

Wednesday,
4th February, 1948

THE
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA
(LEGISLATIVE) DEBATES

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CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF INDIA (LEGISLATIVE)

Wednesday, 4th February, 1948

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. Speaker (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP OF INDIANS AND CONDITION OF INDIAN LABOUR IN CEYLON

108. *Mr. E. K. Sidhva: (a) Will the Honourable the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the recent interviews between the Prime Ministers of Ceylon and of India have brought about a satisfactory result as regards the rights of citizenship of Indians now in Ceylon?

(b) If so, what are the terms and conditions of citizenship?

(c) What is the number of Indian labourers in Tea and Rubber Plantations in Ceylon?

(d) Have Government drawn the attention of the Prime Minister of Ceylon to the most unhealthy, and insanitary and ill-ventilated houses provided by tea and rubber planters of Ceylon for the Indian labour class?

(e) Are Government aware that this is one of the main causes of trouble amongst the Indian labourers in Ceylon?

(f) If no discussion has taken place on this subject, do Government propose to draw the attention of the Government of Ceylon to it and have such houses rebuilt providing the necessary amenities for this class of workers?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: (a) and (b). As a result of our discussions an agreement on broad principles governing qualifications for citizenship has been reached subject to further examination by the two Governments. As the terms of the agreement have not yet been finalised, it would not be in the public interest to disclose them now.

(c) The total number of Indian estate labourers in Ceylon at the end of 1946 was 4,67,011. No later statistics are available.

(d), (e) and (f). The question of the housing of estate labour was not raised during the discussions which were confined mainly to the question of citizenship of Indians now in Ceylon. The housing of estate labour is, in fact, not as bad as is suggested by the Honourable Member, and the question of its further improvement is already engaging the attention of the Ceylon Government and the Agent of the Government of India in Ceylon.

Mr. E. K. Sidhva: Is it not a fact, Sir, that the British Government four years ago appointed a Commission under Major Oder Brown regarding the condition of houses of labourers in Ceylon and that the Commission reported that land should be acquired by Government for Indian labourers and houses of a better type constructed?

Do Government intend to take up this question with the Ceylon Government to see that the conditions of houses for labour are improved?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: These matters are in continuous consideration in consultation with the Ceylon Government. I cannot speak for the exact Report that the Honourable Member refers to—I have not got it before me. But we are continuing to try to improve those estate conditions and on the whole they are better than they have been and better than in many places.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Sir, is the Honourable Prime Minister's statement to the effect that the housing conditions of labour are not as bad as my friend Mr. Sidhva suggests,—is this statement based on the report of the Ceylon Government or other sources?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: Our sources—our Agent there.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay: May I know whether there is any recognised trade union organisation of Indian labourers in Ceylon?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: I would not call it exactly a trade union organisation, but they are very well organised in various ways; repeatedly there have been strikes on a very big scale which shows organisation.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: I have seen those houses when I was in Ceylon some years ago and they are decidedly worse than those in India. May I know whether the Honourable the Prime Minister when he visited Ceylon inspected these houses, and whether he feels that the information conveyed is correct?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: Last time I went to Ceylon was many years ago. Then I did go to many of these houses and I did protest against the conditions there. I had long talks with the Ceylon Government too. As I said there is a continuous attempt being made there to improve labour conditions etc. The House will remember that we are now in a peculiar phase of transition. The main question before us is whether Indian labour in Ceylon is Indian national or not. If it is not Indian national, if it is Ceylon national, then we have no further say in the matter. If it is Indian national it is an alien in Ceylon and we expect the rights and the best conditions that an alien can have.

That is the fundamental question before us. The question of housing and other questions do not arise in this context. The first thing to be determined is whether those Indian labourers in Ceylon are Ceylonese in nationality or Indian. Once that is settled, and if they are Ceylon nationals as we have been asking them to become, then the question of our protesting about any matter regarding housing matters does not simply arise. If they are not Ceylonese nationals, then as Indian nationals we look after their rights and improve their conditions, *minus* their citizenship right.

Seth Govinddas: What is the percentage of Ceylon labourers who are Indian nationals and those who are Ceylon nationals? Is there any data kept about it?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: I am surprised about the Honourable Member's question. That is the whole question: as to who can become a Ceylon national and who cannot. And the demand on behalf of the Indians in Ceylon is that the doors should be thrown wide open to them to become Ceylon nationals. The question is not decided yet. For instance, on our side it is said that every Indian there who has been resident there for a particular period and who wants to become a Ceylon national should become a Ceylon national. We want the door opened. Once they pass that door they cease to be Indian nationals and we can say nothing about them except for humanitarian reasons.

Mr. Tajamul Husain: May I know how we find out whether those Indian labourers are Indian nationals or not and how long it will take for us to find that fact out?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: I must apologise for not being able to make myself understood to the House. Owing to rapid changes in political conditions in India, Ceylon and Burma and other countries, this question of nationality has become very confused. Previously we were all, technically speaking, British subjects, so the question of nationality was not defined. The only questions that arose previously were citizenship rights—not of nationality—and we are still thinking in terms of citizenship rights and that introduces a certain element of confusion. Citizenship rights will naturally follow nationality. Now, we are not thinking of citizenship rights as such but of nationality.

In Burma the position is fairly clear because Burma is an Independent Republic; but what follows from it has not been made clear as to which Indian is going to be a Burmese national and which an Indian national. That matter will probably be settled in the next two or three months. It is a complicated matter: millions of people have to choose. Ultimately the person himself will choose—the Indian in Burma or Ceylon will choose whether he wants to be this or that. Of course even if he chooses he may not be allowed to become a Ceylon national because he does not fulfil certain conditions; that is a different matter. Therefore, the question will be settled by the choice of the individual concerned subject to certain conditions.

Mr. E. K. Sidhva: Until the citizenship is defined, may I know if it is not a fact that sixty five per cent. of the labourers are Indians domiciled in Ceylon?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: Mr. Sidhva is again getting confused between nationality and citizenship and citizenship rights. I do not exactly remember the percentage, but probably his figure is right.

Mr. Speaker: Diwan Chaman Lall's questions were called out in his absence, but that was due to the fact that the Honourable the Prime Minister was not in his seat, when the first question was called and had to be put off. I think it will not be fair to debar him from putting his questions as he has been present here before the first question has been answered. I will therefore allow him to put his questions.

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: May I express my regret for my late coming?

Diwan Chaman Lall: I am grateful to you, Sir, for permitting me to put my questions.

REHABILITATION OF TEACHERS, LAWYERS, AND DOCTORS FROM PAKISTAN

109. *Diwan Chaman Lall: Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) what plans have been proposed for the rehabilitation of teachers, doctors and lawyers from West Punjab; and

(b) whether Government propose to utilise suitable vacant buildings for opening day schools, night schools and adult literacy schools immediately?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: (a) *Teachers:* Ministry of Education have already absorbed 300 teachers in Delhi. The possibilities of introducing double shift in educational institutions are being investigated. This is expected to provide employment to more teachers. Lists of names of displaced teachers are being sent periodically to provincial governments and universities with a request to absorb as many as possible. The Ministry of Education are also collecting statistics of displaced teachers. When this information has been collected Government will be in a position to decide whether it is necessary to ask the provincial governments to reserve a certain number of vacancies for displaced teachers so that they might be absorbed in their expansion schemes.

Doctors: Particulars of refugee doctors have been circulated to all Provinces and the larger Indian States with a view to their permanent absorption. Some of the doctors have also been provided employment at various refugee camps.

Lawyers: All Provincial Governments and Ministries of the Government of India have been requested to consider sympathetically applications from displaced lawyers for suitable judicial and administrative posts for which they are eligible. The Ministry of States is also addressing the States to absorb lawyers in the same manner. Provincial High Courts are being approached to relax their rules so as to enable displaced legal practitioners to appear before them and their subordinate courts.

Lawyers and doctors (including Vaid, Hakims, Homeopaths, dentists and radiologists) who wish to re-establish themselves in their professions can be granted loans upto a maximum of Rs. 3,000 per head.

(b) In East Punjab even school buildings are being used to house refugees. Nor in the present situation are such buildings available in Delhi. The Delhi Administration has and is taking steps to open as many schools as necessary for the refugees.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask my Honourable friend whether it is a fact that there are 30,000 refugee teachers out of whom 300 have been given jobs?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: 300 in Delhi. I dare say more have been absorbed in other places, particularly in East Punjab.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask my Honourable friend whether it is a fact that refugee teachers have got a Provident Fund which amounts to crores of rupees and whether any steps have been taken to give them advances out of that Provident Fund which belongs to them?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I understand that the Provident Funds are invested mostly in Postal Savings Banks and my information is that the Minister of Finance is actively considering the question which my Honourable friend has put to me.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Does the term "teachers" include in its scope professors and lecturers in colleges and universities?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Yes, Sir.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know if the Honourable Minister is aware of the fact that there are certain school buildings lying vacant in Delhi about which Government have so far taken no decision? Also, may I know if Government have taken up this question and whether those buildings will be put to some use?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: We have addressed the Delhi Administration to utilise, as far as possible, all vacant buildings for the purpose of starting schools for refugee children.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Do I understand that the Government have made up their minds that so far as buildings that have been evacuated and left vacant are concerned, they can be used for this purpose?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I should like to have definite particulars about these buildings before I can answer that question.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Many schools and colleges have been evacuated and left vacant. They are lying vacant for the last five or six months. For instance, the Arabic or the Muslim High School. About them, some policy has to be defined. I want to know whether any decision has been taken yet?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: No decision has yet been taken in this matter.

Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramaya: Will Government be pleased to consider or to take concerted measures for ensuring that doctors who have migrated here and who had large practice in Pakistan are given adequate accommodation to carry on their professions?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I entirely agree with that view and I can assure my Honourable friend that every possible effort is being made in that direction.

श्री गोकुलभाई दौलतराम भट्ट : पश्चिमी पंजाब से आये हुए निर्वासित आदमियों को जिस प्रकार यह सुविधा दी जाती, क्या उसी प्रकार से सिन्ध से आये हुये निर्वासितों के लिये योजना होगी।

Shri Gokulbhai Daulatram Bhatt: Will the same policy for affording similar facility to refugees from Sind be followed as is done in the case of refugees who have come from West Punjab?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: The problem of Sind refugees is a recent one and I dare say the policy I have enunciated will apply to refugees from Sind as much as to those from West Punjab.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know from the Honourable Minister as to how many doctors have so far been rehabilitated in Delhi and whether it is a fact that for the biggest X-ray plant which was imported from Lahore here we have not been able to find any housing accommodation?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: The doctors of the type the Honourable Member has in view are in a position to rehabilitate themselves except for such facilities for housing accommodation as may be needed by them. As regards the specific question which he has raised, I should like to have notice of it, so that I can go into the matter and give a definite reply.

Shri S. Nijalingappa: Regarding lawyers, will the Government consider the question of exempting lawyers from payment of enrolment fees?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: That question has not been examined yet, nor, as far as I am aware, has a suggestion to this effect been made by the lawyers themselves.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Have Government considered the advisability of appointing lawyers as panchayat officers in the villages of Delhi, of which there are about 350?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I am afraid that question has not been considered by Government, but I take it the Delhi Administration is fully competent to deal with this question; and my Honourable friend is perhaps rather closely associated with that Administration.

Shri Raj Krishna Bose: Can Government state, from the information they have received till now as to how many of these refugee teachers, lawyers and doctors can be absorbed by the Provincial and India Governments?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: As regards teachers, if the provinces introduce their educational expansion schemes, I have every hope that all the refugee teachers who possess proper qualifications will be absorbed.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I ask whether the number of refugee lawyers is about 4,000 and how many out of the 4,000 have been given jobs or have been rehabilitated?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I should have notice of that question. All I could answer now is with reference to the Central Government, because I have not got the figures from the Provinces.

Diwan Chaman Lall: May I ask whether it is the policy of Government that teachers and lawyers who are refugees should be given priority as far as appointments are concerned in the various camps and East Punjab?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: So far as the camps that are directly under the control of the Central Government are concerned, we are giving preference to refugees, whether they belong to the category of lawyers, teachers or doctors. But the question of suitability has to be considered with reference to appointments for camps. As regards the East Punjab, I daresay that the same principles are being observed.

श्री गोकुलभाई दौलतराम भट्ट : जो शिक्षक हैं, उनको नई तालीम के कोर्स में दाखिल कर लिया जाय तो शायद जो नई तालीम के हम स्कूल बगैरह खोलना चाहते हैं उसमें लाभप्रद होगा। क्या इस बारे में गवर्नमेंट ने कुछ सोचा है ?

Shri Gokulbhai Daulatram Bhatt: If the teachers are admitted to the study of new course of education, will they prove an asset to the institutions that we want to set up for imparting new type of education? Has the Government considered this matter?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: This question has not been considered by Government nor has a suggestion to this effect been received from any educational authority as yet.

REHABILITATION OF REFUGEES THROUGH A CENTRALLY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITY

110. ***Diwan Chaman Lall:** Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 80,000 refugees were sent by the authorities to Rohtak district and whether the majority of them have been ordered to shift again to make room for other refugees; and

(b) whether the Government of India have arrived at any decision to undertake the task of rehabilitation through a centrally constituted authority?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: (a) A report has been called for from the East Punjab Government and will be laid on the table when received.

(b) Government have decided to appoint a Rehabilitation and Development Board whose functions were stated by the Prime Minister yesterday. An official communication on this subject will soon be issued.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

111. ***Diwan Chaman Lall:** Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) what progress has been made in respect of providing financial assistance to refugees of various categories; and

(b) whether this assistance will be administered from the Centre?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: (a) The following schemes of assistance have been sanctioned:

(1) *For agriculturists*—Loans for the purchase of bullocks, seeds and agricultural implements are to be given to those settling on land. Free grants are also to be given for their up-keep for the period from sowing onwards to the next harvest.

(2) *For urban displaced persons*—Loans are to be given to shop-keepers, traders, artisans, etc. up to a maximum of rupees five hundred; each for medical practitioners, and legal practitioners up to a maximum of rupees three thousand each. In all these cases the Central Government have intimated their readiness to advance the necessary funds to the Provincial and State Governments concerned and to share the free grants and the losses on loans.

(3) For small industrialists, Rehabilitation Finance Administration is being set up which will make loans for rupees five thousand and above onwards. Big industry will be catered for by the Industrial Finance Corporation.

(4) A scheme of loans to students for studies overseas; and to students receiving training or education in India has also been sanctioned. The above schemes have been recommended by the Central Governments to all Provincial Governments for adoption.

(b) Schemes for loans to students and trainees abroad will be administered directly by the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation. Others will be administered by the Provincial or State Government or Administrations concerned.

Seth Govinddas: May I ask the Honourable Minister whether steps will be taken to see that as far as the Provinces are concerned, the Centre will meet the expenses of the refugees sent to provinces and that adequate machinery will also be provided to the Provincial Governments so that land which is given to the refugee if it is barren may be cultivated?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I do not know, Sir, whether this question arises out of the question which I have just answered, because the question relates to financial assistance to refugees. The question which my Honourable friend has put to me is as regards the responsibility of the Centre in financing Provinces in their schemes of agricultural resettlement.

Seth Govinddas: What I wanted to know is that as far as the refugees who are sent to Provinces are concerned burden will not fall on Provinces. And whether as regards the land which is given to them by the Provincial Governments if found to be barren, the Central Government will give facilities to Provincial Government in respect of machinery, so that the barren land may be used?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: If specific requests of this kind are received from any Provincial Government, they will be certainly considered.

Shri H. V. Kamath: May I ask the Honourable Minister how many loans have been so far advanced to agriculturists and what is the total amount of loans so advanced?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I should like to have notice of this question.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Will the Honourable Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to say what is the form in which assistance is being given to students in India and trainees abroad?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: The assistance is generally in the form of loans, but free grants are also not excluded.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Are the loans being given to students in India?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Yes.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Does the Honourable Minister remember that some time ago that the Honourable Minister without Portfolio in answer to a question of mine said that the matter of giving scholarships to the displaced students on the same terms as those given to students coming over from Burma in 1942 would be considered?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Well the matter has been considered, and we are now not in a position yet to definitely state whether the terms on which these scholarships were granted in the case of the Burma evacuees will be exactly applicable to the terms which may be fixed in the present instance.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Is the matter still under consideration or have Government come to any definite conclusion?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: It is still under consideration.

Diwan Chaman Lal: May I know whether there is any estimate as to the cost to the Central Government of these various schemes of assistance which is mentioned?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I am afraid, no definite estimate is yet possible to be made, but I can assure my Honourable friend that these schemes will not suffer for want of funds.

CONFLICT AMONGST AUTHORITIES re RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES

112. *Diwan Chaman Lal: Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that until the 10th January, 1948, not a single refugee from West Punjab had been actually settled in any urban area in Amritsar.

(b) whether it is a fact that instructions are frequently issued and changed from the Head Quarters in Jullundur in the matter of resettlement;

(c) whether there is a conflict of authorities in regard to the orders to be given relating to resettlement; and

(d) whether Government of India have considered taking in hand immediately the plans for resettlement in view of the existing conditions?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: (a) to (c). A report has been called for from the East Punjab Government and will be laid on the table when received.

(d) The Rehabilitation and Development Board is expected to play an important part in the Rehabilitation of urban refugees. Beyond this, there is at present no intention on the part of the Central Government to directly take in hand the resettlement of urban refugees in the Provinces.

श्री मोहनलाल गौतम : क्या गवर्नमेंट यह बतलाने की मेहरबानी करेगी कि करीब एक लाख आदमियों के जो अलवर और भरतपुर रियासत से निकाले गये हैं उनको रीसेटिल (resettle) करने का क्या इन्तजाम किया गया है ?

Shri Mohan Lal Gautam: Will the Government please state what arrangements have been made to resettle about one lakh of people who have been evacuated from Alwar and Bharatpur States?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I am afraid, I must ask for notice of that question and it does not directly arise out of the questions that I have answered.

SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY GENERATED AT HIRAKUD TO DISTRICT BALASORE

113. *Shri Lakshminarayan Sahu: Will the Honourable Minister of Works, Mines and Power be pleased to state whether Government propose to supply electricity that will be generated at Hirakud to the district of Balasore for the development of the district?

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: The Hirakud Dam Project as at present visualised is not likely to supply electricity to the District of Balasore.

DIFFICULTIES OF HARIJAN REFUGEES FROM SIND IN KATHIAWAR STATE

114. *Shri V. C. Kesava Rao: (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state whether it is a fact that a delegation was sent to Kathiawar State to enquire into the conditions and difficulties experienced by Harijan refugees who came from Sind?

(b) If so, what is the report of the delegation?

(c) Have Government given these refugees any help?

(d) If so, how many have received such help?

(e) Is it a fact that the Cutch States have asked for the appointment of Welfare Officers to look into the conditions of the refugees?

(f) If so, how many officers have been appointed?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: (a) Two officers of the Government of India were sent to Cutch and the Kathiawar States to enquire into the conditions of Harijan refugees who had come from Sind. They were accompanied by a member of the Constituent Assembly and another public worker.

(b) A few copies of the report are being placed in the Library of the House.

(c) Government have arranged to provide blankets and medical stores to such of the Harijan refugees as are in need of them. Arrangements have also been made to supply looms and yarn to a large number of refugee Harijan families.

(d) Since the receipt of the report there has been further influx of refugees from Sind. Figures are being collected and will be laid on the table.

(e) No request has been received from the Cutch Durbar for appointment of Welfare Officers.

(f) Government of India have appointed a Director of Evacuation for the Kathiawar Region. Special Refugee Officers and Welfare Officers are being appointed at the necessary places. In addition, Mr. A. V. Thakar of the Harijan Sewak Sangh has been appointed as unofficial representatives of the Government of India in Cutch and Kathiawar.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Will the Honourable Minister give the names of the officers deputed by Government to investigate and report about the refugees from Sind?

The Honourable Shri K.C. Neogy: Well, they are officers of my Ministry I do not know whether my Honourable friend would like to have those names.

Shri H. J. Khandekar: May I ask the Honourable Minister whether Government have appointed an officer by name Bhao Rao Gaikwar?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I am afraid, I am not in a position to give an answer straightaway. May I know in which capacity he is appointed?

Shri H. J. Khandekar: May I know, Sir, whether Government will enquire if Mr. Bhao Rao Gaikwar of Nasik is appointed as a Refugee Officer and if there was a warrant against him from the C. P. Government?

Mr. Speaker: I do not think I should permit these questions.

Shri H. J. Khandekar: I would like to explain it.

Mr. Speaker: No explanation is necessary.

Shri H. J. Khandekar: What I want to ask is whether any Refugee officer appointed by the Government of India was under arrest by the C. P. Government?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I have no information.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: May I know in which place in Kathiawar this Director of Refugees has been stationed?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I think he is posted at Rajkot and he acts in liaison with the States Regional Commission, Kathiawar.

RECOVERY OF ABDUCTED WOMEN IN DOMINIONS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN

115. ***Ghani Gurmukh Singh Musafar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether the arrangement for the recovery of abducted women in the Dominions of India and Pakistan, as agreed upon by the representatives of both the Dominions, is working smoothly?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in negative, what steps do Government propose to take, to get the agreement effectively complied with?

(c) How many abducted women have been recovered and sent to their relatives in either dominion?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: (a) and (b). The recovery of abducted women in the Dominions of India and Pakistan is proceeding but the process has unfortunately been rather slow. Every effort is being made by Government to expedite it. Certain political and other developments have however come in the way and have hampered the effectiveness of the present operations. The Government of India is in continuous communication with the Government of Pakistan in order to expedite the recovery. It is obvious that speedy and effective recovery depends upon the close co-operation of the two Dominions Governments. Both these Governments have repeatedly expressed their wish that everything should be done for this recovery of abducted women. In practice, however obstructions are met with which delay matters. I should not like to say much more on this subject at present except that the Government attaches the greatest importance to this recovery of abducted women and will do its utmost to speed it. In this work they have had the co-operation of non-official agencies and well-known women workers which has been of very great help and Government is grateful to them for it.

(c) There are discrepancies between the numbers of women which the Government of one Dominion claims to have recovered and handed over to the representatives of the other Dominion, and the numbers which the latter Dominion admits having received. A committee has now been established to reconcile the figures. Exact information about the number of women recovered is therefore not available at present.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Have Government got information as to how many women were abducted from India to Pakistan and *vice versa*?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir.

श्री राम सहाय : क्या प्रधान मंत्री साहब यह बतलाने की कृपा करेंगे कि उन कन्याओं तथा महिलाओं की संख्या कितनी है जिनको उनके गार्डियन (guardian) या पतियों ने नहीं कब्ज़ किया है ?

Shri Ram Sahai: Will the Honourable the Prime Minister please state the number of those unmarried and married women, who have not been accepted by their guardians or husbands?

آریبل پلڈت چواہر لال نہرو : جی نہیں - میں نہیں کہہ سکتا - لکین جہاں تک
مجھے علم ہے بہت ہی کم ایسا ہوا ہوگا - کیونکہ خاص تعداد میں ایسی ہات سڈ
میں نہیں آئی ہے -

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: No, Sir. I cannot say. But so far as I know there have been very few of such cases; because it has not been so heard in any particular number of cases.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know, Sir, whether there is any truth in the rumour that the Pakistan Government insist on handing over Hindu and Sikh women only in case an equal number is handed over from this Dominion?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: No, the Pakistan Government has said no such thing. But there is a tendency among the junior officials of Pakistan to work in that direction.

AGREEMENT re SAFETY OF EDUCATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN.

116. ***Giani Gurmukh Singh Musafar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Prime Minister be pleased to state whether there is any agreement between the Dominions of India and Pakistan that the property belonging to educational and religious institutions will be kept intact and will not be occupied?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, are the terms of agreement observed in the Dominion of Pakistan?

(c) Are Government aware that land attached to all the Gurdwaras in Pakistan, whether historical or otherwise, has been distributed to and occupied by Muslims?

(d) If so, do Government propose to take up the matter with the Government of Pakistan and see that the terms of the agreement are strictly observed?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: (a), (b) and (d). The two Dominions have agreed that the properties belonging to educational and religious institutions will be protected and safeguarded, but there is no agreement that such properties shall not be temporarily occupied for any purpose whatever by the Government of the Dominion in which they are situated. The question of the disposal of the properties is still under discussion between the two Governments.

(c) Government have no such information.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know, Sir, whether some of the Colleges, e.g., the D. A. V. College, and others, have already been occupied and are being used for other purposes and the Gita Bhavan has been utilised for similar purposes?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: So far as the D. A. V. College is concerned, to the best of my knowledge, it is still used as a refugee camp—I do not of course know of any developments in the last few days. I am sorry I am unable to give any information about Gita Bhavan. I can enquire into the matter if the Honourable Member so desires.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru: Is the Prime Minister aware that the Vedic Research Institute which was associated with the D. A. V. College has not been permitted to remove its stock of paper or the press which could be used only for printing Sanskrit books and Sanskrit Books of a particular kind only?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: I am not particularly aware of this. But I have no doubt that what my Honourable Colleague says may be correct. There has been certain difficulty in removing things from Lahore and Pakistan as a whole. In fact, we have been concentrating, to begin with, on the removal of small valuables. The fact that they can be removed is not denied; but difficulties come in the way.

Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru: Will the Prime Minister take some interest in this matter, because the Vedic Research Institute is one of the very few institutions in this country which are engaged in research work on the *vedas* and has been carrying on work in this line for a number of years?

The Honourable Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru: Certainly, Sir, we shall instruct our High Commissioner in Lahore to take special interest in this matter and try to send papers and other materials of the Vedic Research Institute here.

POSITION re EXPORT OF INDIAN TEA TO KASHMIR, PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN

117. ***Shri Khurshed Lal:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Commerce be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the principal markets for tea produced in the Dehra Dun and Kangra Valleys are Afghanistan and Kashmir, and that this tea used to be sent to Afghanistan and Kashmir from Amritsar?

(b) Is it a fact that about sixty thousand maunds of tea worth about Rupees two crores used to be exported annually from Amritsar to Afghanistan via West Punjab and North-West Frontier Province?

(c) Is it a fact that for some time past no tea is being allowed to be exported to Pakistan, with the result that export of tea to Afghanistan is totally stopped and that large stocks of tea have accumulated at Amritsar?

(d) Is the ban on the export of tea to Pakistan due to any order of the Government of India or of the Government of East Punjab?

(e) What steps do Government propose to take to preserve the market for Indian tea in Afghanistan and how do they propose to arrange for the export of tea to Afghanistan?

(f) Are Government aware that large quantities of tea could not be sent to Kashmir also this year, as the Rawalpindi route was closed and that this has also added to the accumulation of tea at Amritsar?

(g) Have Government any plan for sending tea to Kashmir?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Green tea exports to Afghanistan during the last three years for which statistics are available averaged about 3.4 million pounds worth about Rs. 27.8 lakhs. It is presumed that most of this tea went through Amritsar.

(c), (d) and (e). The Government of India have not placed any ban on the export of tea from India to Pakistan. It is however understood that the East Punjab Government have imposed certain restrictions on the movement of this commodity across the border. The Government of India are fully alive to the need for preserving the market for Indian green tea in Afghanistan and they are accordingly taking up the matter with the East Punjab authorities.

(f) and (g). Government are aware of the transport difficulties affecting supplies to Kashmir but they have not been specifically approached for assistance in regard to tea. If there is a demand for tea from Kashmir, they will consider how it should be met having regard to the priority of other articles and the availability of transport.

Shri Khurshed Lal: Has the Government of East Punjab imposed any ban on the export of tea?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: No ban as such has been placed on the export of tea, but there are certain restrictions with regard to movement of tea.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva: Does it not amount to a ban?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order, that is a matter for argument.

Pandit Balkrishna Sharma: Are Government aware that merchants from Afghanistan were prepared to take delivery of the tea at Amritsar on their own responsibility and take it to Afghanistan, but the East Punjab Government did not see their way to give them this facility?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Government is not aware of any such thing, but, as I said, we are in correspondence with the East Punjab Government on this issue.

Diwan Ohaman Lall: What was the reason that prompted the East Punjab Government to ban the export of tea?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: That is a provincial matter which I am not in a position to answer.

Shri K. Santhanam: Is the Standstill Agreement between India and Pakistan standing still?

SUPPLY OF PETROL, KEROSENE, DIESEL OIL AND OTHER PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

118. ***Shri Deshbandhu Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Works, Mines and Power be pleased to state what efforts are being made to ensure adequate supplies of Petrol, Kerosene, Diesel Oil and other petroleum products?

(b) Are there any possibilities of prospecting for and tapping natural oil resources in India?

(c) If so, what steps do Government propose to take to use such resources?

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: (a) Negotiations are being carried on by the Government of India with the Oil Companies for obtaining adequate supplies of petroleum, kerosene, diesel oil and other petroleum products for India. The India Supply Mission in Washington have been advised to obtain export quotas in respect of certain quantities of petroleum products. Government are also trying to explore the possibility of obtaining supplies from other sources.

(b) Besides the known oil bearing areas which are already being explored no new sources which can be tapped economically have yet been discussed. Possibilities of striking new fields, however, always exist.

(c) The Geological Survey of India is drawing up an intensive programme of geological and geophysical exploration, for oil. Government also propose to encourage private prospecting for oil in India.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know, Sir, whether any effort is being made to get some oil products from the USSR also?

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: A few months ago, we approached the Trade Commissioner of USSR at Calcutta. but so far no reply has been received.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: In view of the fact that we have now closer relations with Russia, do Government propose to renew their efforts and try to get supplies from Russia?

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: As I have already stated, inasmuch as no reply has been received it apparently seems that the USSR is non-communicative.

Shri B. Das: Is it not high time for the Government of India to appoint Trade Commissioners in Moscow so that we can have direct contact with the Moscow Government?

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: Yes, it is high time.

Shri B. Das: Why not immediately?

Shri H. V. Kamath: Arising out of answer to part (a), which are the oil companies with whom Government are negotiating at present.

The Honourable Shri N. V. Gadgil: There are several, and a detailed reply was given on the 28th of January 1948 to a question asked by Mr. Sidhva. But if the Honourable Member wants the names of the companies, I cannot give them just now; I will give the information later on.

ACTION AGAINST ILLICIT PRACTICES BY IMPORT LICENCEES

119. ***Shri Deshbandhu Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Minister of Commerce be pleased to state whether Government are aware of the fact that a number of importers possess import licences obtained under false declarations?

(b) Are Government further aware that there is a practice of transferring valid licences to others?

(c) Has any action been taken by Government against any person or firm for obtaining license under false pretext, and if not, why not?

(d) What steps do Government propose to take to stop such practices?

The Honourable Mr. O. H. Bhabha: (a) It is possible that some importers may have obtained import licences on the production of false declarations and false evidence.

(b) Import licences are not transferable except with the written permission of the authority granting the licence.

(c) and (d). Where it has come to the notice of the Government that an importer has obtained licences under false pretexts action has been taken to debar such parties from getting any further import licences. Unauthorised transfers of licences, when they come to the notice of Government, are also dealt with severely either by confiscation of the goods or the levy of a penalty or by blacklisting both the transferor and the transferee.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Has the Honourable Minister's attention been drawn to the fact that there has not only been unauthorised transfers but public invitations for transfers published by way of advertisements in certain newspapers? For instance, has his attention been drawn to the following advertisement in the *Times of India* of the 9th January 1948:

"U. S. A. newsprint licence available. Interested parties please contact Tavaris Brothers, 'Dhun-Nur' Phirozeshah Mehta Road, Bombay."

May I know whether any action has been taken on this?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: I do not know about this specific case but such things have been brought to the notice of Government, and suitable action has been taken in these cases.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Has the attention of the Honourable Minister been drawn to another advertisement in the *Times of India* of the 29th January as follows:

"Business representation at Delhi undertaken for licences by influential person experienced in import/export trade. Write to Murthi, P. B. 276, New Delhi."

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: I do not know about this specific instance, but our attention has been drawn to this thing and we have devised methods to see that such intermediaries are eliminated.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: May I know against how many people action has so far been taken for transferring licences?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: I am not in a position to state the exact number but quite a large number of cases have been severely dealt with.

Shri H. V. Kamath: What is the kind of suitable action that has been taken?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: I have explained the action that is taken in such cases; they are:—confiscation of goods, blacklisting of such applicants for the next application quota period and preventing them from entering the C. C. I.'s office.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Has the attention of Government been drawn to this report in the *Times of India* of the 8th January last?

"ALLEGED IMPORT LICENCE RACKET"

ONE MAN ARRESTED

Chamanlal alias Babulal J. Mehta, believed to be connected with a gang engaged in an import licence racket, was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Branch of the Bombay City Police on Saturday on charges of theft, cheating and abetment.

According to the police a merchant in Bombay doing export and import business had in June last applied to the Chief Controller of Imports at New Delhi, for licenses to import steel balls worth Rs. 4,66,400 from the United Kingdom.

The merchant did not receive the licenses for a long time. In December the suspect approached the merchant and introduced to him a person who he said, would be able to secure the licences. The payment for the "deal" was fixed at two per cent. of the total value of the imports, namely, Rs. 9,328.

On December 26 last, Mehta informed the merchant that the licences had been received in Bombay and would be delivered to him on payment of the stipulated money. The merchant became suspicious and informed the Anti-Corruption Branch.

A trap was laid by the police and on Mehta receiving the money after delivery of the licences, he was arrested. The police believe that some persons at New Delhi had a hand in this game and had been responsible for withholding the licences with a view to making money on false representations."

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Government are aware of this case; the matter is under police investigation.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Have any officials connected with the Department been arrested in this connection?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Some junior assistants have been questioned by the police.

Seth Govinddas: Are Government thinking of prosecuting such parties in the law courts for cheating?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Where there is definite proof the matter is handed over to the police.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Are Government prepared to lay on the table of the House a statement containing the names of those firms which were not dealing in certain commodities but were given import and export licences and traded in these licenses?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Government have no such list because most of the applicants merely stated generally that they were importers and exporters. It is very difficult for Government to find out whether a particular merchant is handling a particular commodity for which he has put in the application.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Are Government prepared to set up a machinery now—in view of so many glaring instances of corruption having come to notice—to go into these instances, check up the list, blacklist those persons and publish the names of those to whom these licenses were given?

The Honourable Mr. C. H. Bhabha: Government are working in that direction already. I may inform my Honourable friend that the new import licensing forms seek more information than was given in the previous forms, with the result that Government will be in a better position to judge whether a particular applicant has been dealing in these particular commodities.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Will Government consider the advisability of publicly flogging such offenders?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order; next question.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ATTACK ON THE PARACHINAR REFUGEE CAMP BY TRIBESMEN

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Will the Honourable Minister of Relief and Rehabilitation be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the Press Report regarding the attack on the Parachinar Refugee Camp by tribesmen resulting in the massacre of a large number of Hindu and Sikh refugees?

(b) If so, have Government made enquiries about the same and got any information as to the number of refugees killed, injured and abducted?

(c) Have Government asked the Government of Pakistan to explain their failure to discharge their duties in the matter and if so, what reply has been received from them?

The Honourable Shri K. O. Neogy: (a) Yes.

(b) The only information so far available has been supplied by local representatives of the Pakistan Government to our representative at Peshawar. According to the information supplied by them it appears that 130 non-Muslims

living in the Parachinar camp were killed, 81 wounded and 50 abducted. Inquiries made of people who have been evacuated to the territories of the Indian Union, however, indicate that 138 non-Muslims were killed, 223 abducted and 150 injured more or less severely.

(c) The strongest representations have been made to the Pakistan Government indicating the views of this Government on the attitude of the Pakistan authorities on the question of protection and evacuation of the refugees at Parachinar and the necessity of immediate evacuation of other non-Muslims from the N.-W. F. P. and the tribal areas. We have also emphasized the responsibility of the Pakistan Government for the immediate recovery of the abducted persons. An interim reply has been received.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Have Government taken any other measures to find out from other sources the exact number of abducted and injured persons?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Statements are being recorded of the survivors who have reached the Kurukshetra camp. I do not suppose there is any other agency available to us for the purpose of making inquiries in this matter.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: What is the reply received from the Pakistan Government?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: It is an interim reply and does not deal with all the facts. A more detailed reply is expected.

Shri Deshbandhu Gupta: Is it a fact that the Pakistan Government had undertaken to protect the inmates of this camp and they were not allowed to be evacuated when they expressed their desire to do so?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Yes, that is more or less the position.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Is it a fact that a section of the Mongal tribe living in Afghanistan attacked this camp?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I do not know exactly the particular tribe involved in this crime.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Was it a tribe belonging to Afghanistan?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: Actually, from what I have heard from the people among the survivors, there is a dispute as to whether the attack was launched by the tribal people or by others. I should not like to make a definite statement on the point just yet.

Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru: Is an enquiry being made?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: As far as possible, we are having statements recorded of the survivors who are at Kurukshetra. Meanwhile our representative in Peshawar is busy getting more details for us and again we are waiting for a final and detailed reply from the Pakistan authorities.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Has any representation been made by the Government of India to the Pakistan Government to get compensation for those persons who have lost their lives?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: No specific demand for compensation has yet been made. Everything will depend upon the final picture that we get from their reply.

کھانی گورمکھ سنگھ مسافر : کہا یہ تھیک ہے کہ یاراچنار کے متعلق پہلے سے ہی آپ

کے دفتر میں یہ اطلاع آئی تھی کہ وہاں کے غیر مسلم بہت خطرے میں ہیں۔

Giani Gurmukhsingh Musafar: Is it a fact that in respect of Parachinar information had already been received in your office that the Non-Muslim residents of that place were in great danger?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: As a matter of fact, I have been personally looking into this matter for several weeks past, and I have been off and on meeting deputations from Parachinar who have been at Delhi for some time. In a press statement that was issued from my Ministry a few days ago, the full details of the various stages through which these negotiations and representations had proceeded have been given.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: May I know from the Honourable Minister if non-Muslims include any others other than Hindus and Sikhs?

The Honourable Shri K. C. Neogy: I do not think so. But as the figures separately of Sikhs and Hindus are not available, we use this phrase in such replies.

NATIONALIZATION OF THE RESERVE AND IMPERIAL BANKS OF INDIA

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena: Will the Honourable the Finance Minister be pleased to state:

(a) What steps have Government taken to implement the decision announced in the Budget speech for 1947-48 by the then Finance Member to nationalise the Reserve Bank?

(b) Is it the intention of the Government to nationalise the Imperial Bank of India which manages the treasury business of Government all over the country as Agents of the Reserve Bank?

(c) If the answer to (b) above is in the affirmative, can the Government give an indication of the basis on which compensation will be paid to the existing shareholders of both these Banks?

(d) Is it the intention of Government to nationalise the other Commercial Banks also?

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: (a) Nationalisation of the Reserve Bank can be effected only after the 30th September 1948 when the Reserve Bank ceases to be a common banker for India and Pakistan under the terms of Pakistan (Monetary and Reserve Bank) Order 1947. Government propose to take steps to see that the nationalisation of the Bank is effected as soon thereafter as possible.

(b) Government accept the policy of nationalising the Imperial Bank of India but as the Bank has branches outside India, Government propose to examine carefully the various technical questions that would arise in connection with the nationalisation of the Bank before the policy is implemented.

(c) As regards the Reserve Bank, Government's intention is to acquire its shares at the average of the monthly market value of the shares during the period March 1947 to February 1948 taking the opening quotations for each month and to issue thereof to the shareholders three percent, long-dated stock of equivalent value of appropriate maturity. In regard to the Imperial Bank of India, Government propose to adopt a similar basis for the acquisition of its share capital. The period for which the average of the market value of the shares is to be taken will be determined at the time of nationalising the Bank.

(d) It is not the intention of Government to nationalise other Commercial Banks. The Imperial Bank of India, which has been incorporated by a special Act of the Indian Legislature, stands on a separate footing.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari: Does the Finance Minister propose to introduce any legislation for the time being so as to amend the Imperial Bank Act and give the Central Government or the Governor of the Reserve Bank such powers of inspection over the accounts of the Imperial Bank so as to ensure that the assets of the Bank will remain intact till such a time when the Government decides to take it over?

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: I have already stated in my reply that since Government have accepted the policy of nationalising the Imperial Bank of India all the various technical and other problems involved in that process will now be taken into consideration and whatever action is necessary will be taken.

Shri B. Das: Will the Honourable Finance Minister advise the management of the Imperial Bank to stop all foreign recruitment and also recruitment in India till the Honourable Finance Minister takes over the Imperial Bank?

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: I think, Sir, that recruitment of foreigners into the Imperial Bank has been stopped now for many years.

Shri B. Das: No, Sir.

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: Oh yes, it has been!

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: In view of the book value of the various assets being lower than the market value, steps will have to be taken to see that assets are not transferred for their book value and that thus loss is prevented to the bank when the Government takes it over.

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: Every possible step necessary to safeguard the interests of the Government and the shareholder will be taken.

Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Minister be pleased to state whether it is intended to take over also the Reserve Fund or allow that to be distributed to the shareholders and take the shares apart from the Reserve Fund?

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: When we nationalise a bank Government takes over the entire assets and liabilities of the bank including the reserve fund, and we compensate the shareholders on the basis that I have explained.

Seth Govinddas: Have the Government received any reports from smaller banks that the Reserve Bank directors, who are entitled to see the accounts of the other small banks, do some such thing that those small banks are harmed? Until the Reserve Bank is nationalised, what steps are Government going to take to see that these Directors may not be able to see the accounts of smaller banks about whom it is said that reports have been made to the Government?

Mr. Speaker: How does it arise out of this question?

Seth Govinddas: Because the Reserve Bank is going to be nationalised at a later date and smaller banks are being harmed. I want to know what steps

Mr. Speaker: I am afraid I must differ from the Honourable Member.

Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya: Will Government be pleased to ascertain the exact amount of the unclaimed deposits in the Imperial Bank as they stand today and make sure of that figure?

The Honourable Shri R. K. Shanmukham Chetty: As I said, lots of questions will arise about safeguarding the entire assets of the Imperial Bank, and if there is any unclaimed deposits, naturally it will be one of the assets which we will certainly try to safeguard.

Shri B. Das: Is the Honourable Member aware that the Imperial Bank advances overdraft money to foreign firms working in India and discriminates against Indian firms by charging high interest? Will he stop that practice immediately by executive order?

Mr. Speaker: The House will now proceed with the Resolutions.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT FAMINE COMMISSION AT CENTRE.

Shri Mohan Lal Saksena (U. P.: General): In view of the Statement made by the Honourable the Finance Minister, I do not propose to move the resolution in my name.

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari (Madras: General): I do not propose to move the resolution in my name.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar (Madras: General): I do not move the first one. I move the second one.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth (Madras: Muslim): On a point of order. My friend has submitted that he does not want to move the first resolution but the second one. On the agenda that has been supplied to us, it has been definitely stated that my Honourable friend will move the first resolution provided it is not barred. Then again, when he has given notice of the second resolution, he says that it will be moved when the other is barred. Therefore, he is bound to move the first resolution.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: There are two resolutions in my name. It is open to me to give up one resolution and go on to the other.

Mr. Speaker: I do not follow.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Another point was raised by my friend. We will assume both these were tabled in my name. It is open to give up one and go to the other resolution. I cannot see any point of order in this.

Mr. Speaker: There is force in the argument of Mr. Ishaq Seth, but it is absolutely a matter of volition on the part of the Honourable Member to move or not to move a resolution. As the House would have noticed in the case of the first two resolutions, the Honourable Members concerned got up and said that they did not want to move them.

Haji Abdus Sattar Haji Ishaq Seth: It is particularised here. It says "if the above is barred".

Mr. Speaker: I think the Honourable Member Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar is perfectly in order.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Sir, I beg to move:

"This Assembly is of opinion that with a view to offer quick and adequate relief to famine stricken areas where a famine has begun and to take steps by developing the areas so as to avoid famine recurring, a permanent Famine Commission shall be established at the Centre, charged with the duty of affording relief during actual distress and developing the areas industrially, economically and agriculturally so as to avoid famine conditions appearing."

Sir, India has been the home of famines. The history of India can be written according to the number of famines that have occurred from times immemorial and have ravaged this country from end to end. We find that as early as the period of the Upanishads there was a twelve years' famine. Viswamitra had to live on dog's flesh. Later on we find that even during the days of the Ramayana, Dasaratha brought Rishyashringa from the jungle during a twelve year famine and there was plenty of rain in the 13th year. This state of affairs has not since improved considerably or adequately. Science has progressed so far in Western countries that man has been able to conquer the laws of nature. But we have not, unfortunately, been able to utilise all the progress that science has made and we have not been able to use this scientific progress in avoiding famine conditions.

Agriculture in this country is mostly dependent upon rains and these rains come by way of monsoons. The South-West monsoon which starts in May and ends only in October covers a large area of this continent. The North-East monsoon covers the southern portion of the Madras Presidency and Eastern Bengal. In the Gangetic valley the winter rains commence in December normally and go on till February. If they fail for any reason draught comes in

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immediately. In various parts of the country rainfall varies from a maximum of 15 inches in Rajputana to 30 or 40 inches maximum in the Deccan plateau. In the Western Ghats and the Western Coast the rainfall ranges from 70 to 150 inches. In the eastern part of Madras Presidency it is 50 inches, in Eastern Bengal it is higher and at Chirapunji the rainfall is the highest in the world. So far as the Gangetic valley is concerned it does not suffer from draught so often as the Southern plateau but now and then it also suffers for want of rains.

Let us see in what cycle of years famines have set in. I would only read the dates as I have been able to gather them from the chronicle given in some of the Famine Commission reports. After the Moghul Empire let me come to the time when the Britishers came to occupy this land. In 1770 Lower Bengal and Bihar were afflicted with famine. Ten million people are said to have died in 1784. Upper India was afflicted with famine in 1781-82; Madras in 1791-92; Hyderabad and North Madras in 1802-4; Hyderabad, North Madras and Bombay in 1837. The northern parts of Madras, viz., the Guntur district, were, so seriously afflicted with famine that large number of *langar khans* were opened in Madras by charitably-disposed people. In 1812-13 and 1824-25 again Bombay and Madras were seriously afflicted. In 1833 there was the worst famine in Guntur district. Two lakhs of people died out of a total population of five lakhs. In 1837 there was the first severe famine in upper India which extended from Allahabad to Delhi. In 1854 Madras was once again afflicted with famine and at this time Bellary district was affected. There were famines in 1837, 1866, 1867, 1880, 1875-76, 1898 and then we had the latest famine in Bengal which was partly man-made and partly God-made. I cannot say that there is famine in any particular part of the country, for there is famine all throughout the country and it has been in existence for a number of years. But for the imports from foreign countries we would have disappeared from the land. It is common knowledge that we have been living on rations. Though decontrol has been introduced there is no increase in the quantity of foodgrains that is available. Some rich men may be able to get more but the rest of the population are not able to get anything at all. Even with a normal rain-fall of 15 inches in some parts and 30 to 40 inches in others, even when the monsoons do not fail 30 per cent. of our population are under-fed. The production of food in our country even with the best of rainfall has been enough to provide food for only 70 per cent. of the population. When the crop yield is 50 per cent. there is immediately a draught and lots of people suffer. The people that suffer most are the lower classes. The moment the monsoons fail there is no more work for the agricultural labourers who have to depend on agriculture. They flock from there to the towns, as they have no money to purchase food with. Artisans migrate gradually one after another and soon other sections of the population get affected. The lower ranks of the labour population die like flies. Fortunately on account of easy communication with the rest of the world and good communications and other transport facilities in India we have avoided large scale deaths in this country.

How long we are to put up with this state of affairs. Hitherto all that has been done was to relieve distress not by way of prevention but by way of protection. After the famine of 1890 a Commission was appointed which went into the matter closely and tried to find out the causes of famines. The scientific cause of famines was said to be the occurrence of sun spots but nobody has discovered why monsoons fail or why they occur. It has been said that after a cycle of ten or fifteen years the same place is affected and that the whole country is afflicted once in 50 years. That is what appears from the statistics that have been gathered and the various reports that have been published. As early as 1890 they said that protective relief is not so important as preventive relief and they suggested that the various irrigation projects must be immediately taken in hand by the Government. They said that the Godavari delta

must be improved and that the Tungabhadra project must also be started. I am interested in the Tungabhadra project because in the previous Assembly I represented the five districts of the Madras Presidency which are notoriously famine-stricken. That was in 1880 and it is 1948 and it is only now that the Tungabhadra project has been taken on hand. I am glad to see that a Bill has been introduced in regard to the Damodar Valley Project to bring into existence a corporation to improve that valley. This is not at all adequate.

The food that we are producing at present is not at all sufficient even to give ten ounces per head by way of cereals. Cereals are recognised as the staple food of the country. Our country is not rich and therefore we have not got plenty of meat, egg and fish which in other countries are available in plenty. In our country non-vegetarians are not able to get sufficient quantities of these, with the result that both vegetarians and non-vegetarians alike live largely on cereals. Therefore increase in the production of cereals should be the first desideratum or the first requisite to keep body and soul together in this country. The total acreage under cultivation of cereals in this country was 182 millions in 1943-44 and the yield was to the tune of 53.7 million tons. On an average of sixteen ounces per head of the population we require 65.1 million tons. We are therefore in deficit to the tune of nearly twelve million tons per year. We were deficit even before the war and we were importing a million and half tons of rice from Burma. That has stopped. What steps are going to be taken to supply this deficiency?

After the Bengal famine a Commission was appointed to enquire into the causes of that famine. The Commission went into the matter and submitted two Reports, one exclusively confined to Bengal, setting out the causes of the Bengal famine and suggesting what steps ought to be taken with reference to Bengal to increase the food production, and another Report in general relating to famine conditions in the whole of India, suggesting preventive measures and also protective measures regarding famine relief. They urged that district committees ought to be appointed in the Provinces for increasing production. They said that in each Province at Cabinet level the Prime Minister with the Agriculture Minister and two other Ministers must form themselves into a Committee with local district Councils and that the departmental officials must take to the work of increased production. The first thing that has to be done is all sources of water supply ought to be tapped. As agriculture mainly depends upon water supply we may take it that monsoon will fail as it has been failing for a number of years. Therefore every source of water supply ought to be tapped. There are perennial rivers in Northern India and in Southern India also. Every effort ought to be made to have a number of canals and utilise all the water that is now flowing into the sea for the purpose of agriculture. It has been estimated that on an average only seven per cent. of the water that flows through the river Godavari is utilised for the purpose of irrigation and 93 per cent. of the water goes away into the sea. Similar estimates have been made with respect to the other rivers also. Therefore large canal projects ought to be undertaken by the Central Government.

My Resolution is that at the Centre a Famine Commission ought to be established—a permanent Commission—for the purpose of developing sources of irrigation and improving agriculture. That is my intent. From 1880 till 1919 the Central Government was financing famine relief works. After 1919 they handed over famine relief to Provincial Governments. As during the Bengal famine the Provincial Government was not able to cope with the magnitude of the relief works that had to be undertaken, rupees eight crores were given by the Centre. It is now common knowledge that for the past two or three years the Centre has been spending Rs. 19 to 20 crores per year by way of subsidy on foodgrains in the country. Instead of spending these amounts sporadically and spasmodically as and when famines occur all this money may be conserved and entrusted to a Central Government corporation whose sole

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business will be to develop the sources of irrigation, to tap all kinds of sub-soil water where there is no river by boring tube wells, during the time of floods to divert the water in small rivers which are not perennial into tanks and keep storage supplies, in the case of perennial rivers to dam those rivers and divert the water through various channels. These are the ways in which the Central Commission ought to address itself for increasing production.

Shri H. V. Kamath (C. P. and Berar: General): On a point of clarification, Sir, will it not be more appropriate to call the proposed body as the 'Anti-Famine Commission' or the 'Famine Relief Commission'?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: Sir, I only want the substance. Let it be called by any name. If I say Preventive Famine Commission instead of saying Famine Commission in general it will exclude the possibility of relief when actually famine sets in, and I do not want to exclude that. I am trying to make it as general and as comprehensive as possible. I am not sticking to any particular term or nomenclature for this Commission. I want the Commission to have these functions in general. It must be a Commission which must take all steps to increase production. Even in the absence of rainfall and assuming that monsoons will fail it must make all preparations to see that water somehow comes in for the purpose of agriculture. Sub-soil water can be tapped, water can be stored in tanks at the time of floods and used for crops of non-monsoon seasons. For ordinary season crops wherever water is available in perennial rivers it may be dammed and diverted through canals. Waste lands may be brought under cultivation and cultivation thereby extended. There should also be intensified cultivation. It must be the duty of this Commission to supply manure, good seeds, implements of husbandry, to carry water to the very doors of the agriculturist wherever sub-soil water can be tapped, to supply mechanical appliances—these are the functions which I expect the Commission to undertake.

Inasmuch as it is a Provincial subject 50 per cent. of the funds of this corporation or board may be supplied by the Provincial Government and the other 50 per cent by the Centre until India makes itself self-sufficient. We can even go without clothing but not without food. For want of cloth men will not die, but the first need is that they must have sufficient food. This must have the first priority and the Central Government cannot be indifferent about it. I am not however accusing the Central Government at all. As occasions arose the Central Government has been coming to aid. But it has not addressed itself to all the problems that arise and taken a comprehensive view of establishing a corporation like this. The Central Government ought not to sleep until we make ourselves self-sufficient in the matter of food. That is the object with which this Commission should be established.

The Central Commission may be entrusted with the power of producing or increasing the production of other kinds of food also, for instance Milk. It is said that a normal balanced diet should consist of ten ounces of milk per day, of so many ounces of protein which eggs can give, of two ounces of fats and oils etc., all of them coming to 44 ounces for an average individual per day. But we do not have even ten ounces which give only 1,000 calories whereas the normal requirement is about 2,000 to 2,500 calories. We are thus absolutely deficient.

As regards acreage under cultivation, it has been estimated by an American expert that 1.23 acres of land must be cultivated to grow sufficient cereals for the consumption of a normal individual whereas, per head of the population in this country, the acreage under cultivation is only 0.78 which is only 50 or 60 per cent of the area required to be cultivated with cereals. We are absolutely deficient in this.

Cereals may not be able to solve the problem. Therefore milk production ought to be increased, and also fish. Trawlers, boats and machinery for deep sea fishing must be made available. I am a vegetarian, but 75 per cent of the population, if not 80 or 85 per cent, are non-vegetarians. They ought not to be allowed to die and the life of an individual should certainly have preference over the life of a fish.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Are you an egg-vegetarian?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I said fish production must be increased in large quantities. Cattle wealth must be increased, there must be more milch-cows, dairy farms must be established. There is a model farm at Pusa, practically the one dairy farm that I have been able to see in Northern India. Similar dairy farms must be established all over the country.

If individuals are not able to purchase the breed of cattle from here at the prices that are offered, they may be given some remission, and at half the price the cattle may be supplied to persons who are intending to have dairy farms. In various ways the Central Government and the Provincial Governments can help. The Central Commission naturally must have branches all over the provinces with equal powers or acting under the terms of the Central Commission. These are some of the ways in which a Central Commission can work both for preventing famines and also for giving relief when famine conditions prevail.

I am glad that the Honourable Minister, with a lot of experience in politics and in social service is in charge of this administration, and is equally capable like his predecessor Dr. Rajendra Prasad who was in charge of this administration. I am sure that he will take note of the suggestions that I have made and would very soon initiate and bring into existence, with such modifications as may be necessary, a corporation of this kind with all powers so that in a couple of years or three years, India may be made self-sufficient in respect of foodgrains all through the year.

There is one more function for the corporation. Till we make ourselves self-sufficient in food, I would suggest that this Development Corporation must have what may be called a Grains Bank. Just as the Reserve Bank controls the economic life of this country—whenever there is plenty of money in the country, when there is surplus, it withdraws, and when there is deficiency, it puts money in trade and industry—likewise I suggest they must now import as much grain as possible by entering into separate arrangements with Burma. By way of barter or exchange, they should give them cloth and other things that might be necessary and enter into an agreement for a period of five years and build up granaries in this country to the tune of two or three million tons, so that whenever there is failure of monsoon and dearth of grain, grain may be released to the market: whenever there is a plethora, the grain may be withdrawn and prices may also be controlled. These are some of the suggestions made by Sir V. T. Krishnamachari's Committee which sat over this matter. I suggest that one of the functions of the Famine Commission should also be to establish a bank of that kind, to regulate prices and also to see that abnormalities in either production or scarcity may be done away with.

I hope that the resolution will be accepted by the Government and will be implemented as early as possible.

Mr. Speaker: Resolution moved:

"This Assembly is of opinion that with a view to offer quick and adequate relief to famine stricken areas where a famine has begun and to take steps by developing the areas so as to avoid famine recurring, a permanent Famine Commission shall be established at the Centre, charged with the duty of affording relief during actual distress and developing the areas industrially, economically and agriculturally so as to avoid famine conditions appearing."

Kazi Syed Karimuddin (C. P. and Berar: Muslim): Sir, it is not necessary for me to go into the details of the problem. There is no doubt, Sir, that bumper crop or failure of crops in India depends on the caprices of weather, and it is also a fact in the history of India that there have been several famines. Therefore the establishment of a Famine Commission is both urgent and necessary because famines in the past have had very devastating effects on the population, the after effects were very serious and the mortality was very high. We have seen, Sir, that a famine broke out in Bengal in the year 1942-43, and the Government and the people or those who were in charge of the administration were not ready to meet that evil. Why? Because there was no permanent body as suggested by my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar to meet the evil. The medical services were not in a position to cope with the demand; the transport was not in a position to bring goods as soon as possible, and there was no administrative machinery to cope with the supply and demand of the grains. In the absence of such a permanent body, it is not at all possible to keep any reserve in point of grain or in point of services. People forget the rigours of famine and their sufferings very soon after the famine is over. There is hardly any permanent body left in the country to meet the evil in any province or in the country as a whole, and in the absence of this, it is not at all possible to meet the rigours of any famine in India. In Bengal it was found that the Provincial Government was not prepared to meet all these eventualities. Supply and demand could not be adjusted and medical services could not be organized because they did not have any permanent body either in India or in Bengal to meet these eventualities.

Shri Mihir Lal Chattopadhyay (West Bengal: General): But that famine was created deliberately by the Government as a matter of policy?

Kazi Syed Karimuddin: You must be knowing it better

A permanent body, Sir, could maintain an efficient system of intelligence, an effective programme, leave reserve of establishment, reserve of tools and plant, irrigation schemes and extra medical services. I therefore support the motion and submit that the establishment of a permanent Famine Board in India is an urgent necessity as famines in India are frequent and past history has shown that the Central Government or the Provincial Governments have not been able to meet the eventualities.

सेठ गोविन्ददास : सभापति जी, मैं इस प्रस्ताव का समर्थन करता हूँ। जहाँ तक कृषि का सम्बन्ध है वह प्रान्तीय विषय है। परन्तु कई ऐसे निर्धन प्रांत हैं जहाँ अभी तक कृषि का पूर्ण विकास नहीं हुआ है और दुष्काल को रोकने के लिए भी उन्हीं प्रांतों पर भार रख दिया जाय तो इस परिस्थिति में सुधार कम से कम बहुत शीघ्र होना सम्भव नहीं होगा।

हमारी आर्थिक उन्नति के सम्बन्ध में बड़ी योजना बनाई जा रही है। जहाँ तक हमारे देश का सम्बन्ध है, चाहे हम कल कारखाने बढ़ाने का कितना ही प्रयत्न क्यों न करें, जब तक हम कृषि को उन्नति नहीं करेंगे तब तक आर्थिक उन्नति करना संभव नहीं होगा। अभी मेरे माननीय मित्र, आयंगर जी ने अपने प्रांत का दृष्टान्त दिया और उन्होंने बतलाया कि उनके प्रांत में कई जिले ऐसे हैं जहाँ पर लगातार दुष्काल रहता है। मैं अपने प्रांत का दृष्टान्त देना चाहता हूँ, हमारा एक छोटा और निर्धन प्रांत है वह प्रांत ऐसा है जहाँ अति वृष्टि और अनावृष्टि दोनों से

हानी होती है। वहां पर आबपाशी सब प्रान्तों से कम होती है और अति वृष्टि के कारण भी बहुत हानि हो जाती है। मैं माननीय सदस्य को यह बताना चाहता हूँ कि जबलपुर और उसके आस पास के स्थानों पर आज लगातार १७ वर्षों से अति-वृष्टि के कारण अच्छी फसल नहीं हो रही है। तो हमको केवल आबपाशी का ही प्रबन्ध नहीं करना है बल्कि साथ ही साथ इस तरह की योजनाओं पर भी विचार करना है जिस से अति वृष्टि होने से हम फसलों को बचा सकें। हमारे यहां जो एक विशेष प्रकार की बीमारी होती है उसकी ओर मैं माननीय सदस्य का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूँ। वह जबलपुर और उसके आसपास के स्थानों पर होती है। उस बीमारी को 'गेरुआ' यानी 'रस्ट' कहते हैं। जब जाड़ों में बहुत अधिक पानी पड़ जाता है तब यह होता है। मेरे कहने का मतलब यह है कि जब तक कोई ऐसी केन्द्रीय कमेटी न बने जो सब स्थानों की परिस्थिति को देख कर यह निर्णय करे कि दुष्काल को रोकने के लिए क्या हो सकता है जो बड़ी २ आर्थिक योजना बनाई जा रही है उन योजनाओं में क्या किया जा सकता है तब तक हम पूरी आर्थिक उन्नति नहीं कर सकते इसलिए मैं इस प्रस्ताव का समर्थन करता हूँ।

मैं यह भी आशा करता हूँ कि यह कमीशन इस देश में उन स्थानों को भी देखेगा जहां कि लगातार दुष्काल होता है और यह भी देखेगा कि इन दुष्कालों के होने का क्या कारण है। अन्न उत्पन्न करने के लिए कहां पर पानी की जरूरत है और अति वृष्टि के कारण कहां पर उस पानी को नालियां आदि द्वारा निकालने की जरूरत है। आबपाशी के सिवा वह यह भी देखे कि जहां अति वृष्टि होती है वहां नाली आदि की कैसी व्यवस्था हो सकती है जिस से उस जमीन की उपज टोक हो सके। हमें उस जमीन का भी विचार करना चाहिए जहां पर खेती नहीं होती है, जहां उपजाऊ जमीन है पर आबपाशी न होने के कारण वहां की उपज कम होती है। जहां अधिक पानी बरसता है वहां उसके कारण उपज कम होती है।

इसके साथ ही साथ हम को यह भी ख्याल करना चाहिए कि बीज किस जमीन के लिये कौनसा उपयुक्त होगा। अक्सर देखा गया है कि एक बीज एक किस्म के खेत में अच्छा अन्न देता है और दूसरी जमीन के ऊपर वह अच्छा अन्न नहीं देता जिस जमीन में पानी अधिक है और नमी अधिक है वहां पर एक प्रकार का बीज कम देता है और दूसरी जगह दूसरे किस्म का बीज। बीज की भी बहुत अच्छी व्यवस्था करनी चाहिये। केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था को इस बात का भी ध्यान रखना चाहिये कि किस स्थान पर किस तरह का बीज उपयुक्त होगा।

इसके साथ ही साथ खाद की ओर भी देखना होगा। हमारे देश में इस चीज की बहुत कमी है और हमारे किसान बहुत निर्धन हैं और वे इसकी अच्छी तरह से व्यवस्था नहीं कर सकते हमको खाद के लिए इस तरह की योजना तैयार करनी

[सं. गोविन्ददास]

चाहिये जिससे किसान उसका उपयोग कर सकें। इसके लिए हमको वैज्ञानिक खंज की जरूरत होगी। इसके साथ-साथ ही जैसा कि आयरंगर जी ने कहा है, हम दूध भी अधिक उत्पादन कर सकेंगे जो हम दुष्काल के समय में लोगों को दे सकते हैं यदि हम गोबर की खाद तैयार करें। मेरा कृषि से सम्बन्ध रहा है, हम लोगों के कुटुम्ब का सम्बन्ध कृषि से रहा है जमींदार होते हुए हम लोगों ने खेती की है। हमारे मध्य प्रांत का यह सौभाग्य है कि यहां के जमींदार संयुक्त प्रान्त और बिहार के जमींदारों के सदृश नहीं जो खेती न कर किसानों से केवल लगान लेते हों। हमारे प्रान्त के जमींदारों को खेती का बहुत अनुभव है।

मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को कहना चाहता कि ऐसी केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था की आवश्यकता है कि जिस केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था और प्रांतों का घनिष्ठ संबन्ध हो सके और यह केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था जो हो, वह प्रांतों से सम्बन्ध रख कर, हर प्रांत की परिस्थिति को देखकर उस पर ध्यान रखकर, एक बड़ी योजना तैयार करें जिससे कि दुष्कालों का होना बन्द होजाय। यदि दुष्काल कहीं हो ही जाये तो कम से कम हमारे प्रान्त के सदृश जो गरीब प्रान्त हैं, उनको यह केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था पूरी सहायता दे सके। मेरा यह मत है कि हमारे मध्य प्रान्त को केन्द्रीय सहायता मिलने का पहला अधिकार होना चाहिये, मद्रास और बम्बई प्रान्त जैसे धनवान् प्रांतों से पहले।

मैं आशा करता हूं कि माननीय मंत्री यदि दुष्काल हुए ही तो उन दुष्कालों में सबसे पहले गरीब प्रांतों की ओर दृष्टि रखेंगे न कि बम्बई और मद्रास जैसे धनवान् प्रांतों की ओर।

मैंने कुछ अपने अनुभव माननीय सदस्य के सामने रखे हैं। मैं यह मानता हूं कि स्वराज्य के बाद यदि हमारे देश में सबसे पहली कोई आवश्यकता है तो वह कृषि की उन्नति की। इस देश में १०० में से ८० आदमी कृषि पर निर्भर हैं। आज कल अधिकतर हम लोग उद्योग धंधों, कल कारखानों की बात करते हैं। हमें उनकी भी आवश्यकता है लेकिन उन से पहले हमें आवश्यकता है भोजन की इस बात की कि हमारे यहां दुष्काल न हो, दुष्कालों को हम रोकें और दुष्काल में हम गरीब प्रांतों की पहले सहायता करें। हमारे माननीय मंत्री का जो महकमा है वह सबसे प्रधान महकमा है। मैं आशा करता हूं कि उनकी देख रेख में इस तरह की केन्द्रीय व्यवस्था हो सकेगी जिससे केन्द्र और प्रांतों में सच्चा सहयोग होगा यह दुष्काल रोके जायेंगे। और यदि यह पड़ ही जाय तो दुष्काल पीड़ित लोगों की हमें पूरी सहायता कर सकेंगे।

(English translation of the above speech)

Seth Govinddas (C. P. and Berar: General): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this Bill. So far as farming is concerned, it is a matter for Provincial Governments. But there are many poor provinces where it has not been fully developed. If we load these provinces with the responsibility of fighting the famines, I don't think, we can expect quick improvement in the present circumstances.

Many schemes are being prepared for ameliorating the economic condition of this country. So far as India is concerned it will not be possible for her to better her economic state without improving her agriculture, increase as she may her mechanised factories. Just now my Honourable friend Mr. Ayyangar quoted the name of his province as an illustration to show how many of its districts continually suffer from famines. I want to give the example of my own province which is small and poor. It is a province where rains either fall heavily or do not fall at all and bothways they prove harmful. It is comparatively less irrigated than other provinces and excess of rainfall causes much damage. I want to point out to the Honourable Member that due to excessive rains crops have not been good at Jubbulpore and surrounding areas for the last seventeen years. We have not only to make arrangements for irrigation but along with that we have to devise such schemes by which we may be able to protect our crops against too much rain. I want to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to one peculiar disease which is prevalent in and around Jubbulpore. This is known as "rust"; it breaks out in winter when there is heavy rain. What I mean is that so long as we do not have a Central Committee, to survey the conditions all over India and to advise us what can be done for preventing famines, and which may examine the new big economic schemes that are under way and give its opinion on them, it will not be possible for us to achieve real economic progress. I, therefore, support this Bill.

I also hope that this Commission will also be able to pay its attention to those places which have remained famine stricken for long periods, and study the causes of these famines. It will also be able to find out which places need irrigation for growing more food and which places require better drainage for water that collects there due to excessive rains. Apart from irrigation, this Commission should also find out what sorts of drains are required to be constructed in places having heavy rain falls so that they may be properly cultivated. We should also not ignore the land which remains untilled, places which do have a fertile soil but where absence of proper irrigation causes scanty crops, and places where an excess of rainfall does not allow better harvests.

Along with that, we should also see what seeds will be best sown in different soils. Often it has been seen that one kind of seed thrives well in one farm but it fails to yield the same kind of crop in another field. Damp soil requires one kind of seed and dry soil needs another. Thorough study should be made of seeds. The Central Commission should also study what places will require what kind of seeds. Over and above that we should also devote our attention to manures. Our country is very short of this thing; and our poor farmers cannot afford it. We should have a scheme for manures which a farmer should be able to utilise. For this purpose we require scientific research. As Mr. Ayyangar has said we should be producing more milk with which we can help people in times of famine, if we use cow dung as manure.

I and my whole family have been connected with farming. In spite of our being landlords we have been ploughing the land with our own hands. Our Central Provinces are fortunate in that the landlords here are not like the landlords of U.P. and Bihar who never put their hands to the plough but only receive rents from the farmers. The landlords of our province are well experienced in farming.

[Seth Govinddas]

I want to request the Honourable Minister that there is a need for such a Central Commission as should be able to establish intimate relations between the Centre and provinces. This Central Commission should remain in touch with the provinces and should study the conditions of individual provinces, and, keeping that in view, should prepare a big scheme to avert famines; and if at all a famine occurs at any place this Central Commission should be able to give real help to the sufferers, at least to poor provinces like the C. P. I believe that the Central Provinces should be the first to receive the Central aid; it should receive priority over rich provinces like Bombay and Madras. I hope that, in the event of famines, the Honourable Minister will attend first to poor provinces rather than to rich provinces like Bombay and Madras.

I have placed some of my personal experiences before the Honourable Minister. I believe that the first thing which our country needs after the attainment of 'Swaraj' is agricultural progress. Eighty per cent of Indians depend on agriculture. These days we talk mostly of industrial labour and factories. We do need them; but before that we need food; we have to avoid famines and, in the event of any famine occurring in the country, we should be able to attend first of all to the poorer of our provinces. The Ministry of Agriculture is an important Ministry. I hope under the present Minister it will be possible for us to have a Central Committee which should be able to establish an intimate relation between the provinces and the Centre, to avert famines, and if at all there is any famine in the country, it should be able to rush proper help to the famine, stricken areas.

Mr. Speaker: I find there are amendments to the Resolution from two Honourable Members. One is by 'Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava. Does he wish to move his amendment?

Pandit Thakur Das Bhargava (East Punjab: General): No, Sir. I do not wish to move it.

Mr. Speaker: Then there is the other one by Shri Biswanath Das. Does he wish to move it?

Shri Biswanath Das (Orissa: General): Yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: It is better that he moves the amendment, so that the discussion may be both on the motion and the amendment.

Shri Biswanath Das: Sir, I beg to move:

"That after the words 'and agriculturally' the following be inserted:

"in supplementing resources and activities of a Provincial Government or of Provincial Governments concerned"; and at the end of the Resolution the word 'again' be added."

This amendment is formal in the sense that it makes the Resolution to come within the scope of the activities of the Central Government. It is a matter well known to the Honourable Members of this House that famine relief is an activity which comes under the purview of the Provincial Government. To bring it up for a discussion in this House. It is necessary to have this amendment, so that the activities that are contemplated in this Resolution make it a supplement to the activities of the Provincial Governments and also a supplement to the resources of the Provincial Governments.

Sir, before the Act of 1919 famine relief was a Central responsibility. The Government of India was wholly and solely responsible for conducting famine relief operations in different parts of the country. Under the Act of 1919 the responsibility devolved on the provinces and the result is that in the Devolution Rules a Famine Fund has been created. Certain specified amounts have been fixed and laid down for each Province under Schedule IV of the Devolution Rules framed under the Act of 1919. It is clear from the Devolution Rules

that famines occur in Provinces like Madras, Bombay, U.P., Punjab, Bihar, Orissa and C. P. Therefore, those Rules have not only constituted a Famine Insurance Fund but they have also made it compulsory on the Provincial Governments to contribute annually out of their resources certain amounts for famine relief and have also laid down that these contributions should go on for a certain period till certain amounts have been accumulated. All these, Sir, go to show that famine relief is a matter of necessity and devolves on the Provinces.

I am glad that the Honourable Member who has moved the Resolution has given a clear indication of the scope and the enormity of the problem. In a country like India, after it has become free, the responsibility for it has devolved upon us. The enormity of the responsibility devolves not only on the Provinces but also on the Centre. The Provincial sources of revenue are not very elastic; they are very slender. Therefore the Provinces are not able to meet the needs of the seriousness of the famine conditions that prevail in the Provinces. My Province has also had to face the worst of famines time and again. I am glad that the Hirakud project will go to relieve famine to a certain extent in certain specified areas, but other areas are there. Not only Orissa, but in Madras you have certain specified districts which have always famines staring at their faces. Similar is the case with Bengal. So also with C. P. and other Provinces. Famine has become a plague to this country. If we have to fight against famine, if we have to insure the country against famine, if we have to provide food and clothing for the people of this country, then I think it is time that the responsibility should be divided and clearly conceived and understood, namely, that there should be a short-term programme and a long-range programme, policy and planning. Even in the short-term programme, the enormity of the problem makes it difficult for Provincial Governments to cope with the situation. In a famine in my District in 1918-19, the Government of Madras had to spend Rs. 60 lakhs which is beyond the scope of a province like Orissa which is unable to meet even from its famine insurance fund and also from its resources. You have got certain famine insurance moneys in the hands of the Government of India, but they are very small and the contribution that Provinces receive in years of famine are very very small indeed. Therefore, with the changed conditions and circumstances, a planning and a programme are necessary. I would therefore appeal to the Government and to the Minister in charge of Agriculture to plan the whole thing properly and well and face the problem which is really formidable.

Under the circumstances, I move the amendment and let me hope that it will be accepted by the Mover and also by the Government.

Mr. Speaker: Amendment moved:

“That after the words ‘and agriculturally’ the following be inserted:

‘in supplementing resources and activities of a Provincial Government or of Provincial Governments concerned’; and at the end of the Resolution the word ‘again’ be added.”

श्री राम सहाय : सभापति महोदय, मैं इस प्रस्ताव के बारे में केवल इतना कहना चाहता हूँ कि जहाँ इस किस्म का कोई सर्वे (Survey) की जाय, या इस तरह का कोई कमीशन या कोई दीगर स्कीम तैयार की जाय तो उसमें स्टेट्स (States) को भी शामिल रखने का ख्याल रक्खा जाय। हालाँकि स्टेट्स (States) ऐसे कार्य के लिये फाइनेंस (Finance) करने में कोई सहयोग सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेंट को नहीं दे रही हैं जिससे इस तरह की कोई स्कीम तैयार की जा सके जो वहाँ के लिये भी काम कर सकें, लेकिन

[श्री राम सहाय]

मेरा यह ख्याल कि स्टेट्स की जो हालत है और जो आराजी बेकार पड़ी है। और काश्त के काम में नहीं आ रही है उसके इसी तरह पड़े रहने से उसका खामियाजा सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेन्ट को ही भुगतना पड़ता है। जैसा हमने देखा कि जब वहां जरूरत हुई तो सेन्टर से वहां मल्ला सप्लाई (Supply) किया गया। अगर वहां हो तो सेन्टर (Centre) में भी आ सकता है। इसलिये मेरा निवेदन यह है कि जहां इस क्रिस्म के असरात स्टेट्स के खामियों की वजह से सेन्टर पर पड़ता है, जो कमीशन या बोर्ड कायम हो ऐसा हो कि वह इस विषय में स्टेट्स पर भी अपना प्रभुत्व रखें और वहां की आराजी व दीगर हालात तरक्की काश्त के जराए की देख रेख करे और वहां के मुतालिक अपने सजेसन्ज (Suggestions) दे सकें।

मैं यह बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि जैसा और भी कई साथियों ने बतलाया है कि अतिवृष्टि के कारण भी फैमीन (Famine) हो जाता है। मैं भी एक ऐसी रियासत ग्वालियर से आया हूँ जिसके कई जिलों में बारिश होने के कारण से कई सालों से फैमीन (Famine) होता आ रहा है। उसका मुख्य कारण यह है कि अतिवृष्टि के कारण जमीन ठीक नहीं जुत पाती है, इसलिये गेहूँ नहीं हो पाता है। कहा जा सकता है कि अतिवृष्टि जहां होती है, वहां चावल हो सकता है, लेकिन उस इलाक़े में चावल आम तौर पर नहीं हो पाता। क्योंकि जब चावल पकने का वक़्त आता है, तब जमीन सूख जाती है। वहां पानी बरसात में इतना हो जाता है जिससे गेहूँ के लिये जमीन ठीक नहीं हो पाती और वह पानी इतना काफ़ी नहीं होता कि बरसात के बाद जब चावल पकने का वक़्त आता है तो वह उसके लिये उपयोगी हो सके। उसी तरह से जहां अतिवृष्टि होती है, वहां भी मेरे ख्याल से अगर इरीगेशन (Irrigation) का इन्तज़ाम आबपाशी का इन्तज़ाम हो तो ऐसे वक़्त में जब अतिवृष्टि हो चावल इत्यादि की फ़सल की जासके, इरीगेशन (Irrigation) के साधन मुह्य्या हो सकें। वहां की आराजी की हालत इस क्रूर ख़राब हो गयी है कि वहां कोई भी फ़सल अच्छी तरह से नहीं हो पाती है। ख़रीफ़ की फ़सल ज्वार मक्की, बाज़रा अच्छी तरह से नहीं हो पाती है। कांस बहुत ज्यादा बढ़ गया है। वहां मशीनों के साधन बिल्कुल भी नहीं हैं और बैलों की कमी की वजह से वहां जमीन भी अच्छी तरह से हंक नहीं पाती है। इसलिये मेरा यह कहना है कि इस क्रिस्म के प्रस्ताव द्वारा सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेन्ट की तरफ़ से कोई साधन मुह्य्या किया जा सके तो बहुत ही उपयुक्त होगा।

(English translation of the above speech)

Shri Ram Sahai (Gwalior State): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in connection with this Resolution, I would like to say this much only that while undertaking any survey or setting up a Commission or planning any other scheme of this nature, the question of associating the States with it should also be kept in view. Although the States are not co-operating with the Central Government in financing such

projects for the purpose of evolving such a scheme which may also be executed there, yet I hold the view that the Central Government has to bear the consequences resulting from the conditions prevailing in the states where the fallow land is lying waste and thus not utilized by being brought under cultivation. Just as we have seen, whenever the states felt the necessity, foodgrains were supplied to them by the Centre. If these are available there, then the Centre could also be supplied. Therefore, my submission is that where such a state of affairs occurs as a result of the negligence on the part of the States, the Commission or Board so constituted should also exercise its authority over them in this respect. Moreover it should also supervise over the cultivation of land and explore means for the development of irrigation projects, and offer its suggestions on the conditions existing there.

I would like to say just as many other friends have already stated that excessive rains also bring about a famine. Coming as I do from the State of Gwalior, where certain districts are constantly affected by famine for the last so many years on account of rains, the main reason for this is that the land cannot be properly ploughed due to excessive rains, and therefore, wheat cannot be grown. It can be argued that rice can be produced in the regions of heavy rain-fall, but generally rice does not grow in such places, because when the time for the reaping of the rice crop approaches, then the land becomes dry. During the rainy season, the water accumulates there to such an extent that it renders the land unfit for the sowing of wheat. The water also is not quite sufficient so as to be utilized after the rainy days when the time for the ripening of the rice crop comes. I am of the opinion, therefore, that if arrangements for irrigation are made in other similar areas which are affected by heavy rain-fall, it would help the growth of rice crop in such contingencies. Irrigation facilities may therefore be provided in such places as the condition of the land there has deteriorated to such an extent that no crop can be properly grown there. The *kharif* crop *viz.*, *jawar*, *bajra* and *makki* (millet and maize) does not also yield good harvest. Long grass has grown there in abundance. No facilities for the use of agricultural implements are available there and this coupled with the scarcity of bulls renders it difficult to plough the land properly. Therefore, I daresay that it would be quite appropriate if facilities are provided by the Central Government by means of such a Resolution.

Mr. A. Mahboob Ali Baig Sahib Bahadur (Madras : Muslim): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am in entire agreement with the substance of the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, though I would like that the Commission may not be called 'Famine Commission', but it might appropriately be called 'Food Commission.' My friend has traced the history of famine from Upanishads and there cannot be two opinions about the position of food in India. There has been chronic famine all through. With the growth of population in the world, it is an universal problem how to meet the requirements of food, but with this difference that while other countries have been able to produce food in proportion to the increase of population by methods which though available to us have not been employed by us. It is no doubt true that in previous years some attempts were made by the previous Governments for constructing irrigation projects and anicuts across rivers, so that the water of the rivers might be taken into the fields by canals. No doubt some attempts were made in the past, for instance in the area to which I belong, *i.e.*, Andhra Desa, where there are two big rivers flowing, Kistna and Godavari and across these rivers as early as 1850, anicuts were constructed and those areas which are irrigated by water through these sources have been prosperous and have been producing to a larger extent than the other parts of the country. But similar efforts were not made in the case of other areas. I do not know the reason why the Government of the day had not extended the same sort of facilities in the other parts of the country. If only the Government had done

[Mr. A. Mahboob Ali Baig Sahib Bahadur]

that and brought into existence these irrigation projects throughout the country, there is no reason why India should suffer from famines at all. It is no doubt true that monsoons often fail and the failure of monsoon has been responsible to a great extent for the scarcity of food. But where the conditions are such that the failure of monsoon is rather not occasional but universal, i.e., has been failing every year, Government ought to have taken care to see that other facilities are employed. There have been no doubt Agricultural Departments set up and Public Works Departments have been established, but they have not done what they ought to have done in order to prevent these famines. It is no doubt true, Sir, that for the last two or three decades the Provincial Governments have been vested with powers to spend money on constructing irrigation projects. There have been agricultural departments also working all these two or three decades. But what is the result? The Agricultural Departments have not been able to bring home to the ryots improved methods of production. In fact very few people in the villages know that there is any Agricultural Department at all and the activities of the Agricultural Departments have been such that neither the ryots take advantage of these Departments nor the Departments take care to see that any improved methods are adopted by these ryots.

There are two ways in which these famines can be averted. One of them is the production of food which can be accomplished by both intensive and extensive cultivation. As to intensive cultivation it is the duty of Government to teach the *raiya*s how more food can be produced by improved methods of cultivation. Our *raiya*s have been ploughing the land in the same old fashion and manuring their fields in the same old method. It is therefore no wonder that they cannot produce more. Then there are extensive tracts of

1 P. M. land which could be made to produce more food if they can be brought under the plough. But no effort has been made by Government as yet to extend cultivation. It is true that it means expense when you try to bring fallow land or forest land under cultivation, but it is the duty of Government to encourage the *raiya*s and help them to bring all this land under cultivation. No effort has been made by Government in this regard also. I know that during wartime on account of scarcity of food for various reasons Government programmed what is called the Grow More Food Campaign. But in my own province of Madras it was admitted by the Minister of Food and Agriculture that there has been no appreciable increase of food as a result of that campaign. What is the reason for that? My submission is that our Governments in the past have not taken this matter very seriously.

It is admitted that our country is deficit in foodgrains and in the past we used to import them from other countries. But when during and after the war imports from countries like Burma and Siam ceased we had to adopt measures for the control and distribution of food. Now that the war has ended the same conditions prevail. We thought—that is not my personal view,—but some provincial Governments and the Central Government also thought—that the *raiya*t has kept a surplus to himself and is not bringing it to market because the prices are not sufficiently attractive, and that therefore if the control is removed these surplus stocks will be forthcoming. It is yet to be seen whether there was any surplus at all. But whatever it is, it is an admitted fact that we are deficit in foodgrains, specially in some provinces like Madras. Therefore the Governments—both provincial and Central and the Central Government is also responsible for the well-being of the people—must take this up seriously and adopt measures to produce more food instead of depending upon imports from outside. How long are you going to depend on these foreign imports? That is the question that the Food Minister must ask himself. If he does not want to depend on imports and if he also does not want millions here to die, what

should be the programme that he should adopt? That is a question that must be considered very seriously. It is not true that we have not got any facilities; we have got lot of water and very good lands. But the reason why we are not able to produce more food is that we are not able to harness the rain-fall and also to employ the right scientific methods to utilise the resources of the country for the production of food. There is no reason why we should not be able to produce the food that is necessary for us.

This proposed Famine Commission may with a little effort on the part of the people be of some help to Government and so I welcome it. There have been Commissions in the past which produced no results. I hope this will not go the same way and now with a responsible Government there is no reason why it should not give better results. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Shri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar (Madras: General): Sir, I think I should take some part in this discussion because I feel that certain matters have not received the attention they should. In the case of famines it is not really want of foodgrains that matters; the country may have all the grains required and even more. But the people have got no occupation and no money with which to buy these foodgrains. That is the problem that takes place in every famine. I may say, Sir, that I had to investigate this matter twice: once as the Chairman of the last Famine Committee appointed by the Madras Government when famine took place in the area, which is represented here by my friend Mr. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar. All the experts of the Government were members of the Committee. After more than a year of investigation, we found that unless there is more than one occupation—the occupation they have now got is only agriculture—it is not possible to prevent famines. There ought to be diversified occupations which will give work to the people all through the year and that will make it possible for the people to live even if one monsoon fails. That is the sort of problem that will have to be met. It is necessary that the occupation of agriculture should not fail simply because there has been one failure of monsoon. We found, Sir, after investigation into the several famines that took place in that area that one failure of monsoon never brought famine at all to the area. It is the second failure that brought famine. Somehow when the first failure took place, people were able to get on with some work and also with the stores of grains they had. But when the second monsoon failed then the trouble arose. The area from which my friend is coming is subject to famine. Once in every five years there is a bumper crop. The other four years are either deficient or absolute famine years. That is how that particular area has been affected, time after time once every five years, with famine.

As I said, what we found was this. It is no doubt necessary that irrigation projects ought to be taken up. But when there is a failure of two monsoon continuously all water sources also get dried up. Water for irrigation works we may have only from the bigger irrigation works like Tungabadra. Others like tanks, wells and things like that get dry. Even if we have these smaller irrigation works, they would not supply the occupation that is necessary or produce the foodstuffs which we want. No doubt, when there is the first failure these tanks have some water left and with that water you can raise probably a crop. But that will not be sufficient for the second crop and the next crop, and when the next crop season comes, and there is a second failure of monsoon all the people are thrown out of employment and they are practically in the streets. That is the sort of thing that occurs.

So we found that it is necessary to get employment for the people and provide for them not to depend entirely on agriculture and agricultural pursuits. The Government should arrange to get other walks of life provided for the people

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like industries, small and big, mining and things like that for which in the particular area I refer to there was ample scope. Government had neglected the whole thing for very nearly 150 years with the result that the area was suffering.

Mr. Speaker: I believe the Honourable Member will take some time. The House will now adjourn and re-assemble at 2-30 P.M.

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. Speaker (The Honourable Mr. G. V. Mavalankar) in the Chair.

Shri T. A. Ramalingam Chettiar: Sir, while I agree with all the previous speakers that the country should be self-sufficient with reference to food and all possible schemes for increasing food production such as harnessing the big rivers and otherwise should be undertaken, I want to impress on the House that so far as famine is concerned it is a local affair. The remedy for famine is found in the locality itself. Take for instance Rayalaseema. If Rayalaseema is to be saved from famine, it is not by increasing food production in the Godavari or in the Gangetic valley. In former famines we found no difficulty whatsoever in getting food supply from outside but there was difficulty if people could not get employment and they have to go to the camps to earn even the one anna nine pies which we were giving them by way of wages. As regards Rayalaseema we wanted to harness the Tungabhadra and we were also thinking of having another scheme at Sangameswaram. So far as minor irrigation works are concerned they help only in the first year when there is a sort of partial failure. As I said before, it is only when there is a second failure of monsoon that the famine actually sets in. During the first failure there is not the same intensive famine which requires outside help. Minor irrigation works help to get a crop in the first year, though in the second year this source will get dry and there is no possibility of getting any crops from that source. It is on that account that we stressed the point that there should be diversified employment in the locality by encouraging cottage industries, by establishing larger industries or having recourse to mining and things like that. The whole thing has to be worked out as a comprehensive plan and for that purpose we wanted the establishment of a Development Board. After a long delay of nearly ten years (we sent our report in 1939). Only a short time back the Government thought of appointing the Development Board. Only two days ago I saw the report of the proceedings of the Development Board. They have just taken the report on hand and are trying to meet the situation.

So the question of famine is a local affair and has to be dealt with locally and what we require from the Centre will be financial help. For instance the last famine in Rayalaseema cost the Madras Government between two and three crores. It is not for actually working the famine relief that we want the help of the Government of India, because it has to be worked locally. It is a question of opening camps, giving employment to the people and getting food supply from outside. Nobody dies for want of food supply but the difficulty is to get it for them and they have to purchase it with their wages. That is the difficulty we have. So it is a local affair which each local government will have to provide for and especially in a province like mine, where as I said Rayalaseema gets a famine almost once in five years, we have to have a comprehensive policy with the help of a body which will work from day to day not during the famine alone but before and after, so that the famine may not actually come. There will be some sort of scarcity anyway once in five years but the people should not be left without any occupation as they are now, because

there is at present no other occupation except agriculture and agriculture fails when there is no rain. So I would request the Government to consider the question and to see that every local government has some agency to study and work continuously so that the intensity of the famine may not be felt. It may be called scarcity but it need not involve the opening of camps and all the suffering that is involved in the opening of camps such as people crowding there, living on such small wages as they get and living on only half a meal or one meal a day or once in two days. That is what we have to avoid and for that we want a development board like the one we have just started in Madras and there should be a continuous study of all these problems. There should be help from the Centre so far as finance is concerned and if necessary the Centre should get also food supply from other places where it may be available.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram (Minister for Food and Agriculture): Sir, I am intervening in the debate at this stage because as I have been listening to the speeches of the Mover and other speakers one thing that has struck me is that on most points they seem to be expressing my own thoughts. I have therefore been feeling whether it is necessary to prolong the debate beyond the present stage. I have welcomed the moving of the Resolution and I have also welcomed the debate because I feel that the food problem of the country is a subject on which we cannot have sufficient discussion if we want to help the country out of the difficulty in which it finds itself. Speaking generally I feel that there are three propositions which stand out prominently as a result of this debate. One point is that food ought to be given a very high priority when we are dealing with the problems of our country.

Shri Ramnarayan Singh (Bihar: General): First priority.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Doulatram: I would welcome the decision that food ought to be given the first priority. That is my view. If it becomes the view of the Provinces and of the Assembly then I have no doubt that we shall be able to solve all our difficulties much earlier than we may expect. The second more or less common idea expressed was that we should endeavour to make our country self-sufficient with regard to food. In this also I find myself in completest agreement with the opinion of the House. The third point that has been made out is that in some manner, and in some measure the Centre ought to take a more active hand in dealing with the food self-sufficiency question and certainly in dealing with the famine question. It is not yet clear to me as to what exactly is the extent to which the Central Legislature would wish the Government of India to take up the responsibility with regard to famines and also the production of food. There is a certain amount of difference of opinion expressed today. But on the whole, apart from the difference of opinion as to the extent and measure of responsibility which the Centre should take up there is a unanimous expression of view that the Centre ought to take, as I have said, a more active hand in the matter. Except one or two speakers other have more or less omitted any reference to the very great work which the Provincial Governments have to undertake and have undertaken whenever local famines occur. As I suppose most of the Honourable Members know, we have got a very extensive and detailed Famine Code which has been functioning for many many years. Under that Famine Code the Provincial Governments are expected and empowered to anticipate and prepare for meeting the situation whenever they find that famine has overtaken any part of the Province. I have no evidence to indicate that the Provincial Governments have not risen to the occasion whenever this distress has come. But it may be that that matter also may need a little more examination. Somehow most of the speakers made no reference to the first part of the Resolution and most of the speakers contented themselves with elaborating their ideas on the second part. The second part deal with permanent or final remedies. It is with regard to that aspect of the question that I think we might go a little into detail. Whether

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today is the occasion for going into detail I cannot say. I wish we could sit through and have a full dress debate on various methods of developing those special famine areas which year in and year out or once every four or five years have to meet this calamity. But probably the procedure that I am going to suggest may find some favour with the House.

I find also one very promising and interesting feature of today's debate and that is that the representatives of some of the States also want that the Central Government should help them in regard to famine and that the States should not be isolated in this matter from the rest of India. I am glad that on every occasion and on every question the Indian States feel that no difference now exists between their territory and the territory of the Indian Dominion, I am only too glad, and willing and anxious to do the utmost I can as Food Minister to help our States, to win their co-operation and in conjunction with them deal with the situation inside their own territory. With regard to the desire of the moves that Government should adopt the resolution moved. What I feel on the whole is that if I accept it as it is it means that there is to be a permanent Commission dealing with the immediate problems arising from famine and also putting forward and executing schemes of development which will prevent famine. If this Commission is to prevent famine there can be no permanence in its own tenure because it must dissolve itself once it has succeeded in achieving its objective. Therefore, I have hesitation in accepting this Resolution in this form. I have also a feeling that much as I wish that the Central Government should have an active hand in dealing with famine in India wherever it takes place, I am doubtful whether the time is ripe for the Centre more or less to assume complete responsibility. If the Central Government has to function in terms of this Resolution all that it will mean is that the Development Board must completely replace the Agriculture Departments of the Provinces and also the Agriculture Department at the Centre. I am therefore anxious to find some kind of *via media* and I propose to make a brief statement—suggest a kind of formula which may enable the Centre to function, which may enable the Provinces also to share the responsibility and yet which may provide some kind of quick machinery both to deal with famine when it occurs and also to inaugurate those schemes of development which will prevent famine hereafter in this country. I expect that after I have stated my position the Mover of the Resolution and also the Mover of the Amendment will both withdraw their motions.

This is what I propose to do. I propose to set up at the Centre some special machinery capable of speedy action to deal with the immediate problems of famine relief in co-operation with the Provinces. I also propose, in consultation with the Provinces, to examine the question of creating special machinery to bring to early fruition schemes of development calculated to prevent the recurrence of famine conditions. I am not able at this stage to commit myself to details, but I will discuss this question with Members of the Assembly who have participated in the debate and later with representatives of the Provincial Governments, and I hope to evolve an arrangement which would give general satisfaction, my idea in proposing this *via media* is that by adopting this special procedure of consulting Members of the Assembly off the debate hour and in an informal way, probably a suitable solution might be discovered.

In view of the statement that I have made I hope the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution would withdraw his Resolution and so also the Mover of the Amendment.

Mr. B. K. Sdhuva (C. P. and Berar: General): The Honourable Minister said that he would consult the Honourable Members of the Assembly who participated in the debate. There is a Standing Committee of the Food Ministry. It has been the practice established here that whenever such an occasion arises that Committee is to be invited.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: That Committee also will be consulted. What I proposed was an extra facility to Members of the House, to influence my decision.

Shri H. V. Kamath: Why should Consultation with Members of the Assembly be considered out of the way?

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. That is a debatable point.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: What I meant to say was that when Government do not accept a resolution, make a statement and request the Mover to withdraw the motion, then usually the final action is taken by the Government in its own way. What I suggested was a special procedure adopted by me because I want to represent the views of the Assembly, as fully as I can.

Shri Biswanath Das: I congratulate the Honourable Minister for his splendid response and I withdraw my amendment.

Mr. Speaker: Has the Honourable Member leave of the House to withdraw his amendment?

The amendment was, by leave of the Assembly withdrawn.

Shri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar: I am glad that Mr. Das, who tabled his amendment, has enabled me also to withdraw my resolution.

I only want to say that other institutions like the research institutions also may cooperate and be brought under the control of the Development Board. I wanted to refer to growth of forests and prevention of inundation in my speech, but I omitted to do so. I am sure that the Honourable Minister who certainly wants to be an absolute representative of the Assembly and who has gone, according to him, out of the way in inviting Members of the Assembly, will certainly evolve a nice scheme which will do away with famine in the course of at least the next five years.

The Honourable Shri Jairamdas Daulatram: These suggestions will also be considered.

Mr. Speaker: So the Honourable Member wishes to have the permission of the House to withdraw his motion. The amendment has already been withdrawn.

The Resolution was by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

Shri Basanta Kumar Das (West Bengal: General): I do not wish to move the resolution standing in my name.

Mr. R. K. Sidhva (C. P. and Berar: General): I do not desire to move the resolution standing in my name not because it is not important or urgent but because I have been advised to discuss this matter with the Minister in charge of the Department, and after discussing, none would be more glad than myself if the Government themselves bring forward a Bill to that effect. Therefore I do not move my resolution.

Mr. Speaker: I am not concerned with the reasons why the Honourable Member does not want to move his motion. The Honourable Member is not moving his motion.

That brings to a close the business of the day.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 5th February, 1948.