* continuance of —'s subsidy to Sind. 86.

Question *re* supply of foodgrains at controlled or concessional prices to non-military employees of — and Government of Bengal. 74-75.

See also "Government of India".

CENTRAL LEGISLATURE—

Question *re* holding of fresh elections of the —. 50-51.

CENTRAL NURSING COUNCIL—

Question *re* establishment of —. 417.

CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE—

See "Postal Circle(s)".

CENTRAL PROVINCES—

Question *re* rice for military requirements out of provincial reserve in —. 233.

CENTRAL PROVINCES RAILWAYS—

See "Railway(s)".

CENTRAL ROAD FUND—

See "Fund(s)".

CHAIRMAN(EN)—

Nomination of the Panel of —. 86-87.

CHAMBER(S) OF COMMERCE—

Question *re* representation by the Indian —, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 427, 435-36.

CHANDA, MR. A. K.—

Question *re* reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and — on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.

CHARGEMAN(EN)—

Question *re* promotion of non-technical hands as — on East Indian Railway. 9.

CHATTERJI, MR. S. C.—

Question *re* Indian Christians serving in the Army, Navy and Air Force. 281.

CHATTOPADHYAYA, MR. AMARENDRA NATH—

Question *re*—

Distribution of food in Bengal through Food Department. 404-05.

Examination by tribunals of cases of detenus and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.

Expenditure on "Grow More Food" campaign. 227-28.

Food Conferences and Standing Food Committee. 60-63.

Interview of candidates for the post of Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase. 169-70.

Ordinance for distribution of foodgrains in Bengal through registered Co-operative Stores. 403.

Position concerning news roll and other paper. 227.

Provincial stocks of wheat, rice, etc. 56-57.

Recruitment of gazetted officers in Supply Department. 6.

Security and state prisoners. 117.

Steps for relieving food scarcity in Bengal. 57-58.

Sub-division of contracts on communal basis on Railways. 356-57.

Supply and distribution of rice, wheat, etc., in Bengal. 403-04.

Two dead bodies found near Railway lines between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey Railway stations. 357.

Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 58-60.

CHEMIST(S)—

Question *re* discharge of Mr. Halder, Officiating Chief — at Kanchrapara Railway Workshop. 174.

CHETTY, MR. SAMI VENCATA-
CHELAM—

Motion *re* the Food Situation. 325-28, 511.
Point of Order raised by — *re* Motion Proposing Communication of Formal Address to H. E. The Governor General. 440-41.

CHIEF CHEMIST—

See "Chemist(s)".

CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER—

Question *re* instructions issued by the —, East Indian Railway, regarding the staff reporting sick. 188.

CHILD(REN)—

Question *re* assistance in education of — of Railway employees. 188.

CHINESE—

Question *re* — workmen in Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT—

See "Act(s)".

CHOUDHURY, MR. ABDUR RASHEED—
Indian Tea Control (Second Amendment)

Bill—

Motion to consider. 443.

Motion for adjournment *re* ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other Muslim security prisoners. 495.

Motion *re* the Food Situation. 200-06, 541.

Question (Supplementary) *re*—
Food Conferences and Standing Food Committee. 63.

Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office Superintendents in the Offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 174.

Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 60.

CHOUDHURY, MR. MUHAMMAD

HUSSAIN—
Resolution *re* stabilization of prices. 98.

CHRISTIAN(S)—

Question *re* Indian — serving in the Army, Navy and Air Force. 281.

CINCHONA—

Question *re*—
— cultivation and yield of quinine. 242.

Development of — cultivation in India. 437-38.

CINCHONA PRODUCTS—

Question *re* making India self-supporting in quinine and —. 432-33.

CITY(IES)—

Question *re* Provinces having statutory price control and — having rationing. 231-32.

CIVIL AVIATION—

Question *re* post-war development of — in India. 355-56.

CIVIL DEPARTMENT(S)—

Question *re* paucity of Muslim Office Superintendents, etc., in — at Quetta. 550.

CIVIL PIONEER FORCE—

Question *re*—
Commissioned officers in —, United Provinces. 248-49.

Counting of services of commissioned officers in — as war services. 249.

CIVIL POPULATION—

See "Population".

CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT)

BILL—
See "Code of —" under "Bill(s)".

CIVILIAN(S)—

Question re stocks of foodgrains released from Army reserves for — in Bengal. 82-129.

CLASSIFICATION—

Question re—

— as selection posts, of posts of Personal Assistants carrying special or personal pay in the Government of India Secretariat. 237-88.

Principles for — of prisoners. 489-90.

CLERK(S)—

Question re—

Advertisement for recruitment of temporary — by Military Accounts Department. 237.

Block on the promotion of Station Correspondence — on North Western Railway. 545.

Communal composition of Superintendents and Head — (Establishment) on North Western Railway. 355.

Constructing a large hotel for Indian — in New Delhi. 242-43.

Minimum qualification for recruitment of candidates as upper division — in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Minimum qualifications for recruitment of Hindus as lower grade — in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Non-employment of Urdu-knowing — in Perar sub-post offices. 548.

CLERKS' QUARTERS(S)—

See "Quarter(s)".

CLOTH—

Question re supply of standard — to Railway employees. 183.

COAL—

Question re—

— supplies to various industries. 14-16.

Drop in the output of —. 421-22.

Non-acceptance of larger quantity of good quality — for Railways. 22.

COAL OUTPUT—

Question re surplus wagons at Depots in coalfields of Bengal and Bihar and raising of —. 357-58.

COAL TRADE CONFERENCE—

Question re the — at Delhi. 422-23.

COALFIELD(S)—

Question re surplus wagons at Depots in — of Bengal and Bihar and raising of coal output. 357-58.

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

COIN(S)—

Question re—

Cash and small — received from sale of passenger tickets by East Indian Railway. 24.

Steps for removing shortage of small —. 286.

COKE—

Question re domestic — supply in Calcutta. 13-14.

COLLEGE(S)—

Question re raising of Government Intermediate —, Quetta, to Degree — Standard. 550.

COMMERCE DEPARTMENT—

Question re supply of foodgrains to employees of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in Bengal at concession rates. 81.

COMMISSION(S)—

Question re grant of King's — to V. C. O's. 232.

COMMISSIONED OFFICER(S)—

See "Officer(s)".

COMMISSIONER(S)—

Question re salaries of Appellate — and Appellate Tribunals under Income Tax Department. 292.

COMMITTEE(S)—

Question re—

Conference of representatives of Port Haj —, etc. 246.

Food Conferences and Standing Food —. 60-63.

Foodgrains Policy —'s recommendation regarding sale of precious metals to the cultivator. 292.

Gregory —'s recommendations concerning supply of precious metals for sale to the cultivator. 121-22.

Meteorological —. 351-52.

Recommendation of the Gregory — concerning supply of goods which the cultivator needs. 228-29.

Recommendations of the Gregory — concerning supply of necessary goods and precious metals to the cultivator. 229-30.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy —. 49-50.

Reconstitution of the House —. 359.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS—

Appointment of the —. 139.

COMMODITY(IES)—

Question re—

Rice and other — exported from Madras Province. 405-08.

Supply of essential — of life to civil population. 65-66.

Supply of essential — to non-Indian forces stationed in India. 285.

COMMONWEALTH AIR FORCE CONFERENCE—

See "Conference(s)".

COMMUNAL BASIS—

Question re—

Muslim demand of regulating promotions on —. 25.

Sub-division of contracts on — on Railways. 356-57.

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION—

Question re — of Superintendents and Head Clerks (Establishment) on North Western Railway. 355.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION—

Question re—

— among leather goods contractors of the Supply Department. 187.

— in certain Postal offices at Lucknow. 187.

— in Supply Department. 2-3.

Recruitment of Station Masters, Guards, etc., on East Indian Railway and — therein. 187.

COMPANY(IES)—

Question re—

— permitted by the Controller of Capital Issues to be registered under the Companies Act. 116-17.

Mogul Line ships given to Shipping — of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jedda. 435.

COMPANIES ACT—

See "Act(s)".

COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

COMPENSATION—

Question re — for air-conditioning sets requisitioned from private owners. 352-53.

COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION(S)—

See "Examination(s)".

COMPILATION SECTION—

Question re fixing of pay of the retrenched staff re-appointed in the —, North Western Railway. 179.

COMPLAINT(S)—

Question re—

— against a Train Examiner at Pathankote, North Western Railway. 547.

— against Deputy Chief Accounts Officer from the Sub-Heads in Traffic Accounts Branch of the North Western Railway. 24.

— against the quality of essential supplies for employees of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 236-87.

Delay in attending to the — made to Minto Road, and Havelock Square Enquiry Offices, New Delhi. 243-44.

COMPTROLLER(S)—

Question re selection board for appointments in the office of the — of Assam. 286.

CONCERT PARTY(IES)—

Question re—

— disbanded at Ferozepore Cantonment. 120.

Scheme submitted by Mr. S. M. Zahur Ali, regarding —. 120-21.

Selection of personnel of — for British and Indian Troops. 111.

CONCESSION RATE(S)—

Question re supply of foodgrains to Employees of the Railway and Transport Departments in Bengal at —. 184-85.

See also "Rate(s)".

CONCESSIONAL PRICES—

See "Price(s)".

CONCILIATION OFFICER—

Question re activities of the — (Railways). 231.

CONDITION(S)—

Question re insertion in Government of — for fair treatment of labour. 68.

CONFERENCE(S)—

Question re—

— of representatives of Port Haj Committees, etc. 246.

Food — and Standing Food Committee. 60-63.

Participation of India in the Allied Monetary —. 480.

Report of the Commonwealth Air Force —, London. 355-56.

Representation of India at the Empire Air — in London. 20.

The Coal Trade — at Delhi. 422-23.

CONFIRMATION(S)—

Question re grant of increments for the period before — to a State Railway non-gazetted servant. 25.

CONFISCATION(S)—

Question re — of rations of certain Gorakhpur workshop staff enjoying weekly rest. 563.

CONGRESS—

Question re—

Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act by the — of the United States of America. 178.

Treatment of political prisoners and — detenus. 113-15.

CONGRESS DETENU(S)—

See "Detenu(s)".

CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE—

Question re detention of — Members. 484-85.

CONTRACT(S)—

Question re—

— for distribution of grains to East Indian Railway servants. 26.

Insertion in Government — of condition for fair treatment of Labour. 68.

Sub-division of — on communal basis on Railways. 356-57.

CONTRACTOR(S)—

Question re communal representation among leather goods — of the Supply Department. 187.

CONTROL—

Question re—

— on paper other than newsprint. 52-53.

Provinces having statutory price — and cities having rationing. 231-32.

Statutory Price —. 415-16.

See also "Price Control".

CONTROL ORDER(S)—

See "Order(s)".

CONTROLLER OF CAPITAL ISSUE(S)—

Question re companies permitted by the — to be registered under the Companies Act. 116-17.

CONVICT(S)—

Question re—

Daily rations for political detenus and —. 476.

Discrimination in releasing political detenus and —. 475.

Political detenus and — in Madras Presidency. 475.

CONVICTION(S)—

Motions for adjournment re — of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in Durban. 494.

Question re persons detained and convicted in Bihar during the last political movement. 490.

CO-OPERATION—

Question re Government — to non-official relief organisation in Bengal. 64.

CO-OPERATIVE STORES—

Question re Ordinance for distribution of foodgrains in Bengal through registered — 403.

CORRESPONDENT(S)—

Question re recognised Foreign — and News Agencies. 493-94.

COSSIPORE—

Question re Muslims recruited to certain posts in Gun and Shell Factory, —. 353-54.

COST(S)—

Question re—
Allocation of — of building new roads for military purposes. 290.

Liability for — of doubling the Bengal and Assam Railway Metre Gauge Lines for military reasons. 178.

COUNCIL(S)—

Election of a Member to the — of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. 195-96. 495.

COURT(S)—

Election of — Members to the Delhi University —. 31, 189, 441.

COW BYRE(S)—

Question re want of dairies or — in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi. 243.

CREMATION GHAT—

Question re insufficiency of wood fuel, at the Delhi —. 563-64.

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT

BILL—
See "Bill(s)".

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Code of —" under "Bill(s)".

CULTIVATION—

Question re—
Cinchona — and yield of quinine. 242.
Development of Cinchona — in India. 437-38.

CULTIVATOR(S)—

Question re—
Foodgrains Policy Committee's recommendation regarding sale of precious metals to the —. 292.

Gregory Committee's recommendations concerning supply of precious metals for sale to the —. 121-22.

Recommendation of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of goods which the — needs. 228-29.

Recommendations of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary goods and precious metals to the —. 229-30.

CUSTOMS PREVENTIVE OFFICER(S)—

Question re method of recruitment of —. 107-08.

D

D. I. Z. AREA—

Question re neglect of lawns in front of orthodox clerk's quarters in —, New Delhi. 412.

DAILY RATION(S)—

See "Ration(s)".

DAIRY(IES)—

Question re want of — or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi. 243.

DALPATPUR—

Question re two dead bodies found near Railway lines between — and Munda Pandey Railway stations. 357.

DAM, MR. ANANGA MOHAN—

Motion re food situation. 495.

Question re—

Amalgamation of the Dibru-Sadiya and the Jorhat Provincial Railways with the Bengal and Assam Railway. 174-75.

Bengali and Madrassi officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

Chinese workmen in Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

Discharge of Mr. Halder, officiating Chief Chemist at Kanchrapara Railway Workshop. 174.

Expenditure of Anglo-Indian and Indian Railway apprentices. 175.

Expenditure on facilities for Muslim Haj pilgrims. 241-42.

Institution of Engineers. 233-34.

Punjabi officers on Bengal and Assam Railway and Assamese and Bengali officers on North Western Railway. 175.

Ration allowances for Indian and European Members of Indian Engineers (Defence of India) Unit. 477.

Selection board for appointments in the office of the Comptroller of Assam. 286.

Steps for removing shortage of small coins. 286.

Technical Schools maintained by Railways for Apprenticeship Training. 174.

Yugoslav Die-Casting Expert employed at Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

DARYAPUR—

Question re desirability of introducing Mail Motor service between Amraoti and —. 549.

DAS, PANDIT NILAKANTHA—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 156, 157, 159-61.

Motion re food situation. 321, 372-75.

DATTA, MR. AKHIL CHANDRA—

Motion re food situation. 361-64, 369, 498, 530, 537.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 483-84.

Restrictions on interviews with detenus. 483.

Question (Supplementary) re causes of present food crisis in Bengal. 419.

DEAD BODIES—

Question re two — found near Railway lines between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey Railway stations. 357.

DEARNESS—

Question re — of vegetables and fruits in Bengal. 425-26.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE—

See "Allowance(s)".

DEATH(S)—

Question re—
— due to starvation in Bengal. 239-40, 437.

— due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 47-49.

— in Bengal. 231.

— of Major E. M. Martin in Iraq. 108-09, 297.

DEATH RATE(S)—

Question re increased — in Calcutta and other districts of Bengal. 240-41, 437.

DECLARATION(S) OF EXEMPTION—

— and Notification under the Registration of Foreigners Act (laid on the table). 297-99.

DEFENCE DEPARTMENT—

Question re supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 139.

DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT—

See "Act(s)".

DEFENCE OF INDIA RULE(S)—

Question re Bihar detenus under —. 488-89.

See also "Rule(s)".

DEGREE COLLEGE—

See "College(s)".

DEHRA DUN—

Question re—

Affiliation of Forestry training Institute of — to university. 54-55.

Desirability of constructing a mosque in the Indian Military Academy, —. 23-24.

DELEGATION(S)—

Motion for adjournment re non-official — to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.

DELHI—

Question re—

Delivery of telegrams at Shahdara, —, through post office. 554-55.

Directly recruited Police Officers in —. 284.

Insufficiency of wood fuel, at the — Cremation Ghat. 563-64.

Malaria in — Province. 431-32.

Persons arrested and detained in — under rules 26 and 129 of the Defence of India Rules, etc. 294-96.

Release of Congress Detenus of —. 481-82.

Resignation by House Surgeons of Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital, —. 423-24.

Restrictions on released — Security prisoners. 488.

Special Press Adviser in — and his staff. 284.

Superintendent of Industries. —. 417.

The coal trade Conference at —. 422-23.
Tickets issued from — for Delhi-Ambala section railway stations. 345.

Question re persons dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 in — Division of North Western Railway. 555.

DELHI DETENU(S)—

See "Detenu(s)".

DELHI MUSLIM WAKF ACT—

See "Act(s)".

DELHI RESTRICTION OF USES OF LAND ACT—

See "Act(s)".

DELHI UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

DELHI UNIVERSITY COURT—

Election of Members to the —. 31, 189, 441.

DELIVERY(IES)—

Question re — of telegrams at Shahdara, Delhi, through post office. 554-55.

DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOL(S)—

See "School(s)".

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE—

See "Commerce Department".

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD—

See "Food Department".

DEPARTMENT OF INDIANS OVERSEAS—

See "Indian Overseas Department".

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES—

See "Industries and Civil Supplies Department".

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING—

See "Information and Broadcasting Department".

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR—

See "Labour Department".

DEPOT(S)—

Question re surplus wagons at — in coal-fields of Bengal and Bihar and raising of coal output. 357-58.

DEPRESSED CLASS(ES)—

Question re running Room arrangements for — staff on State Railways. 555.

DEPUTY ASSISTANT CONTROLLER OF PURCHASE—

Question re interview of candidates for the post of —. 169-70.

DEPUTY CHIEF ACCOUNTS OFFICER—

Question re complaint against — from the Sub-Heads in Traffic Accounts Branch of the North Western Railway. 24.

DESHMUKH, DR. G. V.—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 145, 146, 155.

Motion for Adjournment re alleged inhuman treatment to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 251.

— Motion re food situation. 360, 361, 370, 375-78, 460, 510, 511.

Question (supplementary) re rearrest of Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 293.

DESHMUKH, MR. GOVIND V.—

Appointment of — on the Committee on petitions. 139.

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 143-50, 161, 163-65.

Motion for Adjournment re—

Alleged inhuman treatment to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 250-51.

Arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of Lahore. 250.
 Conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in Durban. 494.
 Failure to give publicity to mortality due to starvation in Bengal. 84.
 Failure to take timely action for preventing Acute Food Crisis in Bengal. 84.
 Non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 27, 31-34, 44-45.
 Motion re food situation. 301-02, 303, 310, 339, 447-49.
 Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.
 Question re—
 Affiliation of Forestry training Institute of Dehra Dun to university. 54-55.
 Bombay Government's application for manufacture of sulphathiazol. 53-54.
 Constitution of the Indian Soldiers Board. 111-13.
 Disabilities and restrictions affecting Indians in the United States of America. 177.
 Framing of rules to enforce Reciprocity Act. 55.
 Grant of King's Commission to V. C. O's. 282.
 Gregory Committee's recommendations concerning supply of precious metals for sale to the cultivator. 121-22.
 Inadequacy of platform sheds at Muttra Junction Railway Station. 5.
 Indians as staff officers in General Headquarters. 282.
 Indians shot in Police firing in Mauritius. 416.
 Manufacture of 'Atebrin' in India. 54.
 Not allowing Scindia Steam Navigation Company vessel to carry full load of food to Bengal from Karachi. 225-26.
 Preserving food for East African Forces. 225.
 Recommendation of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of goods which the cultivator needs. 228-29.
 Recommendations of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary goods and precious metals to the cultivator. 229-30.
 Repatriation of Italian prisoners in India. 110-11.
 Representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik, regarding war bonus to workers. 415.
 Representation of India at the Empire Air Conference in London. 20.
 Representations in respect of slaughter of young and prime cattle. 234-35.
 Resignation of Mr. J. R. Blair, I.C.S. 109-10.
 Rice for military requirements out of provincial reserve in Central Provinces. 233.
 Selection of personnel of concert parties for British and Indian Troops. 111.
 Statutory Price Control. 415-16.
 The American Exclusion Act and its effect on Indians. 177-78.
 Question (supplementary) re—
 Activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways). 231.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 47.
 Employment of South African White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413, 414.
 Misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway staff and vendors. 168, 169.
 Provinces facing Food shortage. 419.
 Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 293-484.
 Review by Government of India of the purchase programme of Supply Department. 19.
 Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65.
 The coal trade conference at Delhi. 423.
 Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 60.
 Resolution re—
 Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 570-71.
 Reform of the Cantonment Service. 579-81, 587-88.
 DESTITUTE PERSON(S)—
 Question re repatriation of — from Calcutta. 76.
 DETENTION(S)—
 Question re—
 of Congress Working Committee Members. 484-85.
 Persons detained for reasons of state. 1-2.
 DETENU(S)—
 Question re—
 Advisability of transferring Delhi — from Punjab Jails to Delhi Jail. 482-83.
 Bihar — under Defence of India Rules. 488-89.
 Daily rations for political — and convicts. 476.
 Discrimination in releasing political — and convicts. 475.
 Examination by tribunals of cases of — and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.
 Political — and convicts in Madras Presidency. 475.
 Release of Congress — of Delhi. 481-82.
 Restrictions on interviews with —. 483.
 Treatment meted out to Delhi — in Punjab Jails. 481.
 Treatment of political prisoners and Congress —. 113-15.
 DEVASTATION(S)—
 Question re — due to floods in Madras. 476.
 DHANBAD—
 Question re students admitted to — School of Mines. 416-17.
 DIBRU SADIYA AND THE JORHAT PROVINCIAL RAILWAYS—
 See "Railway(s)".
 DIE-CASTING EXPERT—
 See "Expert(s)".
 DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT—
 Question re — to Indian and non-Indian shipping on Indian Register. 427-28, 434-35.

E

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SUPPLY—
 Question re Assistant of the Political Department appointed as Assistant Secretary in the —. 348.
 DIRECTOR OF RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE—
 Question re orders issued by the officiating —. 181-82.
 DISCRIMINATION—
 Question re—
 in releasing political detenus and convicts. 475.
 Racial — in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 10-11.
 Racial — on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on medical grounds. 10.
 DISSOLUTION OF MUSLIM MARRIAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL—
 See "Bill(s)".
 DISTILLERY (IES)—
 Question re facilities given to outsiders for establishing —, etc., in Baluchistan. 549-50.
 DISTRIBUTION—
 Question re scheme for — of foodgrains in Bengal. 235-36.
 DISTRICT BOARD TAX(ES)—
 See "Tax(es)".
 DISTURBANCE(S)—
 Question re letter-boxes removed by rioters and Postal Authorities during the recent —. 24.
 DIVISION(S)—
 Motion(s) for adjournment—
 on the — re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's war effort. 45-46.
 Motion re the food situation—
 on the amendment of Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta, as amended. 540-41.
 on the amendment of Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, as amended. 539.
 Statement re method of taking votes by —. 26-27.
 DIVISIONAL SUPERINTENDENT(S)—
 Question re—
 Reducing of Ticket Collectors to letter Delivery Clerks by the —, Moradabad. 26.
 Temporary tracers in the office of —, Karachi. 25.
 DRAFTSMAN(EN)—
 Question re racial discrimination in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and — on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 10-11.
 (DRIVERS) AMENDMENT BILL—
 See "Motor Vehicles —" under "Bill(s)".
 DURBAN—
 Motions for adjournment re conviction of Mr. P. R. Pathur under the Pegging Act in —. 494.
 DUTY (IES)—
 Question re Alumina imported — free. 80 563.

EARTHQUAKE SUFFERER(S)—
 Question re Viceroy's Relief Fund collections for Bihar. 489.
 EAST AFRICAN FORCE(S)—
 See "Force(s)".
 EAST ASIA—
 Question re activities of Subins Chandra Bose in —. 113.
 EAST ASIA COMMAND—
 Question re financial obligations of India in respect of operations of the —. 282, 290, 492.
 EAST INDIAN RAILWAY—
 See "Railway(s)".
 EDUCATION—
 Question re assistance in — of children of Railway employees. 188.
 EDUCATIONAL STANDARD—
 Question re — for recruitment to subordinate service on North Western Railway. 554.
 EGYPT—
 Question re Mogul Line ships given to Shipping Companies of — for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 246-47, 435.
 ELECTION(S)—
 of a Member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. 195-96, 495.
 of Members to the Delhi University court. 31, 189, 441.
 of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 190-95, 495.
 Question re holding of fresh — of the Central Legislature. 50-51.
 EMERGENCY COMMISSION(S)—
 Question re position concerning recruitment to —. 115.
 See also "Commission(s)".
 EMPIRE AIR CONFERENCE—
 See "Conference(s)".
 EMPIRE AVIATION POLICY—
 See "Policy(ies)".
 EMPLOYEE(S)—
 Question re—
 Assistance in education of children of Railway —. 188.
 Attachment of property of certain Railway — at Ghaziabad for realising District Board tax. 543-44.
 Complaints against the quality of essential supplies for — of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 286-87.
 — discharged for disciplinary reasons on North Western Railway. 183.
 Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal —. 4-5.
 Stations on North Western Railway having European Institutes for —. 345-47.
 Stocks of foodgrains hoarded by — in Bengal. 75-76.
 Supply of foodgrains at controlled or concessional prices to non-military — of Central Government and Government of Bengal. 74-75.
 Supply of foodgrains to — of the Defence Department in Bengal at concessional rates. 139.

- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in Bengal at concession rates. 81.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Finance Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Food Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81-82.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Labour Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Posts and Air Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Railway and War Transport Departments in Bengal at concession rates. 184-85.
- Supply of foodgrains to — of the Supply Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.
- Supply of foodgrains to non-military — of the War Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.
- Supply of standard cloth to Railway —. 183.
- EMPLOYMENT—**
Question re — of South African White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413-414.
- ENEMY PRIZE SHIPS—**
Question re award of — to India. 63-64.
- ENGINEER(S)—**
Question re Institution of —. 233-34.
- ENGINEERS (DEFENCE OF INDIA) UNIT—**
Question re ration allowances for Indian and European Members of Indian —. 477.
- ENQUIRY OFFICE(S)—**
Question re delay in attending to the complaints made to Minto Road and Havelock Square —, New Delhi. 243-44.
- ENTERTAINMENT(S)—**
Question re Welfare and Amenities Directorate and — of Indian troops. 118-20.
- ENTERTAINMENT PICTURE(S)—**
See "Picture(s)".
- ENTOMOLOGIST(S)—**
Question re appointments of Assistant —. 487.
- ESSAK SAIT, MR. H. A. SATHAR H.—**
Motion re—
Food Situation. 301, 303.
Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 190-91, 195.
Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.
Question re—
Absence of station name boards in Urdu on Central Provinces Railways. 550-51.
Annual recognition granted to denominational schools in Baluchistan. 550.
Appointments of Managers of Government of India Presses, New Delhi, and Calcutta. 424-25.
Causes of present food crisis in Bengal. 418-19.
Facilities given to outsiders for establishing distillery, etc., in Baluchistan. 549-50.
- Failure to take timely action for preventing acute food crisis in Bengal. 84.
- Paucity of Muslim Office Superintendents, etc., in Civil Departments at Quetta. 550.
- Provinces facing food shortage. 419-20.
- Raising of Government Intermediate College, Quetta, to Degree College Standard. 550.
- Question (Supplementary) re—
Accommodation for Railway police at Sukkur. 4.
Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal employees. 5.
- ESSENTIAL COMMODITY(IES)—**
Question re supply of — of life to civil population. 65-66.
- ESTABLISHMENT(S)—**
Question re — of Central Nursing Council. 417.
- ESTABLISHMENT CODE—**
Question re non-inclusion in State Railway — of provisions of Rule 7 of Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules. 358.
- EUROPEAN(S)—**
Question re ration allowances for Indian and — Members of Indian Engineers (Defence of India) Unit. 477.
- EUROPEAN INSTITUTE(S)—**
See "Institute(s)".
- EVACUATION—**
Question re reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the — of Indians from Burma. 51.
- EVACUEE(S)—**
Question re—
Employment of South African White — from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413-14.
— and refugees in India. 476-77.
Transfer of power to Indians Overseas Department to grant or withdraw visas to — of foreign nationality. 64.
- EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL—**
See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".
- EXAMINATION(S)—**
Question re—
— by tribunals of cases of detenus and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.
Scales of pay applied to persons entering railway service as a result of competitive —. 171-72.
- EXCISE BILL—**
See "Central —" under "Bill(s)".
- EXEMPTION DECLARATION(S) OF—**
See "Declaration(s) of Exemption".
- EXPENDITURE—**
Question re—
Allocation of — for re-conquest of Burma and Malaya States. 116.
Allocation of — on troops raised in India for outside service. 290-91.
Continuance of — on A.R.P. in Sind. 476.
— of Anglo-Indian and Indian Railway apprentices. 175.

- on facilities for Muslim Haj pilgrims. 241-42.
- on Government publicity. 132.
- on "Grow More Food" campaign. 227-28.
- on the National War Front. 132-37.
- on war publicity. 126.
- EXPORT(S)—**
Question re Yugoslav Die-Casting — employed at Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.
- EXPORT(S)—**
Question re—
— of sugar, wheat and rice and the production of petrol from molasses. 23.
— of wool to Basra for Russia. 552.
- EXTENSION(S)—**
Question re — of service to State Railway gazetted officers. 358-59.
- EYE TEST—**
Question re — for Travelling Ticket Examiners on East Indian Railway. 555.
- F**
- FACILITY(IES)—**
Question re—
Expenditure on — for Muslim Haj pilgrims. 241-42.
— for Juma prayers in the Central Postal Circle. 549.
— for manufacture of manures and fertilizers. 432, 436-37, 552-53.
— for pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes. 350-51.
— given to outsiders for establishing distillery, etc., in Baluchistan. 549-50.
- FACTORY(IES)—**
Question re Inability of Ghazipur Opium — to meet demands for opium alkaloids. 291-92.
- FAMINE—**
Question re—
Censorship on publication of news about — in Bengal. 127-29.
Parts of India where — prevails. 229.
- FAZL-I-HAQ PIRACHA, KHAN BAHADUR SHAIKH—**
Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 140-42.
Question re—
Conference of representatives of Port Haj Committees, etc. 246.
Control orders for sale of raw hides in Punjab. 546.
Meteorological Committee. 351-52.
Recommendations re new musafirkhana at Calcutta. 246.
Reconstruction of the Pilgrim Camp, Karachi. 246.
- FEROZEPUR—**
Question re Concert party disbanded at — Cantonment. 120.
- FERTILIZER(S)—**
Question re—
Facilities for manufacture of manures and —. 432, 436-37, 552-53.
Imports of Ammonia Sulphate and other synthetic —. 67.
- FIGHTING FORCE(S)—**
Question re supply of rations to — in Bengal at concession rates. 138-39.
See also "Force(s)".
- FINANCE DEPARTMENT—**
Question re Supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 138.
- FINANCIAL OBLIGATION(S)—**
Question re — of India in respect of operations of the East Asia Command. 232, 290, 492.
- FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT—**
Question re revision of the — of 1939 between India and Great Britain. 480.
- FIRING—**
Question re—
Indians shot in police — in Mauritius. 416.
- FIRM(S) OF AUDITOR(S)—**
See "Auditor(s)".
- FISHING INDUSTRY—**
Question re duty-free industrial coloured salt and the — in Sind. 24.
- FLOOD(S)—**
Question re devastation due to — in Madras. 476.
- FOOD—**
Question re—
Distribution of — in Bengal through — Department. 404-05.
Not allowing "Scindia Steam Navigation Company vessel to carry full load of — to Bengal from Karachi. 225-26.
Preserving — for East African Forces. 225.
- FOOD COMMITTEE(S)—**
See "Committee(s)".
- FOOD CONFERENCE(S)—**
See "Conference(s)".
- FOOD CRISIS—**
Question re—
Causes of present — in Bengal. 418-19.
Failure to take timely action for preventing acute — in Bengal. 84.
- FOOD DEPARTMENT—**
Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the —. 495.
Motion re election of members to the Standing Committee for the —. 190-95.
Question re—
Appointment of officers and staff in the —. 70-73.
Distribution of food in Bengal through —. 404-05.
Muslim Assistants reverted from the —. 428.
Supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 81-82.
- FOOD POLICY COMMITTEE—**
See "Committee(s)".
- FOOD POSITION—**
Question re deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and — in India. 47-49.
- FOOD SCARCITY—**
Question re steps for relieving — in Bengal. 57-58.
- FOOD SHORTAGE—**
Question re Provinces facing —. 419-20.
- FOOD SITUATION—**
Motion re the —. 196-224, 299-343, 359-401, 446-73, 495-541.
Question re statements by Secretary of State for India on food situation in India. 77-79.

FOODGRAIN(S)—

Question re—

Advertisements as regards arrivals of — and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 11-13.
— imported in Bengal. 408-09.
— position. 232-33.

Import of — from Australia and America. 409.

Issue of permits of wheat and other — by Sirdar Mehtab Singh. 418.

Ordinance for distribution of — in Bengal through registered Co-operative Stores. 403.

Position of supplies of — in Bengal. 79.

Production of and forecasts for —. 411.

Representation by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing —. 427, 435-36.

Rules for purchase of — for fighting forces. 485-87.

Scheme for distribution of — in Bengal. 235-36.

Stocks of — hoarded by employees in Bengal. 75-76.

Stocks of — released from Army reserves for civilians in Bengal. 82, 129.

Supply of — at controlled or concessional prices to non-military employees of Central Government and Government of Bengal. 74-75.

Supply of — to employees of the Defence Department in Bengal at concession rates. 139.

Supply of — to employees of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in Bengal at concession rates. 21.

Supply of — to employees of the Finance Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.

Supply of — to employees of the Food Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81-82.

Supply of — to employees of the Labour Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81.

Supply of — to employees of the Posts and Air Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

Supply of — to employees of the Railway and War Transport Departments in Bengal at concession rates. 184-85.

Supply of — to employees of the Supply Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

Supply of — to non-military employees of the War Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.

FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE—

See "Committee(s)".

FOODSTUFF(S)—

Question re—

Advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other — via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 11-13.

Charges re profiteering in respect of — supplied to Bengal. 236-39.

FORCE(S)—

Question re—

Preserving food for East African —. 225.

Rules for purchase of foodstuffs for fighting —. 485-87.

Supply of essential commodities to non-Indian — stationed in India. 285.

Supply of rations to fighting — in Bengal at concession rates. 138-39.

FORECAST(S)—

Question re production of and — for foodgrains. 411.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT(S)—

Question re recognised — and News Agencies. 493-94.

FOREIGN NATIONALITY—

Question re transfer of power to Indians Overseas Department to grant or withdraw visas to Evacuees of —. 64.

FORESTRY TRAINING INSTITUTE—

Question re affiliation of — of Dehra Dun to university. 54-55.

FREE PASS(ES)—

See "Pass(es)".

FRUIT(S)—

Question re dearness of vegetables and — in Bengal. 425-26.

FUEL—

Question re insufficiency of wood —, at the Delhi Cremation Ghat. 563-64.

FUND(S)—

Question re—

Projects of new roads completed by Bihar Government from the Central Road —. 550-51.

Proposals for establishment of United and Associated Nations' Stabilization —. 284-85.

Viceroy's Relief — collections for Bihar earthquake sufferers. 489.

G

GAZETTED OFFICER(S)—

Question re extension of service to State Railway —. 358-59.

See also "Officer(s)".

GAZETTED SERVICE(S)—

See "Service(s)".

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS—

Question re Indians as staff officers in —. 282.

GHAZIABAD—

Question re attachment of property of certain Railway employees at — for realising District Board tax. 543-44.

GHAZIPUR—

Question re inability of — Opium Factory to meet demands for opium alkaloids. 291-92.

GHUZNAVI, SIR ABDUL HALIM—

Motion for adjournment re—

Banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83.

Failure to implement their guarantee of Independence to Lebanon by the British Government. 359.

Motion re the Food Situation. 319-22, 497, 498.

Question re—

Accumulation of steel supplies by Government of India. 18.

Appointing of separate executive and judicial Assistant Commissioners of Income-tax. 492-93.

Cinchona cultivation and yield of quinine. 242.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal. 437.

Development of Cinchona cultivation in India. 437-38.

Differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping on the Indian Register. 434-35.

Employment of South African White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413-14.

Facilities for manufacture of manures and fertilizers. 436-37.

Financial obligations of India in respect of operations of the East Asia Command. 492.

Government co-operation to non-official relief organisation in Bengal. 64.

Inability of Ghazipur Opium Factory to meet demands for opium alkaloids. 291-92.

Increased death rate in Calcutta and other districts of Bengal. 437.

Mogul Line ships given to Shipping Companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jedda. 435.

Muslims recruited to certain posts in Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore. 353-54.

Outcome of the "Grow More Food" Campaign. 436.

Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office Superintendents in the offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 173-74.

Questionnaire issued by Income Tax Department to Indian Firms of auditors. 492.

Repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act by the Congress of the United States of America. 178.

Representation by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 435-36.

Review by Government of India of the purchase programme of Supply Department. 18-19.

Transfer of power to Indians Overseas Department to grant or withdraw visas to evacuees of foreign nationality. 64.

Question (Supplementary) re scheme for distribution of foodgrains in Bengal. 235, 236.

Resolution re stabilization of prices —. 97-98.

GOLD—

Question re sale of — by Reserve Bank to the public. 478.

GOODS—

Question re—

Recommendation of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of — which the cultivator needs. 228-29.

Recommendations of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary — and precious metals to the cultivator. 229-30.

GORAKHPUR—

Question re confiscation of rations of certain — workshop staff enjoying weekly rest. 189, 563.

GOVERNMENT(S)—

Question re—

Bombay —'s application for manufacture of sulphathiazol. 53-54.

— co-operation to non-official relief organisation in Bengal. 64.

Insertion in Government contracts of condition for fair treatment of labour. 68.

Mutual Aid Plan of the Canadian —. 478-79.

Projects of new roads completed by Bihar — from the Central Road Fund. 551-52.

Rules for admission to the Government of India Press Room and for supply of — Publications to Trade Unions, etc. 132.

GOVERNMENT INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE—

See "College(s)".

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL—

Question re—

Fixation of wholesale and retail prices by — for paddy and rice. 73-74.

Supply of foodgrains at Controlled or Concessional prices to Non-military employees of Central Government and —. 74-75.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—

Question re—

Accumulation of steel supplies by —. 18.

Review by — of the purchase programme of Supply Department. 18-19.

Rules for admission to the — Press Room and for supply of Government Publications to Trade Unions, etc. 132.

See also "Central Government".

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS(ES)—

See "Press(es)".

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SECRETARIAT—

See "Secretariat(s)".

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATION(S)—

See "Publication(s)".

GOVERNMENT PUBLICITY—

See "Publicity".

GOVERNOR(S)—

Motion for adjournment re banning publication of Bengal —'s Order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84, 285-86.

GOVERNOR GENERAL, H. E. THE—

Message from — intimating decision not to address both Houses of the Indian Legislature during the Session. 26.

Point of order re motion proposing Communication of Formal address to —. 440-41.

GRADE(S)—

Question re—

Persons recruited in the Intermediate — on Bengal and Assam Railway. 563.

Equalising of scales of pay of — V, East Indian Railway. 347.

(GRADING AND MARKING) AMENDMENT BILL—

See "Agricultural Produce —" under "Bill(s)".

GRAIN(S)—

Question re contracts for distribution of — to East Indian Railway servants. 26.

GREAT BRITAIN—

Motion for adjournment *re* non-official delegation to — and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.

Question *re* revision of the Financial Settlement of 1939 between India and —. 480.

GREENFIELD, MR. H.—

Oath of Office. 403.

GREGORY COMMITTEE—

See "Committee(s)".

GRIFFITHS, MR. P. J.—

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to circulate. 254-58, 264, 277, 278.

"GROW MORE FOOD" CAMPAIGN—

Question *re*—

Expenditure on —. 227-28.

Operations of the —. 428-31.

Outcome of the —. 436.

GUARANTEE—

Motion for adjournment *re* failure to implement their — of independence to Lebanon by the British Government. 359.

GUARD(S)—

Question *re*—

Fixation of lower pay for Grade I — in Karachi Division, North Western Railway, on abolition of that Grade. 545.
Promotion of — from Grade I to Grade II on North Western Railway. 554.

GUN AND SHELL FACTORY—

Question *re* Muslims recruited to certain posts in —, Cossipore. 353-54.

GUPTA, MR. K. S.—

Motion *re* Food Situation. 222, 461-64.

GUPTA, MR. R. R.—

Question *re*—

Imports of Ammonia Sulphate and other synthetic fertilisers. 67.

Measure for synthetic preparation of mineral oil. 19-20.

Private imports of Industrial plant and machinery. 66.

GWILT, MR. E. L. C.—

Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 143.

Motion *re*—

Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 192-93.

Food Situation. 328-31.

Question (Supplementary) *re*—

Compensation for Air-Conditioning 'Sets' requisitioned from private owners. 353.

Measures for checking inflation in India. 125.

Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 66.

H

HAJ—

Question *re*—

Arranging a fast boat for — pilgrims. 246.

Expenditure on facilities for Muslim — Pilgrims. 241-42.

HALDER, MR.—

Question *re* discharge of —, officiating Chief Chemist at Kanchrapara Railway Workshop. 174.

HARASSMENT—

Question *re* — of railway staff by police. 347.

HAVELOCK SQUARE—

Question *re*—

Delay in attending to the complaints made to Minto Road and — Enquiry Offices, New Delhi. 243-44.

Desirability of closing certain passages in — and Baird Squares, New Delhi. 244-45.

HEAD CLERK(S)—

Question *re* paucity of Muslim — or Office Superintendents in the offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 173-74.

See also "Clerk(s)".

HEGDE, SIR K. B. JINARAJA—

Motion *re* Food Situation. 470-73.

HEJAZ—

Question *re* stoppage of pilgrim ships from carrying pilgrims to the —. 245-46.

HIDE(S)—

Question *re*—

Control orders for sale of raw — in Punjab. 546.

Duty-free industrial coloured salt and — and skin merchants in Sind. 25.

HINDU(S)—

Question *re* minimum qualifications for recruitment of — as lower grade clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION)—

See "Bill(s)".

HINDU MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

HONORARY ADVISORS—

Question *re* supplies of iron, steel, cement, etc., to civil population and functions of — of Cement, iron and steel. 69-70.

HOSPITAL(S)—

Question *re* resignation by House Surgeons of Lady Hardinge Medical College, —, Delhi. 423-24.

HOSTEL(S)—

Question *re* location of W. A. C. (I.) —. 491.

HOTEL(S)—

Question *re* constructing a large — for Indian clerks in New Delhi. 242-43.

HOUSE COMMITTEE—

Reconstitution of the —. 359.

HOUSE SURGEON(S)—

See "Surgeon(s)".

HUNGER-STRIKE—

Motion for Adjournment *re* — of political prisoners in Bhagalpur camp jail. 86.

HUSSAIN AHMAD MADNI, MAULANA—

Motion for adjournment *re* ill-treatment meted out to — and other Muslim security prisoners. 495.

HUTCHINGS, MR. R. H.—

Motion *re* Food Situation. 321, 362, 363, 365-68, 459.

Oath of Office. 281.

Question *re* reports by Messrs. — and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.

I

IMPORT(S)—

Question *re*—

— of American plants for manufacturing sulphuric acid. 351.

— of Ammonia Sulphate and other synthetic fertilisers. 67.

— of foodgrains from Australia and America. 409.

Private — of industrial plant and machinery. 66.

INCOME-TAX, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER(S) OF—

See "Assistant Commissioner(s) of Income-tax".

INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT—

Question *re*—

Questionnaire issued by — to Indian Firms of auditors. 492.

Salaries of Appellate Commissioners and Appellate Tribunals under —. 292.

INCOME-TAX OFFICERS—

Question *re* method of recruitment of —. 284.

INCREMENT(S)—

Question *re* grant of — for the period before confirmation to a State Railway non-gazetted servant. 25.

INDIA—

Motion for adjournment *re* non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on —'s War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.

Question *re*—

Allocation of expenditure on troops raised in — for outside service. 290-91.

Award of enemy prize ships to —. 63-64.

Ban on the sailings of pilgrim ships from —. 73.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in —. 47-49.

Financial obligations of —, in respect of operations of the East Asia Command. 282, 290.

Lease-lend agreement between the United States of America and —. 115-16.

Manufacture of "Atebrin" in —. 54.

Measures for checking inflation in —. 123-25.

Monetary inflation and rise in prices in —. 130.

Parts of — where famine prevails. 229.

Repatriation of Italian prisoners in —. 110-11.

Representation of — at the Empire Air Conference in London. 20.

Revision of the Financial Settlement of 1939 between — and Great Britain. 480.

Statements by Secretary of State for — on food situation in —. 77-79.

Supply of essential commodities to non-Indian forces stationed in —. 285.

INDIAN(S)—

Question *re*—

Disabilities and restrictions affecting — in the United States of America. 177.

Expenditure of Anglo-Indian and — Railway apprentices. 175.

— as staff officers in General Headquarters. 282.

— shot in police firing in Mauritius. 416.

Ration allowances for — and European Members of — Engineers (Defence of India) Unit. 477.

Reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of — from Burma. 51.

The American Exclusion Act and its effect on —. 177-78.

INDIAN AGENT(S)—

See "Agent(s)".

INDIAN ARMY—

See "Army".

INDIAN ARMY AND INDIAN AIR FORCE (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

INDIAN BOILERS (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE—

Question *re* representation by the —, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 427, 435-36.

INDIAN CHRISTIAN(S)—

See "Christian(s)".

INDIAN CLERK(S)—

See "Clerk(s)".

INDIAN COCOANUT BOARD—

Question *re* proposal for establishment of an —. 55-56.

INDIAN COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

INDIAN EVIDENCE (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

INDIAN INFORMATION—

Question *re* desirability of stopping the publication of the —. 25.

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE—

See "Institute of Science".

INDIAN JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION—

See "Association(s)".

INDIAN MERCHANT SHIPPING (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

INDIAN MILITARY ACADEMY—

Question *re* desirability of constructing a mosque in the —, Dehra Dun. 23-24.

INDIAN NATIONAL WAR FRONT—

See "War Front".

INDIAN OVERSEAS DEPARTMENT—

Question *re* transfer of power to — to grant or withdraw visas to Evacuees of foreign nationality. 64.

INDIAN PERSONNEL—

See "Personnel".

INDIAN RAILWAY(S)—

See "Railway(s)".

INDIAN REGISTER—

Question *re* differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping on —. 427-28, 434-35.

INDIAN SEAMAN(EN)—

See "Seaman(en)".

INDIAN SHIPPING—

Question *re* differential treatment to — and non-Indian — on Indian Register. 427-28, 434-35.

INDIAN SOLDIERS BOARD—

See "Soldiers Board(s)".

- INDIAN TEA CONTROL (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—**
See "Bill(s)".
- INDIAN TRADE UNIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL—**
See "Bill(s)".
- INDIAN TROOP(S)—**
See "Troop(s)".
- INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATION—**
Question re — of India. 409-10.
- INDUSTRIAL PLANT—**
Question re private imports of — and machinery. 66.
- INDUSTRIES AND CIVIL SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT—**
Question re supply of foodgrains to employees of the Departments of Commerce and — in Bengal at concession rates. 81.
- INDUSTRY(IES)—**
Question re—
Coal supplies to various —. 14-16.
Developing ship-building — in India. 421.
Duty-free industrial coloured salt and the fishing — in Sind. 24.
Superintendent of —, Delhi. 417.
- INFLATION—**
Question re—
Measures for checking — in India. 123-25.
Monetary — and rise in prices in India. 130.
- INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT—**
Question re new appointments of officers in the —. 297.
- INFORMATION OFFICER(S)—**
Question re—
Creation of post of an Additional Deputy Principal —. 494.
Qualifications, etc., of the Additional Deputy Principal —. 494.
- INJURY(IES)—**
Question re equalization of rates of allowance for men and women under the Indian War — Scheme. 68.
- INSPECTOR(S)—**
Question re method of recruitment of — and Superintendents in Posts and Telegraphs Department. 21-22.
- INSPECTOR(S), PERMANENT WAY—**
Question re Muslim and non-muslim apprenticeship — on Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.
- INSTITUTE(S)—**
Question re—
Affiliation of Forestry training — of Dehra Dun to university. 54-55.
Stations on North Western Railway having European — for employees. 345-47.
- INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE—**
Election of a Member to the Council of the Indian —, Bangalore. 195-96, 495.
- INSTITUTION(S)—**
Question re — of Engineers. 233-34.
- INSTRUCTION(S)—**
Question re — issued by the Chief Medical Officer, East Indian Railway, regarding the staff reporting sick. 188.
- INTERMEDIATE GRADE(S)—**
Question re persons recruited in — on East Indian Railway. 25.
See also "Grade(s)".
- INTERNATIONAL AVIATION POLICY (IES)—**
See "Policy(ies)".
- INTERNEE(S)—**
Question re examination by tribunals of cases of detenus and — under Defence of India Act. 118.
- INTERVIEW(S)—**
Question re—
— and training of Punjabee candidates in Punjabi language at Walton School, Lahore. 179.
— of candidates for the post of Deputy Assistant Controller of Purchase. 169-70.
Restrictions on — with detenus. 483.
- IRAQ—**
Question re death of Major E. M. Martin in —. 108-09, 297.
- IRON—**
Question re supplies of —, steel, cement, etc., to civil population and functions of Honorary Advisers of cement, — and steel. 69-70.
- IRREGULARITY(IES)—**
Question re certain — in the working of the Payment of Wages Act. 230-31.
- IRWIN ROAD—**
Question re—
Newly constructed E type orthodox quarters in the open space between Baird Square East and — in New Delhi. 244.
Want of dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by —, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi. 243.
- ISMAIL KHAN, HAJEE CHOUDHURY MUHAMMAD—**
Motion re the Food Situation. 322-25.
- Question re—**
Contracts for distribution of grains to East Indian Railway servants. 26.
Reducing of Ticket Collectors to letter Delivery Clerks by the Divisional Superintendent, Moradabad. 26.
Sections of Munitions Production Secretariat run by Superintendents and Assistants-in-Charge. 184.
- ITALIAN(S)—**
Question re repatriation of — prisoners in India. 110-11.

J

- JAI PRAKASH NARAIN, MR.—**
Motion for adjournment re—
Alleged inhuman treatment to —. 250-51.
- Question re—**
Re-arrest of —. 293-94, 483-84.
- JAIL(S)—**
Motion for adjournment re hunger-strike of political Prisoners in Bhagalpur camp —. 86.
- Question re—**
Advisability of transferring Delhi Detenus from Punjab — to Delhi —. 482-83.
Treatment meted out to Delhi detenus in Punjab —. 481.

JAMES, SIR F. E.—

- Motion re—**
Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 191-92.
Food Situation. 382-85.
Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.
- Question re—**
Death of Major E. M. Martin in Iraq. 108-09, 297.
Desirability of making more effective use of the All-India Radio Service. 130-31.
Establishment of Central Nursing Council. 417.
Proposal for establishment of an Indian Coconut Board. 55-56.
- Question (Supplementary) re—**
Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 48.
Repatriation of Italian prisoners in India. 110.
- Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—**
Motion to consider. 251-52.
- JEDDA—**
Question re Mogul Line ships given to Shipping Companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to —. 246-47, 435.
- JEHANGIR, SIR COWASJEE—**
Central Excise Bill—
Motion for leave to introduce. 190.
Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to circulate. 264, 270-74.
Motion re—
Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 193, 194.
The Food Situation. 310, 338-40, 389, 390, 451, 510, 511, 537.
- Question (Supplementary) re—**
Charges re profiteering in respect of food-stuffs supplied to Bengal. 239.
Compensation for air-conditioning sets requisitioned from private owners. 352, 353.
Price paid for imported locomotives. 175, 177.
- JINNAH, MR. M. A.—**
Motion re the Food Situation. 498, 508, 509, 510, 513, 517, 522, 524-529.
- JOGENDRA SINGH, THE HONOURABLE SIR—**
Motion re the Food Situation. 307-10, 313.
- JOSHI, MR. N. M.—**
Appointment of — on the Committee on Petitions. 139.
Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—
Motion to circulate. 253, 263-68, 272, 273.
Motion for adjournment re—
Alleged inhuman treatment to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 251.
Failure to take timely action for preventing acute Food Crisis in Bengal. 84.
- Motion re—**
Election of members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 192, 193.
The food situation. 200, 360, 361, 395-98, 499.
Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

- Advisability of transferring Delhi Detenus from Punjab Jails to Delhi Jail. 482-83.
Arrest of Mr. Raghunandan Saran. 480-81.
Equalization of rates of allowance for men and women under the Indian War Injuries Scheme. 68.
Indian Seamen engaged on the United Kingdom registered ships, etc. 68.
Insertion in Government contracts of condition for fair treatment of labour. 68.
Medical treatment of Professor N. K. Nigam. 481.
Persons arrested and detained in Delhi under rules 26 and 129 of the Defence of India Rules, etc. 294-96.
Release of Congress Detenus of Delhi. 481-82.
Security and political prisoners. 126.
Treatment meted out to Delhi detenus in Punjab Jails. 481.
- Question (Supplementary) re—**
Certain irregularities in the working of the Payment of Wages Act. 231.
Coal supplies to various industries. 15, 16.
Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 49.
Detention of Congress Working Committee Members. 485.
Distribution of food in Bengal through Food Department. 405.
Food Conferences and Standing Food Committee. 63.
Framing of rules to enforce Reciprocity Act. 55.
Import of foodgrains from Australia and America. 409.
Industrial organisation of India. 410.
Mogul Line ships given to shipping companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jedda. 247.
Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 293.
Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 49.
Representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik regarding war bonus to workers. 415.
Stations on North-Western Railway having European Institutes for employees. 346-47.
- Resolution re—**
Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 571-73, 577, 578.
- JUMA PRAYER(S)—**
See "Prayer(s)".
- JUTE—**
Question re agreement for fixation of maximum prices of — by Indian — Mills Association. 17-18.
- JUTE MILLS ASSOCIATION—**
See "Association(s)".

K

- KAILASH BIHARI LALL, MR.—**
Election of — to the Delhi University Court. 441.
Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 158-59.

Motion for Adjournment *re* hunger strike of Political prisoners in Bhagalpur Camp Jail. 86.

Motion *re* Food Situation. 302, 466-68.

Question *re*—

Administration in Bihar of the scheme for checking of profiteering in salt. 126-27.

Bihar detenus under Defence of India Rules. 488-89.

Insufficiency of wood fuel at the Delhi Cremation Ghat. 563-64.

Location of W.A.C. (I) hostels. 491.

Persons detained and convicted in Bihar during the last political movement. 490.

Principles for classification of prisoners. 489-90.

Projects of new roads completed by Bihar Government from the Central Road Fund. 551-52.

Restrictions on released Delhi security prisoners. 488.

Uniforms of the Indian personnel of W.A.C. (I). 490-91.

Viceroy's Relief Fund collections for Bihar Earthquake sufferers. 489.

Question (Supplementary) *re*—

Communal representation in Supply Department. 3.

Parts of India where famine prevails. 229.

Students admitted to Dhanbad School of Mines. 417.

Resolution *re* recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 578.

KAMALUDDIN AHMAD, SHAMS-UL-ULEMA—

Question *re* Alumina imported duty free. 80, 563.

KANCHRAPARA—

Question *re*—

Chinese workmen in — Workshop. 348.

Discharge of Mr. Halder, officiating Chief Chemist at — Railway Workshop. 174.

Yugoslav Die-Casting Expert employed at — Workshop. 348.

KARACHI—

Question *re*—

Broadcasting station for —. 122.

Fixation of lower pay for Grade I Guards in — Division, North Western Railway, on abolition of that Grade. 545.

Not allowing Scindia Steam Navigation Company vessel to carry full load of food to Bengal from —. 225-26.

Reconstruction of the Pilgrim Camp, —. 246.

Temporary tracers in the office of Divisional Superintendent, —. 25.

KASAULI—

Question *re* inadequate Sikh representation on Cantonment Board —. 491.

KAZIS BILL—

See "Muslim —" under "Bill(s)".

KAZMI, QAZI MUHAMMAD AHMAD—

Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill — (Amendment of section 100). —

Motion to continue. 140.

Dissolution of Muslim Marriages (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to continue. 140.

Indian Evidence (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to continue. 140.

Muslim Kazis Bill—

Motion to continue. 140.

Question *re*—

Concert party disbanded at Ferozepore Cantonment. 120.

Desirability of constructing a mosque in the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun. 23-24.

Desirability of stopping sale of Baluchi Women. 6-9.

Equalising of scales of pay of grade V, East Indian Railway. 347.

Lack of uniformity in granting overtime and night shift allowances of East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 172-73.

Minimum qualification for recruitment of candidates as upper division clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Minimum qualifications for recruitment of Hindus as lower grade clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenue, Western Division. 283.

Muslim recruitment in the Central Excises and Salt Revenue, Western Division. 283-84.

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on East Indian Railway. 414-15.

Percentage of and qualifications for Muslim recruitment in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Promotion of non-technical hands as chargemen on East Indian Railway. 9-10.

Promotion to selection grade of non-technical hands on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 172.

Racial discrimination in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 10-11.

Racial discrimination in promotions to selection grade on East Indian Railway. 170-71.

Racial discrimination on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on Medical grounds. 10.

Scales of pay applied to persons entering railway service as a result of competitive examination. 171-72.

Scheme submitted by Mr. S. M. Zahur Ali regarding concert parties. 120-21.

Tonga Stand at Roorkee Railway Station. 347-48.

Welfare and Amenities Directorate and entertainment of Indian troops. 118-20.

Question (Supplementary) *re* measures for checking inflation in India. 125.

KEROSENE SCARCITY—

Question *re* — in Ajmer. 438.

KEY SERVICE—

See "Service(s)".

KHARE, THE HONOURABLE DR. N. B.—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 152.

Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 143.

KING'S "COMMISSION(S)"—

See "Commission(s)".

KIRBY, MR. W. H.—

Motion *re* the Food Situation. 334-37.

Oath of office. 281.

KRISHNAMACHARI, MR. T. T.—

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to circulate. 271, 274-76.

Motion for Adjournment *re* failure to consult the Legislature *re* agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. 84-85.

Motion *re* the Food Situation. 379-82.

Question *re*—

Additional quota for newsprint given to certain newspapers. 247-48.

Compensation for air-conditioning sets requisitioned from private owners. 352-53.

Foodgrains Policy Committee's recommendation regarding sale of precious metals to the cultivator. 292.

Improving of treatment of political prisoners. 294.

Lease-Lend obligations incurred by India. 479-80.

Mogul Line ships given to shipping Companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 246-47.

Motor vehicles supplied to the Trade for sale to public. 352.

Mutual Aid Plan of the Canadian Government. 478-79.

Participation of India in the Allied Monetary Conference. 480.

Post-war development of Civil Aviation in India. 355-56.

Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 293-94.

Report of the Commonwealth Air Force Conference, London. 355; 356.

Revision of the Financial Settlement of 1939 between India and Great Britain. 480.

Sale of gold by Reserve Bank to the public. 478.

Supply of wireless sets to the Trade at cost. 248.

Question (Supplementary) *re*—

Activities of Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia. 113.

Award of enemy prize ships to India. 64.

Distribution of food in Bengal through Food Department. 405.

Gregory Committee's recommendations concerning supply of precious metals for sale to the cultivator. 122.

Industrial organisation of India. 410.

Measures for checking inflation in India. 124, 125.

Monetary inflation and rise in prices in India. 130.

Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 484.

Ration permits for purchase of authorised newsprint. 67.

Representation of India at the Empire Air Conference in London. 20.

Treatment of political prisoners and Congress detenus. 114-15.

Resolution *re* Stabilization of Prices. 89, 90.

KUREEL, MR. PIARE LALL—

Question *re*—

Commissioned officers in Civil Pioneer Force, United Provinces. 248-49.

Counting of services of commissioned officers in Civil Pioneer Force as war service. 249.

KUSHALPAL SINGH, RAJA BAHADUR—

Election of — to the Delhi University Court. 441.

L

LABOUR—

Question *re*—

Feeding of — engaged on Military Works in Bengal by Military Authorities. 80, 129-30.

Insertion in Government Contracts of condition for fair treatment of —. 68.

LABOUR DEPARTMENT—

Question *re* supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 81.

LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL—

See "Hospital(s)".

LADY HARDINGE ROAD—

Question *re* want of dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road, — in New Delhi. 243.

LAHORE—

Motion for adjournment *re* arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of —. 250.

Question *re* interviews and training of Punjabee candidates in Punjabi Language at Walton School, —. 179.

LALCHAND NAVALRAI, MR.—

Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to pass. 279.

Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—

Motion to circulate (as reported by the Joint Committee). 446.

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 146, 154-58, 162.

Motion for Adjournment *re* non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 34-35.

Motion *re* the Food Situation. 222, 311, 498, 533.

Question re—
Accommodation for Railway police at Sukkur. 3-4.
Activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways). 231.
Attachment of property of certain Railway employees at Ghaziabad for realising District Board Tax. 543-44.
Block on the promotion of Station Correspondence Clerks on North Western Railway. 545.
Certain irregularities in the working of the Payment of Wages Act. 230-31.
Contr. on paper other than newsprint. 52-53.
Desirability of stopping the publication of the *Indian Information*. 25.
District Board tax levied on wages of railway staff. 543.
Educational standard for recruitment to subordinate service on North Western Railway. 554.
Employees discharged for disciplinary reasons on North Western Railway. 183.
Export of wool to Basra for Russia. 552.
Extensions of service to State Railway gazetted officers. 358-59.
Fixation of lower pay for Grade I Guards in Karachi Division, North Western Railway, on abolition of that Grade. 545.
Harassment of railway staff by police. 347.
Interviews and training of Punjabee candidates in Punjabi language at Walton School, Lahore. 179.
Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal employees. 4-5.
Maltreatment of certain *Muccadams* at Quetta Station by Anti-corruption Department. 350.
Method of recruitment of Customs preventive officers. 107-08.
Misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway staff and vendors. 167-69.
Non-inclusion in State Railway Establishment Code of provisions of Rule 7 of Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules. 358.
Personal Assistants to Station Masters on North Western Railway. 22.
Progress as regards abolition of Lower Gazetted Services on Indian Railways. 3.
Promotion of Guards from Grade I to Grade II on North Western Railway. 554.
Ration permits for purchase of authorised newsprint. 67.
Sindhias as Assistant Directors, etc., in the Sind and Baluchistan Postal Circles. 173.
Stations on North Western Railway having European Institutes for employees. 345-47.
Supply of standard cloth to Railway employees. 183.

Temporary tracers in the office of Divisional Superintendent, Karachi. 25.
Tickets issued from Delhi for Delhi Ambala section railway stations. 345.
Trial of ticketless travellers by a retired Magistrate in the Sind Area of North Western Railway. 349-50.
Question (Supplementary) re—
Advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 12-13.
Broadcasting station for Karachi. 122.
Causes of present food crisis in Bengal. 418.
Communal representation in Supply Department. 2.
Continuance of expenditure on A.R.P. in Sind. 476.
Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 49.
Distribution of food in Bengal through Food Department. 405.
Evacuees and refugees in India. 477.
Import of foodgrains from Australia and America. 409.
Method of recruitment of Inspectors and Superintendents in Posts and Telegraphs Department. 22.
Persons detained for reasons of state. 1, 2.
Pilgrimage to Arabia by Land Routes. 183.
Price paid for imported locomotives. 176.
Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 294.
Recommendations of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary goods and precious metals to the cultivator. 230.
Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 50.
Resignation of Mr. J. R. Blair, I.C.S. 110.
Scheme submitted by Mr. S. M. Jahur Ali regarding concert parties. 121.
Supply and distribution of rice, wheat, etc., in Bengal. 404.
The American Exclusion Act and its effect on Indians. 178.
Resolution re—
Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 568.
Reform of the Cantonment Service. 584-85.
LALLJEE, MR. HOOSAINBHAY, A.—
Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.
Nomination of — to the Panel of Chairmen. 86-87.
Motion re—
Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 192.
The Food Situation. 340, 368-72, 389.

Question (Supplementary) re—
Activities of the Conciliation Officer (Railways). 231.
Charges re profiteering in respect of foodstuffs supplied to Bengal. 238.
Control on paper other than newsprint. 53.
Insertion in Government contracts of condition for fair treatment of Labour. 68.
Mogul Line ships given to Shipping Companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 247.
Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 50.
Reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.
Sale of gold by Reserve Bank to the public. 478.
Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 60.
Viceroy's Relief Fund Collections for Bihar Earthquake sufferers. 489.
Resolution re—
Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 559-70.
LAND ROUTE(S)—
Question re—
Facilities for pilgrimage to Arabia by —. 350-51.
Pilgrimage to Arabia by —. 73, 182-83.
LAWN(S)—
Question re neglect of — in front of orthodox clerks' quarters in D. I. Z. area, New Delhi. 412.
LAWSON, MR. C. P.—
Motion re the Food situation. 218-21.
Question (Supplementary) re compensation for air-conditioning sets requisitioned from private owners. 353.
LEASE-LEND—
Question re — agreement between the United States of America and India. 115-16.
LEASE-LEND OBLIGATIONS—
Question re — incurred by India. 479-80.
LEATHER GOODS—
Question re communal representation among — contractors of the Supply Department. 187.
LEBANON—
Motion for adjournment re failure to implement their guarantee of independence to — by the British Government. 359.
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY(IES)—
Question re holding of a secret sitting of — during current session. 50.
LEGISLATURE(S)—
Motion for adjournment re failure to consult the — re agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. 84-85.
Question re holding of fresh elections of the Central —. 50-51.
LETTER BOXES—
Question re — removed by rioters and Postal Authorities during recent disturbances. 24.

LETTER DELIVERY CLERKS—
Question re reducing of Ticket Collectors to — by the Divisional Superintendent, Moradabad. 26.
LIABILITY(IES)—
Question re — for cost of doubling the Bengal and Assam Railway Metre Gauge Lines for military reasons. 493.
LIAQAT ALI KHAN, NAWABZADA MUHAMMAD—
Election of — to the Delhi University Court. 441.
Motion re The food situation. 205, 206, 222, 361, 389, 392-95, 495, 515, 535, 536, 537.
Question (Supplementary) re advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 13.
Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65, 66.
LOCATION(S)—
Question re — of W.A.C. (I). hostels. 491.
LOCOMOTIVE(S)—
Question re price paid for imported —. 175-77.
LONDON—
Question re—
Report of the Commonwealth Air Force Conference, —. 355, 356.
Representation of India at the Empire Air Conference in —. 20.
LONG RANGE FOOD POLICY COMMITTEE—
See "Committee(s)".
LOWER GAZETTED SERVICE—
Question re promotion of subordinates to — in Traffic Department, North Western Railway. 354-55.
See also "Service(s)".
LOWER GRADE CLERKS—
See "Clerk(s)".
LUCKNOW—
Question re communal representation in certain postal offices at —. 187.
LUGGAGE RULE(S)—
See "Rule(s)".

M

MACHINERY(IES)—
Question re private imports of industrial plant and —. 66.
MADRAS—
Question re—
Devastation due to floods in —. 476.
Political detenus and convicts in — Presidency. 475.
Rice and other commodities exported from — Province. 405-08.
MADRAS AND SOUTHERN MAHRATTA RAILWAY—
See "Railway(s)".

MADRASI(S)—

Question re Bengali and — officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

MAGISTRATE(S)—

Question re trial of ticketless travellers by a retired — in the Sind Area of North Western Railway. 349-50.

MAIL(S)—

Question re desirability of introducing — Motor service between Amraoti and Daryapur. 549.

MAITRA, PANDIT LAKSHMI KANTA—

Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)— Motion to circulate (as reported by the Joint Committee). 446.

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill— Motion to refer to Select Committee. 165.

Motion for Adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 39.

Motion re The food situation. 214-18, 310, 334, 366, 368, 459, 497, 526, 536.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

Expenditure on war publicity. 126.
Measure for synthetic preparation of mineral oil. 19-20.

Private imports of Industrial plant and Machinery. 66.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Censorship on publication of news about famine in Bengal. 129.

Control on paper other than newsprint. 52, 53.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 48.

Examination by tribunals of cases of defenues and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.

Food Conferences and Standing Food Committee. 63.

Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal employees. 5.

Measures for checking inflation in India. 124.

Persons detained for reasons of state. 2.

Repatriation of Italian prisoners in India. 111.

Reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.

Review by Government of India of the purchase programme of Supply Department. 19.

Rules for purchase of foodstuffs for fighting forces. 486.

Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65.

Vacillating policy as regards price of control of wheat, rice, etc. 59.

Resolution re Stabilization of Prices. 96, 97.

MALARIA—

Question re — in Delhi Province. 431-32

MALAYA STATES—

Question re allocation of expenditure for reconquest of Burma and —. 116.

MALTREATMENT—

Question re — of certain *Muccadams* at Quetta Station by Anti-Corruption Department. 350.

MAN(EN)—

Question re equalization of rates of allowance for — and women under the Indian War Injuries Scheme. 68.

MANAGER(S)—

Question re appointments of — of Government of India Presses, New Delhi and Calcutta. 424-25.

MANGAL SINGH, SARDAR—

Motion for Adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 35-36.

Motion re The food situation. 313, 315-19, 332, 334, 340, 388, 389, 534, 535.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

Activities of Subhas Chandra Bose in East Asia. 113.

Allocation of expenditure for reconquest of Burma and Malaya States. 116.

Cases tried by the Anti-Corruption Tribunals. 118.

Communal representation in Supply Department. 2-3.

Companies permitted by the Controller of Capital Issues to be registered under the Companies Act. 116-17.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 47-49.

Deaths in Bengal. 231.

Foodgrains position. 232-33.

Holding of a secret sitting of Legislative Assembly during current session. 50.

Holding of fresh elections of the Central Legislature. 50-51.

Indian Agent's propaganda in the United States of America. 122.

Lease-lend agreement between the United States of America and India. 115-16.

Persons detained for reasons of state. 1-2.

Position concerning recruitment to Emergency Commissions. 115.

Provinces having statutory price control and cities having rationing. 231-32.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 49-50.

Reports by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.

Treatment of political prisoners and Congress detenues. 113-15.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Lease-Lend obligations incurred by India. 480.

Release of Congress Detenus of Delhi. 482.

Restrictions on interviews with defenues. 483.

MANUFACTURE(S)—**Question re—**

Facilities for — of manures and fertilizers. 432, 436-37, 552-53.

— of opium alkaloids for medicinal preparations in India. 491-92.

MANURE(S)—**Question re—**

Facilities for manufacture of — and fertilizers. 432, 436-37, 552-53.

MARKET ROAD—

Question re want of dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, — and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi. 243.

MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Dissolution of Muslim —" under "Bill(s)". 140.

MARRIAGE DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL—

See "Hindu —" under "Bill(s)".

MARTIN, MAJOR E. M.—

Question re death of — in Iraq. 108-09. 297.

MASTER AGREEMENT—

See "Agreement(s)".

MATERNITY BENEFIT (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Mines —" under "Bill(s)".

MAURITIUS—

Question re Indians shot in Police firing in —. 416.

MAXWELL, THE HONOURABLE SIR REGINALD—

Declarations of exemption and notification under the Registration of Foreigners Act (laid on the table). 297-99.

Motion for adjournment re—

Alleged inhuman treatment to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 250, 251.

Arrest of Mr. Pardiwalla, Barrister of Lahore. 250.

Hunger-strike of political prisoners in Bhagalpur Camp Jail. 84.

Ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other Muslim security prisoners. 495.

Non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 44.

Victoria Memorial (Amendment) Bill—

Motion for leave to introduce. 30.

Motion to consider. 251, 252.

Motion to pass. 252.

MEASURE(S)—

Question re — for checking inflation in India. 123-25.

MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT—**Question re—**

Lack of uniformity in granting overtime and night shift allowances of East Indian Railway —. 172-73.

Promotion to selection grade of non-technical hands on East Indian Railway —. 172.

Racial discrimination in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway —. 10-11.

Racial discrimination on East Indian Railway — as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on medical grounds. 10.

MEDICAL GROUND(S)—

Question re racial discrimination on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on —. 10.

MEDICAL TREATMENT—

Question re — of Professor N. K. Nigam. 481.

MEHTA, MR. JAMNADAS M.—

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill— Motion to circulate. 259-62, 271, 272, 274.

Motion for Adjournment re continuance of Central Government's subsidy to Sind. 86.

Motion re the food situation. 206, 301, 310-15, 317, 318, 319, 508, 510, 512, 536.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal employees. 5.

Non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in Berar sub-post offices. 548.

Release of Congress Detenus of Delhi. 482.

Sale of gold by Reserve Bank to the public. 478.

Resolution re Stabilization of prices. 87-91, 98, 101, 102.

Statement of Business by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed. 106.

MEHTAB SINGH, SIRDAR—

Question re issue of permits of wheat and other foodgrains by —. 418.

MERCHANT(S)—

Question re duty-free industrial coloured salt and hides and skin — in Sind. 25.

Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill— See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

MESSAGE(S)—

— from His Excellency the Governor General intimating decision not to address both Houses of the Indian Legislature during the session. 26.

METALS—**Question re—**

Foodgrains Policy Committee's recommendation regarding sale of precious — to the cultivator. 292.

Gregory Committee's recommendations concerning supply of precious — for sale to the cultivator. 121-22.

Recommendations of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary goods and precious — to the cultivators. 229-30.

METALLURGICAL INSPECTOR(S)—

Question re Muslims as —. 493.

METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE—

Question re —. 351-52.

METRE GAUGE LINE(S)—

Question re liability for cost of doubling the Bengal and Assam Railway — for military reasons. 178, 493.

MILCH CATTLE—

See "Cattle".

MILITARY—

Question re—

Rice for — requirements out of provincial reserve in Central Provinces. 233.
Supply of rations to the — in Bengal at concessional rates. 80-81.

MILITARY ACADEMY—

Question re desirability of constructing a mosque in the Indian —, Dehra Dun. 23-24.

MILITARY ACCOUNT DEPARTMENT—

Question re advertisement for recruitment of temporary clerks by —. 287.

MILITARY AUTHORITY(IES)—

Question re feeding of labour engaged on military works in Bengal by —. 80, 129-30.

MILITARY ENGINEERING SERVICE—

Question re reduction of the Basic pay of certain temporary subordinates of the —. 288-89.

MILITARY PURPOSES—

Question re allocation of cost of building new roads for —. 290.

MILITARY REASONS—

Question re liability for cost of doubling the Bengal and Assam Railway Meter Gauge Lines for —. 178.

MILITARY TROOPS—

Question re misbehaviour of — towards Railway staff and vendors. 167-69.

MILITARY WORK(S)—

Question re feeding of labour engaged on — in Bengal by Military authorities. 80, 129-30.

MINES MATERNITY BENEFIT (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

MINE(S), SCHOOL OF—

Question re students admitted to Dhanbad —. 416-17.

MINERAL OIL—

Question re measure for synthetic preparation of —. 19-20.

MINERAL RESOURCES—

Question re employment of South African White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's —. 413-14.

MINTO ROAD—

Question re delay in attending to the complaints made to — and Havelock Square Enquiry Offices, New Delhi. 243-44.

MISBEHAVIOUR—

Question re — of military troops towards Railway staff and vendors. 167-69.

MISRA, PANDIT SHAMBHUDAYAL—

Motion re the food situation. 302, 303, 364.

MOGUL LINE—

Question re — ships given to shipping companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 246-47, 435.

MOLASSES—

Question re export of sugar, wheat and rice and the production of petrol from —. 23.

MONETARY CONFERENCE—

See "Conference(s)".

MONETARY INFLATION—

See "Inflation".

MORADABAD—

Question re reducing of Ticket Collectors to letter Delivery Clerks by the Divisional Superintendent, —. 26.

MORTALITY—

Motion for Adjournment re failure to give publicity to — due to starvation in Bengal. 84.

MOSQUE(S)—

Question re desirability of constructing a — in the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun. 23-24.

MOTION(S)—

— re the Food situation. 196-224, 299-343, 359-401, 446-73, 495-541.

Point of order re — proposing Communication of Formal Address to H. E. The Governor General. 440-41.

MOTION(S) FOR ADJOURNMENT—

See "Adjournment(s)".

MOTOR SERVICE(S)—

Question re desirability of introducing Mail — between Amraoti and Daryapur. 549.

MOTOR VEHICLES—

Question re — supplied to the Trade for sale to public. 352.

MOTOR VEHICLES (DRIVERS) AMENDMENT BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

MOTOR VEHICLES RULE(S)—

See "Rule(s)".

MUCCADUM(S)—

Question re maltreatment of certain — at Quetta Station by Anti-corruption Department. 350.

MUDALIAR, THE HONOURABLE DEWAN BAHADUR SIR A. RAMASWAMI—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill— Motion to refer to Select Committee. 148.

Motion for Adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 33, 39-42.

Motion re the Food situation. 313, 471, 472, 505-13, 527.

Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 577.

MUNDA PANDEY—

Question re two dead bodies found near Railway lines between Dalpatpur and — Railway stations. 357.

MUNITION PRODUCTION SECRETARIAT—

Question re sections of — run by Superintendents and Assistants-in-Charge. 184.

MURTUZA SAHIB BAHADUR, MAULVI SYED—

Motion re the Food Situation. 468-70.

MUSAFIRKHANA—

Question re recommendations re new — at Calcutta. 246.

MUSLIM(S)—

Motions for adjournment re ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other — security prisoners. 495.

Question re—

Bias against posting of —, etc., as Sub-Postmasters in Central Postal Circle. 548.

Expenditure on facilities for — Haj pilgrims. 241-42.

— and non- — apprentice Permanent Way Inspectors on Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

— as Metallurgical Inspectors. 493.

— demand of regulating promotions on communal basis. 25.

— recruited to certain posts in Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore. 353-54.

Paucity of — Office Superintendents, etc., in Civil Departments at Quetta. 550.

MUSLIM ASSISTANT(S)—

See "Assistant(s)".

MUSLIM HEAD CLERK(S)—

See "Head Clerk(s)".

MUSLIM KAZIS BILL—

See "Bill(s)".

MUSLIM MARRIAGES (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Dissolution of —" under "Bill(s)".

MUSLIM OFFICE SUPERINTENDENT(S)—

See "Superintendent(s)".

MUSLIM RECRUITMENT—

See "Recruitment".

MUSLIM UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL—

See "Aligarh —" under "Bill(s)".

MUTTRA JUNCTION—

Question re inadequacy of platform sheds at — Railway Station. 5.

MUTUAL AID PLAN—

Question re — of the Canadian Government. 478-79.

N**NADU, MR. G. RANGIAH—**

Motion re the Food Situation. 455-57.

Question re—

Daily rations for political detenus and convicts. 476.

Devastation due to floods in Madras. 476.

Discrimination in releasing political detenus and convicts. 475.

Foodgrains imported in Bengal. 408-09.

Political detenus and convicts in Madras Presidency. 475.

Rice and other commodities exported from Madras Province. 405-08.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway staff and vendors. 169.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 50.

NAIRANG, SYED GHULAM BHIK—

Appointment of — on the Committee on Petitions. 139.

Indian Merchant Shipping (Amendment) Bill—

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 143.

Motion re—

Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 191.

The Food Situation. 321.

Nomination of — to the Panel of Chairmen. 86-87.

Resolution re Reform of the Cantonment Service. 582-84.

NAME BOARD(S)—

Question re absence of station — in Urdu on Central Provinces Railways. 550-51.

NANKANA SAHIB—

Question re stoppage of railway tickets for stations round —. 547-48.

NATIONAL WAR FRONT—

Question re expenditure on the —. 132-37.

See also "War Front".

NAUMAN, MR. MUHAMMAD—

Motion re the Food Situation. 452-54, 536.

Question re—

Muslim and non-muslim apprentice Permanent Way Inspectors on Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

Non-observance of quota of Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

Persons recruited in intermediate grade on East Indian Railway. 25.

Persons recruited in the Intermediate Grades on Bengal and Assam Railway. 563.

NAVY—

Question re Indian Christians serving in the Army, — and Air Force. 281.

NAYUDU, MR. M. RAMACHADRA RAO—

Oath of office. 47.

NEOGY, MR. K. C.—

Motion re — The food situation. 210-11, 303-07, 390, 453, 497, 498, 504, 526, 535, 536.

Nomination of — to the Panel of Chairmen. 86-87.

Question re—

Advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and East Indian Railways. 11-13.

Agreement for fixation of maxima prices of jute by Indian Jute Mills Association. 17-18.

Allocation of cost of building new roads for military purposes. 290.

Allocation of expenditure on troops raised in India for outside service. 290-91.

Award of enemy prize ships to India. 63-64.

Banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 285-86.

Censorship on publication of news about famine in Bengal. 127-29.

Charges re profiteering in respect of foodstuffs supplied to Bengal. 236-39.

Coal supplies to various industries. 14-16.

Dearness of vegetables and fruits in Bengal. 425-26.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal. 239-40.

Detention of Congress Working Committee Members. 484-85.

Developing ship-building industry in India. 421.

Differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping on Indian Register. 427-28.

Domestic coke supply in Calcutta. 13-14.

Drop in the output of coal. 421-22.

Facilities for manufacture of Manures and Fertilizers. 432, 552-53.

Feeding of Labour engaged on Military Works in Bengal by Military Authorities. 80, 129-30.

Financial obligations of India in respect of operations of the East Asia Command. 290.

Fixation of wholesale and retail prices by Government of Bengal for paddy and rice. 73-74.

Increased death rates in Calcutta and other districts of Bengal. 240-41.

Liability for cost of doubling the Bengal and Assam Railway Metre Gauge Lines for military reasons. 178, 493.

Making India self-supporting in quinine and Cinchona products. 432-33.

Malaria in Delhi Province. 431-32.

Manufacture of opium alkaloids for medicinal preparations in India. 491-92.

Master Agreement between the United States of America and the United Kingdom. 290.

Monetary inflation and rise in prices in India. 130.

Non-acceptance of larger quantity of good quality coal for Railways. 22.

Operations of the "Grow more Food" Campaign. 428-31.

Position of supplies of foodgrains in Bengal. 79.

Possibilities of utilising certain United States of America troop carriers for carrying Australian wheat to India. 241.

Post-war Empire and International Aviation policy. 16-17.

Post-war shipping policy. 420.

Price paid for imported locomotives. 175-77.

Proposals for establishment of United and Associated Nations' Stabilization Fund. 284-85.

Repatriation of destitute persons from Calcutta. 76.

Representation by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 427.

Resignation by House Surgeons of Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital, Delhi. 423-24.

Rice, paddy, etc., carried to Bengal by different Railways. 185-86.

Rules for purchase of foodstuffs for fighting forces. 485-87.

Scheme for distribution of foodgrains in Bengal. 235-36.

Statements by Secretary of State for India on food situation in India. 76-79.

Stocks for foodgrains hoarded by employers in Bengal. 75-76.

Stocks of foodgrains released from Army reserves for civilians in Bengal. 82, 129.

Supply of essential commodities to non-Indian forces stationed in India. 285.

Supply of foodgrains at controlled or concessional prices to non-military employees of Central Government and Government of Bengal. 74-75.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Defence Department in Bengal at concession rates. 139.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in Bengal at concession rates. 81.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Finance Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Food Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81-82.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Labour Department in Bengal at concession rates. 81.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Posts and Air Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Railway and War Transport Departments in Bengal at concession rates. 184-85.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Supply Department in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

Supply of foodgrains to non-military employees of the War Department in Bengal at concession rates. 138.

Supply of rations to fighting forces in Bengal at concession rates. 138-39.

Supply of rations to the military in Bengal at concession rates. 80-81.

Surplus wagons at Depots in coalfields of Bengal and Bihar and raising of coal output. 357-58.

The coal trade Conference at Delhi. 422-23.

Transport of rice and wheat to Bengal and distribution thereof. 433-34.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Causes of present food crisis in Bengal. 419.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 48, 49.

Differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping of the Indian Register. 434, 435.

Distribution of food in Bengal through Food Department. 405.

Foodgrains imported in Bengal. 408.

Measures for checking inflation in India. 124.

Not allowing Scindia Steam Navigation Company vessel to carry full load of food to Bengal from Karachi. 226.

Parts of India where famine prevails. 229.

Preserving food for East African Forces. 225.

Production of and forecasts for foodgrains. 411.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 49.

Repatriation of Italian prisoners in India. 111.

Sale of gold by Reserve Bank to the public. 478.

Scheme submitted by Mr. S. M. Jahur Ali regarding concert parties. 121.

Steps for relieving food scarcity in Bengal. 58.

Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65.

Supply of wireless sets to the Trade at cost. 248.

Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 60.

NEW DELHI—

Question re—

Appointments of Managers of Government of India Presses, — and Calcutta. 424-25.

Ban on keeping milch cattle in clerks' quarters in —. 412.

Constructing a large hotel for Indian clerks in —. 242-43.

Delay in attending to the complaints made to Minto Road and Havelock Square Enquiry Offices, —. 243-44.

Desirability of closing certain passages in Havelock and Baird Squares. —. 244-45.

Growing of more vegetables in orthodox quarters in —. 245.

Neglect of lawns in front of orthodox clerk's quarters in D. I. Z. area, —. 412.

Newly constructed E type orthodox quarters in the open space between Baird Square East and Irwin Road in —. 244.

Rules concerning "out of class" allottees in —. 68-69.

Want of dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in —. 243.

NEWS—

Question re censorship on publication of — about famine in Bengal. 127-29.

NEWS AGENCY(IES)—

Question re recognised Foreign Correspondents and —. 493-94.

NEWS ROLL—

Question re position concerning — and other paper. 227.

NEWSPAPER(S)—

Procedure laid down by Mr. President that the Member who is the questioner should furnish a copy of the — (on whose report his question has been based) to the Assembly Department; it cannot be circulated to all the Members. 5.

Question re—

Additional quota for newsprint given to certain —. 247-48.

Policy regarding giving of advertisements to —. 131-32.

NEWSPRINT—

Question re—

Additional quota for — given to certain newspapers. 247-48.

Control on paper other than —. 52-53.

Ration permits for purchase of authorised —. 67.

NIGAM, PROFESSOR N. K.—

Question re medical treatment of —. 481.

NIGHT SHIFT ALLOWANCES—

See "Allowance(s)".

NOMINATION(S)—

— of the Panel of Chairmen. 86-87.

NON-INDIAN SHIPPING—

Question re differential treatment to Indian and — on Indian Register. 427-28, 434-35.

NON-MILITARY EMPLOYEES—

See "Employee(s)".

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY—

See "Railway(s)".

NOTIFICATION(S)—

Declarations of Exemption and — under the Registration of Foreigners Act (laid on the table). 297-99.

NURSING COUNCIL—

Question re establishment of Central —. 417.

O

OATH OF OFFICE—

Abhyankar, Mr. N. G. 1.

Bewoor, Sir Gurunath. 1.

Greenfield, Mr. H. 403.

Hutchings, Mr. R. H. 281.

Kirby, Mr. W. H. 281.

Nayudu, Mr. M. Ramachandra Rao. 47.

Srivastava, The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad. 1.

Sukthankar, Mr. Y. N. 345.

Tyson, Mr. J. D. 1.

Wakely, Mr. L. J. D. 1.

Zahid Husain, Mr. 1, 543.

OFFICER(S)—

Question re—

Appointment of — and staff in the Food Department. 70-73.

Bengali and Madrassi — in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali — in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

Commissioned — in Civil Pioneer Force, United Provinces. 248-49.

Counting of services of commissioned — in Civil Pioneer Force as war services. 249.

Directly recruited Police — in Delhi. 284.

Indians as staff — in General Headquarters. 282.

Method of recruitment of Customs preventive —. 107-08.

New appointments of — in the Department of Information and Broadcasting. 297.

Punjabi — on Bengal and Assam Railway and Assamese and Bengali — on North Western Railway. 175.

Recruitment of gazetted — in Supply Department. 6.

OIL, MINERAL—
Question re measure for synthetic preparation of —. 19-20.

OPERATION(S)—
Question re—
Financial obligations of India in respect of — of the East Asia Command. 282, 290, 492.
— of the "Grow more Food" Campaign. 428-31.

OPIUM—
Question re—
Inability of Ghazipur — Factory to meet demands for — alkaloids. 291-92.
Manufacture of — alkaloids for medicinal preparations in India. 491-92.

OPIUM FACTORY—
See "Factory(ies)".

ORDER(S)—
Motion for adjournment re banning publication of Bengal Governor's — against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84.
Question re—
Banning publication of Bengal Governor's — against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 285-86.
Control — for sale of raw hides in Punjab. 546.
— issued by the officiating Director of Railway Clearing Accounts Office. 181-82.

ORDINANCE(S)—
Question re — for distribution of food-grains in Bengal through registered Co-operative Stores. 403.

ORTHODOX CLERKS' QUARTER(S)—
See "Quarter(s)".

ORTHODOX QUARTER(S)—
See "Quarter(s)".

ODH AND TIRHUT RAILWAY—
See "Railway(s)".

OUTCOME—
Question re — of the "Grow more Food" Campaign. 436.

OUTPUT—
Question re drop in the — of coal. 421-22.

OUTSIDER(S)—
Question re facilities given to — for establishing distillery, etc., in Baluchistan. 549-50.

OVERCROWDING—

Question re—
Action taken against Railway Servants for causing — of trains on North Western Railway. 188-89.
— of trains on North Western Railway. 546-47.

OVERTIME ALLOWANCE(S)—

See "Allowance(s)".

P**PADDY—**

Question re—
Fixation of wholesale and retail prices by Government of Bengal for — and rice. 73-74.
Rice, —, etc., carried to Bengal by different Railways. 185-86.

PAMPHLET(S)—

Question re issue of objectionable — by postal employees. 4-5.

PANEL OF CHAIRMEN—

Nomination of the —. 86-87.

PAPER—

Question re—
Control on paper other than newsprint. 52-53.
Position concerning news roll and other —. 227.

PARDIWALLA, MR.—

Motion for adjournment re arrest of —, Barrister of Lahore. 250.

PARMA NAND, BHAI—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill. 143-65.

Motion to refer to Select Committee. 152-54, 155.

Question re fixing of pay of the retrenched staff re-appointed in the Compilation Section, North Western Railway. 179.

PASS(ES)—

Question re large number of free — issued to applicants on North Western Railway. 545-46.

PASSAGE(S)—

Question re desirability of closing certain — in Havelock and Baird Squares, New Delhi. 244-245.

PASSENGER TICKET(S)—

Question re cash and small coins received from sale of — by East Indian Railway. 24.

PATHANKOTE—

Question re complaints against a Train Examiner at —, North Western Railway. 547.

PATHUR, MR. P. R.—

Motions for adjournment re conviction of — under the Pegging Act, in Durban. 494.

PAUCITY—

Question re—
Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office Superintendents in the offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 173-74.
— of Muslim Office Superintendents, etc., in Civil Departments at Quetta. 550.

PAY—

Question re—
Classification of selection posts of posts Personal Assistants carrying special or personal — in the Government of India Secretariat. 287-88.
Equalising of scales of — of grade V, East Indian Railway. 347.
Fixation of lower — for Grade I Guards in Karachi Division, North Western Railway, on abolition of that Grade. 545.
Fixing of — of the retrenched staff re-appointed in the Compilation Section, North Western Railway. 179.
Reduction of the Basic — of certain temporary subordinates of the Military Engineering Service. 288-89.

PAY, SCALES OF—

Question re—
Equalising of — of grade V, East Indian Railway. 347.
— applied to persons entering railway service as a result of competitive examination. 171-72.

PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT—

See "Act(s)".

PEGGING ACT—

See "Act(s)".

PERMANENT WAY INSPECTOR(S)—

Question re—
Muslim non-muslim apprentice — on Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.
Non-observance of quota of Assistant — on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

PERMIT(S)—

Question re—
Issue of — of wheat and other food-grains by Sirdar Mehtab Singh. 418.
Ration — for purchase of authorised newsprint. 67.

PERSON(S)—

Question re — dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 in Delhi Division of North Western Railway. 555.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT(S)—

Question re—
Classification as selection posts of posts — carrying special or personal pay in the Government of India Secretariat. 287-88.
— to Station Masters on North Western Railway. 22.

PERSONAL PAY—

See "Pay".

PERSONNEL—

Question re uniforms of the Indian — of W.A.C.(I). 490-91.

PETITION(S), COMMITTEE ON—

Appointment of the —. 139.

PETROL—

Question re export of sugar, wheat and rice and the production of — from molasses. 23.

PIARE LALL KUREEL, MR.—

Question re—
Communal representation among leather goods contractors of the Supply Department. 187.
Communal representation in certain Postal offices at Lucknow. 187.
Recruitment of Station Masters, Guards, etc., on East Indian Railway and communal representation therein. 187.
Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army 564-69, 577, 578.

PICTURE(S)—

Question re subsidies to private studios for producing entertainment —. 289-90.

PILGRIM(S)—

Question re—
Arranging a fast boat for Haj —. 246.
Expenditure on facilities for Muslim Haj —. 241-42.
Mogul Line Ships given to shipping companies of Egypt for carrying — to Jeddah. 246-47, 435.
Stoppage of — ships from carrying — to the Hejaz. 245-46.

PILGRIM CAMP—

Question re reconstruction of the —, Karachi. 246.

PILGRIM SHIPS—

Question re ban on the sailings of — from India. 73.
See also "Ship(s)".

PILGRIMAGE—

Question re—
Facilities for — to Arabia by land routes. 350-51.
— to Arabia by land routes. 73, 182-83.

PLAN(S)—

Question re Mutual Air — of the Canadian Government. 478-79.

PLANT(S)—

Question re import of American — for manufacturing sulphuric acid. 351.

PLATFORM SHED(S)—

Question re inadequacy of — at Muttra Junction Railway Station. 5.

POINT(S) OF ORDER—

— re Motion Proposing Communication of Formal Address to H. E. the Governor General. 440-41.

POLICE—

Question re—
Accommodation for Railway — at Sukkur. 3-4.
Harassment of railway staff by —. 347.
Indians shot in — firing in Mauritius. 416.

POLICE OFFICER(S)—

See "Officer(s)".

POLICY(IES)—

Question re—
— regarding giving of advertisements to Newspapers. 131-32.
Post-war Empire and International Aviations —. 16-17.
Vacillating — as regards price control of wheat, rice, etc. 58-60.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT—

Question re Assistant of the — appointed as Assistant Secretary in the Directorate General of Supply. 348.

POLITICAL DETENU(S)—

See "Detenu(s)".

POLITICAL MOVEMENT(S)—

Question re persons detained and convicted in Bihar during the last —. 490.

POLITICAL PRISONER(S)—

See "Prisoner(s)".

POPULATION—

Question re—

Supply of essential commodities of life to civil —. 65-66.

Supply of iron, steel, cement, etc., to civil — and functions of Honorary Advisers of cement, iron and steel. 69-70.

PORT HAJ COMMITTEES—

See "Committee(s)".

POST(S)—

Question re—

Creation of — of an Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer. 494.

Muslims recruited to certain — in Gun and Shell Factory, Cossipore. 353-54.

Non-reservation of — for Sikhs by the Railway Board. 180.

Non-reservation of — for Sikhs in Telegraphs Department. 180.

POST MASTER(S)—

Question re—

Appointing of Urdu School teachers as Branch — in Central Postal Circle. 549.

Bias against posting of Muslims, etc., as Sub — in Central Postal Circle. 548.

POST OFFICE(S)—

Question re—

Delivery of telegrams at Shahdara, Delhi, through —. 554-55.

Non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in Berar sub —. 548.

POSTAL AUTHORITIES—

Question re letter-boxes removed by rioters and — during the recent disturbances. 24.

POSTAL CIRCLE(S)—

Question re—

Appointing of Urdu School teachers as Branch Post Masters in Central —. 549.

Bias against posting of Muslims, etc., as Sub-Postmasters in Central —. 548.

Facilities for Juma prayers in the Central —. 549.

Sindhias as Assistant Directors, etc., in the Sind and Baluchistan —. 173.

POSTAL EMPLOYEE(S)—

See "Employee(s)".

POSTAL OFFICE(S)—

Question re communal representation in certain — at Lucknow. 187.

POSTS AND AIR DEPARTMENT—

Question re supply of foodgrains to employers of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT—

Question re method of recruitment of Inspectors and Superintendents in —. 21-22.

POST-WAR SHIPPING POLICY—

See "Shipping Policy".

POST-WAR SOCIAL SECURITY—

Question re Beveridge Report for —. 410-11.

POWER(S)—

Question re transfer of — to Indians Overseas Department to grant or withdraw visas to evacuees of foreign nationality. 64.

PRAYER(S)—

Question re facilities for Juma — in the Central Postal Circle. 549.

PRECIOUS METAL(S)—

See "Metal(s)".

PRESIDENT, MR. (THE HONOURABLE SIR ABDUR RAHIM)—

Procedure laid down by — that the Member who is the questioner should furnish a copy of the newspaper (on whose report his question has been based) to the Assembly Department; it cannot be circulated to all the Members. 5.

Statement by — re method of taking votes by Division. 26-27.

PRESS(ES)—

Appointments of Managers of Government of India — New Delhi and Calcutta. 424-25.

PRESS ADVISER(S)—

Question re special — in Delhi and his staff. 284.

PRESS ROOM(S)—

Question re rules for admission to the Government of India — and for supply of Government Publications to Trade Unions, etc. 132.

PREVENTIVE OFFICER(S)—

Question re method of recruitment of Custodians —. 107-08.

PRICE(S)—

Question re—

Fixation of wholesale and retail — by Government of Bengal for paddy and rice. 73-74.

Monetary inflation and rise in — in India. 130.

— paid for imported locomotives. 175-77.

Supply of foodgrains at controlled or concessional — to non-military employees of Central Government and Government of Bengal. 74-75.

Resolution re Stabilization of —. 87-105.

PRICE CONTROL—

Question re—

Provinces having statutory — and cities having rationing. 231-32.

Vacillating policy as regards — of wheat, rice, etc. 58-60.

See also "Control".

PRINCIPLE(S)—

Question re — for classification of prisoners. 489-90.

PRISONER(S)—

Motion for adjournment re—

Hunger-strike of political — in Bhagalpur camp jail. 86.

Ill-treatment meted out to Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni and other Muslim security —. 495.

Question re—

Improving of treatment of political —. 294.

Principles for classification of —. 489-90.

Repatriation of Italian — in India. 110-11.

Restrictions on released Delhi security —. 488.

Security and political —. 126.

Security and state —. 117.

Treatment of political — and Congress detenus. 113-15.

PRIZE SHIPS—

See "Ship(s)".

PRODUCTION(S)—

Question re — of and forcecasts for foodgrains. 411.

PROFITEERING—

Question re—

Administration in Bihar of the scheme for checking of — in salt. 126-27.

Charges re — in respect of foodstuffs supplied to Bengal. 236-39.

PROJECT(S)—

Question re — of new roads completed by Bihar Government from the Central Road Fund. 551-52.

PROMOTION(S)—

Question re—

Block on the — of Station Correspondence Clerks on North Western Railway. 545.

Muslim demand of regulating — on communal basis. 25.

— made in the Statistical Section of the Supply Department. 180-81.

— of Guards from Grade I to Grade II on North Western Railway. 554.

— of non-technical hands as chargemen on East Indian Railway. 9-10.

— of subordinates to lower gazetted service in Traffic Department, North Western Railway. 354-55.

— to selection grade of non-technical hands on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 172.

— to Ticket Checking staff on East Indian Railway. 188.

Racial discrimination in — to selection grade on East Indian Railway. 170-71.

Railway Board rules re Selection Boards for — to Selection posts. 354.

PROPAGANDA—

Question re Indian Agent's — in the United States of America. 122.

PROPERTY(IES)—

Question re attachment of — of certain Railway employees at Ghaziabad for realising District Board Tax. 543-44.

PROPOSAL(S)—

Question re — for establishment of an Indian Coconut Board. 55-56.

PROVINCE(S)—

Question re—

— facing food shortage. 419-20.

— having statutory price control and cities having rationing. 231-32.

PROVINCIAL RESERVE(S)—

See "Reserve(s)".

PROVINCIAL STOCKS—

Question re — of wheat, rice, etc. 56-57.

PUBLIC—

Question re motor vehicles supplied to the Trade for sale to —. 352.

PUBLICATION(S)—

Motion for Adjournment re banning — of Bengal Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83-84.

Question re—

Censorship on — of news about famine in Bengal. 127-29.

Desirability of stopping the — of the *Indian Information*. 25.

Rules for admission to the Government of India Press Room and for supply of Government — to Trade Unions, etc. 132.

Trade Unions supplied with Government — etc. 438-40.

PUBLICITY—

Motion for adjournment re failure to give — to mortality due to starvation in Bengal. 84.

Expenditure on Government —. 132.

Expenditure on war —. 126.

PUNJAB—

Question re—

Advisability of transferring Delhi detenus from — Jails to Delhi Jail. 482-83.

Control orders for sale of raw hides in —. 546.

Treatment meted out to Delhi detenus in — Jails. 481.

PUNJABEE CANDIDATES—

See "Officer(s)".

PUNJABI LANGUAGE—

Question re interviews and training of Punjabee candidates in — at Walton School, Lahore. 179.

PUNJABI OFFICER(S)—

See "Officer(s)".

PURCHASE(S)—

Question re—

Ration permits for — of authorised newsprint. 67.

Rules for — of foodstuffs for fighting forces. 485-87.

PURCHASE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT CONTROLLER OF—

Question re interview of candidates for the post of —, 169-70.

PURCHASE PROGRAMME—

Question re review by Government of India of the — of Supply Department. 18-19.

Q**QUALIFICATION(S)—**

Question re—

Minimum — for recruitment of Hindus as lower grade clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Minimum — for recruitment of candidates as upper division clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Percentage of and — for Muslim recruitment in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.
—, etc., of the Additional Deputy Principal Information Officer. 494.

QUARTER(S)—

Question re—

Ban on keeping milch cattle in clerks' — in New Delhi. 412.

Growing of more vegetables in orthodox — in New Delhi. 245.

Neglect of lawns in front of Orthodox Clerks' — in D. I. Z Area, New Delhi. 412.

Newly constructed E type orthodox — in the open space between Baird Square East and Irwin Road in New Delhi. 244.

Rules for occupation of Railway — and bungalows, by Subordinate Staff on Oudh and Tirhut Railway. 189.

QUESTION(S)—

Procedure laid down by Mr. President that the Member who is the questioner should furnish a copy of the paper (on whose report his — has been based) to the Assembly Department; it cannot be circulated to all the Members. 5.

QUESTIONNAIRE(S)—

Question re — issued by Income Tax Department to Indian Firms of auditors. 492.

QUETTA—

Question re—

Maltreatment of certain Muccadams at — Station by Anti-corruption Department. 350.

Paucity of Muslim Office Superintendents, etc., in Civil Departments at —. 550.

Raising of Government Intermediate College, — to Degree College Standard. 550.

QUININE—

Question re—

Cinchona cultivation and yield of —. 242.

Making India self-supporting in — and Cinchona products. 432-33.

QUOTA—

Question re—

Additional — for newsprint given to certain newspapers. 247-48.

Non-observance of — of Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

R**RACIAL DISCRIMINATION—**

Question re—

— in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 10-11.

— in promotions to selection grade on East Indian Railway. 170-71.

— on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on medical grounds. 10.

RADIO-SERVICE—

Question re desirability of making more effective use of the All-India —. 130-31.

RAGHUNANDAN SARAN, MR.—

Question re arrest of Mr. —. 480-81.

RAILWAY(S)—

Bengal and Assam—

Question re—

Amalgamation of the Dibru Sadiya and the Jorhat Provincial Railways with the —. 174-75.

Liability for cost of doubling the — Metre Gauge Lines for military reasons. 178, 493.

Muslims and non-Muslim apprentice Permanent Way Inspectors of —. 23.

Non-observance of quota of Assistant Permanent Way Inspectors on the Bengal and Assam Railway. 23.

Persons recruited in the Intermediate Grades on —. 563.

Punjabi officers on — and Assamese and Bengali officers on North Western Railway. 175.

Bengal Nagpur—

Question re—

Advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via — and East Indian Railways. 11-13.

Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office Superintendents in the offices of —. 173-74.

Central Provinces—

Question re absence of station name boards in Urdu on —. 550-51.

Dibru Sadiya and the Jorhat Provincial—

Question re amalgamation of the — with the Bengal and Assam Railway. 174-75.

East Indian—

Question re—

Advertisements as regards arrivals of foodgrains and other foodstuffs via Bengal Nagpur and — Railway. 11-13.

Cash and small coins received from sale of passenger tickets by —. 24.

Contracts for distribution of grains to — servants. 26.

Equalising of scales of pay of grade V, —. 347.

Eye test for Travelling Ticket Examiners on —. 555.

Instructions issued by the Chief Medical Officer, —, regarding the staff reporting sick. 188.

Lack of uniformity in granting overtime and night shift allowances of — (Mechanical Department). 172-73.

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on —. 414-15.

Persons recruited in intermediate grade on —. 25.

Promotion of non-technical hands as chargemen on —. 9-10.

Promotion to selection grade of non-technical hands on — (Mechanical Department). 172.

Promotions to Ticket Checking staff on —. 188.

Racial discrimination in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising staff and Draftsmen on — (Mechanical Department). 10-11.

Racial discrimination in promotions to selection grade on —. 170-71.

Racial discrimination on — (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising staff on medical grounds. 10.

Recruitment of Station Masters, Guards, etc., on — and communal representation therein. 187.

Indian—

Question re progress as regards abolition of Lower Gazetted Services on —. 3.

Madras and Southern Mahratta—

Question re Bengali and Madras Officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal, Office Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali Officers in the — and South Indian —. 348-49.

North Western—

Question re—

Action taken against Railway Servants for causing overcrowding of trains on —. 188-89.

Block on the promotion of Station Correspondence Clerks on —. 545.

Communal composition of Superintendents and Head Clerks (Establishment) on —. 355.

Complaint against Deputy Chief Accounts Officer from the Sub-Heads in Traffic Accounts Branch of the —. 24.

Complaints against a Train Examiner at Pathankote, —. 547.

Educational standard for recruitment to subordinate service on —. 554.

Employees discharged for disciplinary reasons on —. 183.

Fixation of lower pay for Grade I Guards in Karachi Division, —, on abolition of that Grade. 545.

Fixing of pay of the retrenched staff re-appointed in the Compilation Section, —. 179.

Large number of free passes issued to applicants on —. 545-46.

Overcrowding of trains on —. 546-47.

Personal Assistants to Station Masters on —. 22.

Persons dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 in Delhi Division of —. 555.

Promotion of Guards from Grade I to Grade II on —. 554.

Promotion of Subordinates to Lower Gazetted Service in Traffic Department, —. 354-55.

Punjabi Officers on Bengal and Assam Railway and Assamese and Bengali officers on —. 175.

Stations on — having European Institutes for employees. 345-47.

Trial of ticketless travellers by a retired Magistrate in the Sind Area of —. 349-50.

Oudh and Tirhut—

Question re Rules for occupation of Railway Quarters and Bungalows by Subordinate Staff on —. 189.

Question re—

Activities of the Conciliation Officer —. 231.

Non-acceptance of larger quantity of good quality coal for —. 22.

Rice paddy, etc., carried to Bengal by different —. 185-86.

Sub-division of contracts on communal basis on —. 356-57.

Technical Schools maintained by — for Apprenticeship Training. 174.

South Indian—

Question re Bengali and Madras Officers in the Railway Rates Tribunal Office, Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali Officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and —. 348-49.

State—

Question re—

Extension of service to — gazetted officers. 358-59.

Grant of increments for the period before confirmation to a — non-gazetted servant. 25.

Non-inclusion in — Establishment Code of provisions of Rule 7 of Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules. 358.

Running Room arrangements for Depressed Classes staff on —. 555.

State-managed—

Question re—

Census taken by — of the travelling public. 188.

Current Luggage Rules on —. 20-21.

RAILWAY AND WAR TRANSPORT DEPARTMENTS—
 Question re supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 184-85.

RAILWAY APPRENTICE(S)—
 See "Apprentice(s)".

RAILWAY BOARD—
 Question re—
 Non-reservation of posts for Sikhs by the —. 180.
 — rules re Selection Boards for promotion to selection posts. 354.

RAILWAY CLEARING ACCOUNTS OFFICE—
 Question re orders issued by the officiating Director of —. 181-82.

RAILWAY EMPLOYEE(S)—
 See "Employee(s)".

RAILWAY LINES—
 Question re two dead bodies found near — between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey Railway stations. 357.

RAILWAY POLICE—
 See "Police".

RAILWAY QUARTER(S)—
 See "Quarter(s)".

RAILWAY RATES TRIBUNAL OFFICE—
 Question re Bengali and Madrassi officers in the — Calcutta, and Assamese and Bengali officers in the Madras and Southern Mahratta and South Indian Railways. 348-49.

RAILWAY SERVANT(S)—
 Question re—
 Action taken against — for causing overcrowding of trains on North Western Railway. 188-89.
 Conditions of service of — employed in Transportation Units of the Indian Army. 562.
 See also "Servant(s)".

RAILWAY SERVICE—
 Question re scales of pay applied to persons entering — as a result of competitive examination. 171-72.

RAILWAY SERVICES (CLASSIFICATION, CONTROL AND APPEAL) RULES—
 See "Rule(s)".

RAILWAY STAFF—
 See "Staff".

RAILWAY STATION(S)—
 Question re—
 Inadequacy of platform sheds at Muttra Junction —. 5.
 Tickets issued from Delhi for Delhi-Ambala section —. 345.
 Tonga Stand at Roorkee —. 347-48.
 Two dead bodies found near Railway Lines between Dalpatpur and Munda Pandey —. 357.
 See also "Station(s)".

RAILWAY TICKET(S)—
 Question re stoppage of — for stations round Nankana Sahib. 547-48.
 See also "Ticket(s)".

RAILWAY WORKSHOP(S)—
 See "Workshop(s)".

RAISMAN, THE HONOURABLE SIR JEREMY—
 Central Excise Bill—
 Motion for leave to introduce. 190.
 Motion to refer to Select Committee. 444-45.
 Motion re Food Situation. 460.
 Resolution re Stabilization of Prices. 88, 89, 90, 101-05.

RATE(S)—
 Question re—
 Equalization of — of allowance for men and women under the Indian War Injuries Scheme. 68.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Defence Department in Bengal at concession —. 139.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Departments of Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies in Bengal at concession —. 81.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Finance Department in Bengal at concession —. 138.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Food Department in Bengal at concession —. 81-82.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Labour Department in Bengal at concession —. 81.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Posts and Air Department in Bengal at concession —. 184.
 Supply of foodgrains to employees of the Supply Department in Bengal at concession —. 184.
 Supply of foodgrains to non-military employees of the War Department in Bengal at concession —. 138.
 Supply of rations to fighting forces in Bengal at concession —. 138-39.
 Supply of rations to the military in Bengal at concession —. 80-81.

RATION(S)—
 Question re—
 Confiscation of — of certain Gorakhpur Workshop Staff enjoying weekly rest. 189, 563.
 Daily — for political detenus and convicts. 476.
 — permits for purchase of authorised newsprint. 67.
 Supply of — to fighting forces in Bengal at concession rates. 138-39.
 Supply of — to the military in Bengal at concession rates. 80-81.

RATION ALLOWANCE(S)—
 See "Allowance(s)".

RATIONING—
 Question re Provinces having statutory price control and cities having —. 231-32.

RAY, MRS. RENUKA—
 Motion re the Food Situation. 385-88.

RAZA ALI, SIR SYED—
 Motion re the Food Situation. 221, 536.

RECIPROCITY ACT—
 See "Act(s)".

RECIPROCITY (AMENDMENT) BILL—
 See "Bill(s)".

RECOGNITION—
 Question re— annual — granted to denominational schools in Baluchistan. 550.

RECOMMENDATION(S)—
 Question re—
 Gregory Committee's — concerning supply of precious metals for sale to the cultivator. 121-22.
 — of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of goods which the cultivator needs. 228-29.
 — of the Gregory Committee concerning supply of necessary goods and precious metals to the cultivator. 229-30.
 — of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 49-50.
 — re new musafirkhana at Calcutta. 246.

RECRUITMENT(S)—
 Question re—
 Advertisement for — of temporary clerks by Military Accounts Department. 287.
 Educational standard for — to subordinate service on North Western Railway. 554.
 — of — of Customs preventive officers. 107-08.
 Method of — of Income-tax Officers. 284.
 Method of — of Inspectors and Superintendents in Posts and Telegraphs Department. 21-22.
 Minimum qualification for — of candidates at upper division clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.
 Minimum qualifications for — of Hindus as lower grade clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.
 Muslim — in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 223-84.
 Percentage of and qualifications for Muslim — in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.
 Persons recruited in intermediate grade on East Indian Railway. 25.
 Persons recruited in the Intermediate Grades on Bengal and Assam Railway. 563.
 Position concerning — to Emergency Commissions. 115.
 — of gazetted officers in Supply Department. 6.
 — of Station Masters, Guards, etc., on East Indian Railway and communal representation therein. 187.
 Resolution re — of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 564-79.

REDUCTION(S)—
 Question re — of the Basic pay of certain temporary subordinates of the Military Engineering Service. 288-89.

REFORM(S)—
 Resolution re — of the Cantonment Service. 579-88.

REFUGEE(S)—
 Question re evacuees and — in India. 476-77.

REGISTER(S)—
 Question re differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping on Indian —. 427-28, 434-35.

REGISTRATION OF FOREIGNERS ACT—
 See "Act(s)".

REGISTERED SHIP(S)—
 See "Ship(s)".

RELEASE—
 Question re — of Congress Detenus of Delhi. 481-82.

RELIEF ORGANISATION(S)—
 Question re Government co-operation to on official — in Bengal. 64.

REPATRIATION—
 Question re—
 — of Italian prisoners in India. 110-11.
 — of destitute persons from Calcutta. 76.

REPORT(S)—
 Question re—
 Beveridge — for Post War Social Security. 410-11.
 — by Messrs. R. H. Hutchings and A. K. Chanda on the evacuation of Indians from Burma. 51.
 — of the Commonwealth Air Force Conference, London. 355, 356.
 Statement(s) (laid on the table) re certain Appropriation Accounts Audit —, etc. 441-42.

REPRESENTATION(S)—
 Question re—
 Communal — in Supply Department. 2-3.
 Inadequate Sikh, — on Cantonment Board, Kasauli. 491.
 — by the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, for utilising shipping space for importing foodgrains. 427, 435-36.
 — from Mr. V. G. Balwaik regarding war bonus to workers. 415.
 — in respect of slaughter of young and prime cattle. 234-35.
 — of India at the Empire Air Conference in London. 20.

REPRESENTATIVE(S)—
 Question re Conference of — of Port Haj Committees, etc. 246.

RESERVE(S)—
 Question re—
 Rice for military requirements out of provincial — in Central Provinces. 233.
 Stocks of foodgrains released from Army — for civilians in Bengal. 129.

RESERVE BANK—
 Question re sale of gold by — to the public. 478.

RESIGNATION(S)—
 Question, re—
 — by House Surgeons of Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital, Delhi. 423-24.
 — of Mr. J. R. Blair, I.C.S. 109-10.

RESOLUTION(S)—
 — re Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 564-79.
 Reform of the Cantonment Service. 579-88.
 — re—
 — Stabilization of Prices. 87-105.

RESTRICTION(S)—

- Question re—
Disabilities and — affecting Indians in the United States of America. 177.
— on interviews with detenus. 483.
— on released Delhi security prisoners. 488.

RETAIL PRICES—

See "Price(s)".

RETRENCHED STAFF—

See "Staff".

REVISION(S)—

- Question re — of the Financial Settlement of 1939 between India and Great Britain. 480.

RICE—

- Question re—
Export of sugar, wheat and — and the production of petrol from molasses. 23.
Fixation of wholesale and retail prices by Government of Bengal for paddy and —. 73-74.
Provincial stocks of wheat, —, etc. 56-57.
— and other commodities exported from Madras Province. 405-08.
— for military requirements out of provincial reserve in Central Provinces. 233.
—, paddy, etc., carried to Bengal by different Railways. 185-86.
Supply and distribution of —, wheat, etc., in Bengal. 403-04.
Transport of — and wheat to Bengal and distribution thereof. 433-34.
Vacillating policy as regards price control of wheat, —, etc. 58-60.

RICHARDSON, SIR HENRY—

- Motion re the Food Situation. 360, 499-505, 536.
Nomination of — to the Panel of Chairmen. 86-87.

RIOTER(S)—

- Question re letter-boxes removed by — and Postal Authorities during the recent disturbances. 24.

ROAD(S)—

- Question re—
Allocation of cost of building new — for military purposes. 290.
Projects of new — completed by Bihar Government from the Central — Fund. 551-52.

ROAD FUND—

See "Fund(s)".

ROORKEE—

- Question re tonga stand at — Railway Station. 347-49.

ROY, THE HONOURABLE SIR ASOKA—

- Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill—
Presentation of the report of Select Committee. 30.
Motion to consider. 278.
Motion to pass. 279.
Code of Criminal Procedure (Second Amendment) Bill—
Motion for leave to introduce. 30.
Motion to consider. 252.
Motion to pass. 252.

- Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill—
Presentation of the report of the Select Committee. 30.
Motion to consider. 278.
Motion to pass. 278.
Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—
Motion to circulate (as reported by the Joint Committee). 445-46.
Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 161-63, 165.

RULES(S)—

- Amendments to the British Baluchistan Motor Vehicles — (laid on the table). 29.
Question re—
Bihar detenus under Defence of India —. 488-89.
Current Luggage — on State-managed Railway. 20-21.
Framing of — to enforce Reciprocity Act. 55.
Non-inclusion in State Railway Establishment Code of provisions of — 7 of Railway Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) —. 358.
Persons arrested and detained in Delhi under — 26 and 129 of the Defence of India —, etc. 294-96.
Railway Board — re Selection Boards for promotion to Selection posts. 354.
— concerning "out of class" allottees in New Delhi. 68-69.
— for admission to the Government of India Press Room and for supply of Government Publications to Trade Unions, etc. 132.
— for occupation of Railway Quarters and bungalows by Subordinate Staff on Oudh and Tirhut Railway. 189.
— for purchase of foodstuffs for fighting forces. 485-87.

RULING(S), BY MR. PRESIDENT (THE HONOURABLE SIR ABDUR RAHIM)—

- Miscellaneous—
An Honourable Member should be in his place when asking his question. 47.
No Member, by simply giving notice of an amendment, acquires any priority or a right to be called on to speak. 364.
To call another Honourable Member as impertinent is unparliamentary. 553.

Motion(s)—

- A motion proposing communication of a formal address to H. E. the Governor General on a matter of general public interest, unless allowed by any other rule, will be governed by Indian Legislative Rule 24A, and cannot be allowed unless the Member of the Government in charge of the particular subject gives his consent thereto. 440-41.

Question Hour—

- Without general agreement the Chair cannot lay down that there shall be no questions on any days. 249-50.

RUNNING ROOM(S)—

- Question re — arrangements for Depressed Classes staff on State Railways. 555.

RUSSIA—

- Question re export of wool to Basra for —. 552.

S**SALARY(IES)**—

- Question re — of Appellate Commissioners and Appellate Tribunals under Income Tax Department. 292.

SALE(S)—

- Question re—
Control orders for — of raw hides in Punjab. 546.
Desirability of stopping — of Baluchi Women. 6-9.
Motor vehicles supplied to the trade for — to public. 352.

SALT—

- Question re—
Administration in Bihar of the scheme for checking of profiteering in —. 126-27.
Duty-free industrial coloured — and hides and skin merchants in Sind. 25.
Duty-free industrial coloured — and the fishing industry in Sind. 24.

SANT SINGH, SARDAR—

- Appointment of — on the Committee on Petition. 139.
Motion re Food Situation. 384, 385, 458-61, 497.
Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

- Advertisement for recruitment of temporary clerks by Military Accounts Department. 287.
Ban on keeping milch cattle in clerks' quarters in New Delhi. 412.
Classification as selection posts of Personal Assistants carrying special or personal pay in the Government of India Secretariat. 287-88.
Complaint against Deputy Chief Accounts Officer from the Sub-Heads in Traffic Accounts Branch of the North Western Railway. 24.
Complaints against a Train Examiner at Pathankote, North Western Railway. 547.
Complaints against the quality of essential supplies for employees of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 286-87.

- Constructing a large hotel for Indian clerks in New Delhi. 242-43.
Dearness allowance to the staff of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 289.

- Delay in attending to the complaints made to Mint Road and Havelock Square Enquiry Offices, New Delhi. 243-44.

- Desirability of closing certain passages in Havelock and Baird Squares, New Delhi. 244-45.

- Growing of more vegetables in orthodox quarters in New Delhi. 245.

- Inadequate Sikh representation on Cantonment Board, Kasauli. 491.

- Neglect of lawns in front of orthodox clerks' quarters in D. I. Z. area, New Delhi. 412.
Newly constructed E type orthodox quarters in the open space between Baird Square East and Irwin Road in New Delhi. 244.

- Non-reservation of posts for Sikhs by the Railway Board. 180.

- Non-reservation of posts for Sikhs in Telegraphs Department. 180.

- Orders issued by the officiating Director of Railway Clearing Accounts Office. 181-82.

- Overcrowding of trains on North Western Railway. 546-47.

- Promotions made in the Statistical Section of the Supply Department. 180-81.

- Reduction of the Basic pay of certain temporary subordinates of the Military Engineering Service. 288-89.

- Stonage of railway tickets for stations round Nankana Sahib. 547-48.

- Want of dairies or cow byres in the area bounded by Irwin Road, Market Road and Lady Hardinge Road in New Delhi. 243.

Question (Supplementary) re—

- Emolument of South African White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413.
Post-war shipping policy. 420.
Re-arrest of Mr. Jaiprakash Narain. 484.
Release of Congress Detenus of Delhi. 482.

- Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 570-577-78.

SCALE(S) OF PAY—

See "Pay".

SCHEDULED CASTE(S)—

- Resolution re recruitment of — to the Key Service of the Army. 564-79.

SCHEME(S)—**Question re**—

- Administration in Bihar of the — for checking of profiteering in salt. 126-27.
Equalization of rates of allowance for men and women under the Indian War injuries —. 68.
— submitted by Mr. S. M. Zahur Ali regarding concert parties. 120-21.

SCHOOL(S)—**Question re**—

- Annual recognition granted to denominational — in Baluchistan. 550.
Appointing of Urdu — teachers as Branch Post Masters in Central Postal Circle. 549.
Technical — maintained by Railways for Apprenticeship Training. 174.

SCHOOL OF MINES—

See "Mine(s), School of —".

SCIENCE, INSTITUTE OF—

See "Institute of Science".

SCINDIA STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY—

- Question re not allowing — to carry full load of food to Bengal from Karachi. 225-26.

SEAMAN(EN)—

Question re Indian — engaged on the United Kingdom registered ships, etc. 68.

SECRET SITTING—

Question re holding of a — of Legislative Assembly during current session. 50.

SECRETARIAT(S)—

Question re—

Classification as selection posts of Personal Assistants carrying special or personal pay in the Government of India. 287-88.

Complaints against the quality of essential supplies for employees of the Government of India — and attached offices. 286-87.

Dearness allowance to the staff of the Government of India — and attached offices. 289.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA—

Question re statements by — on food situation in India. 76-79.

SECTION(S)—

Question re — of Munitions Production Secretariat run by Superintendents and Assistants-in-Charge. 184.

SECURITY PRISONER(S)—

See "Prisoner(s)".

SELECTION(S)—

Question re — of personnel of concert parties for British and Indian Troops. 111.

SELECTION BOARD(S)—

Question re—

Railway Board rules re — for promotion to selection posts. 354.

— for appointments in the office of the Comptroller of Assam. 286.

SELECTION GRADE—

Question re promotion to — of non-technical hands on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 172.

SELECTION POSTS—

Question re—

Classification as — of posts of Personal Assistants carrying special or personal pay in the Government of India Secretariat. 287-88.

Railway Board rules re Selection Boards for promotion to —. 354.

SENIORITY LIST—

Question re racial discrimination in compilation of Combined — of Subordinate Supervising Staff and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department). 10-11.

SERVANT(S)—

Question re—

Contracts for distribution of grant to East Indian Railway —. 26.

Grant of increments for the period before confirmation to a State Railway non-gazetted —. 25.

SERVICE(S)—

Question re—

Counting of — of commissioned officers in Civil Pioneer Force as war —. 249.

Extensions of — to State Railway gazetted officers. 358-59.

Progress as regards abolition of Lower Gazetted — on Indian Railways. 3.

Promotion of subordinates to lower gazetted — in Traffic Department, North Western Railway. 354-55.

Resolution re—

Recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key — of the Army. 564-79.

Reform of the Cantonment —. 579-88.

SERVICE, CONDITIONS OF—

Question re — of Railway servants employed in Transportation Units of the Indian Army. 562.

SESSION(S)—

Question re holding of a secret sitting of Legislative Assembly during current —. 50.

SHAHBAN, KHAN BAHADUR MIAN

GHULAM KADIR MUHAMMAD—

Motion re Food Situation. 211-14.

Question re—

Beveridge Report for post-war social security. 410-11.

Broadcasting station for Karachi. 122.

Continuance of expenditure on A. R. P. in Sind. 476.

Evacuees and refugees in India. 476-77.

Financial obligations of India in respect of operations of the East Asia Command. 282.

Import of foodgrains from Australia and America. 409.

Industrial organisation of India. 409-10.

Measures for checking inflation in India. 123-25.

Parts of India where famine prevails. 229.

Supply of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65-66.

SHAHDARA—

Question re delivery of telegrams at —, Delhi, through post office. 554-55.

SHAM LALL, LALA—

Motion re the Food Situation. 223-224, 299-301.

SHIP(S)—

Question re—

Award of Enemy prize — to India. 63-64.

Ban on the sailings of pilgrim — from India. 73.

Indian Seamen engaged on the United Kingdom registered — etc. 68.

Mogul Line — given to shipping companies of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 246-47, 435.

Stoppage of pilgrim — from carrying pilgrims to the Hejaz. 245-46.

SHIP-BUILDING INDUSTRY—

Question re developing — in India. 421.

SHIPPING—

Question re differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian — on Indian Register. 427-28, 434-35.

SHIPPING COMPANY(IES)—

Question re Mogul Line ships given to — of Egypt for carrying pilgrims to Jeddah. 246-47, 435.

SHIPPING POLICY—

Question re post-war —. 420.

SHIPPING SPACE—

Question re representation by the Indian Chamber, of Commerce, Calcutta, for utilising — for importing foodgrains. 427, 435-36.

SHORTAGE—

Question re steps for removing — of small coins. 286.

SIDDIQUE ALI KHAN, NAWAB—

Election of — to the Delhi University Court. 441.

Motion re Food Situation. 464-66.

Question re—

Appointing of Urdu School teachers as Branch Post Masters in Central Postal Circle. 549.

Ban on the sailings of pilgrim ships from India. 73.

Bias against posting of Muslims, etc., as Sub-Post-Masters in Central Postal Circle. 548.

Desirability of introducing Mail Motor service between Amraoti and Daryapur. 549.

Facilities for Juma prayers in the Central Postal Circle. 549.

Minimum qualification for recruitment of candidates as upper division clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Minimum qualifications for recruitment of Hindus as lower grade clerks in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Muslim recruitment in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283-84.

Non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in Berar sub-post offices. 548.

Operation of the Payment of Wages Act on East Indian Railway. 414-15.

Percentage of and qualifications for Muslim recruitment in the Central Excises and Salt Revenues, Western Division. 283.

Pilgrimage to Arabia by land routes. 73, 182-83.

SIKH(S)—

Question re—

Non-reservation of posts for — by the Railway Board. 180.

Non-reservation of posts for — in Telegraphs Department. 180.

SIKH REPRESENTATION(S)—

See "Representation(s)". 491.

SIND—

Motion for Adjournment re continuance of Central Government's subsidy to —. 86.

Question re—

Continuance of expenditure on A. R. P. in —. 476.

Duty-free industrial coloured salt and hides and skin merchants in —. 25.

Duty-free industrial coloured salt and the fishing industry in —. 24.

SIND AND BALUCHISTAN POSTAL CIRCLE—

See "Postal Circle(s)".

SIND AREA—

Question re trial of ticketless travellers by a retired Magistrate in the — of North Western Railway. 349-50.

SINDHI(S)—

Question re — as Assistant Directors, etc., in the Sind and Baluchistan Postal Circles. 173.

SIVA RAJ, RAO BAHADUR N.—

Motion re Food Situation. 209, 341-43.

Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 573-76.

SKIN(S)—

Question re duty-free industrial coloured salt and hides and — merchants in Sind. 25.

SLAUGHTER—

Question re representations in respect of — of young and prime cattle. 234-35.

SMALL COIN(S)—

See "Coin(s)".

SOCIAL SECURITY—

Question re Beveridge Report for post-war —. 410-11.

SOLDIERS BOARD(S)—

Question re constitution of the Indian —. 111-13.

SOUTH AFRICAN(S)—

Question re employment of — White evacuees from Burma for utilisation of India's mineral resources. 413-14.

SOUTH INDIAN RAILWAY—

See "Railway(s)".

SPECIAL PAY—

See "Pay".

SPECIAL PRESS ADVISER—

Question re — in Delhi and his staff. 284.

SRIVASTAVA, THE HONOURABLE SIR JWALA PRASAD—

Motion for adjournment re failure to take timely action for preventing acute food crisis in Bengal. 84.

Motion re election of members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 190, 191, 194-95.

Motion re Food Situation. 196-99, 201, 202, 205, 221, 222, 460, 461, 529-37, 362, 377, 370, 371, 377.

Oath of Office. 1.

STABILIZATION—

Resolution regarding — of prices. 87-105.

STABILIZATION FUND—

Question re proposals for establishment of United and Associated Nations' —. 284-85.

STAFF(S)—

Question re—

Appointment of officers and — in the Food Department. 70-73.

Confiscation of rations of certain Gorakhpur Workshop — enjoying weekly rest. 189, 365.

Dearness allowance to the — of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 289.

District Board tax levied on wages of Railway —. 543.

Fixing of pay of the retrenched — re-appointed in the Compilation Section, North Western Railway. 179.

Harassment of railway — by police. 347.

Instructions issued by the Chief Medical Officer, East Indian Railway, regarding the — reporting sick. 188.

Misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway — and vendors. 167-69.
 Promotions to Ticket Checking — on East Indian Railway. 188.
 Racial discrimination in compilation of Combined Seniority List of Subordinate Supervising — and Draftsmen on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) 10-11.
 Racial discrimination on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards transfer of Subordinate Supervising — on medical grounds. 10.
 Rules for occupation of Railway Quarters and Bungalows by Subordinate — on Oudh and Tirhut Railway. 189.
 Running Room arrangements for Depressed Classes — on State Railways. 555.
 Special Press Adviser in Delhi and his —. 284.

STAFF OFFICERS—
 See "Officer(s)".

STANDARD CLOTH—
 Question re supply of — to Railway employees. 183.

STANDING COMMITTEE(S)—
 Election of Members to the — for the Food Department. 190-95, 495.

STANDING FOOD COMMITTEE—
 See "Committee(s)".

STARVATION—
 Motion for Adjournment re failure to give publicity to mortality due to — in Bengal. 84.
 Question re—
 Deaths due to — in Bengal. 239-40, 437.
 Deaths due to — in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 47-49.

STATE(S)—
 Question re persons detained for reasons of —. 1-2.

STATE PRISONER(S)—
 See "Prisoner(s)".

STATE RAILWAY(S)—
 See "Railway(s)".

STATE-MANAGED RAILWAY(S)—
 See "Railway(s)".

STATEMENT(S)—
 Question re — by Secretary of State for India on food situation in India. 76-79.
 — (laid on the table) re certain Appropriation Accounts, Audit Reports, etc. 441-42.
 — re method of taking votes by Division. 26-27.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS—
 — by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed. 105-06, 401.

STATION(S)—
 Question re—
 Absence of — name boards in Urdu on Central Provinces Railways. 550-51.
 Maltreatment of certain Mucedams at Quetta — by Anti-corruption Department. 350.
 — on North Western Railway having European Institutes for employees. 345-47.

Stoppage of railway tickets for — round Nankana Sahib. 547-48.

See also "Railway Station(s)".
 STATION CORRESPONDENCE CLERK(S)—
 Question re block on the promotion of — on North Western Railway. 545.

STATION MASTER(S)—
 Question re—
 Personal Assistants to — on North Western Railway. 22.
 Recruitment of —, Guards, etc., on East Indian Railway and communal representation therein. 187.

STATISTICAL SECTION—
 Question re promotion made in the — of the Supply Department. 180-81.

STATUTORY PRICE CONTROL—
 See "Control".

STEEL—
 Question re—
 Accumulation of — supplies by Government of India. 18.
 Supplies of iron, —, cement, etc., to civil population and functions of Honorary Advisers of cement, iron and —. 69-70.

STOCK(S)—
 Question re—
 — of foodgrains hoarded by employees in Bengal. 75-76.
 — of foodgrains released from Army reserves for civilians in Bengal. 82, 129.

STUDENT(S)—
 Question re — admitted to Dhanbad School of Mines. 416-17.

STUDIO(S)—
 Question re subsidies to private — for producing entertainment pictures. 289-90.

SUBORDINATE(S)—
 Question re—
 Reduction of the Basic pay of certain temporary — of the Military Engineering Service. 288-89.
 Promotion of — to lower gazetted service in Traffic Department, North Western Railway. 354-55.

SUBORDINATE SERVICE(S)—
 Question re educational standard for recruitment to — on North Western Railway. 554.

SUBORDINATE STAFF—
 See "Staff(s)".

SUBORDINATE SUPERVISING STAFF—
 See "Staff(s)".

SUB-POST OFFICE(S)—
 Question re non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in Berar —. 548.

SUB-POST-MASTER(S)—
 See "Post Master(s)".

SUBSIDY(IES)—
 Motion for Adjournment re continuance of Central Government's — to Sind. 86.
 Question re — to private studios for producing entertainment pictures. 289-90.

SUGAR—
 Question re export of —, wheat and rice and the production of petrol from molasses. 23.

SUKHTANKAR, MR. Y. N.—
 Oath of Office. 345.

SUKKUR—
 Question re accommodation for Railway police at —. 3-4.

SULPHATHIOZOL—
 Question re Bombay Government's application for manufacture of —. 53-54.

SULPHURIC ACID—
 Question re import of American plants for manufacturing —. 351.

SULTAN AHMED, THE HONOURABLE SIR—
 Hindu Code, Part I (Intestate Succession)—
 Presentation of the Report of the Joint Committee. 30.

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
 Motion to refer to Select Committee. 150, 157.

Motion for Adjournment re—
 Banning publication of Bengal Governor's order against the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 83.

Non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 28, 36-37, 39, 42.

Motion re the food situation. 204, 205, 360, 514.

Statement of business by —. 105-06, 401.

SUPERINTENDENT(S)—
 Question re—
 Communal composition of — and Head Clerks (Establishment) on North Western Railway. 355.

Method of recruitment of Inspectors and — in Posts and Telegraphs Department. 21-22.

Paucity of Muslim Head Clerks or Office — in the offices of Bengal Nagpur Railway. 173-74.

Paucity of Muslim Office —, etc., in Civil Departments at Quetta. 550.

Sections of Munitions Production Secretariat run by — and Assistants-in-Charge. 184.

SUPERINTENDENT OF INDUSTRIES—
 Question re —, Delhi. 417.

SUPERVISING STAFF—
 See "Staff(s)".

SUPPLY(IES)—
 Question re—
 Complaints against the quality of essential — for employees of the Government of India Secretariat and attached offices. 286-87.

Position of — of foodgrains in Bengal. 79.

— of essential commodities of life to civil population. 65-66.

— of iron, steel, cement, etc., to civil population and functions of Honorary Advisers of cement iron and steel. 69-70.

SUPPLY DEPARTMENT—
 Question re—
 Communal representation among Leather goods Contractors of the —. 187.

Communal representation in —. 2-3.
 Promotions made in the Statistical Section of the —. 180-81.

Recruitment of gazetted officers in —. 6.

Review by Government of India of the purchase programme of —. 18-19.

Supply of foodgrains to employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 184.

SURGEON(S)—
 Question re resignation by 'House' — of Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital, Delhi. 423-24.

SYNTHETIC FERTILISERS—
 Question re import of Ammonia Sulphate and other —. 67.

SYNTHETIC PREPARATION—
 Question re measure for — of mineral oil. 19-20.

T

TAX(ES)—
 Question re—
 Attachment of property of certain Railway employees at Ghaziabad for realising District Board —. 543-44.

District Board — levied on wages of railway staff. 543.

TEA CONTROL (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL—
 See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

TEACHER(S)—
 Question re appointing of Urdu School — as Branch Post Masters in Central Postal Circle. 549.

TECHNICAL HAND(S)—
 Question re promotion of non — as charge-men on East Indian Railway. 9-10.

TECHNICAL SCHOOL(S)—
 See "School(s)".

TELEGRAM(S)—
 Question re delivery of — at Shahdara, Delhi, through post office. 554-55.

TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—
 Question re non-reservation of Posts for Sikhs in —. 180.

TEMPORARY SUBORDINATE(S)—
 See "Subordinate(s)".

TICKET(S)—
 Question re—
 Stoppage of railway — for stations round Nankana Sahib. 547-48.

— issued from Delhi for Delhi-Ambala section railway stations. 345.

TICKET CHECKING STAFF—
 See "Staff".

TICKET COLLECTOR(S)—
 Question re reducing of — to letter Delivery Clerks by the Divisional Superintendent, Moradabad. 26.

TICKET EXAMINER(S)—
 Question re eye test for Travelling — on East Indian Railway. 555.

TICKETLESS TRAVELLER(S)—
 Question re trial of — by a retired Magistrate in the Sind Area of North Western Railway. 349-50.

TONGA STAND—
 Question re — at Roorkee Railway Station. 347-48.

TRACER(S)—
 Question re temporary — in the office of Divisional Superintendent, Karachi. 25.

TRADE(S)—
Question re—
Motor vehicles supplied to the — for sale to public. 352.
Supply of wireless sets to the — at cost. 248.

TRADE UNION(S)—
Question re — supplied with Government publications, etc. 438-40.
See also "Union(s)".

TRADE UNIONS (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Indian —" under "Bill(s)".

TRAFFIC ACCOUNTS BRANCH—
Question re complaint against Deputy Chief Accounts Officer from the Sub-Heads in — of the North Western Railway. 24.

TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT—
Question re promotion of Subordinates to Lower Gazetted Services in —, North Western Railway. 354-55.

TRAIN(S)—
Question re—
Action taken against Railway Servants for causing overcrowding of — on North Western Railway. 188-89.
Overcrowding of — on North Western Railway. 546-47.

TRAIN EXAMINER(S)—
Question re complaints against a — at Pathankote, North Western Railway. 547.

TRAINING—
Question re—
Interviews and — of Punjabee candidates in Punjabi language at Walton School, Lahore. 179.
Technical schools maintained by Railways for Apprenticeship —. 174.

TRANSFER(S)—
Question re—
Racial discrimination on East Indian Railway (Mechanical Department) as regards — of Subordinate Supervising staff on Medical grounds. 10.
— of power to Indians Overseas Department to grant or withdraw visas to evacuees of foreign nationality. 64.

TRANSPORT—
Question re — of rice and wheat to Bengal and distribution thereof. 433-34.

TRANSPORTATION UNIT(S)—
Question re conditions of service of Railway servants employed in — of the Indian Army. 562.

TRAVELLING PUBLIC—
Question re census taken by State managed Railways of the —. 188.

TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINER(S)—
See "Ticket Examiner(s)".

TREATMENT—
Motion for adjournment re alleged inhuman — to Mr. Jai Prakash Narain. 250-51.
Question re—
Improving of — of political prisoners. 294.
Insertion in Government of condition for fair — of labour. 58.
— of political prisoners and Congress detenus. 113-15.

TRIBUNAL(S)—
Question re—
Cases tried by the Anti-Corruption —. 118.

Examination by — of cases of detenus and internees under Defence of India Act. 118.
Salaries of Appellate Commissioners and Appellate — under Income Tax Department. 292.

TRIVEDI, MR. C. M.—
Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 578-79.

TROOP(S)—
Question re—
Allocation of expenditure on — raised in India for outside service. 290-91.
Selection of personnel of conceal parties and Indian —. 111.
Welfare and Amenities Directorate and entertainment of Indian —. 118-20.

TROOP CARRIER(S)—
Question re possibilities of utilising certain United States of America — for carrying Australian wheat to India. 241.

TYSON, MR. J. D.—
Motion re—
Election of a member to the Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. 195.
Election of Members to the Delhi University Court. 31.
The Food Situation. 319.
Oath of Office. 1.

U

UMAR ALY SHAH, MR.—
Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill—
Motion to refer to Select Committee. 151-52.

UNIFORM(S)—
Question re — of the Indian personnel of W.A.C.(I). 490-91.

UNION(S)—
Question re—
Rules for admission to the Government of India Press Room and for supply of Government Publications to Trade —, etc. 132.
Trade — supplied with Government publications, etc. 438-40.

UNITED AND ASSOCIATED NATIONS STABILIZATION FUND—
Question re proposals for establishment of —. 284-85.

UNITED KINGDOM—
Question re—
Indian seamen engaged on the — Registered ships, etc. 68.
Master Agreement between the United States of America and the —. 290.

UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND REHABILITATION ADMINISTRATION—
Motion for adjournment re failure to consult the Legislature re agreement for —. 84-85.

UNITED PROVINCES—
Question re commissioned officers in Civil Pioneer Force, —. 248-49.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—
Motion for adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and — to speak on India's War Effort. 27-28, 31-46.

Question re—
Indian Agent's propaganda in the —. 122.
Lease-lend agreement between the — and India. 115-16.

Master Agreement between the — and the United Kingdom. 290.
Possibilities of utilising certain — troop carriers for carrying Australian wheat to India. 241.
See also "America, United States of".

UNIVERSITY(IES)—
Election of members to the Delhi — Court. 31. 189, 441.
Question re affiliation of Forestry Training Institute of Dehra Dun —. 54-55.

UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Aligarh Muslim —" under "Bill(s)".
See "Delhi —" under "Bill(s)".

URDU—
Question re—
Absence of station name boards in — on Central Provinces Railways. 550-51.
Appointing of — School teachers as Branch Post Masters in Central Postal Circle. 549.
Non-employment of — knowing clerks in Berar sub-post offices. 548.

URDU TALK(S)—
Question re ban on broadcasts of — by the All-India Radio. 555.

V

V.C.O.'s—
Question re grant of King's Commission to —. 282.

VEGETABLE(S)—
Question re—
Dearness of — and fruits in Bengal. 425-26.
Growing of more — in orthodox quarters in New Delhi. 245.

VENDOR(S)—
Question re misbehaviour of military troops towards Railway staff and —. 167-69.

VESSEL(S)—
Question re not allowing Scindia Steam Navigation Company — to carry full load of food to Bengal from Karachi. 225-26.

VICEROY'S RELIEF FUND—
Question re — collections for Bihar Earthquake sufferers. 489.

VICTORIA MEMORIAL (AMENDMENT) BILL—
See "Bill(s)".

VISA(S)—
Question re transfer of power to Indians overseas department to grant or withdraw — to Evacuees of foreign nationality. 64.

VOTE(S)—
Statement re method of taking — by Division. 26-27.

W

W.A.C.(I).—
Question re—
Location of — hostels. 491.
Uniforms of the Indian personnel of —. 490-91.

WAGE(S)—
Question re District Board tax levied on — of railway staff. 543.

WAGON(S)—
Question re surplus — at Depots in coal-fields of Bengal and Bihar and raising of coal output. 357-58.

WAKELY, MR. L. J. D.—
Oath of Office. 1.
Resolution re reform of the Cantonment Service. 585-87, 588.

WALTON SCHOOL—
Question re interviews and training of Punjabee candidates in Punjabi Language at —, Lahore. 179.

WAR—
Question re—
Equalization of rates of allowance for men and women under the Indian — injuries scheme. 68.
Expenditure on — publicity. 126.
Post — Empire and International Aviation policy. 16-17.

WAR BONUS—
See "Bonus(es)".

WAR DEPARTMENT—
Question re supply of foodgrains to non-military employees of the — in Bengal at concession rates. 138.

WAR EFFORT—
Motion for adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's —. 27-28, 31-46.

WAR FRONT—
Question re—
Expenditure on the National —. 132-37.
Working of the Indian National —. 556-61.

WAR INJURIES (COMPENSATION INSURANCE) BILL—
See "Bill(s)".

WAR SERVICE(S)—
See "Service(s)".

WELFARE AND AMENITIES DIRECTORATE—
Question re — and entertainment of Indian troops. 118-20.

WHEAT—
Question re—
Export of sugar, — and rice and the production of petrol from molasses. 23.
Issue of permits of — and other foodgrains by Sirdar Mehtab Singh. 418.
Possibilities of utilising certain United States of America troop carriers for carrying Australian — to India. 241.
Provincial stocks of —, rice, etc. 56-57.
Supply and distribution of rice, —, etc., in Bengal. 403-04.
Transport of rice and — to Bengal and distribution thereof. 433-34.
Vacillating policy as regards price control of —, rice, etc. 58-60.

WHITE EVACUEE(S)—
See "Evacuee(s)".

WHOLESALE PRICES—
See "Price(s)".

WIRELESS SET(S)—
Question re supply of — to the Trade at cost. 248.

WOMAN(EN)—
Question re—
Desirability of stopping sale of Baluchi —. 6-9.
Equalization of rates of allowance for men and — under the Indian War Injuries Scheme. 68.

WOOD—

Question re insufficiency of — fuel, at the Delhi Cremation Ghat. 563-64.

WOOL—

Question re export of — to Basra for Russia. 552.

WORKER(S)—

Question re representation from Mr. V. G. Balwaik regarding war bonus to —. 415.

WORKMAN(EN)—

Question re Chinese — in Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

WORKSHOP(S)—

Question re— Chinese workmen in Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

Confiscation of rations of certain Gorakhpur — Staff enjoying weekly rest. 189, 583.

Discharge of Mr. Halder officiating Chief Chemist at Kanchrapara Railway —. 174.

Yugoslav Die-casting expert employed at Kanchrapara —. 348.

Y

YAMIN KHAN, SIR MUHAMMAD—

Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Bill— Motion to circulate. 263.

Motion for adjournment re— Failure to take timely action for preventing Acute Food Crisis in Bengal. 24. Non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 36, 37-39, 42.

Motion re— Election of Members to the Standing Committee for the Food Department. 193. Food Situation. 200, 207-10, 536, 537, 538.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question (Supplementary) re— Domestic coke supply in Calcutta. 14. Progress as regards abolition of Lower Gazetted Services on Indian Railways. 3.

Recommendations of the Long Range Food Policy Committee. 50.

YUGOSLAV(S)—

Question re — Die-Casting Expert employed at Kanchrapara Workshop. 348.

YUSUF ABDOOLA HAROON, SETH—

Question re— Duty-free industrial coloured salt and hides and skin merchants in Sind. 25. Duty-free industrial coloured salt and the fishing industry in Sind. 24, 25. New appointments of officers in the Department of Information and Broadcasting. 297.

Z

ZAFAR ALI KHAN, MAULANA—

Hindu Marriage Disabilities Removal Bill— Motion to refer to Select Committee. 156.

Motion for Adjournment re non-official delegation to Great Britain and United States of America to speak on India's War Effort. 33, 37.

Motion re Food Situation. 313, 331-34, 340, 394.

Question re—

Appointments of Assistant Entomologists. 487.

Delayed enforcement of the Delhi Muslim Wakf Act. 487-88.

Muslim Assistants reverted from the Food Department. 428.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal. 240.

Facilities for Juma prayers in the Central Postal Circle. 549.

Issue of objectionable pamphlets by postal employees. 5.

Non-employment of Urdu-knowing clerks in Berar sub-post offices. 548.

Provinces facing Food shortage. 419.

Resolution re recruitment of Scheduled Castes to the Key Service of the Army. 579.

ZAHID HUSAIN, MR.—

Oath of Office. 1, 543.

ZAHUR ALI, MR. S. M.—

Question re scheme submitted by — regarding concert parties. 120-21.

ZIA UDDIN AHMAD, DR. SIR—

Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment) Bill—(Insertion of Section 12B)— Motion to continue. 140.

Motion re Food Situation. 369, 449-52.

Nomination of — to the House Committee. 359.

Question re—

Cash and small coins received from sale of passenger tickets by East Indian Railway. 24.

Working of the Indian National War Front. 556-61.

Question (Supplementary) re—

Causes of present food crisis in Bengal. 418.

Current Luggage Rules on State-managed Railways. 21.

Deaths due to starvation in Bengal and Assam and food position in India. 48.

Differential treatment to Indian and non-Indian shipping on the Indian Register. 435.

Foodgrains imported in Bengal. 408. Import of foodgrains from Australia and America. 409.

Position concerning recruitment to Emergency Commissions. 115.

Progress as regards abolition of Lower Gazetted Services on Indian Railways. 3.

Provinces facing Food shortage. 419.

Provincial stocks of wheat, rice, etc. 57. Students admitted to Dhanbad School of Mines. 416, 417.

Resolution re stabilization of Prices. 87, 89, 96, 98, 99-101.