

Monday, 30th March, 1931

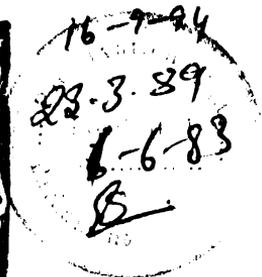
THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES  
(Official Report)

Volume IV, 1931

*(26th March to 1st April, 1931)*

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FIRST SESSION  
OF THE  
FOURTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1931



SIMLA  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS

1931

20

# Legislative Assembly.

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THE HONOURABLE SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTOOLA, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

## *Deputy President :*

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## *Assistant of the Secretary :*

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## *Marshal :*

CAPTAIN NUB AHMAD KHAN, M.C., I.O.M.

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SIR ABDUR RAHIM, K.C.S.I., KT., M.L.A.

RAJA BAHADUR G. KRISHNAMACHARIAR, M.L.A.

MIAN MUHAMMAD SHAH NAWAZ, C.I.E., M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Monday, 30th March, 1931.

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The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

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## MEMBERS SWORN:

- Mr. Herbert William Emerson, C.I.E., C.B.E., M.L.A. (Home Secretary); and  
Mr. Abraham Raisman, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).
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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### CUSTOMS DUTY.

1160. \***Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad:** (a) Will Government be pleased to give the value of the merchandise on which customs duty was charged in the year 1929-30?

(b) What is the total amount of customs duty realised by Government on such merchandise?

(c) What is the value of the merchandise that passed through the ports under the Government of India on which no customs duty was charged? To whom was such merchandise addressed?

(d) What is the amount of customs duty that would have been realised had they not passed free of customs duty?

(e) What is the value of the merchandise imported into India through the ports not directly under the Government of India?

(f) What would be the amount of customs duty on such merchandise, had it been received through British ports?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** (a) No special records is maintained in the trade statistics distinguishing between merchandise that is free from duty and merchandise that is dutiable; but the Honourable Member will be able to work out these particulars, so far as items free under the Tariff are concerned, by referring to the sea-borne Trade Accounts for March, 1930, and taking out the value for each item that is free under the Tariff, totalling these values and then deducting them from the total value of merchandise imported or exported.

(b) Rs. 42,72,79,426.

(c) and (d). I assume that the Honourable Member refers to merchandise which is dutiable under the ordinary law but exempted when imported by certain consignees. There are some comparatively unimportant

exemptions of this kind, such as those in favour of commercial travellers' samples, reimported private personal property, and the effects of consular officers, particulars of which are not on record and could not be obtained without imposing inordinate labour upon Customs officers. The most important exemptions of the kind quoted are two in number: that conferred upon Ruling Chiefs in respect of goods for their personal use by Finance Department Notification No. 86, dated the 27th August, 1927; and that conferred upon Government in respect of aeroplanes and arms, ammunition, etc., by the Notification in the same Department, No. 788, dated the 1st April, 1924. Figures as regards the duty involved in the first concession are in the possession of Government. These figures are recorded by calendar years and therefore cannot be given for 1929-30; the total value of the merchandise also is not separately recorded. The amount of duty that was foregone was in the year 1930 Rs. 1,47,864. Duty figures are not available as regards the second concession, but the trade returns show a value figure of just under Rs. 48 lakhs in 1929-30 against the head "Government stores—arms, ammunition and military stores".

(e) and (f). The information has been called for and will be communicated to the Honourable Member.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** What was the name of the Indian Chief who was exempted from the payment of duty for an aeroplane and other things?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** I must have notice of that question.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** When it struck the Honourable the Finance Member that it was the Indian Chief, who according to him is a privileged person, not paying customs duty to the Government of India for the articles transported by land, he must have seen who was that Indian Chief. It was his duty to answer the question without notice, Sir.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** I am afraid I do not follow the Honourable Member's question but I must have notice of it in any case.

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** May I ask the Honourable the Finance Member whether the merchandise that goes to any particular State is exempt from customs duties, Kashmir for instance.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** I am afraid I did not catch my Honourable friend's question.

**Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Is there any convention by which all merchandise that enters the State of Kashmir is free from duty?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** In the answer I have given the fullest information I could in reply to the question. If any further information is required I think I must ask for notice.

#### ALLOWANCES AND PRIVILEGES OF OFFICERS OF THE INDIAN TERRITORIAL FORCE.

1161. **\*Nawab Major Malik Talib Mehdi Khan:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the British officers of the Regular Army attached to the Indian Territorial Force draw camp allowance of Rs. 6 per day, while senior grade officers of the Indian Territorial Force get Rs. 5 only? If so, do Government propose to consider the removal of this difference?

(b) Is it a fact that officers of the Indian Territorial Force are not allowed any casual leave during their training period? If so, do Government propose to extend this privilege to them as enjoyed by the officers of the regular Army?

(c) Is it a fact that the senior grade officers during Preliminary and Periodical Training draw a camp allowance of Rs. 5 per day and are deprived of this privilege while attached to the Regular Army units for voluntary training? Do Government propose to consider extension of this privilege in the second case also?

(d) Are the Indian Territorial Force supplied with barracks and *charpies*? If not, will Government please state why they should not get an allowance that is allowed to the Indian Army during war time, and whether the conditions under which they serve are practically the same?

(e) Will Government please state whether there is any difference in the ranks of junior grade officers of the Indian Territorial Force and the Regular Army? If not, why are the former placed below the latter in the same grade, though senior in service?

(f) Is it a fact that the names of officers holding King's commission of the Auxiliary Force are shown in the Civil List? If so, do Government propose to show the names of senior grade officers of the Indian Territorial Force also in it?

**Mr. G. M. Young:** (a) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The rate of camp allowance for officers of the Indian Territorial Force was recommended by the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces Committee, and Government consider it adequate.

(b) Casual leave without pay can be granted. In view of the shortness of the training period, it would not be justifiable to provide for the grant of casual leave with pay.

(c) The allowance of Rs. 5 per diem is a camp allowance and is admissible only when officers live in camp. The question of granting a similar allowance to senior officers of the Indian Territorial Force who are in camp when attached to regular units during voluntary training will, however, be examined by Government.

(d) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative; but I may explain that, in this respect, Indian Territorial Force units are treated in exactly the same way as units of the regular Army. Government cannot admit that the conditions of service are the same during training as in war.

(e) By virtue of the difference in the conditions of service all officers of the Territorial and Auxiliary Forces take rank below corresponding officers of the regular Army.

(f) The names of officers of the Auxiliary Force are shown in some, but not all, of the Provincial Civil Lists. The question of similarly showing the names of officers of the Indian Territorial Force is a matter for the Local Governments, to whom a copy of this question and answer will be sent.

#### QUANTITY OF WHEAT IMPORTED INTO INDIA.

1162. **\*Nawab Major Malik Talib Mehdi Khan:** Will Government be pleased to state the quantity of wheat imported into India through various ports during the period from the 1st January, 1931, to the 15th March, 1931?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** Figures for the exact period mentioned by the Honourable Member are not available, but the quantities of wheat imported into India during the period from the week ending on the 3rd January, 1931, to the week ending on the 14th March, 1931, through the ports of Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi were 67,951, 29,249 and 7,915 tons, respectively.

**REPORT OF THE TARIFF BOARD ON THE QUESTION OF PROTECTION TO THE MORARJI CHEMICAL WORKS.**

**1163. \*Mr. N. M. Dumasia:** Will Government be pleased to state when they propose to release the Tariff Board's Report on the proposal for protection to the Morarji Chemical Works and when they propose to take action thereon?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** It is the intention of Government of India to publish the Report of the Tariff Board on the Chemical Industry before the end of May. The action to be taken cannot be indicated until the Report is published.

**Mr. B. Das:** May I inquire what was the reason for this inordinate delay in publishing this particular Report of the Tariff Board?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I have already explained, Sir, on more than one occasion that the Report raises rather difficult and complicated questions, different in character from those which have arisen on other Reports.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Is it true, that the delay was due to the fact that the Honourable the Leader of the House was thinking whether publicity should be given so soon, or is it the fact that they were apprehending any other difficulties or that publicity might do injury to the Government Department in question? What was the reason?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** No, Sir.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Then what was the reason for such delay?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I cannot admit the justice of the implication which my Honourable friend suggests.

**Mr. B. V. Jadhav:** Is it in print, or is it going to be printed?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** It is in print.

**Mr. B. V. Jadhav:** May I know why two months are required for bringing it out?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** Because it is desirable that the conclusions of the Government should be indicated at the time of the publication.

**Mr. B. V. Jadhav:** When did the Government receive the Report from the Tariff Board?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I have given that information, Sir, in answer to a previous question in this House. I have not got the date in my head.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Is it not a fact, Sir, that three years had elapsed since then, since the Report was presented for publication, and the Honourable Member representing the Department took three years longer to consider the matter fully, and has only recently been kind enough to publish the Report?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I am quite aware, Sir, that the Government have taken a long time to consider the Report.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Will Government be pleased to state whether the Leader of the House, when he was questioned last year, informed this Honourable House that the delay was due to Government's being pressed with hard work,—that the Department was full of work so that they had not time to consider the Tariff Board's Report? A year has elapsed since then; and may I ask whether the same reasons still delay the Government's decision in the matter?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I have no recollection, Sir, of giving that reply.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Will the Honourable Member look it up?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** Certainly.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** If my facts are correct, will Government now admit that the delay has been due to some other reason than the great pressure of work on Government?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** I cannot admit the implication of the question, Sir: it all depends on the word "if".

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Are the Government aware, and particularly the Leader of the House, that, while answering a question, it is their duty, before answering any question, to see what answer they had already given on the subject? (Laughter.) If the answer is in the negative, shall I call their attention to the way in which the answer should be given according to the Rules and Standing Orders? (Hear, hear.) If it is in the affirmative, will they be pleased to answer the question? (Hear, hear.)

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** That seems to be a question, Sir, which it is hardly for me to pronounce upon.

#### PROTECTION FOR COPPER WIRE.

1164. **\*Mr. N. M. Dumasia:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the manufacturers of copper wire have applied for protection?

(b) Is it a fact that the Tariff Board have reported that a *prima facie* case has been made out for protection?

(c) If the reply to part (a) be in the affirmative, will Government please state when the application for protection was received?

(d) Will Government please state the reasons why they have delayed taking action in the matter?

(e) Is it a fact that Government wrote to the Indian Cable Company as far back as October last year that their application was noted as one suitable for reference to the Tariff Board?

(f) When do Government propose taking action in the matter?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In their Report on the question of tariff equality in respect of electric wires and cables the Tariff Board remarked that in their opinion a *prima facie* case existed for holding an enquiry into this Company's claim for protection.

(c) The Indian Cable Company applied for protection in July, 1929, but full particulars required for the consideration of their application were not received till February, 1930.

(d) As the Company were informed last year, the Tariff Board has been fully occupied with other urgent enquiries.

(e) Yes.

(f) Government hope to refer the case to the Tariff Board very shortly.

#### CANALS IN THE GANJAM DISTRICT AND ORISSA.

1165. \***Mr. B. N. Misra:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the year or years in which (i) the Rusikulya or canals in the Ganjam District, and (ii) the canals in Orissa were made?

(b) What was the expenditure incurred for the canals mentioned above separately?

(c) What is the interest charged annually for the projects mentioned in part (a)?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the amount of annual expenditure incurred under (i) establishment charges, and (ii) repairs, etc., during the years 1925 to 1930 on account of the projects mentioned in part (a) above?

**Mr. J. A. Shillidy:** (a) The Rusikulya canals project was completed in 1891-92, and the Orissa-canals project in 1885.

(b), (c) and (d). The Honourable Member is referred to Accounts Nos. 83 and 86A, of the Finance and Revenue Accounts, copies of which are in the Library of the House.

#### LACK OF FACILITIES AT SIMLA IN CONNECTION WITH THE CARRIAGE OF BAGGAGE AND RECORDS.

1166. \***Mr. B. N. Misra:** (a) Are Government aware that at the time of the Government of India moves some clerks or departmental agents make arrangements for the carriage of officers' and their subordinates' luggage to Simla and Delhi?

(b) Are Government aware that previous to the last move the Chief Goods Clerk, Simla, used to give every facility to men making such arrangements in the shape of placing wagons at their proper place and time and arranging weighing machines to be placed at different places in the main goods shed to weigh every one's luggage?

(c) Is it a fact that since the last October move the new Chief Goods Clerk, Simla, has withdrawn all these facilities?

(d) Are Government aware that during the last move departmental agents were put to great inconvenience on account of bad arrangements of shunting and withdrawal of weighing machines from the Railway goods shed, Simla?

(e) Are Government aware that except in the case of the Railway Department the Chief Goods Clerk, Simla, used insulting language to departmental agents? If not, do Government propose to enquire into the matter? If not, why not?

(f) Are Government aware that the Chief Goods Clerk, Simla, openly declared his intention of putting more obstacles in the way of smooth working of the removal of Government records and officers' luggage? If not, do Government propose to enquire into the matter? If not, why not?

(g) Is it a fact that at the time of last move of the Government of India, under the instructions of the Chief Goods Clerk, the main goods shed, Simla, was not allowed to be used for loading Government records and officers' luggage in wagons booked by departmental agents?

(h) Are Government aware that officers' luggage was exposed to rain and dust in the open yard of Simla goods shed during the last move? If so, what steps do Government propose to take to prevent its recurrence in the ensuing move?

(i) Are Government aware that the Chief Goods Clerk, Simla, openly declared that he did not like Government of India clerks making arrangements for their officers' luggage and that he would see that they are put to every inconvenience and brought to the bad books of their officers? If not, do Government propose to inquire into the matter? If not, why not?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** (a) Yes.

(b) Government are unaware of the extent to which the Railway authorities have co-operated in the past as regards facilities on the Railway.

(c), (d), (g) and (h). I understand that certain complaints of this nature have been made.

(e), (f) and (i). Government have no information of the incidents referred to.

The matters referred to in the Honourable Member's question lie within the competence of the Railway Administration.

#### FACILITIES FOR BOOKING OF GOODS AT NEW DELHI RAILWAY STATION.

1167. **\*Mr. B. N. Misra:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether New Delhi Railway Station will be open to goods booking for full wagon loads only or will it be open to small consignments as well at the time of the coming move of the Government of India?

(b) Is it a fact that there are different rates of railway freight for the wagons booked containing household effects from those of certain miscellaneous articles like cycles, typewriters, sewing machines and boxes containing books, etc.?

(c) Is it a fact that the New Delhi Railway Station authorities did not allow in the past the booking of those articles (which did not come in the category of household effects), in the wagons booked for household effects of an officer, even if the officer concerned was willing to pay the usual higher rate of freight?

(d) Are Government aware that officers moving between Simla and Delhi are put to great difficulties in weighing and booking their belongings separately? Do Government propose to allow such belongings of the officers moving to Simla to be loaded with wagons booked for household effects on payment of the extra freights fixed for such articles? If not, why not?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** (a) During the move of the Government of India from Delhi to Simla, New Delhi Station is open temporarily for booking at goods rates of household effects and Government records in full wagon loads.

(b) Cycles, typewriters, sewing machines and boxes containing books, etc., if included in a wagon-road consignment of household effects are charged at the rate for household effects. If such articles are booked separately, they are charged at different rates.

(c) I understand that, subject to the proviso that no goods may be booked in less than full wagon loads, the answer is in the negative.

(d) Government are not aware of difficulties such as are alleged. Determination of the conditions under which goods may be booked at New Delhi Station is a matter within the competence of the North Western Railway Administration and Government do not propose to take any action.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Are Government aware that the New Delhi Station has been provided primarily for the purpose of giving facilities for transmission to the people who have to work in New Delhi, and particularly to the officers and staff and the Members of the Legislature and others?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** Government are certainly aware of the fact that the New Delhi Station exists in order to give facilities for traffic, Sir, and, as my answer shows, it is used for that purpose.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** In view of the fact that the Honourable Member has already answered otherwise, would he like to change now the very answer that he gave?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** I cannot accept the statement that I have answered otherwise.

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### UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

#### FINES RECOVERED FROM EMPLOYEES OF THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

417. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the total amount of fine recovered from the employees on the Bengal and North Western Railway?

(b) How has the sum so recovered been disbursed?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** During the year 1929-30, the last year for which figures are available the fines inflicted amounted to Rs. 9,020. In the same year the following disbursements were made from the Fine Fund:

	Rs.
(1) Assistance to Hospital . . . . .	340
(2) School . . . . .	8,763
(3) Recreation Club . . . . .	7,481
(4) Miscellaneous payments . . . . .	1,560

RECORDS OF APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, TRANSFER, ETC., OF WORKMEN ON THE  
BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

418 **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Is it a fact that no letters regarding appointment, promotion, transfer, punishment, etc., are given to workmen of the Bengal and North Western Railway Workshops, Gorakhpur?

(b) Is it a fact that there are cases in which the employees claim to have served the Railway for longer durations than the Railway Administration admit?

(c) Do Government propose to draw the attention of the Railway Administration to the desirability of communication in writing to individuals in regard to the above-mentioned matters? If not, why not?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** (a) and (b). Government have no information.

(c) Government will bring the Honourable Member's question to the notice of the Agent, Bengal and North Western Railway.

GATEMEN AT LEVEL CROSSINGS ON THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

419. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state the following:

- (i) the total number of gatemen posted on the Bengal and North Western Railway level crossing gates;
- (ii) the total number of quarters built for them;
- (iii) the total number of those who are not supplied with quarters;
- (iv) the number of gatemen posted at each level crossing gate; and
- (v) the total number of level crossing gates where only one gateman is posted?

(b) Are single-handed gatemen not allowed to leave their level crossing gates?

(c) Are there level crossing gates where there is no well? If so, how do the gatemen manage to get water?

(d) What is the total number of level crossing gates?

(e) Are the quarters of gatemen provided with latrines?

(f) What are their minimum and maximum wages?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** The Agent of the Bengal and North Western Railway is being asked to furnish the particulars in question and I will communicate with the Honourable Member later.

LEAVE RULES ON THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

420. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether scales of leave, as mentioned in Railway Board's letter No. 8003-E., dated the 6th July, 1929, in reply to my unstarred question No. 333 on the 18th March, 1929, have been inserted in the Leave Rules of the Bengal and North Western Railway and whether they have been notified to the staff concerned? If not, why not?

(b) Are leave rules not supplied to subordinate servants of the same Railway?

(c) Are lower class menial staff and workshop employees not given leave according to the existing rules on the said railway? If not, why not?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** (a) and (b). As already stated in the letter referred to, the scale of leave is provided for in the rules. It is not usual to supply copies of the leave rules to each member of the staff, but they have means of becoming acquainted with them.

(c) Because on the Bengal and North Western Railway as on other railways, it is considered that the conditions of employment of the menial staff and workshop employees do not warrant the same scale of leave as is admissible to the subordinate staff generally.

#### WEEKLY REST DAY ON THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

421. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** With reference to the reply given to my unstarred question No. 334 interpellated on the 18th March, 1929 (*vide* Railway Board's letter No. 8004-E., dated the 6th July, 1929), will Government be pleased to state:

(a) whether the station clerical staff on the Bengal and North Western Railway are now granted a weekly off-day or any rest day during any period of time; if not, why not; and

(b) whether non-clerical staff posted at stations are not to be granted any rest day; if not, why not?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** I have called for certain information and will communicate with the Honourable Member on its receipt.

#### RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PAY ON THE BENGAL AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

422. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** With reference to Mr. P. R. Rau's assurance to Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh about making inquiries in regard to pay given to Europeans and Indians on racial discrimination (*vide* Mr. Siddheswar Prasad Singh's starred question No. 1088 asked on the 18th March, 1929), will Government be pleased to state if they have inquired into the matter, and if so, what are their findings?

**Mr. A. A. L. Parsons:** In answer to an enquiry from the Railway Board the Agent, Bengal and North Western Railway, reported that there is no racial discrimination on the Bengal and North Western Railway in regard to the pay given to Indians, Anglo-Indians and Europeans for work of the same kind and degree of responsibility.

#### PROVISION OF TELEGRAPH COMMUNICATION AT CERTAIN VILLAGES IN THE BURDWAN DISTRICT.

423. **Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Are Government aware that three important villages such as Baidyapur, Akalposh and Bagnapara in the District of Burdwan have got no telegraph communication?

(b) Is it a fact that these villages can be easily given telegraphic communication without much cost?

(c) If so, do Government propose to inquire into the matter?

**Mr. H. A. Sams:** (a) It is correct that telegraph facilities are not available in the villages referred to by the Honourable Member. The question of providing such facilities is within the competence of the Postmaster-General of the Circle to decide. Government have no information regarding the importance of the villages referred to.

(b) Government have no information.

(c) Does not arise.

#### THE AKALPOSH POST OFFICE.

**424. Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Is it a fact that Akalposh is a branch post office with a very good income?

(b) If so, do Government propose to make it a sub-office? If not, why not?

**Mr. H. A. Sams:** (a) and (b). Government have no information except that Akalposh is a branch post office. The matter is entirely within the competence of the Postmaster-General, Bengal and Assam.

#### LACK OF MONEY ORDER FACILITIES FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF THE TATANAGAR<sup>R</sup> FOUNDRY COMPANY.

**425. Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** (a) Is it a fact that the employees of Tatanagar Foundry Company have to go to Golmuri (Tinplate Company's) Post Office after the pay day and are Government aware that they have to apply for a day's leave to send a money order owing to heavy rush of money orders in that Post Office?

(b) Is it a fact that money orders for Rs. 10,000 to 15,000 are sent by the employees of the Tatanagar Foundry Company alone?

(c) If so, do Government propose to have a post office at the Tatanagar Foundry Works? If not, why not?

(d) Is it a fact that there is no letter box within easy reach of the Tatanagar Foundry Works?

(e) Are Government aware that people have to wait for two to three hours at the Jamshedpur and Tatanagar post offices to send their money orders?

**Mr. H. A. Sams:** (a) to (e). Government have no information. The matter is within the competence of the Postmaster-General, Bihar and Orissa, to whom a copy of the question is being sent.

#### SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

##### APPLICATION OF PROVIDENT FUND CONTRIBUTIONS TO PAYMENT OF INSURANCE POLICY PREMIUMS.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the rules of the Provident Funds of the Government of India, Provincial Governments, Municipalities and local funds in India and the Bombay Port Trust permit subscribers at their option to apply the contribution which they would ordinarily make to the Provident Fund as premiums on a Life Assurance Policy, provided such policy is assigned to the employers?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether the Provident Fund Rules of the State Railways contain any such provision, and if not, will Government please state the reasons for refusing such facilities to subscribers to the State Railways Provident Funds?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy:** (a) The answer is in the affirmative so far as the General Provident Fund Rules, the rules of the I.C.S. Provident Funds, the new Contributory Provident Fund Rules which will be introduced with effect from the 1st April, 1931, and the Bombay Port Trust Fund Rules are concerned. Information regarding the Provident Fund Rules of Municipalities and local funds in India is not available.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part, the reasons for the absence of similar provision in the rules of the State Railway Provident Fund are that while the General Provident Fund is a supplement to pension, the State Railway Provident Fund is in lieu of pension, and it has been considered doubtful whether it would be in the real interests of the subscribers to give them the option to apply their contributions to the payment of life insurance premia. Now, however, that a different principle is about to be applied in respect of the Government of India contributory funds other than the State Railway Provident Fund, the question of revising the rules of the latter in the direction referred to will be re-examined.

## MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

### COMMUNAL RIOT AT CAWNPORE.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. I have received a notice from Mr. Maswood Ahmad that he proposes to ask for leave to move a motion for the adjournment of the business of the House today for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the recent communal riots in Cawnpore. I have to inquire whether any Honourable Member has any objection to this motion.

**The Honourable Sir James Orerar** (Home Member): Sir, I do not propose on behalf of Government to raise any objections to this motion. But I should like to repeat, as I did on a former occasion, that I hope that if the House grants leave for this motion, Honourable Members taking part in the debate will speak with a very grave sense of responsibility, and will refrain from adding fuel to what may still be a smouldering fire.

(At this stage Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup rose.)

**Mr. President:** Is the Honourable Member rising to take objection?

**Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammadan): I object to this motion, and my reasons are these . . . .

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member may simply object; no reasons are required.

**Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup:** Sir, I object to the motion for adjournment.

**Mr. President:** As objection has been taken, I would request those Honourable Members who are in favour of leave being granted to rise in their places.

(Several Honourable Members rose in their places.)

Order, order. As not less than 25 Members have risen, I declare that leave is granted and that the motion will be taken up for discussion at 4 p. m. this afternoon.

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi** (Burma: Non-European): May I, Sir, draw your attention to . . . . .

**Mr. President:** Your notice for adjournment cannot be taken up now, because the previous one has been accepted by the House.

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi:** But may I request the Chair to take it up tomorrow?

**Mr. President:** The Chair will consider it.

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#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

**Mr. President:** I have to inform the House that Khan Bahadur Maulvi Rafiuddin Ahmad, Kumar Gupteshwar Prasad Singh and Mr. B. N. Misra have been elected to the Standing Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands.

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#### THE SALT (ADDITIONAL IMPORT DUTY) BILL.

**Mr. President:** The House will now proceed with the further consideration of the Bill to impose a temporary additional customs duty on foreign salt.

**Mr. B. K. Shanmukham Chetty** (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. President, as one of the Members of the Committee that examined the Report of the Tariff Board on the question of protecting the salt industry in India, and as one of the signatories to the majority Report of that Committee, I think it will perhaps be useful if I intervene early in the debate to explain the reasons which induced the majority of that Committee to recommend the imposition of a duty of 4½ annas on foreign imported salt. But before I proceed to explain the reasons that induced the majority on this Committee to come to this conclusion, I think it would clear up the issue considerably and remove a great deal of suspicion and misunderstanding if my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, will tell us what Government intend to do with regard to one particular recommendation, or rather expression of

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opinion, which the Committee has made. In paragraph 10 of the Report the Committee mention that there is a strong equitable case for the application of the proceeds for the benefit of the special classes of consumers on whom the burden of the immediate effect of increase in prices will fall. The object of the Committee in making this recommendation was that the proceeds of the duty should not be taken for the benefit of the Central Revenues, but that after meeting the charges that will be incurred in developing certain sources of salt supply, the balance of the proceeds of the duty must be given over to the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, Burma and Assam, whose consumers will be primarily affected by the imposition of this duty. Well, Sir, if it is made clear that Government intend to act on this recommendation of the Committee, I think it will probably clear up a great deal of misunderstanding and suspicion that exist on this side of the House. Therefore, before I proceed with my speech, I would invite my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, to tell the House what Government propose to do in this matter. If you will kindly permit him, I would like to hear from the Honourable the Finance Member what he has to say.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster** (Finance Member): Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me an opportunity at this early stage in the debate for making an explanation of the Government's attitude in this matter. I was rather sorry on Saturday to hear my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, referring in somewhat sceptical—I might almost say in disparaging—terms to the Committee's recommendation that the provinces affected had a strong equitable claim. As a member of the Committee, I think he might have known that this expression was not, as he suggested, mere eye-wash, and that we meant what we said. The expression was, as a matter of fact, very carefully phrased because members of the Committee appreciated that a most important principle was involved, for I think, it will be admitted that it would be a most dangerous precedent if anything was done which involved the acceptance of a principle that when general customs duties are imposed on the whole of India, the proceeds should be allocated to any particular area which might be especially affected. That, I venture to suggest, would be a very dangerous and far-reaching principle. Therefore, the Committee at my request and, if I may say so, with a very proper appreciation of their responsibilities, refrained from making any recommendation in terms which might involve the acceptance of that principle or in terms which might involve considerable embarrassment to the Government and to myself as a Government member of that Committee. But the recommendation has since then received very serious consideration from the Government and I am glad to be able to state that I can now clear up the Government's position in this matter.

We have come to the conclusion that we should be justified in treating this as a very special case. I think every one will agree that the circumstances are entirely exceptional and that the scheme has perhaps a more definitely limited effect than is likely to occur in any other case. It is indeed a very special case for the only area which uses imported foreign salt is a well-defined area. But, apart from that, and as a stronger reason than that the measure is a measure which we have recommended to be imposed for one year only, during which time we want to see how it works, while we can examine whether it is possible to devise measures for improving the production of salt which will in the long run have the effect of

protecting the interests of the consumer. That being the object, the protection of the interests of the consumer, it would be an extraordinary result if even for a short period, the interests of the consumer were directly damaged. In view of these very special considerations, we on the Government side, provided the House agrees to this, are quite prepared to commit ourselves straight away to applying the proceeds of the duty during this provisional year for the benefit of the provinces affected, subject to certain prior charges according to the recommendations of the Committee. I would make clear exactly what the effect of that proviso is. The Committee's recommendation was that the proceeds of the duty should be earmarked for the following objects:

- (1) The development of certain Northern India sources in the manner recommended by the Salt Survey Committee;
- (2) The investigation of the possibility of the development of other sources of supply in India, particularly in the Eastern parts of India which have not yet been investigated;
- (3) Any further measures that might be found necessary in the light of experience to secure the stabilisation of prices, for example, the establishment of a Marketing Board and the provision of working capital and reserves for such a Board.

Now, Sir, we considered that the first two objects, namely, the expenditure of money on the development of certain definite schemes in Northern India and the investigation of certain other definite schemes in the Eastern parts of India, we considered that those two objects must be pursued, and that they could be pursued this year. But the third object, namely, the reserving of the balance for further measures, that might be found necessary for stabilising the prices, such as the establishment of a Marketing Board, those measures cannot really be undertaken in the next year, and therefore, we propose that any claim for those measures should be deferred. Therefore the proceeds of the duty will be available for the benefit of the provinces affected, subject only to carrying out certain definite measures and certain definite investigations. Now, the probable cost of those definite measures and definite investigations would be at the outside, something like 3 to 5 lakhs, and therefore, our suggestion is that a sum representing not more than a maximum of one-eighth of the duty should be reserved for undertaking those purposes, and that the remaining seven-eighths should be earmarked for the benefit of the provinces affected. The one-eighth is, as I have said, the maximum, and we should certainly not endeavour to spend money up to that amount if we find it is not necessary. It may quite well not be necessary to spend as much as that, but I think it would be safe to reserve one-eighth for that purpose. Therefore, that is the position, that if our view of the situation is accepted by the House, then out of 34 lakhs, if that is realised, seven-eighths would be available for the benefit of the provinces affected. I indicated in dealing with this measure at an earlier stage that the proper way of giving effect to an arrangement of that kind would be by passing a Resolution in this House, following the precedent of the case of the Road Fund. A special two-anna duty on petrol, which was accepted by this House two years ago, was allocated for the Road Fund on the motion of my Honourable friend, Sir Bhupendranath Mitra. On that occasion, after the duty had been passed at the Delhi Session, Sir Bhupendranath Mitra moved at the

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Simla Session a rather long and complicated Resolution dealing with the application of the proceeds. We had thought that it would be better not to move any Resolution dealing with the proceeds of the Salt duty this session, because, firstly, we could not move in the matter at all until the Bill had been passed, secondly, we could not decide our policy as regards the Resolution until we had some expression of public opinion which we expected to get in the course of this debate, and thirdly, the Resolution itself might be a matter of some complication, if in its own terms it seeks to define exactly how the proceeds are to be distributed between the various provinces. But, if in the course of this debate, we found that the general opinion was strongly in favour of a Resolution on these lines, and if the opinion of the House was that a Resolution in general terms would meet the point—when I say in general terms, it would be necessary, in such a case to lay down that up to one-eighth might be reserved for the purposes which I have explained and that the balance should be distributed in such a manner as might be decided by the Governor General in Council as between the provinces concerned—if that Resolution would meet the case and the views of the House and if the House feels that a Resolution ought to be passed this session, I would do my best, after consulting with you, Sir, to see whether we could get it through before the business of this session ends. But that is a matter on which we should be very glad to have expressions of opinions. That is all I have to say in the matter. Having made this clear statement about the intentions of the Government, I hope very much that some of the acrimony which has entered into this debate on the part of those who have spoken on behalf of Bengal, I hope very much that some of their acrimony will disappear. I venture to think that my Honourable friend, Mr. Chetty, will be able to give a very satisfactory account of the scheme when he proceeds with his speech.

**Sir Abdur Rahim** (Calcutta and Suburbs: Muhammadan Urban): I wish to ask just one question. Are the Government now in a position to declare that seven-eighths will be made over to the provinces concerned in order that that amount may be earmarked for the benefit of what are called nation-building activities such as primary education, for instance, in Bengal, or will it be merged in the general revenues of the provinces? That would be rather an important consideration for this side of the House.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster**: In making my statement, I had not intended to suggest that we should seek to impose on the provinces concerned any directions as to how they should apply the funds. I venture to suggest to my Honourable friend that it would really be hardly appropriate in this case, even if we desired to do so, to ask them to adopt such a course. We are only dealing with revenue for an experimental measure destined to remain in force for one year only. We are only considering one year at present and I would suggest that the small sum which would go to each of those provinces is not one which could be used for establishing any very important policy in the matter of nation-building purposes. I think the question could be better discussed when in the light of experience we come to consider whether the scheme is to remain permanently in force. I venture to suggest that it will be undesirable that we should give any definite instructions to the provinces as to the application of the proceeds of this fund.

**Mr. C. C. Biswas** (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I ask the Honourable the Finance Member why he did not find it possible to make this definite announcement on Saturday last. The result is, I am debarred, having spoken once, from meeting this part of the case which he has now placed before the House for the first time. I submit it was not fair to the Mover of the amendment not to have been apprised of the intentions of the Government at an earlier stage.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty**: Mr. President, I am sure the House will agree with me that we are obliged to the Honourable the Finance Member for making the position of the Government clear on this matter. With due respect to my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, I venture to suggest that nothing unfair has been done to anybody either in this House or outside by this announcement of the Government being made today rather than on Saturday. Now, that it is clear that a major part of this duty will be given for the benefit of those provinces which will have to bear the burden, now that this point has been made clear, I think my Honourable friends on this side of the House need not have any more suspicion or mistrust on that point. The Honourable the Finance Member wanted the opinion of this House as to the procedure that the House would like to adopt in arriving at this conclusion. I would suggest to him that on the whole, it will be satisfactory if before the end of this session, a Resolution is moved in this House recommending to the Governor General in Council to apply the proceeds of this duty in the manner suggested by the Honourable the Finance Member. In this connection, I would just like to say one word about the very excellent suggestion that came from my Honourable friend, the Leader of the Independent Party. Honourable Members will remember that a similar question was raised in this House when we remitted the provincial contributions. Opinion was then expressed on that occasion that we should ask the Provincial Governments to apply the proceeds of this remission to nation-building departments and not merely take them to the credit of their general revenues. It was then explained, as it was explained just now by my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, and very rightly too, that it was not proper that this House should fetter the discretion of the Provincial Governments in this matter. But, Sir, I would submit, that we might in this instance follow the same procedure as we adopted on the last occasion when we remitted the provincial contributions. In the Resolution that is to be placed before us for the acceptance of this House, a rider might be added that in the opinion of this House the Provincial Governments ought to utilise the proceeds of this duty for some non-recurring nation-building service. It will be purely a recommendation which this House will be entitled to make to the Provincial Governments, and I have no doubt that the Provincial Governments will treat that recommendation going from this House with that respect which an expression of opinion in this House should deserve.

Sir, having made this position clear, I would like to explain very briefly the reasons that actuated the majority members of the Special Committee to make the recommendation that they have made in this Report. My Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, very rightly asked us to consider this question from the point of view of the interests of Bengal. He is perfectly entitled to ask us to consider it from that point of view and the House would be perfectly justified in considering the question from the point of view of the Bengal consumer who ultimately will have to bear the burden of this duty. But I would submit to my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas,

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that he might have asked this House to consider the question not merely from the point of view of the Bengal consumer but also from the point of view of wider national interests. And in this connection, I would submit that fortunately for us the interests of the Bengal consumer and the interests of the nation at large are not conflicting but practically identical. I put my signature to the majority recommendation of the Special Committee because I was convinced that the measure that we proposed was as much in the interest of the Bengal consumer as in the interests of the national industry of India. Sir, public opinion in this country has for years expressed itself very strongly that India must be made self-supporting in the matter of her salt supply. With an extensive sea-coast all around the sub-continent of India, with great natural resources for producing salt in Northern India, it was considered by the public in this country a real tragedy that India should still depend upon foreign supplies for this most essential article of livelihood. From the national point of view it is very essential that India should be made self-supporting in the matter of salt industry. The necessity for this was impressed upon us specially during the war when the poor Bengal consumer was asked to pay fabulous prices for this most elementary and essential article of food. The Taxation Inquiry Committee in 1926 recommended that measures must be taken to make India self-supporting in the matter of salt. As a result of this recommendation of the Taxation Inquiry Committee, the Government of India asked the Central Board of Revenue to examine this question, and they came to the conclusion that the three points that emerged from an inquiry with regard to making India self-sufficient in the matter of salt supply are, firstly, that the question of making India self-sufficient in this matter is merely a question of supplying Bengal with Indian manufactured salt, because the other parts of India consumed salt made in India itself. It is only the Bengal market, and to some extent Assam, Burma and Bihar and Orissa, that take foreign salt.

The second point emphasised by the Central Board of Revenue was that, though in India salt suitable for the Bengal market was manufactured, the cost of transporting this salt to the Bengal market was a very important feature of the whole scheme, and this cost of transportation made it almost impossible to supply Bengal from this source. My Honourable friends should remember that in the matter of their salt the people of Bengal are more meticulous than the people of other provinces. When some time back it was suggested that the people of Bengal must, at least out of patriotism, take to eating Indian salt, my Honourable friend, Mr. Kabeeruddin Ahmed, said that even sentiments of patriotism could not compel them to eat dirty salt.

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt** (Burdwan Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Kabeeruddin Ahmed does not represent either the best intellect or patriotism of Bengal.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** The problem therefore of transporting white crushed salt from Indian sources to the Bengal market was a very serious problem indeed. The third point emphasised by the Central Board of Revenue was that there are considerable limitations to the possible sources of supply of salt to the Bengal market.

After considering the Report of the Central Board of Revenue, the Government of India came to the conclusion that no case had been made out to examine the question further. But, Sir, we on this side of the House took up the matter again last year. One of the non-official Members during the Budget discussion drew the attention of Government to the necessity of referring to the Tariff Board the question of protecting the salt industry, and in response to that suggestion made on this side of the House the Government of India referred the question to the Tariff Board. The Tariff Board, after a very careful inquiry,—in spite of what my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, said to the contrary I submit the Tariff Board made a very careful inquiry and submitted a very elaborate report—came to the conclusion that no case had been made out for protecting the Indian salt industry in the sense in which protection is generally demanded for an indigenous industry. But they recommended the establishment of a Marketing Board with a view to stabilise the price of salt in the Bengal market at a certain figure, so that the Indian producer of salt may take advantage of the stabilised price and meet the cut-throat competition of the foreign importer of salt. Sir, we examined the Tariff Board Report in the Special Committee. When the Special Committee met, our attention was drawn to the fact that a serious emergency had arisen in the salt market in Bengal. When the Tariff Board reported, the price of foreign salt ex-ship Calcutta was about Rs. 53 per hundred maunds, and the Tariff Board came to the deliberate conclusion that the price which the Indian producer was entitled to expect was about Rs. 66 per hundred maunds; and the Tariff Board therefore came to the conclusion that foreign salt was being dumped on the Bengal market and that as a result of the cut-throat competition the Indian salt works would soon have to close down. When we met, our attention was drawn to the fact that the price of foreign imported salt, which was Rs. 56 per 100 maunds at the time the Tariff Board reported, had come down to Rs. 36 per hundred maunds. We naturally thought that the foreign importers of salt in the Bengal market had determined to have such a cut-throat competition as to crush out of existence the salt works in India and at Aden. We therefore thought that this emergency having arisen, some emergency measures were called for by this Assembly. After very careful consideration, though in the early stages of our deliberations we were deprived of the valuable assistance and advice of my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, we came to the conclusion that the only proper course to adopt now would be to impose a differential duty of 4½ annas per maund on foreign imported salt. Mr. Biswas very rightly asked what justification the Committee had to recommend an import duty when the Tariff Board, which examined this question deliberately overruled it. As I explained in the earlier part of my speech, the Tariff Board came to the conclusion that the Indian salt industry does not require protection in the sense in which protection is generally demanded by indigenous industries. Their reason was this: the total quantity of salt consumed in the Bengal market was about 500,000 tons per annum. Out of this, 180,000 tons came from Aden and the Indian works at Karachi and Okha supplied only about 25,000 tons, the remainder coming from abroad—from the Red Sea ports and abroad. The Tariff Board, after examining the position, came to the conclusion that for protecting 25,000 tons of the Karachi and Okha salt works, it was unreasonable to impose a burden on the Bengal consumer; and they were not sure whether, as a result of the imposition of this duty, the Indian salt works would so expand as to supply within a

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reasonable time at least the major part of the requirements of the Bengal market. Honourable Members must remember that according to the criterion laid down by the Fiscal Commission, a protective duty would be justified only if we could be assured that after some time the Indian industry would develop to such an extent as to supply the greater part of the needs of the country in that direction. With the material that they had before them, the Tariff Board was not in a position to come to the conclusion that Indian salt works could in the near future be made to supply the Bengal market. They therefore recommended that a special committee ought to be set up to inquire into the possible sources of salt supply in Northern India, and in the meantime, having overruled the imposition of an import duty, they recommended the establishment of a Marketing Board to control prices at a particular level. When our Committee met we had the advantage of the Special Committee of inquiry presided over by Sir Chunilal Mehta. The findings of that Committee placed before us information which was not available when the Tariff Board reported. To put it briefly, the finding of Sir Chunilal Mehta's Committee is that, after a reasonable time and after spending a reasonable amount of capital expenditure, the Northern Indian sources of salt supply could be expected to supply the whole of the Bengal market. It has been pointed out to us further that the Railway Administrations had undertaken to transport this salt from Khewra and other Northern Indian sources to the Bengal market at a rate which would be economical for the Bengal consumer. I submit that these two important factors were not present before the Tariff Board when they made their Report. Having come into possession of these two fundamental facts, we came to the conclusion that if only a differential duty were imposed for a definite period, the sources of salt supply not merely at Khewra, Pachbhadra and other places in Northern India, but at Karachi and Okha could be developed to such an extent as would lead us to the inference that, within a reasonable time, Bengal could expect salt from these Indian sources. It was these two new factors, the possibility of sources like Khewra and other Northern Indian sources, and the willingness of the Railway Administrations to transport salt at an economic figure, that enabled the Special Committee to come to the conclusion that a case had been made out to afford temporary protection to the Indian salt industry.

That is my answer to the argument of my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, that the Special Committee went out of their way to recommend a measure which was definitely ruled out by the Tariff Board. I mentioned that the problem of making India self-supporting in the matter of salt industry was to find 500,000 tons of suitable salt for the Bengal market. 180,000 tons come from Aden: we therefore require about 320,000 tons to make India self-sufficient, and Sir Chunilal Mehta's Committee, after very careful inquiry, came to the deliberate conclusion that within the next five or six years the Indian sources of salt supply could be expected to produce 870,000 tons of salt, or 50,000 tons more than we require. They went further and said that this quantity might subsequently be increased to 550,000 tons, and ultimately to 635,000 tons. I would ask my Honourable friends just to pause for a moment and think for themselves what these figures mean. Even if Aden were to be separated from India, and even if we were to ignore the sources of supply from Aden, it has now been established that within probably ten years India can produce from the

sources at Karachi, Khewra, Morvi, Okha and Pachbhadra about 685,000 tons of salt suitable to the Bengal market, while the maximum required for Bengal is only about 500,000 tons . . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed** (Rajshahi Division: Muhammadan Rural): But, will it be as refined as the Liverpool salt? That is the question—whether it will suit the Bengal taste.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty**: I am sure that the salt produced from Khewra will satisfy the meticulous taste of my Honourable friend . . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed**: Without seeing the picture, it is no use making a speech.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty**: The justification therefore that I would give for the majority recommendation of the Committee is simply this: that we are convinced—and I am sure that in the face of these figures the House also ought to be convinced—that within a reasonable period, the Indian sources of salt supply can be expected to supply Bengal with all the salt that Bengal requires. In the face of this situation, I would like to ask my Honourable friends to tell me whether it is not justifiable to impose this small burden on the Bengal consumer for a short period.

After all, when the burden on the Bengal consumer is talked of, I would ask my Honourable friends to realise what—the extent of that so called burden is. It is not a crushing burden. During the war the Bengal consumer was entirely at the mercy of the foreign importers of salt and he had to pay as much as Rs. 500 per 100 maunds.

Today no doubt the Bengal consumer is getting his salt at Rs. 35 per 100 maunds. It has been mentioned to me that the steamer freight for transporting salt from Red Sea ports to Calcutta comes to nearly Rs. 25 per 100 maunds. Is it contended that the cost of production of salt to the Red Sea manufacturer is only Rs. 10 per 100 maunds and this includes a margin of profit for his production?

**Mr. O. O. Biswas**: According to the Tariff Board, Rs. 8 is the cost of production at Aden.

**Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty**: Sir, any one who takes the trouble of going through the figures of the price of salt in the Bengal market cannot but be convinced that the present figure of Rs. 35 per 100 maunds is purely the result of a cut-throat competition. I mentioned in the early part of my speech that the measure that we have recommended is as much in the interests of the Bengal consumer himself, and my reason for making that statement is this. If this price of Rs. 35 per 100 maunds were to continue for some months to come, the result would be that Aden, Karachi, and Okha would be wiped out, and the Bengal consumer would be entirely at the mercy of the foreign importer of salt, and he would then have to pay God knows what price for his salt. (*An Honourable Member*: "Question.") It is, therefore, in the interests of the Bengal consumer himself that some measure ought to be taken to ensure to the Bengal consumer his salt supply at a reasonable rate. (*An Honourable Member*: "Leave that to the Bengal consumer.") Sir, the present price of salt is Rs. 36 per 100 maunds and our duty will come to about Rs. 28 per 100 maunds, and therefore the price which the Bengal consumer will have to pay for his salt will be about Rs. 64 per 100 maunds. If only the price of salt to the Bengal consumer can be stabilised at this figure, then I maintain that it is in the best interests of the Bengal consumer . . . . .

**Mr. C. C. Biswas:** How do you stabilise it?

**Mr. B. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** My friend asks me how will I stabilise it. It is a very pertinent question to ask, and I will invite my Honourable friend to read the Bill that is before us. Government have taken power under this Bill to purchase from Aden and other Indian salt works all their output of salt at about Rs. 64 per 100 maunds. It is only if the Aden and the Indian salt manufacturers are prepared to supply to Government their salt at this figure of Rs. 64 per 100 maunds that they will enjoy the advantage of getting a rebate of this duty. That is the best and the safest safeguard that we could devise in the interests of the Bengal consumer.

My friend talked glibly the other day of this duty being imposed in the interests of a few manufacturers at Aden and that they would take advantage of this duty and profiteer. But I would ask my friend to consider the significance of this power that the Government are taking. It means this that the Aden producer of salt cannot expect to sell his salt at anything more than Rs. 66 per 100 maunds, because the moment the price goes up Government can intervene and compel the Aden manufacturers to sell the salt at that figure . . . . .

**Mr. C. C. Biswas:** What about retail sales?

**Mr. B. K. Shanmukham Chetty:** I will come to it presently. The Tariff Board have come to the deliberate conclusion that the fair selling price for Indian salt is about Rs. 66 per 100 maunds. You are not, therefore, by the imposition of this duty, creating any position which will enable the Indian or Aden salt works to profiteer. In considering the figures of the cost of production, I would invite Honourable Members to pay some respect to the findings of such a body as the Tariff Board. Sir, the Tariff Board is an expert body. The House is at perfect liberty to examine the conclusions of the Tariff Board and to devise alternative methods to what the Tariff Board have suggested; but in their findings of fact like the cost of production, I submit that the House ought to accept the figures given by the Tariff Board. If you look at the Tariff Board's figures from that point of view, and if you agree that Rs. 66 is a proper price for the Indian manufactured salt, then you have by this Bill provided against profiteering.

Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, said that the Tariff Board put the cost of manufacture of salt at Red Sea ports at Rs. 8 per ton. That interruption of my friend is the best example of the fallacy of quoting one sentence from the Tariff Board Report without explaining what exactly it means. Sir, we are talking of the cost of production in the terms of what the Indian producer can reasonably expect when he brings the salt *ex-ship* at Calcutta, and I say that, according to the Tariff Board, it is Rs. 66 per 100 maunds. This Rs. 8 per ton is the cost of production *ex-works*, and Honourable Members must realise that in the case of a duty like salt, it is the cost of transportation that is the important item and not the item relating to cost *ex-works*; and for my friend to say that Rs. 8 per ton was the cost of production to the Aden manufacturer is, to say the least, misleading the House. I therefore submit, Sir, that since power has been taken by Government to compel the Aden and Indian works to sell salt at a particular figure, we have removed the only possible objection, that is the possibility of the Indian manufacturer profiteering at the expense of the Bengal consumer.

My friend very pertinently asked me what about retail prices? Sir, if you examine the question of retail prices, you will find that the poor consumer, for whom we are always shedding tears in this House, does not really get the benefit of a fall in prices to the extent to which he is entitled. I have been told that, in spite of serious fluctuations in the prices of salt in the Calcutta market, the consumer in Bengal in the interior is often made to pay a price very disproportionate to the wholesale price of sale in the Calcutta market. If, therefore, the consumer is really to be benefited, we ought to devise some measures that will take the benefit of a fall in price directly to the door of the consumer. It is when we examine the question of the Marketing Board from this point of view, that I am of opinion that the Tariff Board have recommended a scheme which, if worked out properly, will ultimately prove to the benefit of the consumer. Sir, there is no use of merely establishing a Marketing Board at Calcutta to control wholesale prices. If your Marketing Board and its activities are really to be effective, you must devise some measure by which through the Marketing Board, the consumer will get the benefit of any considerable fall in prices. I would therefore invite my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, not to sleep over the question after getting this Bill passed, but to examine the possibility of establishing a Marketing Board not merely to stabilise retail prices but also to ensure to the consumer in the interior some benefit of fall in prices. If only that can be done, then we would have served the consumers' interest in a much better way than in any other fashion.

I think I have argued sufficiently to convince at least my Honourable friends who have no preconceived notions on this matter, that the measure that we have proposed, far from penalising the Bengal consumer, is ultimately in the best interests of the Bengal consumer by stabilising the prices of salt for him at a reasonable rate. We are further convinced that, apart from benefiting the Bengal consumer in this direct manner, it will serve the interests of India as a whole. Even my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, must realise that we must sooner or later take measures to make India self-supporting in the matter of salt, and I contend that the measure we have proposed is the best that could be devised under the circumstances. I would therefore invite this House to accept the Bill as it is.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma** (Nominated Non-Official): A distinguished member of the community of Chetties, so well noted for native shrewdness and cleverness, my Honourable friend Mr. Shanmukham Chetty has managed to play his cards this morning very dexterously. Having taken up an impossible attitude during the passage of the Finance Bill, having done his best to thwart the safe passage of the Finance Bill and having with reference to the European non-official Members used words and expressions which might almost be called unparliamentary, he has managed by his last speech probably of this Session to pay a tribute to the Honourable the Finance Member and to stand up in defence of the Treasury Bench over this matter, so that he can go tonight to Madras with the consolation that he has been able to retain by his speech his title as the prize boy of Sir George Rainy and Sir George Schuster. (Laughter.)

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): Your remarks are atrocious.

**Mr. President:** I hope the Honourable Member does not wish to impute any motives to the Honourable Member, Mr. Chetty.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** I do not wish to imply any motives of personal interest, but for public interest (Laughter), or rather private interest in public matters, if you, Mr. President, will allow me to modify it. I find myself in an exactly different position today. After having supported Government in all matters (Laughter), because, Sir, as a nominated Member I honestly feel that it is hateful to do or say anything which may embarrass Government. I feel in this matter that there is such a thing as being true to one's salt, and having eaten profusely the salt of Bengal, I think that I shall be entirely false to the salt that I have eaten if I do not raise my voice of protest against this most iniquitous impost. I myself did not understand why my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, when he stated the case for Bengal with that wealth of eloquence, extracts and endurance, should have gone into so much length by trying to meet the arguments of the Majority Committee. The position so far as people from Bengal, whether nominated or elected, are concerned, is that Bengal to a man does not want this. That is quite enough.

**Mr. B. Das:** Mr. S. C. Mitra signed the Majority Report.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** I think that Mr. Mitra will surely get up and explain his position, and then the House will be surprised at what it will hear from him. I say that every Member from Bengal, whether he is elected or nominated, if he is honestly consulted, will declare that he is not in a position to go into the lobby with the Government on this matter. I make this statement very deliberately. The Government of India must by now have been fully acquainted with the opinion of Bengal, not only of the people of Bengal but of the Government of Bengal. The unanimity with which a motion against this Bill was passed in the Bengal Legislative Council must have been an eye-opener to Sir George Schuster. Every speaker, Hindu or Muhammadan, European or non-official,—everybody said in no unmistakable terms that he did not want this at this moment, and though the terms of the Resolution moved in the Bengal Council were such that the Government of Bengal could not possibly accept it and therefore remained neutral, they made perfectly clear what they thought about this business. Therefore, it is enough for me to say that Bengal does not want it, and when the Honourable the Deputy President of this House says that this Bill—I have listened to many humours, I have been a witness to many comic humours in this House, but nothing was more humorous than that the Deputy President of the Assembly should get up and say that this is in the best interests of Bengal, and we shall simply tell him God save us from our friends in this matter! The Tariff Board—I do not know if my Honourable friend Mr. Chetty was a member of it, what would have been the nature of its Report—but as it was constituted, the Tariff Board has, after a very close and scientific examination of the thing, said that it was impossible even to recommend a two annas under the existing conditions. And a body of men, sitting I think only for ninety minutes in all, have decided that it is quite ready to impose Rs. 45 lakhs on the people of Bengal. We ourselves

cannot understand why in the name of protection, whether it is the protection of the cotton industry or the protection of salt, the Bengal taxpayer in every case should be asked to pay. Whenever any industry is in a difficult economic position, either because of its inefficient administration or because of gross mismanagement, or because of economic distress or other causes, they try to find money for that industry by imposing fresh burdens on the broad shoulders of Bengal. Ever since the Fiscal Commission, over which you presided with so much distinction, found out that the panacea of all economic ills lay in discriminating protection, it is always the taxpayer, especially the taxpayer of Bengal—in more instances than one, who is asked to help the lame industrial dog over the stile. I warn the House to remember that it will be the people of Bengal who will have to foot the Bill, and to flout the unanimous opinion of Bengal in this matter will be not only a blunder but a crime with serious consequences. Therefore, I appeal even to the nominated Members from Bengal to go to the lobby with us, and to the officials I make an ardent appeal, in view of the stand taken by the Government of Bengal, either to remain neutral or to vote with us, in order to show that even the officials are truly representing the wishes of the people of Bengal in this matter. I appeal even to my Honourable friend, Mr. Satya Charan Mukherjee, M.B.E. (*Honourable Members*: "He is C. B. E.") very well. C. B. E., to forget for one day that he is not Mr. Boag's henchman, but the illustrious grandson of Raja Pearu Mohun Mukherjee, a name honoured throughout the length and breadth of Bengal.

(At this stage the Honourable Sir George Schuster rose in his place.)

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member can rise at this stage to make a personal explanation and a personal explanation only.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** I shall at once put my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster, at ease by saying that I never meant anything at all by what I said except that Mr. Mukherjee was a Deputy Whip.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** I did not know that my Honourable friend had stopped his speech. I intended to intervene in the middle of his speech. I do not know whether my Honourable friend has finished his speech.

**Mr. President:** Has the Honourable Member concluded his speech?

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** I only wanted to say one word that every Bengal Member, whether it be Mr. Mukherjee, or Mr. Das, or Mr. Neogy . . . .

**Mr. B. Das:** I am not a Bengali.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** Your name is a Bengali name.

**Mr. B. Das:** But I am not a Bengali; I am an Oriya.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** Whoever represents Bengal will have to consider ten times before he goes against the popular wishes in this matter, because I know that the betrayal of Bengal's cherished interests will not be forgotten when he goes back.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** The point that I wish to explain arises out of my Honourable friend's appeal to nominated Members either not to vote, or to vote against the Government on this matter. I wish to explain that Government have very carefully considered what their attitude in relation to this Bill ought to be as regards the official Members. I made it clear on several occasions in this House that our attitude on the whole question has been one of attempting to be responsive to the majority opinion in this House. I signed the Report as Chairman very largely because it was the opinion of the majority, though also of course, as I shall explain later, because I personally agreed with it. We were trying to find out what was the opinion of the House. Now, as regards the attitude of Government in voting on this matter, I am sure Honourable Members will appreciate that we have been put into some difficulty owing to the attitude of the Bengal Government, and we have decided that the members of Government who sit on this Front Bench will vote for the Bill but that the official nominated Members will not vote on the Bill at all. As regards unofficial nominated Members, they are entirely free to vote as they like, as indeed they always are; but I wish to make clear that what is commonly known as the official bloc as such will not vote on this Bill. Only the actual Members of the Government will support it. That, Sir, answers a good deal of what has fallen from my Honourable friend, and I thought it right that I should make that position clear at this stage.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma:** May I say one word of explanation?

**Mr. President:** Order, order. Mr. Neogy.

**Mr. K. O. Neogy** (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I am not in the habit of regulating my course of conduct in this House according to the dictation of my Honourable friend, Mr. Sarma; and indeed the only embarrassment, to which I confess in rising in my seat to speak on this motion, supporting my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas's amendment, is due to the gushing eloquence with which my Honourable friend, Mr. Sarma, supported it. During the period that I have been in this House, I have always approached such questions with a good deal of sympathy, because—I am not ashamed to make a confession of my economic faith—I am a protectionist as much as I think my Honourable friend, Mr. Sarma, is a free trader. (Laughter.) I am not going to imitate my Honourable friend in taking recourse to cheap parochial cries which he has used in supporting this motion. I feel that if Bengal cannot take advantage of the policy of protection which this House has been laying down in connection with various different industries, she cannot very well expect the rest of India to wait till she can come up to the standard. And if it comes to a question of exploitation, I declare it here and now that I would far more readily agree to be exploited by my own countrymen than by foreigners. This has been my economic creed during the period that I have been a Member of this House, and this is going to continue to be my creed so long as I occupy a seat in this House; and if this view of mine does not commend itself to my countrymen I would not hesitate to make room for Mr. Sarma if he happens to get the confidence of my constituency.

Sir, I would now come to the merits of the question. As I said, I am very unwilling to take recourse to parochial cries, but it so happens that the question of making India self-supporting in the matter of salt supplies is a question of supplying Bengal with Indian made salt. I have therefore to refer to the question of Bengal's needs and the opinion that prevails in Bengal on this question. Sir, we had a very flourishing salt industry in Bengal down to the year 1781; and I want to relate the story of the destruction of the salt industry in Bengal for the special benefit of my Honourable friend Mr. George Morgan (*Mr. George Morgan*: "I know it.") and his colleagues who are so clamorous about securing guarantees for their trading rights under the new constitution. It was not till 1781 that the East India Company thought of interfering with the salt industry of Bengal. It was in this year that Lord Clive came out to India for a second time and he found that corruption was prevailing to a considerable extent among the officials of the Company, and he came to the decision that in order to stop this corruption some sop must be given to the officials. Those were days when the more scientific contrivances of Lee Commissions were unknown, and he hit upon the idea of taking over the salt industry of Bengal and working it as a State monopoly for the exclusive benefit of the officials of the East India Company. His intention was to give them additional allowances out of the profits of this industry so as to keep them from corruption. Then followed a melancholy chapter into whose details I do not want at the present moment to enter. I had on one previous occasion to deal with the history at some length; but suffice it to say that when the Government found it difficult to carry on the manufacture of salt under a system of monopoly, they hit upon the idea of deriving the revenue that they wanted from the imported salt instead of relying on the indigenous salt sources. Meanwhile the merchants of Cheshire were exercising their political influence both in England and in India, and they pointed out that in the interest of Bengal—the same cry that is going to be raised by Mr. Morgan—a cleaner kind of salt ought to be made available to them, and if the Government really were keen on getting revenues out of this source, so long as they could get revenue out of the imports of Cheshire salt, there was no reason why they should continue this indigenous manufacture in the country. The East India Company readily fell in with this view and the result was that in the course of a few years the manufacture of salt was prohibited by statute in Bengal.

Now, Sir, we are talking about making Bengal self-supporting in the matter of salt supply, and there is a regular competition among the various ports of India as to how to capture the salt supply of Bengal; but what about reviving the salt industry in Bengal itself? When I say Bengal I mean the entire sea-board stretching between the coast of Burma and the coast of Madras. The Tariff Board, in their Report, devote about four lines to this particular question. They say, "Yes, it is just possible that Bengal might be in a position to produce her own supplies, but we have not the necessary information to go into this question at all". That is my grievance. Why is it that the Government have not seriously taken up this question of making an investigation? And why is it that it is necessary to wait in this matter till Bengal agrees to tax herself to the tune of several lakhs of rupees? Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster, is a Member of a Government which is the lineal descendant of the East India Company in the domain of administration, and my

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Honourable friend, Mr. Morgan, is a successor of the East India Company in the domain of trade. (Laughter.) It is up to both these gentlemen to revive the industry which their predecessors had found it to their profit to extinguish (Laughter). From this point of view, Sir, I am not prepared to support any plea for the imposition of additional taxation. (Applause.) This is a case in which protection should be given to the Bengal industry out of a bounty, and that bounty should come out of the pocket of the Honourable Sir George Schuster; if not, then certainly out of the pocket of my Honourable friend, Mr. George Morgan. . . .

**Mr. G. Morgan** (Bengal: European): I agree.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy**: I am very glad my Honourable friend agrees; and if my Honourable friend, Sir George Schuster, finds any difficulty in getting the necessary funds, I hope he will consider the generous suggestion of Mr. Morgan and impose a capital levy on Clive Street.

**Mr. G. Morgan**: I thought, Sir, this was only a personal matter, when my Honourable friend mentioned me. I said "I agree", and I would be glad to pay; of course provided I could find the money. . . .

**Mr. K. C. Neogy**: My Honourable friend forgets that so long as he is here and when he takes part in the discussions of this House, he has no personal capacity of his own but that he speaks in the name of his constituency and the interests that he represents.

**Mr. R. S. Sarma**: Sir, on a point of personal explanation, the Honourable Member said he was not going to imitate me, but he is over-doing it already. (Laughter.)

**Mr. K. C. Neogy**: I understand my Honourable friend has a soft corner in his heart for Clive Street, and I am very sorry I touched him exactly on that point. (Laughter.) Now, Sir, what is the proposal of the Special Committee? Here I must say that I entirely dissociate myself from the remarks that were made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Sarma, with regard to my Honourable friend, Mr. Chetty's remarks. We may have our differences, but certainly no one can question the motives with which my friend, Mr. Chetty, and my other Honourable friends approached this question in the Special Committee (Hear, hear); and I am certainly not going to imitate my Honourable friend, Mr. Sarma, while I offer criticisms on the Report of this Special Committee. Sir, the Honourable Sir George Schuster gave us an assurance that he is not going to appropriate any part of the proceeds of the special taxation for the benefit of the general exchequer. Now, Sir, looking at the recommendations of the Special Committee, what do I find? The very first item is the development of the Northern India salt sources in the manner recommended by the Salt Survey Committee. If I am not very much mistaken, this is a Department which is run by the Honourable Member's own Department, and this is considered to be a Commercial Department of the Government; and if the question of the increased output of salt is a commercial proposition, which I daresay my Honourable friend's own position would be, then is he not taking away a portion of the proceeds of this special taxation for the benefit of one of his own commercial Departments?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** The general policy of Government is, as regards the sources of production which the Northern India Salt Revenue Department controls, to sell the salt at a price which represents the cost of production and not to make a profit out of it. Government derive a revenue of course from the excise or the import duty on salt, but as regards making a profit, although the sources are worked as a commercial undertaking, that has never been our policy. Therefore, I suggest my Honourable friend's implication is really incorrect. We shall get the duty, but we should get that duty whether salt comes from Aden or Port Said or anywhere else. We shall not gain as regards revenue by developing these sources of production. That is my point.

**Mr. K. O. Neogy:** I entirely accept the position described by my Honourable friend, but I take it that the Government are not prepared to undertake the responsibility of increasing the output of salt unless they have an additional amount provided out of the proceeds of this special taxation. I take it that the Government do not intend to make any profit, but certainly that is no reason why the Government, in the public interest, should not come forward and develop their own salt sources.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** My Honourable friend seems to have missed the whole point of the scheme. We cannot develop these sources of supply for the Bengal markets without losing a great deal of money unless prices can be stabilised at somewhere about the level which the Tariff Board has recommended as a fair selling price for salt. If we can rely on prices of about Rs. 66 per 100 maunds in Calcutta, then only can we afford to develop the Khewra or the Pachbadra works so as to supply the Calcutta market. Otherwise we should be losing a great deal of money and we cannot afford the loss. . . .

**Mr. K. O. Neogy:** I do not see how that improves my Honourable friend's position. The question of stabilisation is an independent issue, and that question has not been pronounced upon by the Special Committee definitely yet because that depends upon the setting up of a Marketing Board. Now supposing there is a Marketing Board, do I take it that the Honourable Member would in that event still appropriate a portion of the proceeds of this special taxation. . . .

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** As soon as stabilisation is assured.

**Mr. K. O. Neogy:** Then do I take it that the Government undertake to develop the sources of the Northern India Salt Revenue Department at their own expense when stabilization is secured?

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** I think my Honourable friend has really, if I may say so, completely misunderstood the position. The position is this. As I said before, if we can rely on prices of about Rs. 66 per 100 maunds in Calcutta, then we should be in a position to develop these inland sources of supply for supplying the Bengal market. Otherwise we cannot do that. Well, we can get to the position of relying on that price, in two different ways. We can do it by adopting the sort of scheme which the Salt Committee of the Assembly has recommended—that will ensure us at least a price of about Rs. 66 in Calcutta—or we can get to it by introducing the sort of scheme that the Tariff Board has

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recommended, which would mean the Government or a Marketing Board taking over completely the control of the import of salt into Calcutta. We in the Committee have recommended this scheme because it is a simple scheme which can be applied at once and which will work simply with an inevitable and direct effect. As soon as we know that this scheme is adopted, then we shall have something to go upon to justify us in developing the Northern India sources of production, but without the scheme, we cannot move at all.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** I do not understand what my Honourable friend means by discussing the question of stabilization now because that is a different thing altogether.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** But the result is the same. The result of stabilization is to ensure a price of Rs. 66 in Calcutta. This scheme recommended by the Salt Committee would also produce a price of Rs. 66 in Calcutta. Whether it is achieved by stabilising, by the Marketing Board, or by the imposition of a duty, the result is what we depend upon, and that is the power to sell salt in Calcutta at Rs. 66 per 100 maunds.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Chair cannot allow these constant interruptions and interchange of views. The time is getting on, and the debate must proceed on its normal course. If there is a special occasion when the Honourable Member in charge wishes to offer any explanation, the Chair will permit him to do so, but this constant interchange of questions and answers cannot be allowed. (Hear, hear.) The Chair has to see that the debate proceeds on right lines and the Honourable Member in charge will have ample opportunity to give all explanations in his reply.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Sir, what I ask is that having regard to the fact that the question of stabilization is very nebulous just now and that it has not yet taken shape, why is it that the Honourable gentleman wants to appropriate a few lakhs out of the proceeds of this special taxation for the purpose of developing the salt sources if that depends on the stabilisation itself? However, I am not going to pursue this point any further, but I would just inquire as to whether the railways have definitely made any declaration with regard to reduction in the freight, because when the Tariff Board made their investigation they said that it was not enough that the Northern India Salt sources should be developed for the purpose of enabling them to supply the Bengal market, but as it was largely a question of railway freight, railways must reduce their freight to a reasonable extent. I have not seen any statement hitherto made in this House which has the effect of carrying out this recommendation of the Tariff Board on behalf of the Government.

As I have stated, my objection is to the proposal to spend any portion of the proceeds of this special taxation for the development of Government's own commercial Department. Sir, I happen to know something about the working of this Department in my capacity as a Member of this House and also as a member of the Public Accounts Committee and I had on past occasions to discuss the management of this

Department. I am free to confess that I have no great faith in the capacity of this Department for development. As a matter of fact, having been a Member of the first Legislative Assembly that sat in 1921, I remember that it was on exactly this pretext that lakhs of rupees were obtained from this House, I mean the predecessor of this House, by the then Honourable Member in charge of this Department. It was stated that if we agreed to spend a few lakhs on the development of these salt sources of Government, the price of salt would be brought down, and that there would be such a large output of salt that the whole country would be flooded with it. Nothing like it has happened. On the other hand, the direct result has been the raising of the price of salt produced in these salt sources. And, furthermore, I have failed to find out any appreciable increase in the output. When this fact was pointed out by me and by other Honourable Members, the Member in charge of the Department turned round and said: "No, what we intended was to stabilise the output; it was never our contemplation to increase the output". And when I confronted the Honourable Member in charge with statements made by responsible Members of Government in the Legislative Assembly itself on the strength of which these lakhs were sanctioned by us, he said, that he did not hold himself responsible for the things that were said before. That is the way the Government took shelter. Sir, I am not, in the light of these facts, entirely satisfied with the Report of Sir Chunilal Mehta's Committee with regard to the capacity of this Department to expand its salt supply, and therefore I am not prepared to allow any portion of this tax, if it is at all to be levied, to be diverted for that purpose.

Sir, the only other point that remains for me to mention is the opposition in Bengal. It is an undoubted fact that opinion in Bengal is absolutely opposed to this measure. It has already been mentioned that the Bengal Legislative Council has unanimously adopted a Resolution condemning this Bill. The lead in this matter was taken by an Indian commercial association, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, and the different Chambers of Commerce in different parts of the country have endorsed their opposition. And just when I was coming to the Chamber this morning, I received a representation from an Indian Merchants' Association in Chittagong, which points out, among other things, that the introduction of this Bill itself has already raised the price of salt. Having regard to the acute economic distress now prevailing in all parts of the country, and particularly in Bengal, this additional impost will be felt very heavily indeed by the consumer. I am not unaware of the fact that the price at which salt is being sold—I mean the wholesale price—is abnormally low, and I do not know how long this state of things is going to continue. But what I say is that, having regard to the acute distress of the people, let them enjoy a little benefit of the low price of salt. My Honourable friend's financial proposals in connection with the Budget had the effect of raising the price of kerosene to a certain extent. They will also have the effect of raising the price of cloth, because as far as I know the price of the imported stuff determines to a very large extent the price of Indian manufactured cloth. My Honourable friend, while bringing forward his financial proposals, takes up each item separately and says: "Look at the infinitesimal burden that we are going to place on the consumer". The same he did with kerosene and said that the extra burden was quite negligible. But I want my Honourable friend to realise the

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cumulative effect of the enhanced taxation of all these various items which relate to the necessaries of life of the poorest of the poor.

Sir, my Honourable friend raises a very large amount of tax from a commodity which he and his predecessors have described as the monopoly of Bengal. He expects to raise a revenue of 860 lakhs, if I am not mistaken, during the next year as customs duty on the export of jute. But I do not know whether he has taken any care to inquire into the present economic distress of the people who are really enabling my Honourable friend to get this nest-egg for the next year. Although jute is described as a monopoly of Bengal, the grower who is entitled to the advantages of monopoly is hardly able to recover the bare cost of production, and yet my Honourable friend is budgeting for a revenue of 360 lakhs. Now, Sir, it is up to my Honourable friend to help the cultivators of Bengal, because it is these half-starved cultivators who grow jute exclusively for his benefit because they do not make a profit out of it. They have not been making a profit out of it for some time. Is it not up to my Honourable friend to come to the rescue of the poor ryot in Bengal? And that is why I suggest that if protection is given at all, it should be by way of a bounty; and I maintain that the line of investigation should be as to how far the salt industry of Bengal may be revived. If my Honourable friend were to make a sincere and honest attempt to revive the salt industry of Bengal, I am sure he would find that he need not go as far as Aden for the purpose of enabling India to be self-sufficient in her supply of salt. The other day I had the good fortune of coming across a very prominent member of the Bengal Congress organisation who was actively engaged in the civil disobedience movement and had considerable experience of the manufacture of salt in Bengal as a part of that movement, and he told me that the facts that the Congress in Bengal had obtained during the course of the manufacture of salt as a part of the movement had really surprised the Congress leaders. The Congress in Bengal is at the moment engaged in collecting information, statistical and otherwise, with regard to salt manufacture that was carried on under the civil disobedience movement. I was assured by the gentleman I have referred to that there was a great deal of scope for the development of salt manufacture, at least as a cottage industry on a very large scale, on the coasts of Bengal. He is a reputed chemist and analyst and told me that he had examined the salt that was manufactured during the civil disobedience movement, and he was perfectly satisfied with the quality both from the point of view of bacteriological and chemical tests. But he was very emphatic in his opposition to the Bill, not that he did not want any protection. He said, "This is not the time. If you want to impose heavy taxation in the national interests, do it some other time". That was what he told me. Meanwhile, he said, the details, which he was engaged in obtaining, might form very valuable data for any further enquiry that the Government might undertake. For all these reasons, I support the motion moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas.

**Mr. G. Morgan:** Sir, previous speakers have covered almost the entire ground in connection with the subject matter of this debate and I am sure Honourable Members would not like me to go over all the sections of the Tariff Board's Report and all the sections of Sir Chunilal Mehta's Report, because I do not think I can do it under a two days speech. I will,

therefore, confine myself to just a few points. I am speaking in favour of the amendment for circulation. I oppose the Bill absolutely and utterly. The Honourable the Finance Member said a short time ago that all taxation was immoral. I think I am right in saying that he did say so. As regards all taxation being immoral, I do not agree with that view at all. I think some taxation is quite beneficial and not immoral. But I do think that legislation for a taxation of this kind is immoral.

Now, let us take the Bill. In the Preamble of the Bill it says :

"Whereas it is expedient in the interests of the Indian salt industry to impose a temporary additional duty of customs on the import of foreign salt and at the same time to make provision for safeguarding the interests of consumers of salt."

Now, Sir, with regard to the first part, there are certain interests which stand to gain by this and other interests which are not affected at all. The only interest, in a Bill of this description, which stands to gain is Aden. Karachi and Okha will not come into the picture at all in this Bill. With regard to the Government salt works at Khewra and Pachbadra, I will only quote, if I may do so, to the Honourable House, what the Salt Conference said about those places. This one remark is very short and very pointed. As regards Khewra, they say :

"We now take this opportunity of commenting on the Tariff Board proposals regarding the Khewra salt, particularly as it raises issues of a very far-reaching nature affecting the prospects of our interests."

'Aden is supposed to be part of India and with regard to that, this is what they say :

"So far as Aden and the purely Indian salt works are concerned, their interests are not identical at the moment and not likely to be so in the future."

I leave it to Honourable Members to draw their own conclusions,—I hold that Aden under this Bill will get practically a monopoly, not quite a monopoly, but any how it will secure a very great advantage for every maund of salt that it can export to any other part of India. With regard to the interests of the consumer under this Bill, at the moment, the position is this. Since 10th March, so far as my information goes, the price of salt has risen from Rs. 36 to Rs. 62 or Rs. 63 and in some cases, the salt has not been sold at all since the 10th March pending the result of this Bill in this House. On 20th March last year, the Honourable the Finance Member made this remark in dealing with, I presume, the salt excise duty. All my Honourable friends on that side of the House are at one that there should be no excise duty on salt and that salt should be as cheap as possible to everybody in the whole of India. These are the words of the Honourable the Finance Member :

"After all, what we are out to do is to get into the hands of the people who actually purchase salt a good quality of salt at the cheapest possible price." (Hear, hear.)

Not stabilised price or combine price, but the cheapest possible price. We have all got, everybody has got sympathy with the consumer, but it is very difficult to see where the sympathy is expressed in practice. This additional duty will cost—the figures have been given time over time—including Burma and Bengal, it will cost something like 35 to 40 lakhs. My Honourable friend Mr. Chetty gave us an excellent speech on the

[Mr. G. Morgan.]

merits of the Report and on the Bill. With regard to the money coming back to Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa and Furma, I put it to the House in this way. You are asked to pay at once Rs. 28 per hundred maunds more and you are told that, "After certain deductions, you may get something. You cannot get cheap salt because, we have not yet got a formula, but when we have got a formula and provided this Honourable House passes a Resolution we will give you back something". But what is this something? Who is going to get it? Who is going to spend it? All these things nobody knows. "We will give you back something; don't be afraid", this is what the Government say. Meantime I have paid Rs. 28 more and if I die before the Resolution is passed, what benefit do I get?

**Sir Hari Singh Gour** (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): Your heirs will get it.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Why not get it in the other world?

**Mr. G. Morgan:** I will make my Honourable friends heir to it. There is one other point which I want to touch upon. I will not weary the House with figures, but there is one other point which seems to me to require attention called to it. There has been a great deal said about the price of salt, about the terrible rates which Bengal had to pay at certain times and the awful sins of a combine. It is a curious thing that the people who are most vocal now were members of that combine. There were two Aden concerns in that combine and the prices between the years 1925 and 1929 were roughly from Rs. 62 and Rs. 72, going up to Rs. 118 and so on, and back again to Rs. 66 and Rs. 65. None of our purely Indian concerns are quoted; they are not quoted in the list of prices, but two Aden concerns are quoted and presumably they were hard-hearted enough to make money out of those high prices and put something into their own pockets during that time. Now, Sir, when the price has gone down, they say they are going to be crushed out of existence by somebody or other, and so we are now asked to get Bengal to come to its aid and pay for the difference between the cost of production and the price at which the other concerns are ready to sell in the Bengal market. I think that is a bad position. I will not go over the arguments about the Tariff Board sections regarding the duty, but I would like to point out that Karachi and Okha stand to lose a great deal by this Bill. A number of protests have been received from various bodies such as the Bengal Legislative Council, the Bengal Government (and my Honourable friend Mr. Das will be interested in this), the Bihar and Orissa Government, the Assam Government, the Bengal Salt Sellers Association, the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, two important bodies of Burma, the Salt Merchants Association of Calcutta, who sent a special protest to the Government of India and the Viceroy. It is a curious thing that in one protest, which has been sent, one firm has signed itself, *per pro* for the Luxmi Salt Works of Karachi against the import duty. I will leave Honourable Members to draw their own conclusions from that.

Sir, I do not wish to weary the House but I would like to point out. . .

**Mr. Jehangir K. Munshi** (Burma: Non-European): Sir, I do not wish to interrupt my Honourable friend, but we the Members from  
 1 P.M. Burma have received no representation whatever from any association or person in Burma. Will my Honourable friend state to the House from whom he got these representations?

**Mr. G. Morgan:** I have not got the names here, but I will show them later to my Honourable friend.

With regard to the protests sent up from Bengal, my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas made some remarks. But I will go further than that. It is not only a question of civil disobedience. It is a question of inter-provincial feeling, and at the present moment we are all busily engaged in trying to get a feeling of unity and co-operation throughout India. Everybody is talking about Federation. When people are trying now to make every province feel that its destinies would be safe in the hands of a Federal Assembly when it is appointed, is it logical to expect that feeling to be there in the face of a Bill of this description? I doubt it.

In conclusion, I will only say that all my friends on that side of the House know what the position is with regard to salt. They know that salt should be as cheap as possible. It is their creed. It has been hammered out from every platform in the country. They have signed, sealed and delivered their protest against all increase in the price, and I ask them how they can reconcile voting in favour of this Bill with their established creed of cheap salt.

**Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar** (South Arcot *cum* Chingleput: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I had no intention of intervening in this debate, but the course of the debate has been an eye-opener to me. We Indians are protectionists not by instinct but by sheer necessity, and Bengal was in the vanguard of these movements for protecting national industries. To see my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy with all his eloquence arguing for the other side and finally concluding that he is going to the same lobby along with Mr. Morgan and along with Mr. Sarma, is truly a case of the lion and lamb trying to sleep together, the lion in the meanwhile trying to fly at the throats of Mr. Morgan and Mr. Sarma. I take Mr. Neogy as the lion and Mr. Morgan and Mr. Sarma as the lambs. What is it that can have induced my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy to have ended his excellent speech, which has been delivered along with Mr. Chetty's speech, to finally conclude by saying that he is going into the lobby with Mr. Morgan? Sir, I think there is something behind all this. Some people are genuinely afraid of this thin end of the wedge as regards the salt industry. The Government have been pressed on this side, I remember from the year 1921 onwards, to take some steps to protect the salt industry and revive the salt industry in this country. They have been sleeping over it, lumbering over it, hesitating over it, halting over it, committeeing over it. They have appointed committee after committee. They have come forward with a modest measure and unfortunately it so happens that nationalist Bengal is opposing it. But could not nationalist Bengal bear this pin-prick for a time? It is nothing but a prick. Her conscience must be roused; she has been agitating for Swadeshi all along; and I think if I learnt anything at all about politics, I learnt it from Bengal, having listened to the oratory of my friends, the late Sir Surendra Nath Banerjee, Ananda Mohan Bose and

[Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar.]

Lal Mohan Ghose. Where are the descendants of those gentlemen now? They are now ranged on the side of Mr. Morgan, his ancestors and successors and I do not know what else! This is simply a surprising spectacle for us. Here is a national industry which, according to my friend Mr. Neogy, had been crushed, destroyed and killed beyond recognition by Mr. Morgan's ancestors and by my Honourable friend Sir George Schuster's ancestors. Now Sir George Schuster at any rate is trying to make amends for his past sins. But Mr. Morgan is not prepared to do that. The Government of India are responsive to public opinion and they have now come forward with a proposal which appeals to my heart. I wish I were in Bengal so that I could say honestly that I would bear this prick for a time.

**Mr. C. C. Biswas:** Apply the true remedy.

**Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar:** We do not know what the true remedies are. Let us try this remedy and see what it is like. After all it is a temporary measure. If my Honourable friend will reflect over it, he will find that there is no need to cry so much over this small pin-prick which is being inflicted.

**Mr. C. C. Biswas:** It is a quack remedy.

**Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar:** It may be a quack remedy, but let us try it. How do we know that it is a quack remedy? Let us try and find out whether it is a quack remedy or not. There are others foreshadowed in the Tariff Board's Report; there are others foreshadowed in the Special Committee's Report, and here is a temporary measure which is urgently needed. Does any Honourable Member reflect over the figures of the selling prices of salt? In Bombay near the seat of production the price is about Rs. 60—I am told it is Rs. 62-8. In Madras where we produce salt, thanks to the policy pursued by the Government there, the price is about Rs. 50 or 55. How is it that the friends of Mr. Morgan there across the Red Sea or in the Red Sea are able to dump salt at Rs. 35 today? Could it be a *bona fide* sale price? I say it is not, certainly not. It cannot be an honest price which they are now giving to the Bengal consumer. They are trying to deceive them. Friends like Mr. Biswas are taken in by this temporary lull in prices which is produced by a wilful act on the part of producers elsewhere. My Honourable friend complained that the salt industry in Bengal had been killed. Sir, if you will allow this policy to continue, not only in Bengal will the salt industry be killed by this cut-throat competition, but the industry in the whole of India will be killed. Does my Honourable friend want to see that spectacle? Is he not part of national India? Does he want national India to be crushed by this cut-throat competition on the part of these people who bring salt from abroad? Let him reflect upon that aspect of the question. Let him not attach too much importance to his own personal or provincial injuries. Let him bear this pin-prick for a time. I will be thankful—we will all be thankful to Bengal; in fact the whole country will rise in gratitude to the people of Bengal if they will bear this temporary burden. And what is the burden? The burden is very little and the bulk of it goes back as benefit to Bengal. My Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, cries

that the industry in Bengal has been crushed and he wants it to be revived. Why not devote the whole of these 28 or 30 lakhs—I suppose Bengal will get about 20 lakhs at least—and earmark it by our Resolution for reviving the salt industry in Bengal itself? Will not my Honourable friend be content with that assurance if it can be given? I think we can send a recommendation to the Bengal Government to do that. It is a small beginning. Let us all vote for it. Let us see how it works, and in the meanwhile the Finance Member can pursue his investigation in regard to the other remedies recommended by the Tariff Board. In another six months we will have acquired experience. I do submit this is a wholesome Bill for the whole of India and we ought to rise to support it with all our heart.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Half Past Two of the Clock.

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The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

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**Sir Abdur Rahim:** Sir, as I come from Bengal and as I am going to oppose the motion for circulation, I think it is only proper that I should give my reasons as shortly as possible. After listening to the lucid, eloquent and, if I may say so, convincing speech of my friend Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, it is not necessary to dwell at length on the pros and cons of the question. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the salt industry is an essential need of India, including Bengal, and I cannot contemplate with equanimity the prospect of such an industry disappearing from India and India depending entirely on imported salt. Sir, as has been mentioned by some Honourable speakers, Bengal has been the home of Swadeshi, and if I cast my vote in favour of this Bill as put forward by the Government, I should be casting my vote in favour of Swadeshi. Sir, we all know that there has been a great deal of agitation against the excise duty on salt, and the demand of the people all over the country has been that salt should be made as cheap as possible, and I am convinced that that is only possible when you have a proper salt industry established in India itself. No doubt, before the Honourable the Finance Member gave a pledge on behalf of the Government that 7/8ths of the proceeds of the duty would be made over to the Bengal Government there was hesitation on the part of some of us because Bengal would have to suffer to the extent of about 30 lakhs of rupees, but after the promise made by the Finance Member, there can be no hesitation whatever on the part of any Member from Bengal to vote in support of this Bill. How that money is going to be applied, the Government of India was not able to pledge themselves at this stage. That we can understand, but I support the suggestion made by my friend Mr. Chetty as to the procedure to be adopted in this case, and when such a procedure is adopted, and a Resolution is brought forward before the House, then we shall see that the House recommends that this money is devoted to establishing a proper salt industry in Bengal itself or to promoting some equally necessary nation-building activities.

[Sir Abdur Rahim.]

Sir, I know there is a certain amount of popular cry against this duty, but when the whole position is analysed, when we are aware of the actual facts, I am sure it will be readily conceded that, unless a duty like this is imposed on imported salt, the entire salt industry will be paralysed and extinguished, and any slight inconvenience that Bengal might temporarily feel is very much outweighed. With these words, Sir, I would vote against circulation and I would support the Bill.

**Mr. S. C. Mitra** (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I was anxiously listening to the earnest appeal of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition to the patriotism of the Members from Bengal to rise above their parochial interests and to support this imposition at a considerable sacrifice, at this time. He was also not certain why such a sincere patriot like my Honourable learned friend Mr. Neogy could not see his way to support this tax, though all his arguments were in favour of this tax. Sir, I should like to make clear to the House the position of Members from Bengal, because really we are on the horns of a dilemma. We feel and we know that the condition of the Bengal peasants is very very critical at this particular time. They are really on their last legs. Their main produce, paddy, is fetching no proper price; jute is selling at a rate which is far below its cost of production, and in addition to this, they are now going to face additional taxation even in regard to some necessities of life, like kerosene, corrugated iron sheets, sugar and probably also for wheat. So, it is certainly true, that when voting for any additional taxation that will fall on the poor consumers, the Members from Bengal should thrice consider their position. But at the same time it is also clear that Bengal will certainly accept any sacrifice if they are convinced that the salt industry in Bengal can be revived. I shall presently give the House a few figures from which it will be clear that no serious attempt has been made to revive the salt industry in Bengal. In fact, though India produces about 3/4ths of the requirements of the whole country in salt, out of a total of 20 lakhs of tons, about 14 lakhs of tons are still produced in the country. The peninsular India, both on the Madras coast and on the Bombay coast, produces her own salt. Northern India and Rajputana produce their own salt for consumption from the Punjab salt rocks and Rajputana lakes. It is only Bengal which is dependent on imported foreign salt. Perhaps, Honourable Members are aware that the condition was quite different in years gone by, in fact Bengal produced all her salt in olden times:

"In 1863 the Government abandoned the monopoly and local manufacture was permitted subject to an excise duty, but in 1898 local manufacture was entirely prohibited."

I do not agree that there is no possibility of reviving the salt industry in Bengal, because I know the main ground is that the brine in the Bay of Bengal is not strong enough for salt to be economically produced from it. But I have consulted expert opinion and they say that if brine is taken from water below 20 feet, the brine will be strong enough, and if efforts are made on scientific lines, salt can be produced even in Bengal economically. This is a matter which should be enquired into scientifically, and we should not rest content with the mere opinion of

the Central Board of Revenue that Bengal shall have to depend on imported salt alone. I am a member of the Salt Committee, and I submit that we gave our anxious consideration to the question as to how to meet the situation. In fact, it will be very, very wrong on our part to say that Government was obstructive in any way. We must commend the conduct of the Honourable the Finance Member. I shall not go into details, but he left it entirely to the Committee to take any course they wished to take. We cannot complain against the Government when the Committee was elected by the Members of this House. The Honourable the Mover of the motion for circulation said that Government were not justified in having the view of the Assembly beforehand. I may say that the members were elected by the vote of the House and the Committee went into the subject in great detail. Unfortunately, we were deprived of the assistance of my Honourable friend the mover of the circulation motion because of certain reasons, and we could not have the advantage of a consultation with him. But I can say this much, that we considered all the pros and cons in this matter and came to the conclusion which we have recorded in our Report.

It is true that we must see that the cost of salt is not prohibitive, but in that case we must look at the man who actually consumes salt—I mean the retail buyer. I come from a village, and I say from my own experience that the variations in the price of salt in the villages do not depend very much on the wholesale rate. In fact, the price of Rs. 35 now prevailing in the Calcutta market really means half a pice for one seer of salt in Bengal. The ordinary villager buys salt by a seer or a seer and a quarter. To him the price of a seer is six pice, and not according to the Rs. 35 rate. The initial expense of production forms a very small part to the real cost to the retail buyer. In fact, it is one to seven times, and I can give you the price that obtains in Bengal. One and a quarter seer sell at six pice. I have also consulted the Board of Revenue, and Mr. Tottenham told me that, unless the price varied to the extent of Rs. 31 and annas 4 for a hundred maunds of salt, it would have no effect on the retail price in Bengal. (Inaudible interruption by Mr. C. C. Biswas.)

When we are speaking of the condition of the consumer, we must take into account only the price to the retail buyer and not to the wholesale dealer. We must also bear in mind that this price of Rs. 35 will not and cannot continue for a long time, because we know from past experience that this is merely a price-cutting war, and within two or three months—it is no exaggeration to say, as soon as the indigenous industry has been wiped out—it will go back to its former price, and as a matter of fact, the price which is prevailing in Burma even now is very high—it is near about Rs. 100. So, in speaking of the Bengal consumer for whom we feel so much, and for whom my Honourable friend Mr. Sarma pleaded so much, it is not much use playing to the gallery and asserting that we are anxious about the interests of the consumer. Let us see how this variation in price will reflect on the price to the retail buyer in the villages. The price that prevails in the village is six pice for one and a quarter seers. If we go through the Tariff Board's Report we will find that within two or three years the prices varied very much because of the various combination, combines and rings amongst the importers. Ordinarily, the price rules between

[Mr. S. C. Mitra.]

Rs. 80 and Rs. 120, and I am absolutely certain, if we accept the figures given by the Tariff Board, then there is no chance for our indigenous industry surviving, because the Tariff Board say in page 57 that, "Competition need not be prolonged or continuous in order to damage the Indian industry because having no reserve it would quickly succumb". We must accept the conclusions of the Tariff Board as matters of fact, and they conclude the indigenous manufacturers cannot continue this competition for more than 3 or 4 months, and we get also from their figures that more than a crore of rupees has been put in reserves by these foreign importers by raising the price only a few months before they can well afford to continue this cut-throat competition to kill our indigenous manufacturers, and they really want to light out the indigenous producers for some time yet, till they are wiped out.

As regards the Aden producers, I have no soft corner at my heart for them. But I know that they have entered into a contract with the Government of India that they are not to sell locally but to sell all their produce in India. So, they are producing for us. But as regards the foreign importers, what is the guarantee that in the near future those people will not raise their prices and have their vengeance? This is not a mere guess.

Now let us consider the general situation, we have got figures from the Report of the Tariff Board, and also from the subsequent enquiry by the Salt Survey Committee, which corroborate the fact that India can produce not only sufficient salt, but also salt of the high standard quality that is consumed in Bengal. If we can keep alive our manufacture for some time, we shall certainly get the benefit of a stability in prices and by extending the field of Indian manufactures become self-supporting in her salt production. So, I appeal to the Honourable Members from Bengal not to look at the near future for the next two or three months. We must see what will be the stable price after 6 or 7 months. The price of Rs. 35 is not a real price, because the cost of transport itself is about Rs. 26. As soon as the last chance of surviving the Indian industry is gone, I do not see why the foreign importers will not raise the price again. There will form rings and combines as before, and we have found to our bitter experience in the past history of this industry how much we had to suffer and pay.

The only other point that I was thinking of is this. The Bengal National Chamber of Commerce has asked why Government should not give some rebate or some bounty to the Indian producers to keep them alive for a few months. I do appeal to the Honourable the Finance Member when he has got almost all his extra 17½ crores of rupees *minus* a crore and ten lakhs,—I think he can well afford to pay to the indigenous producers a little sum like Rs. 11 lakhs now. In fact, when the matter was discussed in the Committee, I did not dare suggest to him the case for bounty because there was then an unbalanced Budget. Now that he has got all that he wanted, I do not know whether he will be kind enough to consider the condition of Bengal consumers; though I know that they will not be affected to the extent depicted here, yet their condition is so critical that even the chance of a rise of half a pice in the price of a seer may fall very heavily on them, and that was the reason

why my friends from Bengal were hesitating to vote either way. They are all anxious that the Indian industry must be saved and for that purpose, if necessary, Bengal will undergo that sacrifice, knowing full well that unless we bear patiently this sacrifice for the time being, we shall have ultimately to pay much more for the cost of salt even within the course of this year. At the same time we expect that the Finance Member will reconsider his position and if he gives us any hope that he will consider the question of bounty or rebate to Indian producers, then I think we can support the motion for circulation in the expectation in the Simla Session of finally adjusting things. Sir, I support the motion.

**Mr. L. V. Heathcote** (Nominated Non-Official): In spite of many excellent speeches which have been made in regard to this measure, I am not at all sure that the issue is really clear. Many have spoken of the necessity for supporting a national industry. I think that we should all welcome any constructive and fair methods of supporting an Indian industry, and had the Bill been framed to provide the Government with sufficient money collected throughout India to support those indigenous producers who must certainly be feeling the effect of the serious competition which is now going on, I am certain that they would have secured the support of this House. On the rough figure of 50 crores of maunds of salt consumed in India, I reckon that a tax of no more than half an anna a maund would have been ample to provide Aden, Port Okha and Karachi and other small producers with a bounty which would enable them to withstand not only this competition but even more serious competition. But that is not the proposition. The proposal is that Bengal and Burma should provide the money to enable these indigenous producers to live, and my Honourable friend the Leader of the Opposition referred to the burden which is being put on Bengal as a prick. I suppose that there is no way of defining a prick in financial terms, but whereas half an anna a maund all over India would certainly not be called anything but a prick, I would certainly think that  $4\frac{1}{2}$  annas or 9 times the tax sought to be levied on one section of the people would be more like a jab, and I cannot think that the measure can be said to be a measure for the protection of a national industry falling on the nation. It falls on Bengal and the reason for its being placed upon Bengal is that the measure is intended to benefit Bengal and we have also heard today that this House would welcome an indication to be given in the Resolution which I understand is to be placed before the House that the Bengal Government should be told how to use the money which will eventually be refunded to them. It seems to me that this House is in these two directions taking upon itself a responsibility which it would do better to avoid. The father chastises his son and tells him that while it pains him very much to do it, he is sure that it is in the eventual interest of his son. That is a line which you can take when the son is a young child. It is not an action that I would recommend taking when the son is fully grown. It is apt to lead to considerable dissensions in the family and I cannot think that it is wise for this House to tell Bengal what is good for it. Bengal is quite competent to express its own opinion and it will be time enough for this House to consider what measure it should pass when Bengal asks it to do so. The last speaker referred to the infinitesimal effect which a measure of this nature is likely to have upon the consumer and I do not propose to quibble with his figures

[Mr. L. V. Heathcote.]

of retail prices which will be affected by the application of this duty, but you cannot get away from it that some 35 to 38 lakhs is to be taken out of Bengal and the surrounding provinces and if that can be done in one way, it can be done in another way and in fact in placing this duty upon Bengal, we are removing at least some possibility of the Provincial Governments' taxing their own people to the same extent, and in that respect also I think we should be careful. Others have said that it is in the interest of Aden and as has also been said Aden did not lose any opportunity which was given to it when prices were raised some few years ago to take the fullest benefit of the increase in those prices, and I am not sure that this House is so enamoured of Aden and the inhabitants of Aden that it is prepared to levy a tax of 12 lakhs a year in order to benefit Aden. The Honourable the Finance Member referred to the difficulty which confronted the Government when they came to consider how the proceeds of the tax realised from importers of salt were to be returned to the consumer. I can well understand his difficulty. It was partly due to the extraordinary nature of the state of affairs confronting him, and I feel that his difficulty would have been removed had he not taxed Bengal or proposed to tax Bengal in the interests of the nation. The interests of the nation should be supported by the nation and not by a section of it.

Another aspect of the question is that of stabilising price, and here I must say that if I were at all confident that stability of prices was assured, I should have greater doubt than I have as to how I should

3 P.M. vote for this measure. I cannot see that in any direction at all does it provide for stability of prices. The Honourable the Deputy President told us that the Bill includes a proviso whereby Aden is prevented from profiteering. Admittedly so; but there is nothing to prevent a very considerable increase of the price charged by the foreign suppliers; and, should their price increase from Rs. 35 a hundred maunds to some Rs. 65 a hundred maunds, there is nothing, as far as I can see in this Bill, which is going to prevent the price rising by that amount of Rs. 30 a hundred maunds. The only extent to which the price can be prevented from rising is the extent to which the Aden manufacturers are not to be allowed to raise their price; but, inevitably, as they supply just over a third of the demand, the foreign price will be that actually reflected in the market. Were the object to provide ourselves with some breathing space in which this difficult question could be examined, I feel certain that other measures could have been adopted by imposing a much lesser duty, which would still provide some considerable security for the Aden manufacturers, because, as has been very clearly pointed out, at Rs. 53 a hundred maunds, the Tariff Board found that Aden was in no need of protection; and so I feel certain that this House would be well advised to support the amendment of my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, to submit this Bill for circulation.

Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh : Muhammadan Rural): Sir, like my Honourable friend, Sir Abdur Rahim, who said just now that, after hearing my Honourable friend, Mr. Shanmukham Chetty, he was convinced that this Bill was a good Bill, I, Sir, after hearing my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, my Honourable friend, Mr. George

Morgan, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy, am convinced that this is a bad Bill. Sir, only the other day my Honourable friend Sir Cowasji Jehangir in this House, while speaking on the motion for a cut in the income-tax, emphasised that public opinion was behind him. I say, Sir, that public opinion as regards this Bill is wholly behind us,—and the unanimous public opinion of Bengal is that Bengal does not want this Bill. Furthermore, Sir, the constituency which I have the honour to represent has given me a mandate to oppose this Bill, and therefore I am going to oppose this Bill. Sir, much has been said to show that Bengal will get ultimate relief, that it is only a temporary measure, that they will get back the money that they may now put in. Sir, that is not a convincing argument; that does not convince us and make us support this Bill. What we would get a decade hence is not for us to consider at the moment. Sir, at this time of political troubles, I am surprised and amazed that Government should force the people of Bengal again to revolt.

**Some Honourable Members:** No, no.

**Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi:** Sir, this is not a Hindu-Moslem question; here is a unanimous opinion (Hear, hear). This is not a question where even the officials do not agree; but, though even officials are also unanimous in supporting our view, still the Government of India think that they will thrust the Bill upon us. Well, I warn them once more. If they want to see repeated what is happening in Cawnpore and what is happening in other parts of the country, let them go on with this Bill if they like.

**An Honourable Member:** What happened at Dacca?

**Mr. A. H. Ghuznavi:** That will be happening again; and there will be such a revolt in Bengal as the Government never saw before. Sir, I whole-heartedly support the amendment of my Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas.

**Some Honourable Members:** The question may now be put.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh (Muzaffarpur cum Champaran: Non-Muhammadan):** Sir, my only excuse for intervening in the debate at this late hour is that the Bill affects the interests of my province as well, because, as stated in the Report of the Indian Tariff Board, of the total imports of foreign salt into Bengal, about two-thirds are consumed in Bengal and Assam, and the remainder is consumed in Bihar, Nepal and the Eastern portion of the United Provinces. Practically the whole of the salt consumed in Bengal and Assam is imported from outside India proper. Now, Sir, it is a strange irony of the situation that a country like India, surrounded by salt seas, and which has got natural advantages in the way of salt lakes and salt mines, with a temperate climate almost all the year round, should depend upon a supply of salt from foreign sources. Bengal, in olden times, had her own salt works, but this was actually killed by the deliberate policy adopted by the predecessors of the present Government, I mean the East India Company. However, I need not go into that question at the far end of the day. I will only mention this, that the Taxation Enquiry Committee reported about the year 1926 that it was very essential that this national industry should be made self-supporting, and with that end in

[Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh.]

view they proposed a rebate of duty or a differential duty on foreign salt. In 1929 this question was debated upon in this House, and Mr. N. C. Kelkar made a cut in the general Budget. The point on which this debate was raised was the question of making India self-supporting in respect of salt supply, and then it was stated that it might be necessary to impose an import duty of a protective character on foreign salt. I have been looking over the list of speakers who took part in the debate, and I find that my Honourable friend, Mr. K. C. Neogy, supported this motion which was carried, by a speech which was really very exhaustive; and the other Members from Bengal, who voted for the motion, were almost all the Members from Bengal who were present on the occasion, including my Honourable friends, Mr. Amar Nath Dutt, Mr. Dharendra Kanta Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. S. C. Mitra, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Mr. Nirmal Chunder Chunder, and others. (Laughter.)

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Did they support this Bill in anticipation?

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** But the principle of the Bill is about the same as the motion which was then under discussion.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Nothing of the kind.

**Mr. Gaya Prasad Singh:** Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, when he was a Member of the Imperial Legislative Council (later on he was knighted when he was made a Minister) in the course of the debate in the Imperial Legislative Council, spoke as follows:

"My memory carries me back to the days of the Swadeshi movement when we eschewed foreign salt. We vowed not to take any foreign salt. We made that vow in our mosques and in our temples and many of those took the vow observed it. Therefore, Sir, under a strong Swadeshi impulse, which I hope will revive with the growth of responsible government we may discard the very clean salt that we are in the habit of consuming. Things are changing rapidly in India. Tastes will also change." (Applause.)

Where is the vow which the people of Bengal took in their temples and mosques? Sir, the policy of the Government in this matter has been very unfortunate. The gates of India have been flung wide open to the import of foreign salt. Salt is coming from Cheshire, Liverpool, and other places; but it is a strange irony that salt produced in Indian India, in places like Okha and Kuda which is in the territory of the Dhrangadhra State, which I myself visited, should be prohibited from entering into British India except in Bengal and in the distant Burma, where it was not economically worth importing. Sir, it is said that this import duty will be a burden to the poor consumers of Bengal. I do not know whether it will be so. It is stated that the recent fluctuations in the price of salt did not affect the consumers so much as the fact that the money went into the pockets of the middlemen who were speculators in the salt industry. Therefore, I do not think that this imposition of the import duty will affect the consumers of Bengal to any appreciable extent. And even if it does affect them, I rely upon the national sentiment of the people and their sense of patriotism to rise to the level of the occasion and bear the temporary burden which is at present intended for one year only. With these words, Sir, I support the original motion. (Cheers.)

**Mr. Amar Nath Dutt:** Sir, a great English statesman once observed :

"Whenever I found that a particular newspaper was supporting me, I thought that I was in the wrong."

When I rise today here, I rise with a similar feeling, because I find that a class of newspapers are opposing this Bill which leads me to think that probably I am wrong. Sir, I have given this subject my anxious consideration and thought over and over again and I have come to the conclusion that at least the motion which my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas has moved, namely, that the Bill be circulated for eliciting opinion thereon should be supported. Sir, I have been in the public life of my country for more than three decades and I remember the day when the people of other provinces were accustomed to hurl on the people of Bengal their sneers and jeers for their patriotism. I remember a gentleman, who now happens to be a member of the Round Table Conference, and for the moment he will remain nameless, who at the time when there was agitation for swadeshi cloth, quoted figures showing that so many foreign articles were imported into Bengal and there were jeers on the Bengalees. Bengal has survived that. The whole of India did not support us in our Swadeshi agitation, and in spite of that Bengal has survived it. So, I believe, that we can survive the sneers that are hurled on us in season and out of season. My Honourable friend, Mr. Chetty, with whom I beg to differ, has tried to persuade us that it is in the interests of Bengal that this duty should be levied. He says that national interests and the interests of Bengal consumers are the same. Sir, I have patiently listened to his speech, but I have not been able to find out how national interests and the interests of the consumers are the same. I will convince him that he is wrong if he will only remember one fact, namely, that the poor consumers at this time of distress will have to pay more than what they are paying now for salt. You may say that it would be half a pie or something like that, but these half pies make up quite a lot. You have already increased the duty on kerosene and other things. Sir, I shall try to be as short as possible. So, instead of discussing these things, we had better let this Bill go for circulation, so that we may have the opinion of those who are most affected. If Bengal say that they are opposed to this import duty, then let us go back to our constituencies; let us consult them; let us place all the arguments before them. Sir, there is no harm in a few months' delay, and I hope Honourable Members on the other side of the House will agree to the motion. Sir, Bengal has been the Cinderella of the British Indian Empire, and I hope we will not again be asked to pay about 50 lakhs of rupees, bearing in mind the fact that most of it will come from the poorest consumer. With these words, I support the motion of my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas.

**Several Honourable Members:** The question may now be put.

**Mr. President:** I accept the closure. The question is:

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** Sir, I think everyone will agree that we have had a very interesting and, if I may say so, a very unusual debate. My Honourable friend, the Leader of the Opposition, has referred to the close association of lions and lambs in this matter. Sir, I do

[Sir George Schuster.]

not know whether I am a lion or a lamb, but I am quite certain that I shall find myself in the lobby with some very unaccustomed companions when we come to vote on this measure. (Laughter.) Sir, this matter is interesting in several ways. I venture to think that possibly the line of action which we as Government have adopted in this matter may be of some interest. I do not wish now to go into all that fully again, but I must emphasise that there are special considerations which induced us to take this attitude, particularly the fact that this is a question on which provincial interests may be regarded as conflicting, a fact which, as I have already explained, let the Government into a considerable difficulty as to how the provincial officials, who sit behind the Government, should record their votes. I have already explained what the Government decision as regards that is, and I will not go over it again. I only wish to emphasise that this is a very special case and we had very special reasons in deciding what we have decided. Sir, as to the Bill itself there is clearly a great deal to be said on both sides in this matter, and I do not pretend, although I am supporting the Bill, to say that all that has been said against it is unreasonable. I had, throughout the sittings of the Committee, tried, as far as possible, to preserve an impartial attitude, and although we have tried to respond to what we consider to be the majority opinion, I now quite clearly state that my own opinion has been formed definitely in favour of this Bill.

I should like to go back at the outset to the speech made by the Honourable the Mover of this amendment, whom I must congratulate on his eloquence, rather perhaps than on his accuracy. Sir, if ever I have a bad case to defend, I shall be very glad to engage the services of my Honourable friend Mr. Biswas. (Laughter.) He certainly made the best of a bad case. Now there is one point on this question of accuracy to which I must make some reference. There is a good deal of confusion about figures in this matter, and one of the reasons for the confusion is that the Tariff Board in their Report have given figures sometimes with reference to tons, sometimes with reference to maunds and sometimes with reference to one-hundred maunds. When my Honourable friend, the Deputy President, was speaking this morning, he referred to the price at which salt was selling today or rather the price at which salt was selling just before this measure was introduced. That price was about Rs. 35 per hundred maunds. He said that his information was that the cost of shipping was about Rs. 25 per hundred maunds, which left to the producer only a narrow margin of Rs. 10 per hundred maunds, and he suggested that it was quite impossible that any producer could live at that price. My Honourable friend, Mr. Biswas, interrupted him, and said that the Tariff Board themselves had given the fair cost of production as Rs. 8 and that therefore there was a margin of Rs. 2 below Mr. Chetty's figure. But the point is this. The Tariff Board figure of Rs. 8, was Rs. 8 per ton, and my Honourable friend, the Deputy President, was talking about Rs. 10 per hundred maunds. Now a price of Rs. 9 per ton is equivalent to no less than Rs. 30 per hundred maunds. Therefore the Tariff Board figure was Rs. 30 as minimum cost per hundred maunds for which the producer can now get only Rs. 8. They are therefore now selling at prices which, according to the Tariff Board figure, are Rs. 22 per 100 maunds below the cost of production. That is a very important point, which leads me to this further point which

I wish to emphasise. We have heard a great deal about the interests of the consumers and it has been one of the interesting features of this debate to find speakers exchanging roles in this particular matter. I think we must all consider the interests of the consumers, and although I listened with very great interest to my Honourable friend Mr. Mitra's figures in which he pointed out that this change in prices will have very little effect on retail prices, I also agree with him that in spite of the small effect, we cannot leave it out of account. But, Sir, when we look at the consumers' interests, I do not think it is fair to take the present selling price, or rather as I have said before, the price at which salt was being sold before this measure was introduced. It is not fair to take that and say that that is the price at which the consumer can buy and then to argue by our action we are going to put it up by another Rs. 28 per hundred maunds. I do not think there is the slightest chance that the consumer can count on being able to go on buying salt on an average at the present price for any considerable period, and that is the whole basis of the case. If we admit that the present low prices are likely to continue permanently, then the whole case for the Tariff Board scheme or for our scheme drops out, at least that side of the case which argues that the stabilisation of prices at a fair level is a measure which may be in the interests of the consumer. And unless we could advance that argument, I, for one, should not be supporting this measure. If I thought that salt were likely to remain at about the present level that is to say about Rs. 35 per hundred maunds, then I should certainly join with those who are going to vote for the circulation of this Bill. But I am quite certain that that is not the case. Therefore, what we have to consider is whether the Tariff Board price, which they have fixed as a fair average price, is a price which on an average will be to the benefit of the consumer. That is the first point we have to consider. And the second point is, will the scheme, towards which this Bill is a first step, really result in preserving the price at that level. On the first point, as I have already indicated, I have myself no doubt in my own mind that if the Bengal consumer could rely on an average price of Rs. 66 per hundred maunds, he would be doing very well, and for that reason I am prepared to support this Bill. And here I should like to say something on a point which has not yet been mentioned in this debate. If we are considering the interests of the consumer, it is the control of retail prices which matters, and, underlying our whole plan, is the idea that it is at least worth while studying the question whether we can introduce some system of marketing throughout India which would enable us to control the retail prices. Now, if the wholesale price is stabilised, I venture to argue that it will be very much easier to control retail prices. For the retail dealer will not then be able to claim that wholesale prices have gone up and then raise his retail prices in a way which the uneducated small purchaser cannot check. If there is a standardised wholesale price, it is going to be very much easier to establish a standardised retail price. That is one of the reasons for which I think it is worth while trying this scheme.

Then, as regards the second point, the second part of the question, is there a reasonable chance that this scheme will help us to standardise the prices? Now here I fully admit that we are treading on uncertain ground and I fully admit that this measure can only be regarded as an experiment. But one of the advantages of dealing with this matter in this form is that if this experiment fails, we shall have committed the country to nothing at

[Sir George Schuster.]

all. It will be perfectly easy to remove this duty and return to the original conditions of trading. On the other hand if we started as recommended by the Tariff Board, the first step would be for the Government to assume some control of the trade in foreign salt, and it would be very difficult indeed for us to recede from that position. Therefore that is one of the reasons for making the first step in this experimental way, and getting on to ground from which we can easily withdraw if we find it does not work. But will it work? I think at least there is a reasonable probability that it will. For what will be our position? We, as a Government, will have our hand on the producers at Aden and at the Indian sea coast places where salt is being produced, Okha, Karachi, etc. I say we shall have our hand on them, because the essence of this scheme is that any producer that takes advantage of the rebate to the Indian producers must submit himself to the obligation to sell his salt at the price of Rs. 64 per hundred maunds. So that we shall have the power to put on the market even today something like 200,000 tons of salt per annum at this price. Then, in addition to that, if our plans mature, as I hope they will, we shall very shortly be able to put on the market a further large additional quantity from Khewra. That of course will be entirely in our own hands for it will be produced by the Government of India Salt Department. With these two sources of supply, I venture to think that the chances of any foreign producers' ring being formed again and putting prices up will become very small. That, Sir, is at least my opinion. I admit it is no more than an opinion, and I have used the words "the chances will be small" because I admit that it is a question of chance. But I think it is a chance worth taking. As I have already said, if our scheme does not work, it is very easy to retreat from the position we shall have taken up without doing any harm to the country at all.

Now, turning again to the speech of the Honourable the Mover of this amendment, he took us through very long passages of the Tariff Board's Report, but although he told the truth as regards what the Tariff Board has said, he certainly did not tell the whole truth. He confined his remarks almost entirely to what they said about the production at Karachi and Okha and the whole question of sea-borne salt. I fully recognise that as regards sea-borne salt they said that to encourage that would bring very little material advantage to India. But when they came to deal with the possibility of developing the internal sources of production, the rail-borne salt, then they were able to argue that the advantages would be very substantial, and that is really the essence of the scheme. The essence of the scheme is not to protect Aden, though Aden production is going to be very useful to us in controlling prices, but the essential purpose of the scheme is to develop the internal inland sources of production in India.

Then, Sir, a good deal has been said about developing production in the Eastern parts of India, in Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, and some criticism has been passed on Government for not yet having taken steps to investigate the possibilities in those areas. I should like to make our position clear on this point. In appointing the committee over which Sir Chunilal Mehta presided, we were following out the recommendation of the Tariff Board. They concentrated their attention on certain sources of production in Northern India because those were the sources of production which obviously could be developed very easily. Now, the point of their

inquiry was not to provide us with a complete account of all the possibilities, but it was simply to give us an idea whether the first condition could be satisfied; not to tell us what was the total maximum quantity that could be produced from any possible sources of production in India; but to tell us whether there were any sources of production which could give us something like two or three hundred thousand tons of salt per annum. And therefore they went first to those places which could be most easily developed. And the result of that is that, if their Report is to be believed, we are now assured that India can produce from inland sources this extra two or three hundred thousand tons which are required to make India completely self-supporting.

Then as regards the burden on Bengal, that of course does put this Assembly in a very difficult position; but when my Honourable friend, Mr. Morgan, used an argument against this measure that if the Assembly voted in a certain way on this matter it would be almost a death-knell to any idea of federation, I think that although he referred to what is an important reality in the situation, he showed that he had been thinking of federation in realms of imaginary illusion. Because, unless India can provide some central body which can deal with these questions where the interests of different States or provinces are divided, no scheme of federation can work. The essence of a federal scheme is that the constituent units will be prepared to see matters of all-India interest dealt with by a Federal Legislature which represents them all and in which these cases of divided interests will have to be fought out. On the other hand that Central Legislature must act fairly and it most certainly does behove this Assembly to do its best to be fair in these matters and to be quite sure that by any action which it takes national interests are promoted and that no single part of India is being unfairly treated. With the scheme which we have now produced, a scheme which gives to those areas which will bear the burden of the extra duty the benefit of 7/8ths of the revenue which is to be collected. I do maintain that, with that feature introduced, the Assembly, if it gave its approval to this measure, could not be accused of unfairly over-riding the interests of any part of India.

Sir, there is only one more remark which I have to make and that is that I think myself that if this motion of circulation is passed, it will certainly be the end of this particular form of action. As far as I can see, there is nothing new to be learnt on the matter. It has not been hastily considered. We have had the Tariff Board's Report for a considerable time. That has received very careful consideration by Government; we have consulted every one concerned about the Tariff Board recommendations and the scheme which is now proposed received very careful study by a committee of this Assembly, certainly very much more than the 90 minutes' consideration which one speaker said was all that had been given to it. I do not see how any motion for circulation is going to advance our knowledge on this particular proposal. Circulation really will mean rejection of this proposal, and then we shall be thrown back on to considering whether our first steps ought rather to take the form of Government control which the Tariff Board has recommended.

These, Sir, are, I think, the main issues before this House. As I have already said we want the House to decide, and although we the Government Members will vote for the Bill, the result of any vote that is taken will be truly one of the non-official Members of the House.

Sir, I oppose the amendment.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That the Bill be circulated for the purpose of eliciting opinion thereon by the 31st July, 1931."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—19.

Biswas, Mr. C. C.  
Cocke, Sir Hugh.  
Dutt, Mr. Amar Nath.  
Ghuznavi, Mr. A. H.  
Gidney, Lieut.-Colonel H. A. J.  
Heathcote, Mr. L. V.  
Krishnamachariar, Raja Bahadur G.  
Moore, Mr. Arthur.  
Morgan, Mr. G.  
Mukherjee, Rai Bahadur S. C.

Neogy, Mr. K. C.  
Reddi, Mr. T. N. Ramakrishna.  
Sarma, Mr. R. S.  
Scott, Mr. J. Ramsay.  
Sen, Pandit Satyendra Nath.  
Studd, Mr. E.  
Suhrawardy, Dr. A.  
Sykes, Mr. E. F.  
Wajihuddin, Khan Bahadur Haji.

NOES—53.

Abdur Rahim, Sir.  
Anklesaria, Mr. N. N.  
Anwar-ul-Azim, Mr. Muhammad.  
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.  
Chetty, Mr. R. K. Shanmukham.  
Crerar, The Honourable Sir James.  
Das, Mr. A.  
Das, Mr. B.  
Fazal Haq Piracha, Shaikh.  
Fazl-i-Husain, The Honourable Khan Bahadur Mian Sir.  
Fox, Mr. H. B.  
Gour, Sir Hari Singh.  
Gunjal, Mr. N. R.  
Harbans Singh Brar, Sirdar.  
Hari Raj Swarup, Lala.  
Ismail Ali Khan, Kunwar Hajee.  
Ira, Chaudhri.  
Jadhav, Mr. B. V.  
Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar.  
Jehangir, Sir Cowasji.  
Jog, Mr. S. G.  
Kyaw Myint, U.  
Lahiri Chaudhury, Mr. D. K.  
Liladhar Chaudhury, Seth.  
Maswood Ahmad, Mr. M.  
Misra, Mr. B. N.  
Mitra, Mr. S. C.  
Muazzam Sahib Bahadur, Mr. Muhammad.

Mudaliar, Diwan Bahadur A. Ramaswami.  
Majumdar, Sardar G. N.  
Munshi, Mr. Jehangir K.  
Murtuza Saheb Bahadur, Maulvi Sayyid.  
Pandit, Rao Bahadur S. R.  
Parmanand Devta Sarup, Bhai.  
Rainy, The Honourable Sir George.  
Rajah, Rao Bahadur M. C.  
Rajan Bakhsh Shah, Khan Bahadur Makhidum Syed.  
Rangachariar, Dewan Bahadur T.  
Reddi, Mr. P. G.  
Sarda, Rai Sahib Harbilas.  
Schuster, The Honourable Sir George.  
Shafee Daoodi, Maulvi Muhammad.  
Shah Nawaz, Mian Muhammad.  
Sher Muhammad Khan Gakhar, Captain.  
Singh, Kumar Gupteshwar Prasad.  
Singh, Mr. Gaya Prasad.  
Sitaramaraju, Mr. B.  
Sohan Singh, Sirdar.  
Talib Mehdi Khan, Nawab Major Malik.  
Uppi Saheb Bahadur, Mr.  
Walayatullah, Khan Bahadur H. M.  
Yakub, Maulvi Muhammad.  
Yamin Khan, Mr. Muhammad.

The motion was negatived.

**Mr. President:** The question is:

"That the Bill to impose a temporary additional duty of customs on foreign salt be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

**The Honourable Sir George Schuster:** Sir, I move that the Bill be passed.

The motion was adopted.

**Mr. President:** I do not think Honourable Members desire to take up the next items on the Order Paper, as the House will begin to consider the adjournment motion in ten minutes.

The next item is the Wheat Bill.

(*Cries of "Tomorrow" and "Adjourn".*)

Will the Honourable Member be able to finish his speech in ten minutes?

**The Honourable Sir George Rainy** (Member for Commerce and Railways): I am afraid not, Sir.

**An Honourable Member:** The next item after that may not take very long.

**Mr. President:** Is it your pleasure to try and dispose of the next item on the Order Paper? (*Cries of "Yes".*) Mr. Young.

#### THE INDIAN FORCES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

**Mr. G. M. Young** (Army Secretary): Sir, I move that the Bill to amend the Indian Reserve Forces Act, 1888, for certain purposes, as passed by the Council of State, be taken into consideration. This is a Bill which contains only one item of practical importance, and that is in clause 5 sub-section (b), which seeks to include Presidency Magistrates among the authorities empowered to try cases in which reservists fail to comply with orders calling them up for training. At present such offences may be tried either by courts-martial or by Magistrates of the First class, which term does not include Presidency Magistrates. It is obviously desirable that minor offences of this kind should be tried wherever possible by the standing courts, rather than by courts-martial specially convened for the purpose. I think the reason why Presidency Magistrates are not included in the provisions of the Act is probably that, in 1888, when the Act was originally passed, the number of reservists who lived in presidency towns was negligible. But in these days of increasing mechanical transport an important section of our reserves consists of motor drivers, and a considerable number of these, no doubt, carry on their civil occupations in presidency towns. The remaining amendments proposed by this Bill are purely verbal, and are inserted with the object of bringing the phraseology of the Act up to date. Sir, I move.

**Mr. President:** Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Indian Reserve Forces Act, 1888, for certain purposes, as passed by the Council of State, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

[Mr. President.]

Clauses 2 to 6 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

**Mr. G. M. Young:** Sir, I move that the Bill, as passed by the Council of State, be passed.

The motion was adopted.

**Mr. President:** The House will have to wait for five minutes more before it proceeds to discuss the adjournment motion.

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## MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

### COMMUNAL RIOT AT CAWNPORE.

**Mr. M. Maswood Ahmad** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move that the House do now  
 4 P.M. adjourn in order to discuss an urgent matter of public importance, in connection with the recent communal riot at Cawnpore.

Sir, I want to make it clear that I do not stand to create any communal bitterness in this House. I have great respect for those who have lost their lives in saving lives of their innocent countrymen. Their names will be written in golden letters in the history of this country. According to our religion, they are alive; they are not dead. They are seeing how we respect them and their noble mission and condemn the action of those who have created such a great trouble. These rioters have not served the mother country, rather they have done harm to the country.

Sir, this is the fourth riot that has taken place in the United Provinces within the last two months. The history of the Cawnpore riots, so far as the facts are known, is this; that after the execution of Sardar Bhagat Singh and his comrades a *hartal* was observed on the 24th March. The demonstrators wanted to terrorise those who did not join the *hartal*, and brought pressure on Muslim shopkeepers to close their shops too. Some peaceful and innocent Muslim shopkeepers refused to join the *hartal*. They were tired of these *hartals*. Those shopkeepers did not like to give up their right of liberty and stoutly refused to join the *hartal*. This was the only fault of the peaceful shopkeepers. The demonstrators took the law and order into their own hands and brought about a communal riot. By 25th March, the deaths registered, according to Government report, at the Cawnpore City Hospital, were 94, out of which 67 were Mussalmans. According to another version, by the 26th, the death list mounted up to 122, and out of these 89 were Muslims. The total number of injured was about 500 and the majority of them were Muslims. Today's report is that the number of deaths has gone up to 200 and majority of this consists of Mussalmans. Those killed generally included innocent persons, children and helpless women. The list of casualties also includes faithful and loyal servants of the country who were trying to suppress the riot and were trying to save others' lives. A large number of women and children is missing.

Mussalmans have suffered much more than others. Their houses have been burnt, their shops have been looted, their children have been butchered. For several days the authorities failed to restore peace and order. I fail to understand what the police were doing all this time, and for what purpose such a huge army, on which more than fifty crores of rupees are spent, is being maintained. (Applause.) After the riots of Benares, Mirzapur and Agra, the Government ought to have been more cautious and should have been in readiness to meet any such emergency, but they failed and hopelessly failed in their duty of protecting the lives and property of the peaceful citizens of this country. They ought to have realised from the other three riots that took place in other cities of the United Provinces that public peace was in danger, and their failure to realise this was rather disappointing. We want to know the Government policy in this connection. We are not begging protection from the Government. We claim it as a matter of right. If they are unable to give us protection, I would ask them to leave the country bag and baggage (Hear, hear) without even waiting for the decision of the Round Table Conference as to their destinies. And then we will take care of ourselves. (Loud Applause.) We can protect ourselves easily, but the difficulty is that all of a sudden *goondas* take law and order into their own hands and a riot starts. They kill innocent citizens, and when we strengthen ourselves and are ready to counteract the attack and to suppress the *goonda raj* and to take our revenge, British bayonets and machine guns come in our way. The difficulty is that the lives of innocent and peaceful citizens are in great danger, and in fact, they have been butchered in Cawnpore like anything, but the Government are sitting tight in their seats and are not caring a bit for those wretched and helpless citizens who have lost their lives. There were so many police to suppress the civil disobedience movement and the *lathi* charges were for that purpose only, but when there is the question of the protection of lives of poor Indians, suppression of *goondaism* and restoration of peace and order, all their instruments become rusted and are not fit to be used.

I do my duty and inform the Government that they are losing the confidence of the public, and if such *goondaism* will not be suppressed, it will be the match that will inflame the whole country. The citizen cannot sit idle any more. I ask the Treasury Benches either to protect us or tell us in plain language that they cannot do so. I appeal to you in the name of civilization, in the name of humanity, in the name of religion, and in the name of God,—I ask you to realise your responsibility and check such irresponsible acts and take strong measures against the creators of mischief. If you want to suppress the terrorisation, if you actually want that such riots do not take place in future, keep your army in all the big towns, instead of keeping them in Dehra Dun and other cool places. Distribute arms to innocent citizens belonging to minority communities to protect themselves. Constitute peace committees consisting of influential persons of the different communities at different places and try to compensate the sufferers. Appoint a committee of officials and non-officials to enquire into the matter.

Sir, I move:

"That the House do now adjourn."

(Loud Applause.)

**Lala Rameshwar Prasad Bagla** (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Sir, as one representing Cawnpore in this House, I think I shall not allow this opportunity to pass without expressing my indignation at the events in Cawnpore. I keep before me the very good advice of the Honourable the Home Member that we should not say anything in this House which might embitter feelings or interfere with the resumption of normal conditions. We are not here at the moment to go into the causes of the trouble. But there is a strong feeling everywhere that if the local officials had taken the right measures in the beginning the situation would not have been so bad. It is not my idea today to apportion blame. We are glad, however, that the Governor of the United Provinces and the Honourable the Home Member of those Provinces took the earliest opportunity to visit the affected areas and their timely visit has helped the growth of a better feeling between the two communities and to the slow move towards normal conditions.

Every Member in this House will view with the greatest pain the unfortunate murder of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, a name respected both by Muhammadans and Hindus in Cawnpore and the United Provinces. The mystery of his death must be solved. Therefore, I appeal to the Government to take such steps not only to resume peace and order in Cawnpore, but also to find out the circumstances under which such a noble soul as Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was lost

**Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin** (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadian Urban): Sir, as a representative on the Assembly of the seven cities of the United Provinces, including Cawnpore, I rise to support the motion moved by my Honourable friend, and with deep sorrow I wish to say a few words in connection with the serious communal riots which have been going on since 24th March at Cawnpore. I understand that the refusal of Muslim shopkeepers to observe *hartal* by closing their shops in sympathy with the Lahore executions has led to trouble to such an extent that a large number of innocent persons have been killed, hundreds of them have been wounded, and a considerable number of shops have been looted and burnt down. Many houses were set fire to, mosques and temples have been destroyed and damaged. Great panic prevails throughout the city and the cantonment. Sir, my source of information is most reliable. Friends and members of my own family are present today in the disturbed area. I have just received communications from my friends there and I will read out a few sentences from them which will give a rough idea as to the real conditions prevailing in Cawnpore. This is an extract from a letter dated the 25th March, 1931. It is as follows:

"Cawnpore is in an extremely dangerous condition. Riots are in full swing. No sign of abatement. Business is at a standstill. People are panic stricken and horrified. We cannot go out. We are confined to our homes and passing through very critical moments. It is quite beyond our calculation as to when this loot and arson will cease. Many have been killed and many are lying injured. Acts of barbarism are being perpetrated and continue in full swing up to the time of writing this letter. Shops and houses are being burnt down. Wholesale loot is going on."

Here is another extract from a letter dated the 27th March, 1931. It is as follows:

"No change in the riot yet. Condition has gone from bad to worse. Hundreds have been put to death and hundreds robbed and rendered homeless. Houses are set on fire. Even our shops could not remain safe. The mob got through in and looted as much as they could lay their hands on. It seems that the British Government raj is

over. Our three servants have been killed by the mob. There is no sign of abatement till now. Still passing sleepless nights and confined to our homes. These events have called to memory the mutiny of 1857 God knows how long this will last, how many have been killed and what more is about to happen. Our eyes have never witnessed such a riot before."

Sir, let me say frankly that the atrocities committed by hooligans at Cawnpore are no doubt too horrible to relate. Further there is no guarantee whatsoever that such atrocities will not be committed again.

Now, Sir, the question naturally arises whether the local authorities at Cawnpore had realised the critical situation created by the Lahore executions and whether there were sufficient reinforcements ready to hand to cope with the situation. It is of course a matter of the great regret and disappointment that the local authorities have failed to restore peace and order till now in spite of the fact that six days have elapsed since the riots commenced there. The details so far available are extremely inadequate, but, Sir, they are enough to show that the riot there has been one of the most terrible of its kind in India's recent history. According to today's Press news the death roll has exceeded 200, the majority of whom no doubt consist of Muslims, while the population of Cawnpore, I believe, consists of not more than one-third of Muslims and about two-thirds of other communities. But all cases of deaths in connection with outbreaks of this kind do not immediately come to official notice. Many of them indeed never come to be recorded at all. According to the figures furnished by my Honourable friend Mr. Gwynne three days ago on the floor of this House, I find that out of 94 deaths reported by that time, there were 67 Muslims alone. My esteemed friend also admitted the other day, in answer to a question, that the majority of those injured were also Muslims. Taking into consideration the several riots which took place in various cities of the United Provinces, namely, Benares, Agra, Mirzapur and Cawnpore during a short period of two months, I think it is high time for both the Government and the Congress leaders to consider most seriously the problem of protecting the lives and property of Indians against these outbursts of political fanaticism that have become so terribly frequent in my unfortunate province. With these remarks I support the motion of adjournment.

**Lala Hari Raj Swarup** (United Provinces: Landholders): Mr. President, I stand with a heavy heart to take part in this discussion because the official report itself says that more than 200 of my countrymen have been killed in warfare in Cawnpore besides the large number of persons injured. The actual number of casualties cannot yet be ascertained and I am sure it will far exceed the number officially reported. Coming as I do from the United Provinces and representing as I do the landholders of that Province, which constituency extends to the whole of the province, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not take part in this discussion. I do not want to discuss how many Muslims and how many Hindus have been killed, because the full facts are not yet before the House. My object in speaking on this motion is to fix upon the Government the entire responsibility of not having been able to restore peace and order so far. In dealing with this point I will take two aspects of the question. The first point is the omission on the part of the Government to take precautionary measures, and the second point is that, once the riot broke out, adequate steps were not taken by

[Lala Hari Raj Swarup.]

the executive as promptly as they should and could have been. Taking the first point, I reliably understand that the news of the execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades reached Cawnpore about 8 o'clock in the evening of the 23rd. Attempts were made on that day to obstruct traffic by making tram cars and tongas stop. That ought to have been an eye-opener to the authorities and they ought to have posted police and the military in the town in order to prevent a recurrence of the trouble which they ought to have expected on the following day when the Congress had declared that a general *hartal* would be observed. Furthermore my own province unfortunately during the last month had been subjected to serious communal riots in various places like Benares, Mirzapur, Agra and lastly Cawnpore. That ought to have given a hint to the authorities to take precautionary measures especially at Cawnpore where such a large amount of combustible element live in the form of mill hands.

As regards the second point, the trouble started on the morning of the 24th, and as far as the discussion in the local Council shows, it has been clearly proved that on the 24th and 25th not a single policeman was to be seen throughout the town and looting and incendiarism was allowed to go on. The Commissioner, to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude, arrived on the morning of the 26th. He convened a committee of the important persons of Cawnpore, which was attended by leading Muslims and Hindus, on the afternoon of the 27th. All these gentlemen went round the town in motor cars in order to see the affected areas and I will just read out a few passages showing what these people noticed during their visit in the town. As will be plain, this will also corroborate my contention that the Government did not provide sufficient police and did not take sufficient protective measures:

"At one point the cars were surrounded by the people of the area who rushed out on seeing them and complained that there was no police guard anywhere in the vicinity and they were living in perpetual fear day and night and had to concentrate themselves in a few houses, living thirty or forty in each of them."

As the party motored on,—

"At another place which is inhabited by the educated middle class people in houses constructed by the Improvement Trust, the men who came out alleged that a police party came there and went away after giving several of them a good deal of beating, some of whom were lying injured."

This is the way, Sir, in which the police behaved in Cawnpore. This party motored throughout the city of Cawnpore and not a single place was there where the people did not complain of the inadequacy of police arrangements. What the party heard further was:

"At another place people complained that they were not receiving any police protection. Throughout the way, although the car was passing through the worst affected areas and had covered many miles, not a single policeman was visible anywhere, and each of the people's representatives several times exclaimed: 'Where is the police? No trace of it!'"

Then Munshi Narain Prasad Nigam, a leading citizen of Cawnpore, makes a statement to the Press and says:

"These leading men complained, according to him, that the police arrangements were not what they ought to have been. Murder and arson, they said, had been committed under the very nose of the police."

Then, Sir, the military was also requisitioned on the 24th, but early on the morning of the 25th the authorities, thinking that the situation had come under control, withdrew the military, and rioting again started, and it is an open secret that rioting continued even up to this day, and so many lives have been lost. It is also quite clear that for the first three days of rioting no arrests were made. Had the authorities been prompt in arresting the miscreants and the *goondas* the situation might have been averted. This clearly shows that the impression prevailing in the country that there is a difference between a political riot and a communal riot, and that the determination shown by the Government in dealing with the former is considerably relaxed in dealing with the latter is perfectly right. With these few remarks, Sir, I support this motion for adjournment, and I appeal to the Government to be more attentive and effective in dealing with these communal riots,—the responsibility for long continuance of which lies more on the shoulders of the Government than on the people concerned. If stringent measures are taken at the outset, the trouble is nibbed in the bud. If no such steps are taken and the authorities give a long rope to the *goondas*, the trouble continues for a sufficiently long time with the resultant misery for all people.

**Mr. H. W. Emerson** (Home Secretary): Sir, I should like first to read out to the House the latest information received about the situation in Cawnpore. This is a report received from the United Provinces Government this afternoon:

“The following is the situation at Cawnpore as reported at 9-45 A.M. by telephone this morning. Everything perfectly quiet. No murders and fires reported during the night, and shops are beginning to open a little. Some of the mills have started work. The city is still very panicky, but feeling is getting better. Arrests up to date 341. Casualties: deaths so far ascertained 141,—42 Hindus, 99 Mussalmans; wounded 386,—219 Hindus, 167 Mussalmans.”

I should, Sir, first like to express, on behalf of Government, their very great regret at this tragedy and to express their sympathy with the relatives of those who have lost their lives, with those who have been injured and with those who have suffered loss or injury to property. The criticisms of the Honourable Members who have so far spoken have been mainly directed towards two points; firstly, that at the outset vigorous action was not taken by the local authorities, and secondly, an expression of surprise that these disorders should have taken so long to be brought under control. Now, Sir, Government are at an obvious disadvantage in answering those criticisms. They have received certain information about the course of events, but that information is incomplete, and for a very good reason. The local officers, for nearly a week now, have been engaged, night and day, in suppressing disorder, in doing their utmost to save the lives of innocent citizens, and they have not had the time to send daily reports; nor would I think any Member of this House desire that, until there is safety of life and property in Cawnpore, the local officers should be diverted from their primary duty of restoring order in order to send detailed reports to Government. Nevertheless, such information as we have goes to show that there was no lack of vigorous action at the outset. The trouble began about 2 P.M. on the 23rd.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): When?

**Mr. H. W. Emerson:** On the 24th,—I beg your pardon—first on the Mall where it took the form of breaking shop windows and of some damage to property. Action was immediately taken there, and the trouble stopped. Later, in the afternoon, trouble began inside the city and the cause was that stated by several Members, namely, attempts to force Muslim shop-keepers, against their will, to shut their shops. That also was of a local character and was quickly brought under control. As soon as the trouble began, the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police themselves went into the city. They sent 250 of their armed reserve also into the city and they made their dispositions. Later, in the evening, further trouble occurred, but that was not of a serious character and was also stopped. During the nights of the 24th and 25th there was sporadic trouble in the city. Some of the troops in Cawnpore were however called out, and when, early in the morning of the 25th, it appeared that the trouble was likely to assume more serious dimensions, aid was at once requisitioned from Lucknow. There was no delay in sending reinforcements. 200 police, mainly armed, were despatched at once from Lucknow. The last of them arrived in the afternoon. Two companies of the East Yorks were also sent from Lucknow and they reached Cawnpore about three in the afternoon. On the same day, that is March, 25th, orders were issued to other districts to send reinforcements as soon as possible, as all the available men in the Lucknow reserve had already been sent. These requisitions were met with as little delay as possible. The position on the 28th was that the total reinforcements from outside districts were 567, making a total, with the Lucknow reserve, of 872, in addition to the ordinary city force. This was further augmented by reliefs of 250 men. Now, from the facts I have mentioned, it seems to be unfair to assume, certainly in the absence of more complete information, that the local authorities in Cawnpore and the Local Government in Lucknow failed to take all measures possible in order to reinforce the local forces at Cawnpore.

Now, the second criticism I have to attempt to answer is that with all the police and all the troops at their command, the local officers were unable immediately to bring this rioting under control. Now, I am speaking with a certain amount of experience of disturbances of this sort and I have read the reports of many other disturbances which I myself have not seen. Generally speaking, there are certain features common to all communal disturbances,—either they are brought under control within the first few hours or, if they are not so brought under control, the task of controlling them is a gradual process. The reasons for this are, I think, clear. When disorder spreads in a large city, it does not usually take the form of clashes between two opposing mobs, one belonging to one community and the other to the other community. If it took that form, it would be comparatively easy to deal with, but it takes the form of frequent raids from one mohalla into another by small gangs of Muhammadans or Hindus or of members of other communities . . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed** (Rajshahi Division: Muhammadan Rural): What about your reserve police which was posted from corner to corner in the city with guns and bayonets?

**Mr. H. W. Emerson:** . . . . . or it takes the form of raids within the same mohalla where the residents belong to both communities. Still more frequently—and this is the feature that is the most difficult to deal

with—it takes the shape of isolated sporadic attacks on individuals in which two or three men pounce upon an innocent passer-by from some lurking place or some corner in a bye lane of the city. There is only one effective way of dealing with a situation of that sort; and that is by constant patrolling and intensive picketing. Now, constant patrolling and intensive picketing assume a large force of troops and police. If the force is not adequate to deal with the whole of the situation, the most it can do is to restore order in particular areas. And that is what was done at Cawnpore. As soon as reinforcements came in, picketing and patrolling were put into practice and gradually one portion of the city after another was brought into order. But, Sir, those who have seen these disturbances know the great difficulty that the police and the troops and the local officers have to encounter. They cannot achieve the impossible. It is primarily a matter of man-power; the forces have to be brought in before control can be obtained.

It has been suggested that Government officers and the police are more ready to deal with political disorders than with communal disturbances. That charge has been often made. It is almost unnecessary for me to say that it has never been supported by any evidence that would satisfy any reasonable person. And I can conceive no worse dereliction of duty on the part of any civil officer or any police officer than deliberately to stand by while the lives of innocent citizens are in jeopardy.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Did you arrest any people on the night of the 23rd March at all? Mr. Swarup has already said that you were the silent spectators and did nothing on the 23rd, 24th and 25. Can you explain that?

**Mr. President:** Order, order.

**Mr. H. W. Emerson:** I repeat, Sir, that I can conceive no worse failure of duty than any act of that kind.

At present quiet has been restored in Cawnpore and it is the prayer of everyone that quiet will be maintained and there will be no recurrence of disorder either there or in any other place. We should all be glad to think that the disturbances that have occurred recently in the United Provinces are isolated events and that with the restoration of peace in Cawnpore, we shall see the end of a tragic story. But it would be folly for us to be wilfully blind to the writing on the wall and to fail to take precautions lest unhappily this trouble recurs in other places. It is the duty of the public, of members of the community and of Government to do everything that is possible to see that events of this sort do not occur.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Have you discharged your duty? Did you arrest.....

**Mr. President:** Order, order.

**Mr. H. W. Emerson:** So far as Government are concerned, the House has the right to know what it is able to do. It can do a certain amount in this direction; it cannot achieve the impossible. It must be primarily the task of leaders of public opinion and of all communities to maintain friendly relations and good feeling and to restore them when these feelings have been disturbed. In the first place, it may be stated unequivocally that it is the duty of Government and of everyone of its servants to do everything that is possible to foster and promote good relations and friendly feelings between the various communities, and it is equally their duty,

[Mr. H. W. Emerson.]

when causes of friction arise, to do their utmost to remove them. If unfortunately feelings run high and there is danger of troubles, then it is the business of local officers to be vigilant, to take all precautions that are possible and to learn from experience elsewhere. And in this respect I would like to say that the Government of India will study the reports that they have received from time to time of communal disorders of this kind. They will examine them with a view to learning the lessons they contain and will pass on to Local Governments information regarding the measures that have proved successful both in preventing their occurrence and in stopping them when they have occurred. They will do their utmost within their powers to see that occurrences of this kind do not stain the record of this country.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum** (Nominated Non-Official): Will the Honourable Member please tell me whether the police or military had to open fire on this occasion?

**Mr. H. W. Emerson**: So far we have had no information that firing was resorted to. But I cannot say whether it was or it was not. We cannot give a specific answer to that question.

**Nawab Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum**: Do we take it that the Government simply resorted to the arrest of the law breakers and ordered no firing when they came across rioting on such a colossal scale?

**Mr. H. W. Emerson**: I do not think any such assumption can be made.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I must congratulate the Honourable the Mover of this motion for having brought forward the specific facts in connection with this dastardly episode and presented them in a manner worthy of this House. I also congratulate the representative from Cawnpore, Mr. Bagla, on presenting his case with that restraint of feeling which only shows how much he feels in that matter. So has Mr. Hari Raj Swarup, the representative of the Landholders in the United Provinces, spoken on their behalf. The Honourable Mr. Emerson made his maiden speech this session in this House, but he has delivered that speech without the usual blushes of a maid. Sir, he has given us some facts about the communal situation, the communal riots in Cawnpore. He has also given us one or two little essays arising from his own experience as to how communal situations should be handled. Obviously his speech discloses one glaring discrepancy in regard to the bureaucratic methods of dealing with matters of law and order. When they have to deal with the political situation, they have got one method of diagnosis, one method of dealing with the situation. When they have to deal with the communal situation, where European lives are not involved, they begin to think of the lanes and by-lanes in which the dregs of society quietly crawl, only surreptitiously creeping up and take away lives. They are not dealing then with clashing mobs, they are dealing with clashing snakes. That is the sum and substance of what he said. There are lanes in Cawnpore, there are by-lanes in Cawnpore, and the military could not crawl there, their own police could not go there and these assassins coming out of their little caves dig into other people's houses and

set fire to them and escape. That is the sum and substance of what Mr. Emerson has told us. In other words, the Government of this country have no heart to deal with communal crises in the same manner in which they deal with political crises. The lives that have been daily lost in Cawnpore tragically disclose the incompetence of the present authorities to maintain law and order where Indian lives are concerned. According to the facts published in the *Leader*, a very responsible newspaper of Allahabad, edited by an *ex*-Minister, a very responsible gentleman, noted for his moderation; according to this paper, the figures supplied by the Commissioner which are presumably hospital statistics are as follows. The number of casualties on each day following the 24th stood like this. On the 25th, 146 were injured and 50 killed; on the 26th, 75 were injured and 60 killed; on the 27th, 42 were injured and 19 killed; and on the 28th, up to 10 A.M. two were injured and one killed. The Honourable Member was pleased to furnish this House with information as to how many Muhammadans and how many Hindus were killed. I am today concerned with how many Indians were killed and as to how far the English Government in India was capable of stopping the progressive murder of peaceful citizens. I would ask Mr. Emerson and his Government to imagine that, instead of the Indian lives lost in Cawnpore, instead of Indian women and children murdered in Cawnpore, European lives had been lost and European women and children were murdered in that place, from the 24th and onwards. Would Mr. Emerson, I ask then have stood up in his place and so placidly and so unemotionally, like an essayist, read out his experience of former riots and methods of dealing with recent happenings? There would have been martial law in Cawnpore then.

**Mr. B. Das** (Orissa Division: Non-Muhammadan): As in Sholapur.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** As my Honourable friend, Mr. Das, says, as it was in Sholapur, though to my knowledge in Sholapur so many Europeans were not murdered as in Cawnpore so many Indians have been murdered. There was less need for martial law in Sholapur and real need for martial law in Cawnpore. Is martial law incapable of creeping into lanes and by-lanes? At least history provides us with one lane in Amritsar where martial law was capable of penetrating. It is all very good for Mr. Emerson to stand up in this House and tell us about the difficulties of stopping communal passions from developing but I know how it is very difficult indeed for outsiders to deal with lives and property and to preserve the safety of the Indian people. That accounts for the carnage of communal riots spreading year after year ever since the beginning of the British rule in India. That, Sir, is a condemnation, a terrible indictment of this alien administration, an exposure of their incompetence to maintain law and order where the Indian prestige, Indian lives and Indian honour and Indian property are concerned. (Applause.) Wherever there was a political event, wherever there was a political happening, wherever the prestige of these foreigners was involved, there was a riotous display of bureaucratic force and police power. I see Mr. Emerson is perhaps trying to belittle the situation in Cawnpore, but I ask him to go to Bombay and to think of Bombay happenings. What happened? Men and women marching in peaceful procession to pull down the foreign flag and salute their own national flag were insulted, the police were let loose like hounds of Bellona, let loose on those harmless inoffensive people, consisting of a large number of ladies.

[Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer.]

The hospitals of Bombay will tell the story of the *lathi* charges and their after effects, and the jails all over India will tell how the jails were filled up by a foreign Government when their prestige and their honour were involved, even though their lives were not so much in jeopardy. On the other hand when our men are being butchered in the streets by hooligans, a hooligan Government abdicates. Sir, the other day we were told in a place which was full of high idens and by a great Englishman who has done a great deal for this country, we were told of the outbreaks of "savagery". But there has been no more savagery on this God's earth than the rule of one people by another, and so long as that foreign rule continues, I am afraid these communal riots will continue to tarnish the fair name of this beloved Motherland of ours. Lives will continue to be lost and we will be told that snakes lie in the lanes and by-lanes. But when there is a political situation as in the Punjab, we and our people are asked to "crawl like snakes on our stomachs," as Lord Curzon put it in the House of Lords in condemning that brutal order.

Sir, law and order has abdicated and these law and order men seated on those Benches have solemnly proclaimed that in this transitional stage they are not going to stop or prevent the Provincial Governments from giving a long rope to communal fanatics and communal rioters, to men who want to mar the peaceful atmosphere that has been created. Sir, the most shocking thing in Cawnpore was this. There were rescue parties, and in one rescue party perished one of my dearest friends, Vidyarthi, a man who was a friend of the Hindu, a friend of the Muslim, a friend of every community except perhaps the police community, except perhaps the Government community, whom he had time in and time out enraged both by his newspaper articles and by his Gandhian propaganda. Newspaper accounts—and I need not read them as I presume Mr. Emerson has read them—newspaper accounts show that Mr. Vidyarthi was protecting from the hands of the hooligans unfortunate families, men, women and children. The police watched on: they withdrew their help. Such a thing is heard in no other part of the world and seen in no others part of the world but in India where the police watch their erstwhile political opponents trying to evolve order out of chaos without the resources which the police themselves enjoy. If the police of Cawnpore were honest about the business, they would have come to the help of the rescue parties instead of watching the cold-blooded murder of these helpless participators in the creation of peace. There has been a grave dereliction of duty on the part of the local authorities, so far as the information in my possession goes, and in justification of my statement I will, as my time is limited, read just one or two lines from the observations of the *Leader* which have not been challenged:

"In the report of our special correspondent"—says the "*Leader*" dated March 30,— "who visited what was described as the worst affected area in the company of a number of leading citizens and the Commissioner and the District Magistrate; it was stated that no policeman was visible for miles, the leaders drew pointed attention of the two officers to this fact and that at once place the cars were surrounded by the people of the area who complained that there was no police guard anywhere in the vicinity. . . . etc.

These facts Government themselves know and I wish that they will immediately care to appoint a committee of inquiry consisting of prominent non-officials besides Government men to go into this ghastly episode

which only reveals how crudely, how clumsily, how irresponsibly, how recklessly the police on the spot did not do their duty in regard to law and order.

**Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I do not like the idea of bringing such matters on the floor of this House for discussion. It is really a domestic concern of the two communities who live in this land. Therefore, although such riots have been happening for the last so many years, my attempt has always been to talk to my Hindu friends who know me most intimately and discuss with them the ways and means for suppressing these riots. That course I have always adopted and I have never brought any such case to the notice of this House. If we bring these things to the notice of this House and try to find the root cause of the evil, we shall do nothing but wash dirty linen before the outsiders, so to speak. That is the reason why I have never liked to discuss such matters before this House composed as it is. I have recently complained of it to men whom, though I respect, I hold responsible, and who in my humble opinion can remedy the evil. But the matter has now been brought before this House and the incident at Cawnpore is not one which can be passed over as something small. I find that grave consequences may follow from it. I feel that I would be failing in my duty if I did not speak out my whole mind at this juncture. I feel that I may be hurting the feelings of many of my friends on this side if I give out my views and therefore I would apologise to my friends and ask them to give me their indulgence and hear my point of view on this question. I cannot understand why we should criticise the Government alone. Government are certainly to be criticised for not taking precautionary measures and for not being prompt in reinforcing the police or the military forces for protecting the people. That is one thing which has always happened, but in spite of criticisms and very vigorous and violent criticisms, the thing has not come to an end. Why? Because there is something else behind it, and unless that something else is tackled properly, I think we shall not see an end of these unfortunate happenings. What that something else is has got to be seen. It has been more patent in Cawnpore than in other riots which have happened during these past years, because we do not find the cow at the bottom of the riot nor music before mosques at the bottom of it. It is a body of men who want to force their view on the people who do not like to obey them. I do not think any of my friends here can challenge me on this point. The plain thing which every one can see and cannot deny is that here were shopkeepers who did not like to observe *hartal* according to the mandate of the Congress and there were people who wanted that the order of the Congress should be obeyed by them. Of course altercations would ensue and it would certainly end in affray and the trouble would continue. Every one of us can imagine very easily how these things grow.

The simple psychology of the human mind is enough to show what is behind all this. Is it not the enforcement of the will of a body of men on the will of another party? It is clear that there are two communities living side by side: one does not want to obey the Congress orders, and the other wants that the order should be obeyed. A conflict is inevitable, and if it is to be avoided, it cannot be avoided by accusing the police and the military. It can be avoided by those leaders of the

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two communities, by those sensible men who claim to have the goodwill of the communities at heart: it is for them to find out ways and means for remedying the evil. I think I should not say anything on this point at great length. It is enough for my friends who want to understand my point of view to know what I mean. I submit that we have got to recognise facts. Unless we recognise facts, we will not be able to diagnose the disease and the remedies will be far far away from us. The fact is that there are two communities, one wants to impose its will upon the other, and the other wants to avoid it; a conflict is inevitable. If you want that these things should be rare in India, you should first of all try to educate public opinion in such a manner that the domination of one community over the other must cease and cease at once. That is the only course to be adopted by those who have the goodwill of India at heart. I would even say that the fate of India will be doomed if the step which I am suggesting is not taken up at once and by every one of us who feels for the people of this country. I should say that, although the Congress movement has been called non-violent, still I am tempted to say, and my friends will permit me to say, that the non-violence has been exhibited against those who have got brute force behind them; but the element of violence cannot be eschewed by a human being and it is displayed as against those who are considered to be helpless. I have my own personal experience in the matter, that Muslims have been murdered in solitary lanes. A Muslim who is weak and imbecile has been murdered in a helpless condition: these are the things which ought to be stopped at once. It is the personal experience of such horrible things that made me sever my connection with the Congress. I cannot persuade myself to see these things happening and forget them in the interests of something else. Of course I know that there are higher interests which should be looked to at all times, but there are also lower interests which should not be sacrificed, if doing so is going to affect the very foundation of society. I should say the remedy lies in our recognising the fact that there are two communities and that the two communities want to develop themselves in their own way. Let them develop themselves in their own way. Do not stand in their way. Give them free choice to choose their own path of evolution. Then and then only the two communities would come nearer. It may be that if we are more earnest, we may see the day coming nearer, but if we are not in earnest, the day will be far far distant from us. Therefore I would conclude by asking our friends to recognise facts, to go to the root of the evil and try to remedy that root cause. Then and then only we shall see an end of these unfortunate tragedies.

**Mr. Arthur Moore** (Bengal: European): Sir, this morning the Honourable the Home Member appealed to us very earnestly to deal with this subject with restraint. The reply to that appeal was the speech of **Mr. Ranga Iyer**. I am sorry that after delivering that speech he has not remained in the House. I am bound to say that I do not think that I have ever listened in this House to a more disgraceful utterance. I doubt if I have ever listened to a more obviously insincere utterance. (Hear, hear.) I commend to the House much more the tone of my friend, **Mr. Shafee Daoodi**. **Mr. Ranga Iyer**, I am sure, left the impression upon all minds that there must be some very unpleasant trail to be

covered. What are the facts about the European community? I have no hesitation in saying that if some complete stranger had been present in this House, knowing nothing of the subject and listening to Mr. Ranga Iyer, he would have derived the impression that there had been an appalling massacre of Indians in Cawnpore with every circumstance of indignity and outrage and that this had been committed by Europeans. He endeavoured to establish . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** He did not say that.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** He went as near it as he could . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** No, no.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** His suggestion was that these terrible outrages upon Indians had been perpetrated, and the whole trend of his speech was to indicate that Europeans were responsible. Now I should like to begin by saying that we do not pretend to sit in judgment upon the facts of the case. But—entirely contrary to what Mr. Ranga Iyer asked the House to believe,—Cawnpore is a town where there is a large and important European community, and where the Europeans have very great interests indeed. Some one, unfortunately for him, mentioned Sholapur. He endeavoured to establish the proposition that the Government would ruthlessly shoot down in towns where European interests were involved, but that they would sit back and do nothing where there were no Europeans to be considered. Now, we must all know the history of the unfortunate communal disturbances that have broken out repeatedly in town after town in recent years, where there were no Europeans interested at all, or to an extent comparable to that in Cawnpore, and where British troops had to be called in to restore order. The very instance of Sholapur which he cited is such an instance. Therefore, I need not go on with it . . . .

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** When did the troops pour in to Cawnpore to restore order?

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Honourable Member is not yielding.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** We all know . . .

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** I should like to know from the Honourable Member when did the troops appear on the scene to restore order?

**Mr. President:** The Honourable Member is on his feet. He must yield, otherwise the Honourable Member cannot interrupt him.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** I don't want to yield, Sir. We all know the troops were called in to restore order in Sholapur. With regard to this terrible situation that has arisen in Cawnpore, as I say, we do not attempt to sit in judgment, because we have some information that the European community in Cawnpore is inclined to think that the authorities ought to have acted with greater promptitude.

**Mr. O. S. Ranga Iyer:** Why did not the authorities in Cawnpore act with greater promptitude?

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** I do not know. We do not know.

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** You read your own newspaper.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** What I resent, Sir, is the suggestion of the Honourable Member that there were no European interests in Cawnpore which were in danger and for that reason the Government did nothing . . .

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** I made no such statement. What I said was . . .

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** I will not give way . . . .

**Mr. President:** Order, order.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** The European community in Cawnpore has suffered heavily indeed in these disorders. I do not know if any lives have been lost—I do not know it yet; but what I do know is that a great deal of damage has been done to property. Therefore, the whole argument of the Honourable Member falls to the ground, but there seems to be some agreement in the European community in Cawnpore that there was some indecision shown in the earlier stages by the Government . . . .

**Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer:** Fatal indecision, if you please, resulting in the loss of so many lives.

**Mr. Arthur Moore:** As regards that, we are not in a position to sit in judgment. We do not know all the facts, but this we do know, and it must be obvious to all, that the Government was not in a position on that day to reinforce particular points with extra police, because of these demonstrations which were being forced by one particular party, (I mean these enforced *hartals*). The likelihood of those demonstrations causing a tension in all parts of the country was known, and therefore it was impossible to denude one town for the sake of another. That was obviously a difficulty in which the Government was placed. As I said, we do not know all the facts, and we do not wish to sit in judgment. We all deplore the terrible happening, and I think most terrible also is the spirit in which it was treated by the Honourable Member.

**Mr. A. Das** (Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I do not think it is proper for Honourable Members of this House, in considering this motion, to take Cawnpore as an isolated instance. There have been similar instances within the last months unfortunately in other important districts like Benares, Mirzapur, Agra and others. I think it is useless or futile to discuss the causes of those outbreaks. We all know that some party, either Hindus or Mussalmans, were to be blamed, and once the matter gets out of the hands of the leaders and it gets into the hands of a few misguided persons, then it becomes a question of mob psychology, and where mob psychology is concerned, it is impossible to apportion the blame to any particular community, because it is the mob which is concerned—it does not consider the question of numbers or community; any person who gets into his misguided head to hit a man behind his back will do so . . . . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** What was the motive behind this trouble?

**Mr. A. Das:** I hope my friend will not disturb me. \*

The main point to which I want to draw the attention of the House is this. Although I agree with my Honourable friend sitting over there, who says that the responsibility lies with the leaders of both the communities to make the people understand that they should not indulge in such matters in future, is that the end of it? After we have said that, can it be said that we have discharged our duties? I submit not. One matter has not been brought out prominently in the debate, and I would like to refer to it, and it is this. Wherever there has been a communal riot, besides the leaders of both communities, the police as well as the district authorities are responsible to a great extent. Have the authorities ever taken any action, after those riots were over to bring the police and the district authorities to book and to warn them that, should any more riots take place in their jurisdiction, they would be transferred to some other place? On the other hand what do we find? After the riots are quelled, both the police officers as well as the district authorities are praised, and the Government also defend their action by saying that they have done their duty, and Government never try to censure its officers for what they have not done. That is one point which I wish to bring forward to the notice of the Honourable Members. I do not think that in the numerous riots that have recently taken place and in which a large number of innocent lives have been lost, Government have ever cared to take any disciplinary action either against the police officers or the district authorities for their failure to take prompt action. After the riots stop, what do the Government do? They either in this House or in the Provincial Councils tell the Members that they have done all they could possibly do and that they could do no better; they were handicapped in this way or that way, which is all eye-wash. I submit, Sir, that is not the way to deal with riots of this character. If once a riot takes place in a district and the Government feel that the police officials or the district authorities have not taken action promptly to deal with the situation, then the officials directly responsible for maintaining law and order in the district should be brought to book. The Government should take severe disciplinary action against such officials so that such riots may not take place in future. That is one suggestion which I wish to place before Government. Instead of doing that, what do the Government do? Instead of taking the responsible police officers to task for neglecting their fundamental duty of maintaining law and order, they merely come forward and say they were handicapped owing to this or owing to that reason and want to defend them? We all know that the Government were handicapped. But what have you done to prevent a thing like that happening in future? Simply expressing your inability to do this or that will not remedy matters.

There is one other point which has not been brought forward in connection with the Cawnpore riots. It has been suggested in the newspapers—I do not think the Government Member referred to it in his speech—that Mr. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, whose loss we all deplore, while he was going into the disturbed area and had rescued a number of Muhammadan families from the hands of Hindu hooligans, was accompanied by a Deputy Magistrate and some police officers—I do not know to what community they belonged. After Mr. Vidyarthi had rescued two or three people, both the Deputy Magistrate and two constables who were in his company left him alone and departed to some other place. Was that a

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proper thing to do for responsible police officers? I have not heard the Government Member say that the officers in question disregarded their duty in not giving assistance to Mr. Vidyarthi, but I have heard police officers say, when such riots take place, that they have got no orders to do anything in the matter. They generally stand as mere spectators and will not move an inch. Mr. Vidyarthi's case is an instance in point. Mr. Vidyarthi was himself accompanied by the Deputy Magistrate and two constables; he rescued some Hindu and Muhammadan families; in fact he seems to have rescued more Muhammadan families than Hindus and while he was doing that kind of rescue work, both the Deputy Magistrate as well as the constables quietly deserted him and left him in the lurch. Is that an action which the Government would tolerate? I do not wish to say anything more on the question, but I do wish to make a humble suggestion that the Government should not gloss over the whole thing whenever any riot takes place. For instance, last month a very severe riot took place at Benares and what did they do? They did not make any inquiry. If they had done so, they would have been able to find out to what extent the police were to blame, to what extent the district officials were to blame. So I submit in all such cases they should take proper action against the officials concerned and they should not shirk their responsibility in the matter.

**Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup** (Ambala Division: Non-Muhammedan):

I am quite in agreement with my Honourable friend, Maulana Shafee Daoodi, that we should not have brought this matter before this House. The other day when a similar motion was brought before the House, I took exception to it and raised an objection. Today, again, my view was the same, I objected to this motion of adjournment. The Maulana Sahib has however stated that the water had gone too high, therefore he could not control his feelings and he wanted to speak out his mind before this House. I take this opportunity just to tell him that he is working under a very wrong impression in the matter, having been simply carried away by emotions. In the first place, I want to make it clear that the riot at Benares and the riot at Cawnpore were not communal at all. Though I admit that in consequence of what happened, the two communities took part in opposing each other,--but if we go to the root cause of the trouble, we will find that it does not savour of communalism in the least. There was a period of Hindu-Muslim rioting some years back, as Maulana Shafee Daoodi himself has referred to it, that the origin of dispute, then was music before mosques, the sacrifice of a cow or some similar other thing. These were the things that touched the religious susceptibilities of one community or of the other, so they broke out in rioting. Those riots could naturally be called communal riots. But as regards the riots at Benares and at Cawnpore as I stated before, I would not call them communal at all.

Let us come to the origin of the riot in Cawnpore. On the next day after Bhagat Singh's execution, the Congress or a certain other group of youths called upon the people to observe a *hartal*. In Cawnpore it happened that some child volunteers went about and asked the people to close their shops. What I have to say is that this question of *hartal* was neither Hindu nor Muhammadan question. The Congress is

composed of the Hindus as well as Mussalmans. In a good many cities of the Punjab and of other provinces the Muhammadans also observed this *hartal*. Therefore, Sir, if child or boy volunteers go about and ask Muhammadan shopkeepers to close their shops, there is no question of communalism or religious susceptibility coming in it. These children it is reported were beaten or were abused by those shopkeepers. . .

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Why did not the Muhammadan shopkeepers close their shops?

**Mr. President:** Order, order. The Honourable Member ought not to interrupt.

**Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup:** They were free to do it or not to do it, that has nothing to do with the matter. Similarly, in the case of the riot at Benares, the question of the boycott of foreign cloth, was not a concern of the Hindus as such. Coming to Cawnpore, I have to say that Mr. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, the President of the United Provinces Congress Committee, who was killed the next day after the breaking out of the riot, was the principal figure. I have been reading his life work in a prominent newspaper. It is said there that he was the most deadly enemy of communalism meaning thereby his hostility to the cause of the Hindus. It was also mentioned in that paper that in the elections of 1926 he was opposing a candidate who was supported by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai and he defeated him by a large majority. This fact was adduced to show that the man was not a communalist at all, that he was not a Hindu Sabhaite, or Hindu in spirit. Then again we take his action during this riot. He was rescuing people on the 24th and 25th March. When he went first, he was accompanied by certain officials, but they had to leave him, I do not know why, but he continued the work of rescuing people in trouble. The report has it that he rescued about 150 Muhammadans in the Hindu Mohallas and brought them to safe quarters. He was accompanied by Hindu volunteers and then by a Muhammadan volunteer when he was stabbed. The volunteer earnestly entreating his co-religionists to abstain from the foul deed. He offered himself for being killed. He stood for Hindu-Muslim unity, and I want to submit this to you, Sir, that there was no Hindu-Moslem question in this whole affair.

If you read the report of the resolution of the Congress that was passed upon his death, you will find that the man died for a noble cause, namely, the Hindu-Muslim unity, and in trying to save the lives of Muhammadans in that riot. And among the Congress leaders who have passed that resolution are prominent Muhammadans. The Muhammadan leaders deplore this riot and deplore his death, and therefore, I say that the cause of this riot at Cawnpore in its origin is far from being communal. On the other hand, it is because certain people believed in observing *hartal* on a certain day. Among them, there may have been a larger number of Hindus, as the population of India has got a majority of Hindus, but along with them there are Muhammadans also in the same proportion, and both of them are in reality jointly responsible for the happening. That is my position, that these riots are not communal. I objected to this motion being brought before the House for the very reason that we should not give them a communal colour. That was my reason.

[Bhai Parmanand Devta Sarup.]

Sir, but as the thing has come up, I want to say one thing more. Maulana Shafee Daoodi says that one community wants to dominate and force its will over another community. This, I submit, is not right. He says that he has got experience, and in the same way, I may say that I have also experience of many such riots. We all know what has happened quite recently in Sindh and East Bengal. Although I did not go to Dacca or Kishoreganj, I have been to Sukkur and I saw how the Hindus in 200 villages of one district had been utterly ruined by the dominating population in Sind. That is the reason why the people of Sind at this time are crying themselves hoarse against its separation from Bombay. All the same, Sir, I say that there is no question of one community being bent on dominating over another community. Some Muhammadans hold Congress views and observe *hartal*, while there are others who do not want to do so. Similar is the case with the Hindus. Then there are differences in views. Whenever this difference becomes acute, there is a clash. There are among us persons whether Hindus or Muhammadans, who give a communal colour and communal rioting begins.

I quite agree with my Honourable friend, I do not put the whole blame on the authorities. My view is that it is not the authorities who are responsible for this rioting. It is the public, who should be responsible for the keeping of peace and order. If the public do not realise their responsibility of helping to keep peace in the country, then no authority and no Government on earth can establish peace. I agree so far with my Honourable friend, Maulana Shafee Daoodi, but the question is, how can you bring it about? We have to change our mentality and see all things in their true colours. Where the Muhammadan religion is attacked or treated with disrespect, I can understand their rising in a riot against the Hindus. But the Hindus cannot be blamed where an independent body, consisting of both the Hindus and Muhammadans, wants that a certain thing be done in a particular manner. It is the Muhammadans who give it a communal colour and begin to riot and go on rioting, and the Hindus have to defend themselves. I would tell my Honourable friend, if he is really anxious, as he has said, for Hindu-Muslim unity,—and he has been trying to propagate this idea—I would be ever ready and most willing to co-operate with him in the matter so that both communities could come to a real understanding. (Applause).

**Mr. Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural):

Sir, I have a lot of friends in Cawnpore both among Hindus and Mussalmans. I have been connected with Cawnpore for many years, and I have generally a larger number of friends among the Hindus than among the Mussalmans there. I had also the fortune of representing Cawnpore City and the Cawnpore district in the Council of State for two years. I am very well acquainted with them and I have got my sympathies with the people who have suffered in these riots. When we had this motion of adjournment, we wanted to talk on this matter in a different spirit and with a different motive. It has taken a different shape today. My idea in getting up and supporting this motion of adjournment in the morning was that this House might come to certain conclusions and by their speeches express such condemnation of this kind of riot, so that it may never occur again. I thought that the responsible Members of this House

would go deeply into the cause and try to ameliorate the feelings which exist today in the whole country. Riots have taken place in 5 out of the 7 cities of the United Provinces—Benares, Cawnpore and Agra. Only four cities have been left. I think it is no use our throwing blame on the Government or justifying Government for the part which they have played. We should try our level best to put a stop to this kind of affair by expressing our opinion and going deeply into the causes and trying to remove them. I do not think that any one in the House would deny that a section of the population has been responsible for creating this feeling in the country. There has been created a feeling which was bound to find vent in one way or the other. That feeling was created by the every day observance of *hartals* by force—not by persuasion. I have had experience of the *hartals* which have been observed. They have not been voluntary. On every occasion a band of young men go about the city asking the people to close their shops and so preventing them from earning their living. This is done on every slight occasion. This is becoming so common. Formerly we used to hear of these *hartals* once a year. Now every day there is a *hartal*. There is a certain limit to the patience of the people who have to suffer every day. These shopkeepers must earn their living for their families and children. On every little thing happening in the country, a band of young men go about asking people to close their shops. I could understand the *hartal* if it was voluntary. There are people who do not want to close their shops and yet they are compelled to do so and are thereby deprived of their earnings. This can be tolerated up to a certain limit and up to a certain time. India is at present in such a state that the people have not enough to eat. Agriculturists are dying. When the country is in that state, people are compelled to stop all work. This has been getting on the nerves of people. What happened in 1921 and 1922 is happening today, in exactly the same way. When you compare what happened then and what is happening now, you will find that they are exactly the same. I can blame the Government only for not putting a stop to all this kind of nonsense. They have not taken prompt measures to stop this when it started. These peaceful *hartals* end in violence and I appeal to Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress to see their way to put a stop to this kind of thing, so that what has happened in three cities of the United Provinces and two villages may not occur again.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** I quite agree with my Honourable friend, Bhai Parmanand, that it is a misnomer to call the riot at Cawnpore a communal riot. The riot in the district of Mirzapur may certainly be called a communal riot, where the whole adult Muslim population of a village was murdered ruthlessly, because it was considered that a Muslim zemindar had injured the religious feelings of the tenants of the village. But the riots at Benares and Cawnpore cannot be called communal. If they were communal riots, I would not have been so much disturbed. Ignorance is prevalent in India and the people of India are known to be very susceptible to anything against their religious feelings. The riots in Benares and the riots in Cawnpore were nothing short of deliberate and organised political attacks and it is for that reason that I am very much concerned. Here we have a politically trained body of educated young men who get military training like the Army. They put on *khaki* uniforms; they get physical training and they are out every day to force innocent

[Maulvi Muhammad Yakub.]

citizens to agree to their will, and if they do not obey, they are put to death, their shops are looted and their houses are burnt. The great pity of it is that these occurrences are called non-violent. If this non-violent movement could end in these violent outbreaks, then I wonder what form the movement will take when it becomes violent. My strong objection to this movement is this, that not a single responsible Congress leader has condemned this sort of activity on the part of the Congress people (Hear, hear),—and what is the result? The result of this is that these people have got courage, they think that if they kill others, they gain their object, and that if they are injured or killed, they become martyrs; and therefore this sort of things is going on, and the Congress is sitting quiet, not taking any objection to this movement, and still they say that their movement is non-violent. (Hear, hear.)

**Mr. B. Das:** I strongly object to the Congress being libelled in this manner.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** I hold the Congress alone responsible for these things. The main body of the Hindus is quite sound. The uneducated Hindus and Mussalmans—not those who are politically minded—are still the friends of each other, they call themselves brothers and cousins, but it is these politically-minded Congress volunteers who want to dominate over others, who want to impose their will upon others, who want to interfere with the free will and liberty of those who do not agree with them. If people do not agree with them, then they are prepared to take their lives by violent means . . . .

**Mr. B. Das:** I strongly object to these insinuations.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Here is a statement which was issued at Karachi about the Cawnpore affair. In this statement they say:

"We deeply deplore the terrible tragedy at Cawnpore resulting in the death of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, one of the Congress workers who was trying to rescue those who were in danger."

Now, Sir, I am extremely grieved to learn that this noble soul was lost in this political riot. I have as much sympathy for him as any of my Honourable friends, but, Sir, I have a great objection to this statement this unsympathetic statement, in which there is not a single word of sympathy for the poor Mussalmans, men, women and children who were slaughtered. What is this? Is this the sympathy which the Congress want to show to the world?

**An Honourable Member:** Read on.

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** I have read the whole thing, but I do not find that there is a single word of sympathy for anybody else except Mr. Vidyarthi, whose death I also sincerely deplore and for whose relatives I have the greatest sympathy. So, Sir, I say that while you have made a truce, you have withdrawn your forces, but the other side are, I say, not complying with the conditions of the truce, and probably I think the riots at Cawnpore were encouraged, because they knew that Government, bound by the terms of the truce, have withdrawn their forces. (Hear, hear.) Government have been blamed and Government have been charged for not calling for the military and for not using the armed police in time, but, Sir, we know in this very House Government have been condemned, so many times, for using military for the purposes of internal riots. (Hear, hear.) We have condemned Government, we have

said that the military force should not be requisitioned in order to subdue such riots. We have charged Government for not allowing so-called peaceful processions to pass through the city (Hear, hear), and for restricting their liberty. So the Government are on the horns of a dilemma. If they do this, then we lay the charge of repression at their door, but if they try to act according to the terms of the truce, then the result is what happened at Cawnpore,—and we charge Government for inaction. Sir, I charge the Government with this that they did not fully gauge the situation and that they did not see how the settlement would work and what would be the result if truces are arrived at without listening to the weaker community, and behind their back.

**The Honourable Sir James Orerar** (Home Member): Mr. President, at an earlier stage I took it upon myself to ask every Honourable Member to speak during the course of this debate with the very greatest sense of responsibility: and that being so, I feel that it is incumbent upon me to observe a special measure of restraint,—as indeed I am glad to recognize that the majority of the Honourable Members who have spoken have done. At this late hour it is not my purpose to speak, nor indeed could I speak, at any great length. I desire to reiterate and to re-emphasise what fell from my Honourable friend, Mr. Emerson, namely, the very deep concern, the very profound regret which Government feel at these lamentable events—regret and concern which I know is shared by the House—and what I am aware is equally shared by the House is the Government's feeling of very great sympathy for all those who have suffered, all those innocent sufferers—and I fear they have been many—from these tragic occurrences. Now, Sir, I would like to say at the outset, that Honourable Members will doubtless recognise that we are not as yet in full possession, nor can we for some time be in full possession, of all the details of the events of the last few days in Cawnpore. As has been pointed out by the Honourable Member who preceded me, the first, the most essential and the most indispensable duty of all those who are concerned with affairs in Cawnpore must be the restoration of a stable state of order and tranquillity. To that all energies must be directed, and for that all available forces must be conserved.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** But what about the damage?

**The Honourable Sir James Orerar:** And for this reason I cannot take upon myself, because, my information is admittedly incomplete, to answer authoritatively the various allegations that have been made in the newspapers or been placed before the House derived from some such sources. I cannot undertake to do that because my information is not yet complete. But my information, Sir, is sufficiently complete for me to speak, with regard to the charge that the Local Government and its officers failed to deal with the situation promptly, effectively and with all the resources at their command, and that allegation, I maintain, my information is quite sufficient to refute. Now, Sir, when events of this character take place, it is very easy, and perhaps it is very natural, for the public or for individuals to say, "Well, these events have taken place; surely it must have been perfectly obvious to the authorities that they were going to take place"; and that proposition can, without very much difficulty, be enlarged and extended to the supposition that it was perfectly obvious that these things were going to take place and the authorities were lamentably to blame for not having taken the necessary

[Sir James Crerar.]

precautions. But, Sir, that is not the way that things actually happen. On the contrary, the common experience in relation to disturbances of this character is very much to the contrary. Those of us who have had personal and direct experience of disorders of this kind know—indeed, I think many Honourable Members of the House who have not had any direct, personal responsibility for such things must realize, that these things most commonly blow up like a tropical storm. Very frequently, indeed, the occasion may be—though in this case it was not—a trivial and an almost irrelevant incident the consequences of which no wit of man could possibly foresee; and I think therefore, Sir, that Honourable Members who are disposed to be critical, on information which is either inadequate or inaccurate, have to consider whether the position could possibly have presented itself so clearly and so plainly and so obviously to the authorities at Cawnpore. They must consider whether there was any reasonable apprehension of the occurrence of such events as unfortunately did actually occur. However, that may be, I must also remind the Honourable Members that, with the police force and the other forces of law and order, constituted as they are and disposed as they are, it is physically an utter impossibility for the maximum number of police or military to be invariably present at the particular spot where the maximum requirements may arise on a totally unexpected occasion. What can reasonably be required from local authorities is that they should form as speedily as possible a proper estimate of what is likely to occur. Having done so, they should not take panicky measures, of which they have often been accused, nor should they take unduly drastic measures, of which they have also often been accused but they should arrive at a judgment, on a reasonably considered assessment of the position, as to what is required and they should take the necessary steps as speedily and as promptly as possible. That, I maintain, is precisely what the local authorities in this case did do. I contend that, on the information before us that is the proper conclusion to arrive at unless and until more detailed information which may subsequently be at our disposal gives ground for modifying it. But that is the view which ought to be held by this House on the information before us. However, I do not intend to pursue that particular point.

Fortunately, as our latest information has indicated, peace has been restored at Cawnpore. I trust that it has been finally and definitely restored and the task which lies immediately ahead is to restore confidence, to relieve distress and to bring the principal and the real offenders to justice. I need not assure the House those duties will be carried out by the Local Government. But I would urge further that in carrying out those duties, the Local Government and the local authorities have a right to look for the co-operation and the assistance of the public. That point was brought out in the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Yamin Khan, and I should like to take this opportunity of reinforcing it. In the past, Sir, it has been my experience, and I am sure it has also been the experience of many others whose unfortunate duty it has been to deal with matters of this kind,—and I am the first to acknowledge it,—that we have received very great and very valuable assistance from leading men of the various communities that may have been involved, either in preventive measures, where prevention was possible, or in accelerating

the restoration of peace and confidence and normal conditions. In the difficult task which lies before the local authorities in Cawnpore, I feel sure that they will have the assistance to which they are entitled, and which I am confident, will not be withheld. If the restoration of peaceful conditions in Cawnpore is not to be more than temporary, it must, I submit, be based not simply on coercive or preventive action on the part of the authorities but on a healthy and emphatic re-assertion of public opinion. Not only to inculcate the extreme folly, the great injury and suffering inflicted by these incidents, but to ensure that public opinion will set against any reiteration of such events and that respect for the authority of law will be restored, are the immediate necessities of the position. And for that, as I said, the local authorities must look, and, I say once more, I feel sure they will not look in vain, to the assistance and the support of all enlightened men of goodwill, whether Muslims, Hindus or of any other community.

**Mr. K. Ahmed:** Will Government try to indemnify the loss and damage done to the people who are killed?

**Maulvi Muhammad Yakub:** Have Government caused the loss?

**The Honourable Sir James Orerar:** Now, Sir, I have placed upon myself the injunction that I shall, so far as possible, refrain from touching upon any matters of controversy. And what I propose in the few minutes which remain at my disposal is to touch upon matters which I hope will not be matters of controversy. I said just now that if the peace which has now been restored in Cawnpore is to be durable and stable, it must be confirmed by the healthy re-assertion of public opinion, and not merely by punitive or preventive or coercive measures on the part of the Government. More than one speaker in the course of his speech has pursued that argument to what I felt was an impressive and a logical conclusion. I am not concerned to join issue between what fell from Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi on the one hand, and Bhai Parmanand on the other because I think there was some essential unity in substance, though their points of view might be different. Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi, at any rate, struck what to me appeared to be a note not only of wisdom and of sagacity, but of logic and common sense. He pointed out that, whatever lessons might be drawn from the late lamentable events in Cawnpore, whatever measures have been taken to deal with those events while they were in progress, and whatever immediate measures now may be taken for the re-establishment of peace in Cawnpore, there was a deeper and a larger problem concerning the country. He pointed out how essential it was in the interests of India, with regard not to any temporary, or incidental differences that may arise, but on the great points of principle that are involved, that there should be peace and unity not merely superficial, not merely external, but an internal and a genuine peace and unity between the principal communities that inhabit this country. Now, Sir, it is not my purpose to follow Maulvi Muhammad Shafee Daoodi in his precise application of that general proposition. But the general proposition itself I do most heartily endorse.

**Mr. President:** Order, order. It is now six o'clock and the House stands adjourned till 11 o'clock tomorrow.

The House then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 31st March, 1931.