

Monday, 25th February, 1935

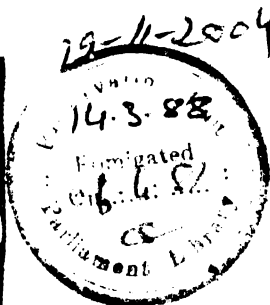
# THE COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

VOLUME I, 1935

*(11th February to 17th April, 1935)*

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## NINTH SESSION OF THE THIRD COUNCIL OF STATE, 1935



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# COUNCIL OF STATE.

Monday, 25th February, 1935.

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

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

NUMBER OF BRITISH AND INDIAN SOLDIERS BY ARMS ON 1ST OCTOBER, 1934.

44. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA: (a) Will Government be pleased to give the number of British soldiers employed in India in all sections of the army separately?

(b) What is the number of Indian soldiers at present?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the pay and allowances of a British soldier and those of an Indian soldier?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: (a) and (b). I lay a statement on the table giving the figures for the regular army.

(c) The pay and allowances of the British private soldier amount at the moment to about Rs. 850 per annum, while those of the Indian sepoy amount to about Rs. 285. These figures include, besides basic pay, messing, kit and clothing allowances and proficiency and deferred pay.

*Strength of British and Indian soldiers by arms on 1st October, 1934.*

Arm.	British.	Indian.
<i>Combatant services.</i>		
British Cavalry . . . . .	2,848	65
Artillery . . . . .	9,292	10,820
British Infantry . . . . .	38,636	1,854
British Infantry Training Company . . . . .	..	210
Tank Corps . . . . .	1,156	..
Indian Cavalry . . . . .	..	10,180
Engineers Sappers and Miners . . . . .	164	9,431
Signals . . . . .	2,001	3,566
Indian Infantry . . . . .	..	83,979
Mechanical Transport . . . . .	374	3,381
Animal Transport Units . . . . .	44	9,744
Total Combatants . . . . .	54,615	133,170

*Strength of British and Indian soldiers by arms on 1st October, 1934—contd.*

Arm.	British	Indian.
<i>Departmental and administrative services.</i>		
Medical Services . . . . .	753	3,347
Supply Services . . . . .	303	*
Remount Services . . . . .	16	140
Veterinary Services . . . . .	4	536
Training Establishments . . . . .	496	101
Master General of Ordnance (Indian Ordnance Department) and Indian Army Ordnance Corps.	608	879
Military Grass Farms . . . . .	44	80
Embarkation Staff Railway, Transport Staff and special attached sections.	45	2
Army Educational Services . . . . .	168	63
Indian Army Corps of Clerks . . . . .	308	*
GRAND TOTAL . . . . .	57,260	138,318

\* Indians are employed in the supply and clerical services, but in a civilian capacity.

#### MILITARY AIRSHIPS.

45. THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA: Will Government be pleased to state the number of military airships maintained in India and the places where they are kept?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: There are no military airships in India, that is to say, aircraft which are lighter than air. The establishment of first-line aeroplanes under the orders of the Air Officer Commanding in India is 102. These are located normally at Peshawar, Kohat, Risalpur, Ambala, Lahore, Karachi and Quetta.

#### AMOUNT PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO PROVINCES FOR SALT PREVENTIVE WORK.

46. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee): (a) Will Government be pleased to state the amount paid annually by the Central Government (i) to the Bengal Government, (ii) to the Bihar and Orissa Government for salt preventive work in those provinces?

(b) Has any enquiry been made by an officer of the Madras Salt Department regarding the work done by the Salt Department in Bengal and Bihar and Orissa and was any report submitted by the said officer?

(c) If the answer to part (b) be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to lay on the table a copy of the report submitted by the officer concerned? If not, why not?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state whether any concrete proposals were made by the officer concerned to the effect that salt preventive work can be done more economically in the two provinces? If so, will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to take any steps on the lines of the said report for economising expenditure? If not, why not?

(e) Will Government be pleased to state what work is actually done by the Salt Department of Bengal, and Bihar and Orissa and whether the amount paid by the Central Government annually to these provinces is actually spent on salt preventive work? If not, for what purpose is that amount utilised and is such utilisation of the money for other objects sanctioned by the Government of India? If so, why?

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. TALLENTS: (a) The Government of India make a fixed annual contribution of Rs. 2 lakhs to the Government of Bengal for conducting inland preventive work, administering inland bonded warehouses, controlling saltpetre refineries and soda factories and dealing with matters relating to remission of duty on salt including educed salt used for industrial purposes. It is not possible to say how much of this expenditure is devoted to preventive work only.

A sum of Rs. 76,000 is paid to the Government of Bihar and Orissa annually for salt preventive work done by them in Orissa. Preventive work in Bihar is done by the Northern India Salt Revenue Department.

(b) Yes.

(c) No. The report is intended for official use only.

(d) Yes. The Government of India have the report under consideration.

(e) The duties performed by the Government of Bengal are stated at (a) above. The work done by the Government of Bihar and Orissa in Orissa consists of prevention and detection of offences chiefly relating to illicit manufacture, possession and sale of salt in the three saliferous districts of Cuttack, Balasore and Puri.

The amounts are contributions to the cost of combined establishments which actually perform the duties in respect of which the contributions are paid.

#### ANNUAL COST INCURRED BY THE NORTHERN INDIA SALT REVENUE DEPARTMENT FOR SALT PREVENTIVE WORK IN DISTRICTS.

47. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee): Will Government be pleased to state the number of districts in which preventive work is done by the Northern India Salt Department and the annual cost of upkeep of the establishment maintained by that department and also the number of districts in which salt preventive work is done in Bengal and Orissa and the annual cost of upkeep of the establishment maintained by the departments in those provinces?

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. TALLENTS: Salt preventive work is done by the Northern India Salt Revenue Department in the following places:

29 districts in the Punjab, 48 in the United Provinces, and 11 in Bihar; Kohat district in the North-West Frontier Province, Ajmer-Merwara and the Rajputana Salt Sources Division as a whole.

The cost of preventive establishment in the department was Rs. 3,41,744 during 1933-34.

The number of districts in which this work is done by the Government of Bengal is 7. The Government of India make a fixed annual contribution of Rs. 2 lakhs to the Government of Bengal for conducting inland preventive work and in addition administering inland bonded warehouses, controlling of saltpetre refineries and soda factories and dealing with matters relating to remission of duty on salt, including educed salt, used for industrial purposes. It is not possible to say how much of this expenditure is devoted to preventive work only.

Salt preventive work is done by the Government of Bihar and Orissa in three districts in Orissa and the Government of India pay a fixed annual contribution of Rs. 76,000 to the local Government in this connection.

In each case the work is done by the excise staff of the local Government as a part-time job.

#### AMOUNT REALISED FROM THE EXCISE DUTY ON MATCHES.

48. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee): (a) Will Government be pleased to state the amount of money realised upto date from the recently imposed excise duty on matches manufactured in India?

(b) Will Government be pleased to supply a list of indigenous match factories located in India, province by province, and also the amount of money contributed by each province under the head of match excise?

(c) Have Government received representations that this excise duty has hit hard many factories in their infancy?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the actual production of "Wimco" matches before and after the imposition of this excise duty?

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. TALLENTS: (a) Rs. 1,12,87,000 up to the end of January, 1935.

(b) The information has been called for and will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

(c) A number of representations were received, but they do not appear to have drawn particular attention to the case of newly established factories.

(d) I am not in a position to supply the desired information.

#### NUMBER OF STORES PURCHASE CIRCLES UNDER THE CHIEF CONTROLLER OF STORES.

49. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee): (a) Will Government be pleased to state the number of Stores Purchasing Circles under the Chief Controller of Stores, Delhi and Simla, and the amount of stores purchased through this organisation in 1933-34?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether there is a branch for Stores Purchase in London? If so, who is the Controller of that organisation?



(c) How many Controllers of Stores are there under the Chief Controller ? What is their salary ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : (a) Besides the Purchase Branch at Headquarters, which comprises three sections, there are three Purchase Circles under the Chief Controller of Stores. They are located at Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi. The total value of orders placed by the Indian Stores Department was Rs. 3,59,94,135 during 1933-34. Full details of the work done by the department are given in the Administration Report of the Indian Stores Department for that year, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

(b) There is an organisation in London, called the India Store Department, under the control of the High Commissioner for India which deals, among other things, with the purchase of stores. The head of the organisation, designated " Director-General, India Store Department ", is at present Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Stanley Paddon.

(c) At each of the three Purchase Circles there is a Controller of Purchase. The scale of pay of the Controller at Calcutta is Rs. 1,500—75—1,800. At Bombay and Karachi it is Rs. 1,000—50—1,200.

#### AMOUNT OF STORES PURCHASED BY THE INDIAN STORES DEPARTMENT.

50. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee) : (a) Will Government be pleased to state the amount of stores purchased in 1933 of purely Indian manufacture ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the reduction affected year by year in the Stores Purchase organisation in London since the Indian Stores Department was first established ?

(c) Is it a fact that the Indian Stores Department was created with the ultimate object of closing the London Stores Purchase organisation ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : (a) It is presumed that the Honourable Member refers to purchases of stores made by the Indian Stores Department and his attention is invited to paragraphs 24, 25 and 70 and to Appendix VII of the Administration Report of the Indian Stores Department for 1933-34, a copy of which is in the Library of the House.

(b) The Honourable Member will find the information he requires in the annual reports on the work of the India Store Department, London, which are available in the Library of the House.

(c) No.

#### RADIO RECEIVING.

51. THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Jagadish Chandra Banerjee) : (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether considerable interference is caused in radio receiving owing to defective electrical appliances in Dacca ?

(b) Has there been any complaint received by the Postal Department from radio licence holders at Dacca ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state what action it intends to take ?

(d) Is it a fact that the law as it stands at present does not empower the Postal Department to take steps to effect a remedy for such a state of affairs ?

(e) Will Government be pleased to state whether they intend to amend the law to enable the Postal Department to take such action against the person or persons causing the disturbances as may be necessary ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : (a) Government have no information.

(b) No such complaint has been received by the Director General, Posts and Telegraphs.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes.

(e) Government have this matter under observation but do not consider any action is necessary at present.

### RESOLUTION RE REDUCTION OF BRITISH SOLDIERS IN INDIA.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA (United Provinces Central : Non-Muhammadian) : If you will permit me, Sir, I want to move my Resolution in a slightly amended form because I find it will be more acceptable to the other groups and may be acceptable to the Government as well. I want to insert the word "substantially", after the word "reduce" and to delete the words "from 60,000 to 30,000."

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : But there is a similar amendment by the Honourable Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan. I would like to know from him if he has any objection ?

THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN : I have no objection, Sir.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : I will allow the amendment.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to reduce substantially the strength of British soldiers in India".

In addressing the cadets of the Indian Military Academy in November last, His Excellency the Viceroy was pleased to remark as follows :

"Most sincerely I wish you success in your future careers and trust that you may prove worthy of the great military traditions and history of your motherland and will never do anything which will bring discredit on the Military Academy".

His Excellency was pleased to remind the students of the Academy of the glorious military traditions and history of India. Indeed, India has got a glorious history so far as military achievements are concerned. It was only due to the unfortunate incident of 1857 which has caused the Indian soldier to be distrusted, and in spite of the fact that they have proved their worth, gallantry and devotion to duty time and again during the wars since then, the ratio then fixed of 2 Indians to 1 British soldier is still maintained.

Sir, my Resolution has two aspects—financial and political—and I would like to place my views on these separately. As regards the financial aspect, I submit that India is spending the largest amount on the upkeep of its military forces in comparison with the other Dominions in the Empire considering the revenues of the country. In making this assertion I am supported by Justice Sir Shadi Lal in his note of dissent to the report of the Tribunal on certain questions in regard to defence expenditure in dispute between the Government of India, the War Office and the Air Ministry. He had first-hand information available in regard to military forces in other Dominions and all the facts and figures were placed before the Tribunal. In his note on page 33 he says :

“ It appears that the ratio of military expenditure of India to her public revenue is higher than in any other part of the Empire or in any foreign country. The statistics supplied to us also show that in respect of certain colonies where British troops are stationed, the Imperial Government have adopted the rule that the cost to be levied from them should not exceed one-fifth of the total assessable revenue of the colony concerned ”.

That was his opinion based on the facts and figures supplied to him. Therefore I submit that India, considering her revenue, is spending much more than other colonies on their military forces.

Sir, we all know that India has been made the training ground for British and foreign soldiers, who are transported to India and receive their training at the expense of India, which pays for their recruitment, transport and maintenance. We all know that the Capitation Tribunal decided to give a very paltry sum by way of compensation, to cover the cost for all services, namely, a sum of Rs. 2 crores, while we are spending much more in the training and maintenance of these forces. It was only the other day that an Honourable Member in the other House put a question about the expenses incurred on a British and Indian soldier, respectively. I have also asked the question this morning and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in reply said that they were spending Rs. 850 per annum on a British soldier and Rs. 285 on an Indian sepoy. That is, a British soldier costs more than three times what an Indian soldier costs. We all know the financial condition of India today. We are having deficit budgets and the deficits year after year are made up by further taxation, sometimes by novel forms of taxation, and many infant industries are being killed on account of this heavy burden of taxation. In comparison with other countries India is a very poor country, where millions do not get even two meals a day. With all that the burden of taxation is steadily increasing, mainly to meet certain obligatory expenses on our army. Since 1917 a policy of Indianisation has been started, but with what result? In all these years we find from the answer given by the Government in the other House only 195 Indian officers have been taken on out of a total strength of 7,000. Sir, we were supplied with two pamphlets last year. One relates to some facts and figures of Indian defence, 1933-34. This pamphlet was supplied to us by the Government to show us how much we are spending on our defence forces and what the present state of affairs is. Honourable Members will find on page 23, paragraph 4, how the money is being spent in the Army Department. The report says :

“ The total gross expenditure excluding receipts comes to about Rs. 49½ crores. Of this sum about Rs. 25½ crores or 52 per cent. are spent on pay and allowances of the services. About Rs. 15½ crores go to the fighting services, and Rs. 10½ crores to the others; over Rs. 8½ crores or 17 per cent. go on pensions; rather under Rs. 7½ crores or 15 per cent. on the manufacture and purchase of stores of all kinds ”.

So, Sir, in this way they have given how sums the total of which comes to about Rs. 49½ crores is being spent by the Army Department and by this you will

[Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra.]

find, Sir, that we are paying as much as Rs. 8½ crores or 17 per cent. on pensions. On page 27 they have given a full description of the strength of British and Indian soldiers in different departments of the army and with your permission, Sir, I will read one paragraph to enlighten the House so far as the strength of British and Indian soldiers is concerned.

"The reasons for the Indian demand for the reduction of British troops and the Indianisation of the army are two-fold. They are partly financial, on the ground that British troops cost more than Indian troops, and partly political, because there is a perfectly natural feeling that, until India can stand on her own in the matter of defence it will be impossible for her to achieve the measure of self-government towards which she is aiming".

The remarks that they have made in this report are exactly what we are pressing this day on the floor of this House.

"To take the first of these reasons first, it will be of interest to examine how much India is paying at present for British troops and what the saving would amount to if they were entirely replaced by Indian troops. The defence estimates are not compiled in such a way as to give a ready answer to this enquiry, but the information was given in 1932 in reply to a question in the Legislative Assembly that the total cost of the British portion of the army in India might be taken to amount to Rs. 13 crores. This referred to fighting troops. Statement I in the Defence Estimates also gives the information that the total strength of the British personnel in the Defence Forces (including the Royal Air Force, the Royal Indian Marine and the permanent establishment of the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces) amounted on April 1st, 1933, to 7,154 officers (including the 143 officers with King's commissions, who are technically counted as British officers) and 60,038 British other ranks. The fighting units and staffs accounted for 4,562 British officers and 55,952 British other ranks or a total of 59,614; the administrative and ancillary services included 2,241 British officers and 3,707 British other ranks besides, of course, a large number of Indian other ranks. The Royal Air Force had 256 British officers and 1,881 British other ranks; and the Royal Indian Marine contained 95 British officers and 35 British other ranks".

These, Sir, are the figures that are given in this report which was circulated to us last year. Further on they say:

"The five British cavalry regiments cost Rs. 80·25 lakhs, while the same number of Indian cavalry regiments would cost Rs. 35·80 lakhs".

That is less than half.

"The saving therefore would amount to Rs. 44·45 lakhs. The 45 British infantry battalions cost about Rs. 7·77 crores, while the same number of Indian infantry battalions would cost about Rs. 3·02 crores".

That is much less than half.

"The saving would therefore amount to about Rs. 4·75 crores".

These are the facts and figures that were given by the Government and placed before us and we find that in every section of the army we are paying much more to a Britisher than to an Indian. When Indians have proved their worth, gallantry and devotion to duty on so many occasions, there is no reason why a substantial reduction of the British forces should not be made; and if the present condition of India requires the same strength of these forces—and I do not agree with that—they can be replaced by Indian soldiers to the great advantage and less expense to India.

Now, Sir, I come to the second part of my Resolution. What are the political reasons underlying this Resolution. Sir, whenever we ask for dominion status or home rule, we get the point blank answer that the first and preliminary thing for India is to be able to defend herself before she can be considered fit to get dominion status or swaraj. How, Sir, shall we be ever abl

to defend our country unless the pace of Indianisation is speeded as much as is required by the situation ? With the present speed I am afraid it may take a century or two before India is able to defend herself. Sir, Major Attlee in his Minority Report on the Joint Parliamentary Committee has definitely said the same thing. In his minute of dissent he writes :

" So long as British troops are employed in India, whether for external defence or for internal security, it is in our view impossible to bring them under the order of a responsible minister ".

These are the views of an important member of the British Parliament belonging to an important Party. But in spite of all that we find that the former ratio of 2 to 1 is still maintained. I would remind the House that recently two committees were set up and the question is as to what was their finding, what was their personnel and whether they were composed of men on whom we can safely place our reliance or not ? These two committees to which I want to refer are the Shea Committee and the Skeen Committee. The Shea Committee was composed of three lieutenant-generals, three major-generals, three colonels and two lieutenant-colonels. Surely such a Committee could be relied on to know to what extent the army could be Indianised without endangering efficiency ? Sir, they have in their report recommended that the complete Indianisation of the army within 30 years is a practical proposition. As I have said, Sir, this Committee of many experts were of opinion that 30 years are quite sufficient for the complete Indianisation of the Indian Army. May I put the question to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, " What has been done with regard to this report ? Why has Government not given effect to the recommendations of this report and thrown it into the waste-paper basket ? "

Then, Sir, another committee was appointed. It was presided over by Sir Andrew Skeen. This Committee also expressed the opinion that half of the cadre of officers should be Indianised by the year 1952. May I ask the Government why the recommendations of this Committee have not been given effect to ? These are not the views of a layman or armchair politicians like ourselves. They are the views of your own experts and if you are not prepared to rely on their views how can we expect that our lay opinions will carry any weight so far as the question of Indianisation of the army is concerned ?

Sir, we all know that the first Round Table Conference wanted seriously to tackle this problem and they appointed an expert committee to give its opinion so far as the Indianisation of the army is concerned. We do not know what was the result of that Expert Committee's deliberations. The report was never published but we find that the authorities concerned have not accepted their recommendations and have decided to stick to the existing ratio of Indianisation. So, Sir, when committee after committee of Government experts have failed to find acceptance at the hands of the Government, we cannot help wondering how many centuries it will take to Indianise the army. May I ask, Sir, if this is the way to go about it ? What are the definite proposals of the Government to speed up Indianisation of the army and how long do the Government propose to take over the process of Indianisation ? Sir, we all know that Japan in the very short time of 20 years reorganised its army on national lines and at present the Japanese forces are as good as, if not better than, the fighting forces of the other great nations of the world. If Japan can completely reorganise its forces on national lines in 20 years, I see no reason why India cannot do it. Let it be in 20, 30, 35 or 40 years, but for God's sake let us know the definite period during which you want to completely reorganise the army on national lines.

[Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra.]

Sir, since the present ratio of British and Indian troops was fixed several important changes have taken place. Fighting will in future not be so much on land as in the air. Now in answer to my question this morning we were told that in India at present we have an Air Officer Commanding about 102 aeroplanes. I think, Sir, that is a very sufficient number. We have established so many aeroplanes in India. We have also established naval forces. It is therefore only in the fitness of things that we should now reduce our armed forces to at least half, if not more.

Sir, there is another pamphlet, as I said which, was circulated to us last year containing a summary of important matters connected with the defence operations carried out in India in 1933-34. By going through this summary we find that our forces were engaged in about five operations during last year. I do not want to waste the time of the Council by reading out all it says about these operations but the point I wish to make is that in all these operations Government found the air forces substantially helpful. Which means, Sir, that aeroplanes have greatly reduced the utility of the land forces, and therefore I do not see any reason why they feel shy about reducing the land forces and thus bringing down substantially their military budget. Sir, during the war there was a time when less than 15,000 British soldiers were left in India. The rest were all despatched to the fighting line. May I ask, Sir, if the Government ever had the least difficulty in administering Indian affairs at that time with these reduced British forces? If, at that important and dangerous time when so many States were grouped on one side and equally States were grouped on the other side, when nobody knew when there would be an attack on India, affairs here were thoroughly and satisfactorily managed with less than 15,000 British troops, then why at a time of peace can they not manage with 30,000 troops? I do not see any reason, Sir, if they could be managed then, why they cannot be managed now? And therefore, Sir, I request with all the emphasis at my command that His Excellency may kindly see his way to reduce substantially the number of British troops maintained in India at present.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muhammadan): Mr. President, in view of the amended form in which my Honourable colleague, Mr. Mehrotra, has moved his Resolution, I do not now propose to place my amendment\* before the House. That amendment, of which I gave notice, was intended to concentrate attention on the strength of the British Army of Occupation now in India. It is a well known fact, Sir, that the quantum of the army is dependent primarily on the work that it has to perform. An army which is required only to guard internal peace would be quite different in numbers to an army that is required to fight a second class or third class power and the strength which you would require to fight a first class power would be quite different. It is from that standpoint that I wish to tackle this question. We, Sir,—and by “we” I do not mean the non-official Indians, but I mean the entire Government of India,—are, in this matter, as powerless to dictate as the non-officials. The strength of the army, the duties which it has to perform—all these are laid down by the Committee of Imperial Defence.

*“His Majesty’s Government claim to exercise through the Cabinet and do exercise a powerful voice in deciding the strength of British troops to be maintained in India, the major organisation and the standard of training; in fact, everything on which the cost of the establishment depends”.*

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\*“That for the figures ‘30,000’ the figures ‘48,000’ be substituted.”

Not only this. India is made the depot for the stationing of troops for imperial purposes. If any proof is required, I will show that from the report of the Mesopotamia Commission, page 14, *it will be seen that India was actually compelled to send out troops during the war.* I would like to remind the House of a passage on which I laid great stress during the debate which we had during the last few days :

*"The army in India serves an imperial purpose because it is unquestionable that the British garrison in India is of incalculable value to the British Government and the Empire generally in addition to the services it renders to India in particular. Without it (that is, the British Army in India), either the imperial garrison in the East would have to be increased or an imperial reserve would have to be located in the East at the expense of the Home Government."*

This is the opinion of a very high authority. We have got an example before us. Australia, one of the Dominions, is not able to safeguard itself against the maritime dangers which may threaten her. The result is that the Empire, at the expense of England, maintains a base in Singapore and at other places in Eastern waters. It is there primarily for the safety of Australia, and secondarily for the safety of other parts of the Empire in those waters. There is another example. In Egypt, a part of the British army is maintained for which nothing is charged to the Egyptian Government. That army is now 10,000 in strength. Sir, unless we have a voice in settling the duties that the army in India has to perform, it is idle to confront ourselves with saying that the requirements are so much, because the requirements are dictated by others. If there is to be an independent judgment on this question, namely, whether the duties that have been assigned to the British Army in India are those which are purely Indian in nature, then and only then can we say that the strength of the army which is being maintained in India is in the interests of India herself. But if the duties are of an imperial character, as has been admitted very fully by people who are competent to judge of the matter,—I do not mean idlers from this side of the House,—then the British Government ought to compensate. If it is a fact—and I have no doubt that it is a fact—that the strength of the army is measured by the duties which it has to perform, and these duties are dictated by the British Government; therefore, when we say that this strength ought to be reduced substantially, what we mean is that the duties which are assigned to the British Army in India should be materially altered. If it is not possible even to alter these duties, the least that can be done is to substitute Indian personnel for British personnel, because British personnel involves payment which is a drain to the wealth of the country. Any expenditure incurred in payments inside the country does not mean any reduction in the wealth of the country, but payments for outsiders involves a reduction in the wealth of the country. This is almost axiomatic and I need not labour the point.

The strength of the army at the present moment is in the ratio of about 1 to 2 of Indian soldiers. Before 1857, in the time of the East India Company, the ratio was 5 to 1. We thought that during the last 80 years of connection with the British Crown, the capacity and the abilities of the army would improve and not deteriorate. It is a strange commentary on the way in which the British Government have trained the Indian personnel of this army that they are now regarded as inferior to those who were in the service of the East India Company. What is more strange is that during the time of the East India Company, the army used to be truly national in character in this sense that it used to consist of men from all sides and parts of the country. Now, it has become concentrated to a small portion of the north-western corner of India, and other parts are left out. What I am particularly concerned with is,

[Mr. Hossain Imam.]

if it was quite convenient, when there were hostile powers inside the country, when there was no peace in the country, when there were always wars on the western and eastern frontiers,—I mean the wars of Burma, Assam and other places,—if it was possible then for the British Government to maintain a ratio of 5 to 1, why not now? Is it not strange that when the Indian soldiers had proved their mettle, when they had proved in the four years' campaign during the Great War that they are worthy of every confidence reposed in them, that the old and fallacious ratio of 2 to 1 should still be maintained? I thought that on the battlefields of Flanders we had justified our claim at least to revert to the position which the Indian soldiers occupied during the days of the East India Company. Even if this is done, it will effect a sufficient and enormous saving in the army budget. Now, Sir, what are the disadvantages of having 60,000 men? I will just cite a few instances. *No part of the British Empire pays capitation charges except India.* India is the one and only culprit which has been penalised by being asked to pay capitation charges. The strength of the army maintained is responsible for other incidental expenses than mere pay and messing allowance. One of the things we have to pay is the passage money, and incidentally, along with it, the pay during the voyage. On an actuarial basis it was found that for the maintenance of an army of 60,000, only 8,479 men would be required each year. But the actual figures of men sent out to India during the four or five years of which I have the figures are much higher. In 1926, 12,190 men were sent out. In 1927, 15,798. During 1928, 14,322. And India had to make double payment for six weeks for all this personnel who were in transit. This is an extra expenditure which will be materially reduced if the Britisher is replaced by the Indian. Then the payment for the conveyance of troops from outside India to India and back was an item about which we used to have a great deal of complaint. We used to get a payment of £130,000 from the War Office in lieu of this expenditure. We fought to have it apportioned equally between the two countries. As a result of the Capitation Tribunal, the whole of this £130,000 has now disappeared. *We do not receive any payment on account of the conveyance of troops to and from England and other parts.*

Sir, the question may be asked, what is the necessity for maintaining such a huge army and for whom is it being maintained? The only answer which stares us in the face is that all these military preparations are to safeguard India from the Northern Bear. But I thought that Nature was on our side, that it had provided strong enough bulwarks in the shape of the frozen zones on the north-west of India, the impassable heights and other obstacles which go a long way towards making it impossible for an invader to enter. Though this bogey has been in existence for well nigh 50 years, it has never materialised. The only passage open to them was through a neighbouring country, but even that possibility is now very remote. We know the great change in the world's sentiment towards that country. No one is sympathetic to the order of things existing there. That is a material fact which ought to have been taken into consideration when laying down the strength of the army. I very much regret that the report of the Committee on the strength of the Army in India over which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief presided never saw the light of day. If that report had been made available to us we would no doubt have learnt many things from it and ascertained the reasons for Government's maintaining this huge army in India. We do not wish to tie the hands of Government to any definite numbers. We therefore leave the decision in the hands of His Excellency and his advisers. But what we do wish to urge upon the Government of India and on His Majesty's Government in Great



Britain is that India is unable to pay this expenditure. It is beyond her means and unless something definite is done to relieve the pressure it will become too great for India to bear.

One word more and I will conclude. In regard to Mr. Chari's amendment on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report debate with reference to the separation of Burma, I said that with Burma separated from us the eastern frontiers of India would be materially reduced, and there ought to be a reduction of at least a tenth part in the army consequent upon the separation of Burma. I do not like the idea that Indian armies should remain in service in Burma when she is separated, because if England wants to have control of this country, consequent on British soldier's employment, wherever the Indian army may be employed there India will also demand a measure of control. The first reason why England is not prepared to hand over control in the centre is that she has to maintain an army here. So, if an Indian army is to be maintained in Burma it is only reasonable that India should have a voice in affairs there. If India is to have no voice, I claim that there should be no Indian troops stationed there and only British and Burman troops should be employed, and to that extent there should be a reduction in the total strength of the army in India.

With these words, Sir, I support the Motion.

THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN (West Punjab : Muhammadan) : Sir, the question now under discussion is of such importance that it is absolutely essential for every Member to consider it dispassionately and set aside all political considerations, because, whatever form of government we may have in this country it is most important that the efficiency of the army should remain intact. I have no doubt that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief will give us credit for putting the Resolution in such a reasonable form that the Government should have no objection in accepting it. The Resolution lays down only one fundamental principle, and that is that Government accept the principle of Indianising the army. That is not a new principle. It was accepted by the Government a long time ago and what we are now asking the Government to do is to reiterate the principle which they have already accepted. Why the necessity has arisen for asking the Government to reassure us that they intend to carry out the principle which they have already accepted in regard to the Indianisation of the army is due to the indifference which the Government has shown in regard to the rate of Indianisation. Doubts have arisen in the minds of people whether it is intended to carry out the policy in right earnest or not. Fortunately I come from a part of the country which probably supplies the largest number of recruits in India. As a matter of fact in the small district of Jhelum which I have the honour to represent contains not less than 30,000 ex-soldiers who were demobilized after the Great War. Sir, the mere fact that 55 per cent. of the total male population in the district joined the army during the Great War is enough to show that it was really due to an instinct which the martial races in this country possess, and no further proof is required to show that India is competent to manage its own defence. The Resolution does not require the reduction of British troops straightaway. What we ask the Government to do is to reduce the number as rapidly as possible, replacing them, if necessary, by Indian troops. Then the question naturally arises, whether we Indians are capable of taking the defence of India entirely upon our own shoulders. Sir, instead of taking the time of the House in giving reasons, with your permission, I will just quote the opinion of Mr. J. H. Thomas, who presided over the Defence Sub-Committee of the first Round Table

[Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan.]

Conference. In the course of discussion it was mentioned that Indians were capable of self-defence, the Chairman, Mr. Thomas, said :

" I do not want to hear a word about the competency, the qualification, or the desire of India to defend herself. All that may be taken for granted ".

This was the opinion expressed by the Chairman of this most important Committee called the Defence Committee. When it is admitted 12 Noon. that we are competent to supply any number of recruits for the army, is there any reason why a soldier, who costs us four times more than a soldier whom we can supply from our own country, should be kept in a poor country like India where there has been continuous criticism on the excessive army budget for the last so many years and the Government still insist that the budget cannot be reduced ? Then, Sir, in some quarters it is suggested that the treaties with some of the Indian States make it imperative on the British Government to maintain British soldiers in this country. That was a view which was expressed by Sir Leslie Scott while giving evidence before the Butler Committee. I am very glad, Sir, that this view was repudiated by such an eminent Maharaja as His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner who possesses the qualities of both a politician and a soldier. In this very Committee, Sir, he said :

" We are very grateful to Sir Leslie Scott for the great efforts he made in putting forward the case of the States before the Butler Committee, but Sir Leslie, in his own personal capacity and in no way on instructions from us and at our desire, put forward the suggestion that British troops could never be withdrawn or dominion status granted because of the treaties with the States. That is a view to which I personally and many others of us do not subscribe ; we do not subscribe to that view because we do not want to stand in the way of the advance of our country, which is our Motherland, in these matters ".

After this statement from His Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner no doubt is left that it is not at the instance of the Indian States or in consideration of their treaties that Government consider it inexpedient to reduce the number of British soldiers. As a matter of fact, Sir, if we take into consideration the past history of various committees appointed for various purposes, it is a general belief which previously was confined to the higher circles alone but now everybody who reads papers possesses that whenever committees are appointed the question which they are asked to examine is generally shelved, and the best way of postponing a matter is to appoint a committee. Anybody who reads the proceedings of the Report of the Defence Sub-Committee will find that although they succeeded in producing a unanimous report there was a definite cleavage between two schools. Almost all the Indian members, whether representatives of the Indian States, the Princes themselves or the Liberals or anybody else, in one form or other pressed for the rapid Indianisation of the army. On the other hand, all the British representatives by hook or by crook tried to avoid laying down a definite proportion for Indianisation. That is a fundamental difference which runs throughout this report and in spite of that we find here a unanimous report. I was surprised to read, and I must confess that I did not know it before, that a Committee was appointed in 1922 at the time of Lord Reading when Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the late Sir Muhammad Shafi were Members of the Viceroy's Executive Council. This Committee's report unfortunately was never published and although I find at the end of this book some extracts from this report, still we cannot see the whole of it. Not only are we deprived of seeing this report, but even when the Sandhurst Committee was appointed this report was not placed before that Committee. The rate of Indianisation which was recommended by this Committee and which was accepted by the Government of India,

including His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, was as follows. The total Indianisation was to be brought about within a period of 30 years by three different stages :

- (a) First period—1st to 14th year.
- (b) Second period—15th to 23rd year.
- (c) Third period—23rd to 30th year.

Now, that was the report submitted to the Government in 1922 and accepted by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief and all the military authorities. In accordance with that report by 1952 the army in India should be thoroughly Indianised, including the rank and file. May I know, Sir, what was the use of appointing the Sandhurst Committee in 1928 and why this report was not supplied to the Sandhurst Committee? Then what happened in this Round Table Conference was that they said that the question of reducing British troops was of such a technical nature that it was necessary to appoint an expert committee. When they were discussing this, the Indian members expressed an apprehension that the appointment of an expert committee may be indefinitely delayed. When this apprehension was expressed, the President, Mr. Thomas, again gave a definite assurance that they would make it clear in the report that this committee should be appointed without any loss of time. This happened in 1931. Four years have passed and I at least do not know whether the expert committee promised was appointed or not. Whenever there is a suggestion for the appointment of a committee on such important matters at least the public feel that the object is nothing else but to postpone the matter. As a matter of fact, Sir, what expert committee is required for this purpose?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** You have said enough about these committees. Will you now speak on the Resolution?

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN :** The Resolution is that the number of British soldiers should be substantially reduced. And I say that no committee is necessary to examine the contents of this Resolution, because it was admitted that Indian soldiers were as competent as British soldiers not only during the Great War when their fidelity was proved beyond any question when Muhammadan soldiers faced Turkey and remained faithful and loyal to their own country and to their own Government. Then, Sir, in 1919, when there were political disturbances on a very large scale it was mainly the Indian soldier who was employed to quell those disturbances. And is there a single instance when the fidelity of an Indian soldier was doubted? Then came a third period when there were acute communal bickerings and fights. Then also it was the Indian soldier who was employed. Was any sign discovered in these Indian soldiers of communal feeling? If on these occasions it was established beyond doubt that the Indian soldier can be relied upon under most trying circumstances, is it fair now, I ask, that the British soldiers should be kept in such large numbers simply because the efficiency of the army is supposed to be effected if their number is reduced? Now I will conclude, Sir, with an earnest appeal to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to very kindly accept this Resolution or at least definitely tell us whether there is any chance of a reduction in the number of British troops, and if so, what is going to be the speed of Indianisation?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** (United Provinces : Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I have fought for the Indianisation of the Indian Army from the very beginning of the present reforms. It was in

[Mr. Mohammad Yamin Khan.]

1923 that on my Resolution for Indianisation of the Indian Army the late Lord Rawlinson, the then Commander-in-Chief, made the announcement in the Assembly about eight units to be Indianised at once. When the acceptance came it came like a bolt from the blue as I have said and people were taken by surprise for they had never expected that announcement to come up so sharply and on that day. I have pressed ever since for rapid Indianisation of the Indian regiments and I have always confined myself to the Indian regiments only because I believe, Sir, that unless and until we have the Indian regiments Indianised altogether there is no use in pressing for the other part of the army. That, Sir, the Indianisation of the Indian regiments has been going on and I have fought year after year for the privileges of the Indian officers in the other House and to a certain extent with success. Last time too, Sir, at Simla I fought for the privileges of the Indian officers who are going to be recruited in future. I, Sir, wholeheartedly support all the compliments that have been paid to the Indian soldier and I am proud that my countrymen have fought so bravely and well on the battle fields of Europe, Palestine, Mesopotamia and other countries, and have justified their martial spirit in all places. The Indian soldier is second to none and I think, Sir, with the Indian soldier as far as he has been recruited and the discipline which he has obtained, that India can be proud of her soldiers for having demonstrated to the world their efficiency and their capability. There is not the slightest doubt that anybody can place upon the efficiency of the Indian soldier. All we Indians aspire that soon we may have the whole army Indianised and we may be given the full opportunity to defend our own country rather than be dependent on troops which come from outside. When our forefathers could manage our own country, when they could be generals, field marshals and attain the highest ranks in the army, there is no reason why their descendants should now be deprived of those opportunities, and history, Sir, tells us that we may well be proud of our ancestors. We are proud of their martial spirit and of the great deeds which they did in the past and therefore, Sir, we claim that opportunity must be given to us in the future to demonstrate the blood which we have got in us.

That is one aspect, Sir, but here where I am confined to the Resolution which we have got before us today, I quite agree with my friend, Mr. Mehrotra, that from the financial aspect India is a poor country and India cannot afford to pay highly for the army. This financial aspect of his is perhaps to a great extent sound. India cannot afford at present to pay Rs. 850 a year for one soldier when they can easily get him for Rs. 285. From the political aspect too, Sir, he is right in saying that we may not be told in future that we are incapable of defending our country so that our progress may be retarded. That also is a sound proposition. But there is, Sir, a third aspect which my friend has not touched upon. That is, to counterbalance these two aspects, we have the efficient defence of the country and tranquillity and peace inside the country also. We who are living in times of peace and security today, we should not ignore those times when India was in a state of turmoil. We should not ignore the period of a whole century, from 1707 up to 1806, when the Mahratta armies were roaming the land, and denuding it of all its wealth of standing crops like an insect pest or a flight of locusts that passes through one's field, and village after village was wiped out and shorn of its prosperity, and cities were burnt and people were butchered and dishonoured and India could do nothing to check the devastation. And these things were done not by foreigners but by Indians themselves. And if we are asked to revert to those conditions, shall we be prepared to go back merely for the

sake of having a purely Indian army. I say, Sir, most of the people will say, "No". It is true that that tranquillity and peace was purchased at a high price—at the price of becoming a subordinate nation. But at least we know that our houses are safe. At least we find that the cities cannot be burnt by roaming bands of adventurers. We find that our trade and commerce has been established, our homes and hearths are safe. It is true it is at the heavy price of becoming a subordinate nation, but can we seriously think that we can do away with the people who have restored India and brought her to her present state of prosperity and security? I quite agree, Sir, that the Indian soldier deserves to be thoroughly relied upon. The Indian soldier has demonstrated his faithfulness on many battlefields. An illustration was given just now by my Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, that the highest test which could be put on the faithfulness of the Army was put when the Indian Mussalman soldiers were sent to Syria, Palestine, Hedjaz and Mesopotamia to fight against their religious head as the Sultan of Turkey claimed and stood at that time in the eyes of the Mussalman world. That was the highest test that the soldier stood for his country and King more than for his religious sentiments. Therefore, Sir, I think that while the Indian soldiers could be relied upon—and should be relied upon—this is the most inopportune time to come forward with a Resolution like this. This Resolution comes up to make a demand at a time when the constitution is in the melting pot and when our enemies in England,—the people who are not in favour of giving any progress to the country,—this demand from a House like this will give a weapon in their hands to say that India is going to demand these things in the future if power is placed in their hands.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. D. CHARI : Let them understand it.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN : They may understand it or may not. There is a Persian proverb which goes :

"Dana dushman beh ze nadan dost",

which means that a wise enemy is better than a foolish friend. In my opinion, Sir, there can be nothing more inopportune than to press a Resolution of this kind at the present moment. I do not agree with my friend the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam that the British soldier takes away the money. I think that all the money that is given to a British tommy is spent in India, and the wealth does not get out of India at all, so that—

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. D. CHARI : Even the passage money?

THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN : The passage money may be a different thing. But whatever is given to the British tommy I think that when he leaves the Indian shores, he goes without a penny in his pocket, and all the money is spent in India.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : What about the health insurance and the unemployment insurance that we pay for him?

THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN : I will deal with these questions separately. I am now saying that whatever is given to the British tommy, that is spent here. That is my point.

**THE HONOURABLE KHWAJA HABIBULLAH OF DACCA** (Bengal : Nominated Non-Official) : It is given to him when he leaves. My friend is making a mistake.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : The other point is, if this Resolution had been worded that a substantive share of the British soldiers' pay should be borne by England when these soldiers are stationed in India, I would have wholeheartedly supported it.

**THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA** : Ballot a Resolution for that.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : My friend ought not to have asked for a reduction of the British soldiers in India, because I think it is a great necessity at the present moment to keep up the strength of the British soldiers in India for the safety and tranquillity of India. What we want is not a reduction in the number of soldiers but that a substantive share of the cost of British soldiers, while they are stationed in India, should be borne by England, because, after all, the British soldier is not a permanent soldier of India. He comes like a migratory bird for a few years. They are stationed in India for a certain period and then they are taken away. The British soldier comes here not with the idea of serving India, but with an idea of serving his own country.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. D. CHARI** : They get training at the expense of India.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : I want that the British soldiers, when they come to serve India, must feel that they are Indian soldiers. They should feel that they remain here for the safety and prosperity of India and they must be loyal to India. We find that this idea is engendered in the minds of many of the civilians and other officers who spend a large portion of their life in this country. They become attached to India. They begin to think of India as their second home. They would much rather prefer to settle down in India and not go back to England if the rules permitted. In the same way, I want the British soldier to get those feelings. Unless and until the British soldier gets those feelings, a share of the British army which is stationed in India should be borne by England, because, after all, they are British soldiers, and the case is very well met by our saying that we should not spend more than what we can afford. It is not reduction in number, but reduction in the expenditure per head that we want. Sir, that would have met with some kind of support, but the present Resolution cannot find that support.

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT** : Your time is up.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : One minute Sir. One remark which has been made by one of my friends here I do not agree with. My friend Mr. Hossain Imam said that at present the recruiting ground is only the North-West Frontier Province—

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM** : I said "the north-west corner of India".

THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN : A corner in the north-west of India. Sir, I do not agree with my Honourable friend. There are regiments from other places too. They are recruited all over India. I am proud to say that during the war, it was my district in the United Provinces that supplied the highest number of recruits. We won a shield for recruitment in the Meerut district. We have got a large number of troops in the United Provinces. In the Central Provinces, Sir, as you are aware, the Mahrattas are being recruited, and I would ask His Excellency not to be influenced by these remarks in any manner but to recruit the people who are best fitted for the military, and only those classes of whom India can be proud. We do not want men who might bring discredit to India. I think that this Resolution is inopportune. It would have been better if the Honourable mover had asked for a substantive reduction in India's share of the cost.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA (Bombay : Non-Muhamadan) : Mr. President, I could not have seen my way to support the Resolution as it was originally worded, nor the amendment of my friend the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam. But I wholeheartedly support the Resolution as modified and as it has now been put before the House, namely, that the number of British troops might be substantially reduced. Mr. President, the British troops in India, we are told are for the purpose of external defence and internal security and also for, what is not equally well admitted, for imperial purposes. 60,000 is the number which the original Resolution mentioned as the strength of the British Army in India but if I remember aright, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, some time back gave the number as somewhere between 55,000 and 60,000. What exactly it is today, I am sure when he rises to address us he will let us know. But it will be better still if His Excellency can be persuaded to inform us what has been the rate of decrease in the number of British troops in India during the last 10 years, which would give us an index as to what to expect for the future. Dominion status is the goal of India. As we all know, we can not expect dominion status so long as defence is not in our hands. It is for that reason that we are aspiring to have defence in our hands at as early a date as possible. His Excellency this morning gave the cost of the British soldier in India at Rs. 850 per annum and of the Indian soldier as Rs. 285. That is a ratio of 1 to 3. My recollection is that some years ago figures were given which showed that the Indian soldier cost only one-fourth of what the British soldier cost. It may be therefore that some items of expenditure, such as those which were referred to by the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam, have been left out in the calculations to which His Excellency referred this morning, as, for example, the cost of transport backwards and forwards, extra pay, etc.

Now, Sir, a reference was made to the different military committees that were appointed at different times. I happened to be a member of the Skeen Committee. The members were all Indians with the exception of two, the late Sir Andrew Skeen and Sir Ernest Burdon, and our very efficient Secretary Colonel Lumby. Sir Andrew Skeen was undoubtedly a great Englishman and a great soldier, and every member who was his colleague in the Skeen Committee regrets his premature death a week ago. He lived respected and died regretted. Sir Andrew Skeen and Mr. Burdon (as he then was) held out two boogies to the Indian members. The first was that the speed of Indianisation of the army could not be accelerated beyond the rate at which it was then carried on, and the second was in regard to restricting the military services to what they called the martial classes alone. The Indian

[Sir Phiroze Sethna.]

members could not endorse their views. I am glad to say that in the end we were able to convert our British colleagues to our view for, as the House will remember, we were able to present an unanimous report to Government. It is a matter of regret to the members of that Committee and the country that its recommendations, which were made more than eight years ago, were not given effect to. Had effect been given to them, by now Indianisation would have proceeded much faster and there would not have been that discontent on this question as certainly exists. The matter was again taken up in the Defence Sub-Committee of the first Round Table Conference, over which the present Colonial Secretary Mr. J. H. Thomas presided. Mr. Thomas asked us to postpone further discussion because Government were appointing another Committee. That Committee was presided over by our present Commander-in-Chief, His Excellency Field Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode. All questions were to be referred to that Committee, but it was later a matter of very keen disappointment to the members of subsequent Round Table Conferences that the main question, namely, the rate at which Indians were to be trained for officers' rank was deliberately fixed by Government, as His Excellency then informed the Committee, in spite of the assurance that Mr. Thomas had given us that it would be open to the Committee to discuss all matters in whatever manner they decided to do so. I believe that the number fixed by Government, as conveyed through His Excellency, was 60 per annum. That as I say was a matter of keen disappointment to the members of the Round Table Conferences as also to the Indian public. Another fact which nobody knew then was brought out by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the late Sir Muhammad Shafi. It is well known that Members of the Executive Council even after they retire from the Council are pledged to secrecy in regard to everything that happened during their tenure of office. Both these gentlemen were in a great fix, because they wanted to inform the Defence Committee as to what had actually happened during Lord Reading's administration in regard to Indianisation of the army. They therefore approached the higher authorities and with their permission gave us facts and figures which were a revelation to us. As the Honourable Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan has informed the House, not even the Sken Committee was informed that the Government of India had considered the question in the time of Lord Reading when the late Lord Rawlinson was the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Rawlinson prepared a scheme according to which the whole Indian army could be Indianised in the space of 42 years. The Indian Members of the Council would not accept that figure. They asked Lord Rawlinson to reconsider, and after mature consideration he submitted a report according to which the Indian army could be fully Indianised within the space of 30 years. Have conditions in India changed so greatly since the days of Lord Reading and of the late Lord Rawlinson that 30 years are not now regarded as a possibility? The Sken Committee made recommendations according to which in the space of 25 years half the total cadre of officers could be Indianised and in another 25 years every officer in the Indian Army could be an Indian. But that as I say was knocked on the head and no effect given to their recommendations. At the rate we are progressing, we want His Excellency to inform us if he thinks that even 50 years from today the Indian Army, officers and men, will be fully Indianised? We shall feel grateful to him if he does answer that question.

These are some of the facts relating to these respective committees. I do not think the Indian public is at all satisfied at the rate of progress that has been made so far as Indianising the army is concerned. We quite realise that circumstanced as we are at the moment, the presence of the British Army



is necessary. It is also necessary, however, as I believe His Excellency has himself admitted before now, that its strength should be gradually reduced. I therefore respectfully appeal to him to let us know at what rate it has decreased in the last 10 years and at what rate he expects it will decrease in the next 10 years, and also His Excellency's opinion as to when he thinks the whole army will be completely Indianised ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR** (Central Provinces : General) : Sir, I think there is little left for me to say after the case has been so ably handled by the Honourable Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan. I am induced to take part in this debate on account of certain remarks made by my Honourable friend Mr. Yamin Khan. He raised the constitutional point that we should not demand a decrease in the number of British soldiers when the constitution is in the melting pot. I am sorry I have to differ from him. We on this side of the House think that it is our duty to tell the British Government and British statesmen in unequivocal terms that we Indians, amongst whom they have raised very strong hopes about the defence of India, do realise our position and do earnestly think that it is our concern to manage the defence of India. This fact, Sir, has been admitted not only by British experts—I mean military experts,—not only by British statesmen, but we find reference to this fact in the Joint Parliamentary Committee's Report. If we have to manage dominion status, if we have to manage our own affairs and if we have to look after the defence of India, the army must be Indianised as soon as possible and the highest authorities in England must know what the desire of Indians is. Therefore, Sir, I think this is the most appropriate occasion on which we could give vent to our desire. My Honourable friend Mr. Yamin Khan has referred to the period before 1806. I wish he had considered twice before making these remarks about the conditions obtaining in that period. I think further, Sir, that he has done great injustice to the Britishers in India in making those remarks. After British rule of over 150 years in India if—

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : Where was 450 years ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR** : I said 150 years. If after a period of over 150 years of British rule in India we are not in a position to think that peace and tranquillity will exist in India, then certainly we are doing injustice to the Britishers. I am very glad and I am very proud to hear from the lips of my Honourable friend that the Indian soldier has proved the test of fidelity during the last war, that the Indian soldier was found quite equal in bravery, in gallantry and other things with British soldiers, and still, Sir, I am really surprised to find that he is against this proposition to reduce the strength of the British Army in India. He agrees with my friend Mr. Mehrotra that the financial condition of India is such that India cannot afford to maintain such a large army at such a heavy cost.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MOHAMMAD YAMIN KHAN** : Not a heavy army, but a heavily paid army.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR** : If you agree with that proposition, the natural conclusion is that you have to agree to the proposition sponsored by my friend Mr. Mehrotra about reducing the strength of the army. I am with you on the point that the efficiency of the army should not be impaired. But as my friend has admitted that the efficiency of the Indian soldier has been tested fully and found quite satisfactory, I see no

[Mr. V. V. Kalikar.]

ground for the view that he holds that the strength should not be reduced. Sir, Indian soldiers are recruited, as we were informed, from certain parts of India, especially from the north-west part. My Honourable friend Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan told us that in the district from which he comes—the Jhelum district—55 per cent. of the male population are disbanded soldiers. If that information is correct—and I think it is perfectly correct—I see no ground to say that we will not find the necessary efficient element for recruitment in the Indian Army. If that is the position, then it is for the British authorities to take into consideration the claims of Indians to increase their number in the Indian Army and to train them in the art of management of the defence of India and further to give employment to some of those martial classes, so that they may also take a proper share in the art of defence of India. I therefore, Sir, heartily support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend Mr. Mehrotra.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: Sir, I confess that I am a little bit disappointed in some ways that two amendments to the original Resolution were withdrawn. I was naturally very anxious to hear what the Honourable mover had to say and how he proposed to justify the original enormous demand for reduction he put down on the Order Paper. I was equally intrigued to know why my friends Mr. Hossain Iman and Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan had chosen to modify the original proposal so very greatly in their amendments and I am still left guessing unless the reason is because of a remark which fell from Sir Phiroze Sethna that he had told them that possibly it was rather ridiculous to put such a very fierce figure before the House.

Before I go to my main argument, I will answer one or two points put by various speakers. The Honourable mover reiterated, and so did other speakers, the gallantry of the Indian troops and how they had proved themselves in many wars, and notably in the last one. I really cannot see why anyone in this House should take the trouble to reiterate that statement. It is a statement which we, British, most fully subscribe to in all seriousness. The gallantry of the Indian troops is without question and the relations between them and their British comrades are those of mutual respect and mutual admiration and understanding. But as regards the argument for further Indianisation, it is not quite so strong as some Honourable Members seem to think, because one has to remind them that when they performed these acts of gallantry, which they have on so many occasions, they have been led by British officers and in most cases the now accepted proportion of British to Indian troops has actually been the proportion when those battles took place in which they behaved so well. Another point of the Honourable mover which I must question is the way in which he brought out that old argument of comparing India with the other Dominions. It is an argument that I never can see the force of at all. There is no other Dominion in the British Empire that is exposed to either the internal or the external dangers to which the Indian Empire is. He also instanced the enormous cost that the Indian nation are put to on account of their army and he quoted at great length from that little pamphlet that we issued last session, and in turn I will quote a few figures from it as to the comparative cost of the Dominions and India of their defence :

“ The incidence of the defence expenditure in India is Rs. 1-8-0 per head of the population. In England it is Rs. 30, in the Dominions between Rs. 3-8-0 and Rs. 8; in France Rs. 29; in the United States of America Rs. 18-8-0 and in Japan Rs. 6-8-0 ”.

The Honourable mover also touched upon a question which I do not propose to enter into at all and that was the question as to why we cannot employ the strength of the air more than we do in comparison with ground troops. That is a very highly technical question which it would not befit me at all to enter into any discussion on here. It is even now under discussion every day. I would only say one thing to the Honourable Member. If he considers we should so largely increase the proportion of our air forces to that of our ground forces, why should we be the only nation to do it? Other nations still retain practically the same or more ground troops than they did before the war and they are in much graver danger of war, many of them, than we are.

The Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam again raised the old bogey that the strength of the army in India, the purposes for which it is kept and the scale of equipment is dictated by His Majesty's Government, and especially by the Committee of Imperial Defence and the War Office. I do beg him to believe my reiterated denial of that statement. I have, not once or twice but many times during my tenure of the office of Commander-in-Chief, refused to ask India to spend money on equipment which I did not consider was absolutely necessary for the purposes of India itself. Naturally His Majesty's Government take the advice of the Imperial Defence Committee because it is the highest technical committee in the Empire and advises on all parts of that Empire, but the Committee or the War Office do not dictate to us.

Now, I must say I still would like to know why those amendments were withdrawn? Was it because the Honourable Mr. Hossain Imam thought that the sweet reasonableness of a less demand would appeal to the most Die-hard member of the British Government or the present Satanic Government in India, or what was the motive?

The Honourable mover is a whole-hogger, I am afraid. He would like us to say: "Split the army in two, remove the backbone from the army and it will function somehow. At least it is not my business to run the army and someone will have to make it do without a backbone. Let us destroy the proportion of British troops to Indian which has functioned so extraordinarily well for so many years past and has stood the test of time and war. Let us destroy that. Let us destroy it long before any efficient substitute is ready to take its place".

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN:** On a point of order, Sir. Is the Honourable Member entitled to discuss a Resolution or amendment which has not been moved or is the discussion to be confined only to the wording of the Resolution which is before the House?

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT:** He is entitled to refer to amendments which have been withdrawn in the Council Chamber.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF:** He would say to himself: "Never mind what the administrative impossibilities or difficulties are. It has always been a good stick to beat the Government with and let us beat them with it again". I cannot believe that in a Resolution so drastic as he intended to move at first there was any thought of the safety, honour and welfare of this country. It is merely the stick which is always a popular stick to beat the Government with.

But I must say that the person who I have been most surprised at among those who have spoken this morning is my Honourable friend, Raja Ghazanfar

[ His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. ]

Ali Khan. Why do I find him of all people in this *galère*. He comes from a part of the country where we get most of our soldiers from, from among the fighting races. And those people know only too well—and he knows only too well—how splendidly that proportion has succeeded and been found useful in old days and up to the very last in the Great War. Why does he try to induce me to recommend to the Government to reduce that proportion? When he knows how dangerous it is to tamper suddenly with the composition of an army.

Now, Sir, naturally if it is the wish of the Opposition the opinions that have been put forward in this debate will be forwarded to the Government and, if they wish so, to His Majesty's Government at home, but I would remind the House that the form in which the Resolution was put, that is to say, recommending to the Governor General in Council that he would substantially reduce the proportion of British troops in India, cannot be accepted because it is not possible for His Excellency the Governor General to take such action. His Excellency the Governor General may recommend to His Majesty's Government that such a thing may take place, but I would remind the House that the proportion of British troops to Indian troops has only very recently indeed been laid down by His Majesty's Government and approved by the Government of India. It has been discussed repeatedly and on many committees referred to in this debate and the proportion now is the result first of all of the recommendation of the Services Committee of the Round Table Conference, who recommended that an expert inquiry should be held. That expert inquiry was held. The result of that expert inquiry was sent home and considered most carefully by the Committee of Imperial Defence who made their recommendations to His Majesty's Government who sent them out for the views of the Government of India. Both Governments agreed upon them and that fixed the proportion of British to Indian troops in India during the transition period between what exists now and the further Indianisation of the army in India.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA: What is that ratio?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: The ratio is 3 to 1 in brigades when we go to war.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA: And for what fixed period?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: There is no fixed period. No period has been fixed or can be fixed. Surely, the Honourable Sir Phiroze Sethna would not like any man who has the burden of the defence of India on his shoulders as I have, to say definitely that an experiment of such magnitude and importance and one might say danger of going wrong as Indianisation could possibly be carried out in a fixed period.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA: That puts an end to Indianisation!

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I deny absolutely that it does anything of the sort. On the contrary, during my period of office I have increased Indianisation from eight units to 15 as the Honourable Member knows very well and I have said more than once from my place in

this House that when these young men, the officers who have now been drafted into the Indian Army, have had 14 years' service and are company commanders, then will be the time to see whether we can increase the speed of Indianisation because by that time they will have proved themselves or not. How can we prove a young man when he has only had seven or eight years' service and say he is fit to take charge of men and teach them in peace and lead them in war?

I am sure the House will not accuse me of not having the fullest sympathy in this matter. I have always said that it is I believe the right line to go on that the army in India should be gradually Indianised. (Applause.) I have always said it and I repeat it again. And I have always said the army budget as I found it when I first took over my office was too high and I would remind the House that just after the war the army budget was Rs. 60 crores, that it was Rs. 55 crores when I took it over, and I have reduced it by Rs. 9 crores in my short four years period of office. I have actually doubled the rate of Indianisation. I do not honestly think, Sir, that anybody can accuse me of not doing my best to fulfil the aspirations of Indians.

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. D. CHARI: May I ask one question?

1 P.M.

In what proportion were the Indian army sent to the war?

The proportion of Indian troops to British ranks?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I could not possibly tell you off-hand. You mean, how many Indian troops fought in the war and how many British?

THE HONOURABLE MR. P. C. D. CHARI: The proportion in which they were sent to the field—the proportion in which they fought?

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: The exact proportion? I think whenever it was possible a brigade of troops consisted of one battalion of British and three of Indians, and it always has been.

Honourable Members have referred again to the possible reduction in the cost of defence in India to the pre-war figure. I really hardly think it worth while countering that argument. You might just as well say that the British Army in England which now consists of less men than it did in 1914 should cost the same. It actually cost £29 million before the war which included the Air Force of that day, and it now costs over £40 millions and I believe it is going to be £42 millions this year, or something like that. How then is it possible to go back to the pre-war figure of Rs. 29 crores for the Indian Army? You might just as well say that you should pay the same for your own clothes or your own household expenses. It was also mentioned during the debate—I think by the Honourable Sir Phiroze Sethna—that he thought that the cost of an Indian soldier was considerably less than the Rs. 280 that we quoted this morning.

THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA: I said my recollection was that the cost of an Indian soldier to that of a British soldier was 1 to 4. That the British soldier cost some years ago Rs. 1,000 or more, and not Rs. 850. If he costs less today there must be some reason for the figure you gave this morning.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: I thought the Honourable Member suggested that in previous times the Indian soldier cost less than he does now.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA :** I did not say so.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** I beg the Honourable Member's pardon. I have really nothing more to say. I have exhausted all my arguments. It is not in the power of the Government of India to recommend to His Majesty's Government that either the rate of Indianisation should be increased or the proportion of British troops to Indian troops in India be reduced within such a very short time after so important and momentous a decision was come to by both the Governments.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM :** May we ask His Excellency whether the Report of the Expert Committee over which he presided will be made available to Members of the Legislature ?

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** No. It will not, any more than the report, which the Honourable Member quoted, of the so-called Rawlinson Committee will be made public. It is a very confidential document, and so was the Rawlinson Committee Report, and the Rawlinson Committee Report was not made public by a request of the Indian members themselves who pressed it should not be.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA :** The Indian members did not say so at the first Round Table Conference. They were Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and the late Sir Muhammad Shafi. They wanted to make it public and they have succeeded in doing so.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF :** All I can say is, Sir, that—I forget whether it was in the covering letter or whatever it was which forwarded the report to the Government—the members declared that they considered that it should never—I remember the word “never”—be made public. Perhaps the Honourable Member is referring to the Shea Committee ?

(The Honourable Mr. P. N. Sapru then rose in his place.)

**THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT :** The question has been thoroughly threshed out. Do you think it necessary to speak after His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. P. N. SAPRU** (United Provinces Southern : Non-Muhammadan) : I will take only about five minutes, Sir. I will not take more than five minutes. The Honourable Mr. Yamin Khan has given us the history of the great services which he has rendered to the cause of Indianisation in this country! I think we should vote a vote of gratitude for all those services and also his reading of Indian History between 1707 and 1806! He forgot one thing, and that was that the ratio of British troops to Indian troops during this period, that is, between 1707 and 1806, was 5 to 1. If I wanted to know what Indian History was, I would go to an earlier period, the glorious period of the Moghul Empire, not the period of the decay of the Moghul Empire, a decay to which the East India Company also contributed a very great deal. I suppose he is also grateful to the East India Company for what they did during that period ? Coming now from Mr. Yamin Khan

to the Resolution itself, I should like just to emphasise one point, and that is, that before the Mutiny, the ratio of British troops to Indian troops was 5 to 1. The present ratio was fixed in 1859. The Commission of 1859 and the Commission of 1879 considered this question and the present ratio was fixed after the Mutiny. The main reason for that ratio—and I put it in the most direct manner possible—is *political and not merely military*. The policy is based upon a distrust of Indian capacity, Indian loyalty and Indian patriotism, and that is really what we object to. Therefore, Sir, at the first Round Table Conference, the Indian delegates were very emphatic that there should be a reduction of British troops. What was the result? The Defence Sub-Committee recognised the great importance attached by Indian thought to the reduction of the number of British troops in India to the lowest possible figure and considered that the question should form the subject of early expert investigation. Now, Sir, the matter has been investigated, but on that Expert Committee, Indians were not appointed. I believe you could have got some Indians from Indian States who have had experience of army administration to serve on this Committee. We know nothing about this Committee. The proceedings were confidential. The report of this Committee is confidential. But we know this, that the British delegates at the conference recognised the great importance which Indian thought attaches to the reduction of British troops. We also know this, that the Defence Sub-Committee recognised that with the development of a new political structure in India, the defence of India must to an increasing extent be the concern of the Indian people, and not of the British Government alone. We want therefore to know whether you have observed in letter and in spirit the recommendation of a Conference Sub-Committee to which you were parties, and whether you have given effect to these recommendations or not? If you have not given effect to these recommendations, then we are entitled to say that we are not satisfied with what you have done; we were not parties to the decisions arrived at, and that we will go on pressing our demand for the substantial reduction of British troops, at a very early date.

Sir, as I have given you an undertaking that I will not speak for more than five minutes, I shall not say more. I should have liked to say much more on this subject, because I think one could show that it is possible to have a planned effort at Indianisation. Major Attlee and the Labour Delegation have said that you can Indianise the Indian Army in 30 years. It is their definite suggestion in their memorandum. Modern countries have shown what planning is capable of. You can change the whole face of a country by planned effort. Modern countries have shown that you can do that. It is no use saying that you cannot have planned effort. Well, you are moving at such a snail's pace that we cannot be satisfied with it. Sir, the country is hungering after freedom. It cannot wait till eternity for freedom. Therefore I want to say with all the emphasis of which I am capable that there ought to be a change of policy in this respect. As I wish to stick to my promise, I resume my seat.

THE HONOURABLE RAI BAHADUR LALA MATHURA PRASAD MEHROTRA : I have listened to the reply of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief with all the attention that it deserved. I am very thankful that he was very moderate in his reply. His Excellency was much worried as to why the Resolution was altered and moved in another shape in the House today. I may inform His Excellency that when I came here and had a talk with different groups I found that the Resolution would be more acceptable to them if it was worded as it was eventually moved. It was for that reason that the Resolution was

[Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra.]

moved in an amended form. Personally I am of opinion that this large reduction can be made, and I pointedly referred in my speech to the fact that during the Great War less than 15,000 British troops were left in India. I asked His Excellency whether that had involved taking a risk, and, if so, why the Government took that step and reduced the strength of British troops from 60,000 to less than 15,000? And, Sir, at that time we were facing dangers from all sides, while today every nation is sick of war and is seeking to establish peace permanently. Therefore, since the danger is so much less now I cannot see why the British Army in India cannot be substantially reduced? There is a further reason, as I said in my speech, that then we had no fleet of aeroplanes here which we have today—102 in all. These do greatly help on the frontiers. If there is any danger to India it is on the frontiers. Besides that, we have now formed a navy and therefore we are also secured on that side. Considering all these developments, I think if it was possible to carry on with 15,000 men at that time it must surely be possible to carry on with 30,000 at the present time.

Then I am glad to hear from His Excellency that the proportion of Indian to British troops has now been changed from 2 to 1 to 3 to 1. I quite appreciate the change which he has announced, but I would urge with all the emphasis I can command, that it is not quite sufficient. When the ratio before the Mutiny was 1 to 5 why should it not be the same today after a sound training of about 75 years? It is no credit to British training to say that that ratio cannot be attained after so long a period of training and after so many trials in different wars outside India. Therefore I would request that if His Excellency is pleased to recommend to His Majesty's Government that the ratio should now be 5 to 1 instead of 3 to 1, we on this side of the House will be satisfied with the progress of Indianisation and would like to withdraw the Resolution.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: Sir, I am afraid I cannot accept the proposal of the Honourable mover. I would point out again that not one single argument has been used today that was not in every way and every time before the three Committees who decided on the proportion of British to Indian troops in this country. They were before the Select Committee, they were before the Expert Committee, they were before the Imperial Defence Committee and the Garran Tribunal and before both Governments, and no new argument has been produced today that will in any way alter their opinion, I feel quite sure.

There is only one other point I would like to allude to and that was the Honourable mover's suggestion that because during the war we left only 15,000 British troops here that is an argument for taking the same risk again. I do not deny that we took a very grave risk in doing so. We had no idea at the time what would happen, but we had our backs against the wall and we were fighting for our lives, and we trusted at the time, as we had always trusted before, in the loyalty of India, and she did not fail.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT: Resolution moved:

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to reduce substantially the strength of British soldiers in India".

The Question is:

"That this Resolution be adopted."



The Council divided :

AYES—15.

Barua, The Honourable Srijut Heramba Prasad.  
 Charj, The Honourable Mr. P. C. D.  
 Devadoss, The Honourable Sir David.  
 Ghazanfar Ali Khan, The Honourable Raja.  
 Halim, The Honourable Khan Bahadur Hatiz Muhammad.  
 Hussain Imam, The Honourable Mr.  
 Kalikar, The Honourable Mr. V. V.  
 Khaparde, The Honourable Mr. C. S.

Kidwai, The Honourable Shaikh Mushir Hosain.  
 Mehrotra, The Honourable Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad.  
 Menon, The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir Ramunni.  
 Mitha, The Honourable Sir Suleman Cassim Haji.  
 Naidu, The Honourable Mr. Y. Ranganayakulu.  
 Sapru, The Honourable Mr. P. N.  
 Sethna, The Honourable Sir Phiroze.

NOES—26.

Charanjit Singh, The Honourable Raja.  
 Chetty, The Honourable Diwan Bahadur G. Narayanaswami.  
 Choksy, The Honourable Khan Bahadur Dr. Sir Nasarvanji.  
 Commander-in-Chief, His Excellency the.  
 Ghosal, The Honourable Mr. Jyotananath.  
 Gladstone, The Honourable Mr. S. D.  
 Glass, The Honourable Mr. J. B.  
 Glancy, The Honourable Sir Bertrand.  
 Habibullah of Dacca, The Honourable Nawab Khwaja.  
 Hafeez, The Honourable Khan Bahadur Syed Abdul.  
 Hallett, The Honourable Mr. M. G.  
 Johnson, The Honourable Mr. J. N. G.  
 Miller, The Honourable Mr. E.  
 Mitchell, The Honourable Mr. D. G.

Muhammad Hussain, The Honourable Khan Bahadur Mian Ali Baksh.  
 Noon, The Honourable Nawab Malik Sir Muhammad Hayat Khan.  
 Padshah Sahib Bahadur, The Honourable Salyed Mohamed.  
 Pandit, The Honourable Sardar Shri Jagannath Maharaj.  
 Philip, The Honourable Mr. C. L.  
 Russell, The Honourable Sir Guthrie.  
 Spence, The Honourable Mr. G. H.  
 Stewart, The Honourable Mr. F. W.  
 Stewart, The Honourable Mr. T. A.  
 Tallents, The Honourable Mr. P. C.  
 Ugra, The Honourable Rai Sahib Pandit Gokaran Nath.  
 Yamin Khan, The Honourable Mr. Mohammed.

The Motion was negatived.

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

The Council reassembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, the Honourable the President in the Chair.

## RESOLUTION RE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND STATE RAILWAY PRESSES.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY (West Bengal: Muhammadan): Sir, I beg to move the following Resolution which stands in my name:

"That this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a mixed committee of officials and non-officials be appointed to enquire into the working of the Government of India Presses and State Railway Presses with special reference to :

- (i) the amount and nature of work done;
- (ii) the working conditions prevailing in these presses;
- (iii) leave, holidays, pay and pensions granted to the workers; and
- (iv) how far the printing machinery introduced in the presses during the last 15 years has effected the workers in regard to the number employed and their earnings."

[Mr. Mahmood Suhrawardy.]

Sir, the proper treatment of labour in industry has been one of the most serious concerns of all Governments. The Government of India have been giving some thought to this important matter, as would appear from some of the recent legislation piloted by them though the Legislatures with a view to make the lot of our ill-paid and ill-treated workers a little better, a little more bearable. Like all progressive Governments they have also been, for some time now, giving more attention to the observance of factory laws with a view to improving the conditions of working in the factories and provide other necessary amenities calculated to keep the fund of human energy and efficiency materially unimpaired.

Unfortunately, however, this alertness of the Government for securing humane conditions of work and fair treatment to labour often seems to suffer a peculiar change when it comes to the question of securing similar amenities to those who work directly under the Government. The cases of the workers of the Government of India Presses and State Railway Presses at Calcutta may be cited as instances in point.

Sir, I was originally thinking of bringing the matter of the Government of India Presses only for discussion. But on subsequent thought I decided to include the matter of the State Railway presses also. Workers of both the presses have a long list of grievances—though of quite a different nature. Last year the grievances of the workers of the State Railway Presses were discussed in the Assembly and the Honourable the Railway Member was kind enough to agree to enquire into the matter; and an official enquiry committee was set up to conduct an enquiry. But unfortunately the unfortunate workers were not allowed by the Agent of the East Indian Railway to represent their case before the Committee through the representatives of their own choice. They made several representations signed by almost all the workers that the secretary of their union—a registered body under the Trades Union Acts, assisted by some of the workers themselves, be permitted to explain their case to the Committee. This prayer was made not in the spirit of opposition but as was pointed out in those petitions that as the secretary made a special study of questions affecting them and as they are complicated ones he may be permitted to explain their case and it was also pointed out that if the gentleman in question was not allowed as a secretary of any union then he might be permitted to appear as an advocate which he is,—but this humble prayer was refused. And even when Mr. S. C. Mitra, an ex-M. L. A., who took up their cause in the Assembly and at whose instance the enquiry was instituted, went to represent their case to the Agent at the request of my Honourable friend Sir Guthrie Russell, he was plainly told by the Agent that the enquiry had been finished ex-parte and there was no use of his explaining the case. This is how the enquiry ended. My Honourable friend Sir Guthrie Russell, kind and considerate as he is, knows everything—except perhaps the important things—the real grievances of the workers which remained hidden beneath the white-washing done by the Agent's Committee. But my Honourable friend of the Treasury bench can know them if he cares to do so. The workers themselves submitted a long memorandum to the Railway Board cataloguing their grievances. Sir, the Honourable Member in charge of Railways did promise last year to enquire into the matter—and I hope that the Honourable Member did mean a real enquiry at that time and not a sham enquiry,—a white-washing enquiry as has been done by the Agent.

Now, Sir, regarding the Government of India Presses. The Government of India own five printing presses, two in Calcutta (the Central and Forms

Presses) and one each in Delhi, Simla, and Aligarh. The labour employed in these factories may be designated under two broad categories, viz., (i) salaried hands and (ii) piece-workers, accordingly as they are paid on the monthly system or by the piece-rate for the work done. The total number of workers in all these printing presses would be about 2,200 of which 1,600 are salaried hands and 600 piece-workers. An invidious distinction is made between salaried hands and piece-workers regarding leave, holidays and some other matters and the salaried hands enjoy better privileges than those enjoyed by the piece-workers, e.g., piece-workers do not get any wages for the days during which the factory remains closed, for they work on the principle—no work no pay. But with salaried hands it is different. Then again, the salaried hands who are permanent superior industrial ones are entitled to get leave on average pay at the rate of one month's leave for every complete period of eleven months duty, whereas the permanent superior piece-workers get leave on average pay for 16 or 23 or 31 days according to their length of service being less than 10 years, or 10 years but less than 15 years, or 15 years and above respectively. Besides piece-workers as a rule do not get any casual leave.

Now, Sir, one important thing which I would like this House to take into consideration that this distinction between piece-workers and salaried hands is not based upon any difference of work which each class performs. The same class of workers is placed on the two different wage systems in different presses, e.g., binders of Calcutta are piece-workers whereas they are salaried hands in Delhi; then again compositors of Calcutta and Delhi are piece-workers, whereas they are salaried hands at Simla and Aligarh. There are other such instances. They are entitled to enjoy the privileges accordingly as they come under the category of salaried hands or piece-workers even though they perform the same nature of work.

Sir, the woes of the press-workers, especially those who are paid on the piece system are not altogether unknown to this House. The question was raised on several occasions on the floor of this House; and as early as the 29th September, 1921 this House accepted the Resolution of my friend, the Honourable Mr. Khaparde, for instituting an Enquiry Committee to go into their grievances and to suggest remedies. But unfortunately the Committee could not be unanimous in their recommendations and my friend, the Honourable Mr. Khaparde, who was one of the members of the Committee, had to differ from other members in respect of a very important matter, i.e., the abolition of the piece system.

However, Sir, as was natural the Government accepted the majority report and hoped that it would remove the grievances of the press workers. But, Sir, after the lapse of about 13 years during which the majority recommendations had ample time for experiment, I am, unfortunately, bound to say that they did not improve the lot of those unfortunate but loyal band of workers known as "piece-workers". Sir, much could be said for and against the piece system; to me it is an academical question. But to me what is important is this, the piece workers of the Government Presses are now finding that in spite of many pious wishes of the authorities, the piece system as obtains in the Government Presses is costing them dearly. Their earnings are gradually being decreased. In 1926 the Honourable Mr. Ley informed this House that the maximum earnings of a Calcutta compositor in 1925-26 was Rs. 122 per month. The Honourable Sir Frank Noyce stated in September, 1933 in the Assembly the said maximum earning had come down to Rs. 82 per month. In several replies to interpellations in the Assembly the Honourable

[Mr. Mahmood Sukrawardy.]

Member in charge of Industries and Labour also admitted that the earnings of the piece-workers are actually decreasing (*vide* interpellation in the Assembly No. 283, dated the 11th December, 1933 ; No. 720, dated the 21st March, 1930 ; No. 720, dated the 20th September, 1933).

I knew, Sir, that the Honourable Member opposite on the Treasury bench will try to put it across that if the outturn of the piece-workers remained unaltered their earnings would also remain unaltered. But, Sir, I may inform the House, that the peculiar design of the piece system of work is hedged in with such fine complications that outturn seldom indicates one's earning capacity. One's outturn depends upon various factors—and outturn is no indication of one's capacity to produce or his efficiency as a worker. Besides, there are some works which are more paying, i.e., they can be done at lesser time and at the same time their rate is higher. There are some works which cannot be valued and paid for on piece-rate. When a worker is given such work his wages are calculated on the basis of the hours during which he is engaged on it, and for the purpose of such payment each worker has an hour fixed. Generally this is fixed on the average of his earnings per hour which he earns when put on piece-work. But as the class rate of a worker when once fixed, increases biennially it does not generally represent his actual capacity to earn per hour if put on piece-work. Generally the class rate of a senior hand is higher than what he can earn when put on piece-work. This was done on the recommendations of the piece-works committee to ameliorate the condition of the senior hands.

Now, Sir, I am informed, that the authorities of the press have practically ceased to distribute the "paying works" to hand compositors who are piece-workers, but are giving them to the mono-operators and line-operators who are all salaried hands. This is one of the reasons why the earnings are decreasing. Another reason is that the senior men whose class rate is higher are seldom put on "hour work" and when it is found that the outturn of any worker is higher than his "class rate outturn" he is put on "hour work" and *vice versa*.

Sir, there are other things, such as vagaries of section holders, computers, checkers, etc., which are responsible for the decrease of earnings of a piece-worker. It was elaborately discussed by my friend the Honourable Mr. Khaparde in his dissenting minute of the piece-work committee report ; so I will not go further with them any more.

It is therefore necessary, Sir, that there should be an enquiry as to why in spite of the measures recommended by the majority report of the piece-work committee which were calculated to bring about an improvement both in the earnings and condition of service of the piece-workers did not have the desired effect. I think, Sir, that the lot of the poor piece-workers in the press cannot improve unless the piece system is totally abolished as suggested by my Honourable friend Mr. Khaparde. In this connection I may inform the House that in State Railway Presses the piece system has been abolished since 1930 and all the workers there are now being paid on the monthly salary system. The Government of India also has abandoned this system in its presses at Simla and Aligarh and practically put many of its workers in the Delhi Press, e.g., binders, machinemen, etc., who are piece-workers in the Calcutta Press, on the salary system. Why then does Government not abolish this system altogether in its presses?

Then, Sir, there are other matters which also require scrutiny. There are many men even with such length of service as more than 20 years who are

still working as temporary hands. This practice, as far as I know, was condemned by the piece-work committee. And in 1930 Mr. C. T. Letton, the Controller of Printing and Stationery, informed the said temporary hands who submitted a petition to the Government :

"The Government are now considering the question of making nearly all the posts of the press permanent. I made this proposal months ago and the decision should come very soon. . . . . I am certain that all those who can claim a fair amount of service will have their posts converted to permanent posts before very long".

Sir, four years have rolled by since this assurance was given, yet the situation remains almost the same.

Further about medical leave. Under the leave rules promulgated by the Government of India for the workers, medical leave is treated as cumulative and their services are being counted, since the promulgation of the rule in 1928 from the date of appointment for the same purpose. But they have been now informed after six years of uniform practice, that the authorities made a mistake and the length of service should be counted not from the date of appointment but from the date of promulgation of the rule, i.e., September, 1928 and so the leave salary which they had drawn for medical leave taken has now been ordered to be recovered amounted to more than Rs. 500. Sir, is it justice? Why should the poor workers be deprived of a concession that they were so long enjoying and why should they be penalised for a mistake, if any, committed by the authorities themselves?

There is another matter. Retrenchment of staff has been effected in most of the Government Presses on account of paucity of work, yet from the Annual Report on Government of India Printing for 1929-30 it is found that under heads "Posts and Telegraphs" and "Military Services", a total contract for an amount of Rs. 12,83,551 was given to outside presses during the year under review. When the same question was raised some time ago, the Honourable Mr. Ley stated on the floor of this House that :

"The Government Presses were capable of doing the work given to contractors".

Why then, may I ask the Government, do they give out such huge contracts to outside presses? Sir, it cannot be said the contractor can turn out the work more cheaply than a Government Press. Sir, the Government has had sad experience with one press, Lal Chand's. Why is it committing the same folly?

There is another small matter which I would like to mention. The Central Printing Office was established to regulate the distribution of work to the aforesaid five printing presses. But unfortunately, I am informed, that while the Calcutta presses are suffering from dearth of work and many workers have to be retrenched the press in Delhi is having a surfeit of work and many hands have been recruited and the press almost always has to work overtime. Why are the Calcutta presses in the bad books of the Government? Another thing I would like to mention. Why are the retrenched hands of Calcutta not provided with jobs in Delhi or Simla? And why, if given such jobs are they not given the same pay which they were getting in Calcutta? Sir, I understand that some of the retrenched hands of the Calcutta press who have more than 15 years service were taken on in the Delhi Press on the recommendations of the Calcutta Manager and they were at first re-appointed on their former salary; but subsequently for reasons unknown they were demoted to a lower grade of pay. Why was this done?

[Mr. Mahmood Suhrawardy.]

The accumulated grievances of the Government of India Press employees expose the shameful indifference and callous unconcern with which they have been treated by the Government. The time has come when a crisis stares them in the face and the only way they can get out of this mess of bad organisation and shameful mismanagement is by instituting a searching inquiry into and thorough reorganisation of the whole wretched system.

Sir, with these words I commend my Resolution for the acceptance of this House.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE (Berar Representative): Sir, I wish to speak early in the discussion on this Resolution because I had a similar Resolution which should have been argued a few days ago, but I fell ill and had to go home. I feel very much obliged to my Honourable friend Mr. Suhrawardy for his lucid and compact exposition of the grievances of the printers. It saves me the trouble of giving the previous history of this whole case. I have been connected with it for some time because I first took it up when we used to sit in Metcalfe House, in 1920, and since then I have been arguing this question in one shape or another and there was the temptation that I might stray altogether into wrong paths. He has saved me from that and I can begin with the argument straight off.

But first I will take a few preliminary points. The first is that in the papers and in the correspondence these people, the press workers, have been mentioned as labourers, temporary labourers and labourers employed on salaries and labourers kept hanging between the two, temporary but with hopes of permanency. That is how their labour is classified. But the important point is that though the word "labourer" in the English language does not carry any bad odour about it, in our Indian language "labourer" means a man of no education or culture, a man of a lower type. In England of course you speak of labourers in the scientific field or other branches of research in the best sense of the word. It has a different connotation altogether. Here it is not so, and I wish you to understand that these people who are being spoken of as labourers are really gentlemen: that is to say, they have a school or college education and do not belong to the labouring class as we know it here; they have connections in the learned professions and are, generally speaking, drawn from that class of people. So, though they are described as labourers, they have to be looked upon as gentlemen, not like the ordinary coolie or a water bearer or other humble workers of that calibre. Having made this distinction, I have to say that, speaking from my long experience in India and also my experience abroad in England, a phrase which I heard there most aptly describes the law of this world. The law of this world is:

"Unto him who hath more shall be given and from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath".

When they first started the press they called people to put sticks, etc., together; labourers came there; later on they got better men who  
 3 P.M. could not only put things together and do other things but also compose and put types together; these men were taken on and still classed as labourers. The whole class of compositors is spoken of here as labourers. When compositors came in, then there came the merchant naturally with his money and machinery. He had a great deal of money and more had to be given to him. The way to do it was to purchase his machinery and pay him. There was a mild craze for machinery and that mild craze has not yet

gone away but come to stay. The present civilisation is based mostly on scientific investigations. The craze for machinery being there naturally they want to get as many things done by machine as possible. There is a limit to everything in this world. Even the use of machines has got its own limits and there are points at which machinery fails because after all a machine is an inanimate thing. Unless there is a man behind it it does not carry things further. I suppose in course of time intellect will come by its own. I saw a book some time ago pointing out that a great deal is done by machinery. Unfortunately it is not available now ; I have mislaid it. You take the cost of a work before machinery was introduced and the present cost. Machinery is said to save labour. Still if you take the cost of the machine and the interest on it you will find that it exceeds what was formerly paid to the labourers. Human labour is displaced by machinery and yet machinery is more costly in the end than human labour. However, that is too large a proposition to be argued on this occasion. I only mentioned it because it is important to remember how things went on.

In 1920 Sir Thomas Holland wrote a long memorandum and he wanted to replace many things by machinery. We used to meet in Metcalfe House then. It was pointed out that the proposal would take the bread out of the mouths of so many people. He replied " Oh, that is not it " and this is what he promised :

" That if the terms sanctioned in the Government Resolution of 15th July do not demonstrate that they would get higher wages for shorter hours of work, I would tear up the Government Resolution and that I would revise the rates and again revise them until the men acknowledge that they are able with these terms to earn a decent living by working during decent hours ".

This was the promise under which this system came in. When it came in, I pointed out that it would not work, but that did not matter. It went on and it went on. So the two promises made in introducing this system of machinery and piece-work were that people would have a decent wage and a decent living by working decent hours. Has it turned out so ? It has not. In an enquiry it has been found that originally when there was not much machinery but only hand labour each of these workers got something like Rs. 122 a month. Now each of these men get something like Rs. 82 a month. Anyhow Rs. 40 has gone away from the pockets of these poor people and they do not get on well. If you take the cost of the machinery that has been employed and if you calculate interest on it, you will find that Government is at present spending more money by employing machinery than they would have to spend if they had piece-workers. As a purely economic proposition, the present system is wrong. However, we can put that aside for the time being, because the argument usually advanced is that scientific apparatus will cost more in the beginning but gradually it will get cheapened ; as royalties on the inventions disappear the thing would become cheaper ; and on that consideration we can tolerate this matter to go on further. But how did it go on ? There were various quarrels, numerous discussions and that was going on for a long time. Then the matter came up again and the enquiry that we asked for was granted and I was one of the people put on that committee and there was Mr. Ascoli and there was a third, Sir Vithaldas Thackersey, who is dead now. I am about the only living representative of that committee. That committee came to a decision with which I did not agree and ultimately I had to write a long note of dissent and that note of dissent also has been referred to by my Honourable friend Mr. Suhrawardy. All the arguments are there and so I need not repeat them. Our present point is this. We come now not for a prayer to revise any system ; we are not asking you to change

[Mr. G. S. Khaparde.]

anything. We are only asking for an enquiry. After 13 years I suppose it is time to examine your system and see if it is working properly or not. It is not an inordinately short time within which to revise a thing. Twelve years is our Indian time to examine a thing and see what happens. This is the end of the twelfth year. We again come up and those people for whom I spoke then I speak now and I again ask an enquiry may be granted and that enquiry has to be on the five points mentioned in the Resolution. After the committee reports on these five points the report will be considered by this Council and decided finally. There is a little history which has to be necessarily mentioned. After this enquiry and my note the matter came up again and that was the time when Mr. Ley was Secretary of the Commerce Department. He fought our propositions, of course ; but when it was argued, then he said :

“ I do not want it to be understood to suggest that there are not grievances : there are grievances and there must be,”

and so on. So that there were grievances when we came up again; that fact being admitted I may be allowed to stand there. Then we were told that these poor people could put petitions but ought not to request Members to ask questions and so on. But they again put questions and then came a thing which really took me by surprise. They again put questions and the answer at that time was given by Mr. Letton. He is also connected with the department, I am told, and he said:

“ I have made recommendations that these grievances should be redressed and proposals have already been submitted to Government and orders are expected and then the matter will be all right ”.

So we cannot set down what it is but “ something is going to be done”. Later on, it came out that Government had declined to interfere, and things remained as they were. In these circumstances, I bring this Resolution before the Council here. It appears in the meantime that the department did not like our bringing the matter before the Council because Mr. Ley said :

“ Why do you come to the Council ? You come to me with petitions and I shall settle them all right and they will be departmentally dealt with properly ”.

We said “ All right ”. So those people brought petitions, something like 300. What became of those petitions God alone knows. There was no action taken, and there the matter stands even to this day. Whatever became of those petitions we got nothing out of them. At least it was said that proposals had been submitted. We did not know what the proposals were nor were we entitled to ask because they were officially submitted and until they were sanctioned they could not be disclosed. Ultimately they said no orders had been passed. Anyhow we got nothing out of it. And there the matter stands. So at this time I believe Honourable Members will agree that we have followed out the official course. We have not tried to upset any of the set customs in the office and we come to you after 13 years once more with the same complaint, that our plaint still remains unredressed. If you gave us a committee and we did something with that committee, the matter was left over and was not satisfactory. Will you kindly give us another committee now and let them decide and if they decide we will abide by it. So this is the plaint before you and this is our application. Our application is for a committee of mixed officials and non-officials of such number as the Council approves, with instructions to inquire into and report on the five points mentioned in the Resolution and if they would kindly do that then it will be time to see.



how matters stand. This is our case and this is the case that I have come to argue and put before you, and I believe this the proper place to leave it at. There was a promise made by Sir Thomas Holland to provide two things—a decent wage and decent hours of work. That has not been fulfilled. Further inquiry said something would be done : but nothing has been done.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Will you please conclude your speech.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE : I am concluding, Sir. This is my peroration. So the Government's promise having failed and we having waited 13 years, we have come here to ask for another inquiry and we hope Honourable Members will give us an inquiry.

THE HONOURABLE SAIYED MOHAMED PADSHAH SAHIB BAHADUR (Madras : Muhammadan) : Sir, I give my whole-hearted support to the Resolution. I feel, Sir, that the demand that is made is only a modest one. It cannot be denied that the system which obtains in these two presses, the Government presses and the Indian State Railway presses is such that it neither makes for economy nor efficiency nor does it conduce to the creation of healthy conditions for the people employed in them. Sir, it is true that there have been inquiries into the condition of things in both directions but, Sir, as has been pointed out by my Honourable friend, the Honourable Mr. Suhrawardy, both these inquiries were defective. The inquiry that was made last year by the official committee set up to inquire into the grievances of the Indian State Railway presses was vitiated by the fact that the employees of those presses were prevented from establishing their case before the Committee through their own representatives. Their request that they should represent their case before the Committee through the Secretary of their Union was turned down by the Agent as my Honourable friend, Mr. Suhrawardy, has just pointed out. The attitude taken up by the Agent seems to have been so uncompromising, so stiff, that even Mr. S. C. Mitra, the ex-M. L. A. at whose instance that Committee appears to have been set up was refused a hearing. Though he went to the Agent at the instance of the Chief Commissioner of Railways, he was told by the Agent that the inquiry had been closed and there was no use of his making any representations to him in the matter. Well, Sir, that was the fate of the inquiry about the Indian State Railway presses. As regards the other press, Sir, the investigation that was made in this case also failed to produce the desired effect. The reason was, Sir, that the scope of the inquiry was limited and it did not cover the whole field of the operations of the system that obtained in this press. Secondly, even those few recommendations that were given effect to by the Government were in the very process of being carried into effect, so modified that much was done to militate against the very purpose for which those recommendations were meant.

Sir, the grievances of the employees in these presses are many and real. As has been pointed out by my Honourable friends who have spoken before me these grievances have been brought to the notice of the Government from time to time, and in spite of the inquiries that have been made and in spite of the fact that an attempt was made to try and improve conditions, the lot of the employees of these presses has remained as it was. There does not seem to be much improvement there, because the press employees in these presses appear to have no sympathy of the authorities. As the Honourable mover of the Resolution has pointed out, a distinction is made between the

[Saiyed Mohamed Padshah Sahib Bahadur.]

salaried hands and the piece-workers. There is no justification whatever for this distinction for this is a distinction without a difference, because the work that is done by the salaried hands in one press is the work that is done by piece-workers in another press. So, this distinction has no justification. Again, Sir, in the matter of leave, allowance, etc., the piece-workers are labouring under great difficulties. Again, in giving a particular kind of work to particular people the recommendation of the Piece-workers' Committee has not been properly carried out. No definite rule to my knowledge has been made which would go to make things clear, so that it would not be possible for the people who distribute work to exercise favouritism. I am told, Sir, that even now, older men get heavier work very often and the younger men get better sort of work. There is again a perpetual conflict between the interests of the salaried hands and those of the piece-workers. Since salaried hands are entitled to over-time allowance, they are for making delays; while, on the other hand, the piece-workers, who are paid by the amount of work, are anxious that they should turn out as much work as possible. The result is that the piece-worker very often has to wait for hours without having any work since they have to depend upon people whose interest lies in delaying as much as possible. I feel, Sir, with my Honourable friend Mr. Khaparde, that since the Honourable Mr. Ley, who replied to the criticisms in this Honourable House admitted that even after an enquiry had been made by the Sarma Committee and after Government had attempted to give effect to the recommendations of that Committee, there were still grievances, and inasmuch as it was admitted even so long ago as 1926 that there were grievances,—I feel, Sir, in view of these considerations that a very strong case has been made out to make a further inquiry into the matter, and to see that those grievances are redressed.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM (Bihar and Orissa : Muham-madan) : Sir, I wish to associate myself and my Party with the object with which this Resolution has been brought forward. We are all in sympathy with this Resolution, because it wants to give something to these have-nots. Although the order of things in Europe and everywhere else is to take away from the have-nots, we in India at least have not become so much modernized. Sir, Government have taken up an anomalous position with regard to Government Presses. We find from statistics that the number of men who are employed is getting less and less and the work that is put out from the Government Presses are not on the increase. We are told that contracts are given to contractors, because they do things cheaper. The question is, how is it that a contractor can put out the same amount of work at a cheaper rate than the Government ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : He pays his workmen less.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : I will tell you how he does it. If there is more output the overhead charges are reduced. The lesser the output, the greater the incidence of overhead charges on each piece-work that is turned out. Private contractors make intensive use of their works, their mill, machinery and everything. Where they save is in the overhead charges. The highly paid officers increase the cost of the Government of India Presses. In no private press will you find a manager or superintendent on the same scale of pay as in a Government Press. As far as these workers are concerned, they do not get a much higher rate of salary than they command in other commercial works, but there is no doubt that the officers do

get a much higher rate of pay than they do in private presses. I wish to ask for information from Government on one point. When a question was put in the Assembly—question No. 127, dated the 20th September, 1933—as to whether the cost of the work in the monotype and linotype was higher than that of the ordinary press, the reply was that they were not high. But when a detailed account was demanded how much would be the cost of each and every item, which would go to make up the real cost of these monotype and linotype, the reply was that this information was not readily available. One wonders how one can say that a thing would be costly or not when one does not know the full cost item by item. It is easy to say that the amount of wages paid is more in hand work than in machine work. But the entire cost,—the replacement charges, the original cost price, the interest charges, the machinery which they utilise,—all these items go to make up the cost. I therefore appeal to the Government that this matter deserves their sympathy and that they would not be over-burdening the taxpayers if they do justice to the workers.

Sir, I support this Motion.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL (Industries and Labour Secretary) : Sir, the Honourable Members who have spoken have me somewhat at a disadvantage. They have come briefed with a number of specific grievances, of which I had no special notice, and I find myself quite unable to meet their very large number of points of detail. However, I think it is not incumbent on me to meet them on points of detail. The frame of the Resolution is not the discussion of grievances but the appointment of a Committee to inquire into those grievances, and I propose to confine my remarks to that very broad issue. Now, we all have our grievances. I suppose most of the Honourable Members of this House have their grievances, though they cannot be said to be drawn from the economically depressed classes. I should think there are few groups of industrial workers in the whole world who have not got economic grievances. I do not for a moment deny that the industrial workers in Government and Railway presses have their grievances. That however is not the question. The question is whether these grievances are of such a nature as to require the special step of the appointment of a special committee consisting of officials and non-officials to make an inquiry into those grievances. I would point out that the appointment of a Committee of this kind virtually amounts to a vote of censure on the administration in the department concerned.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : No, Sir, we do not say that.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : As I will endeavour to show later, machinery already exists in the department concerned for the redress of grievances. If that machinery has failed to operate it must be through the fault of the department concerned, and I regard the motion as virtually constituting a vote of censure on my department.

Now, Sir, is there a case for the appointment of this special committee ? To my mind two conditions must be proved before we can accept that proposition. The first condition is that the state of these workers is a grievance crying to the heavens, which requires special and immediate redress. The second is that there is no regular machinery by which these grievances could be redressed. I submit, Sir, that in spite of the lugubrious tones of the Honourable mover, neither of these two points have been established. To begin with, let me explain very briefly and broadly the condition of the industrial workers

[Mr. D. G. Mitchell.]

in Government Presses. As most Honourable Members in this House and all those who have read the Report of the recent Royal Commission on Labour know, one of the features of Indian industrial life is what is called "turn over," which refers to a habit of labour all the world over, and particularly in India, of seeking a fresh job every now and again. It may be due to mere restlessness or incapacity to hold down a job; but in any case the phenomenon exists. But there is one very notable exception. It does not exist in the Government of India or Railway State Presses. Once a man gets a job there, he stays in that job until he dies or retires. There is no desire to seek another job. Even a man taken on as a temporary hand does not seek to get another post elsewhere; his chief ambition in life is to be made permanent.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM: The trouble is they may continue to be temporary for 20 years.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL: In that case his ambition becomes all the more keen.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY: That is what we want an inquiry for.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL: Now, Sir, we come to more particular terms and working conditions. The Resolution itself gives, I am sorry to say somewhat vaguely, certain references. The mover indicates certain headings on which I will make a few remarks. "Leave, holidays, pay and pensions granted to the workers." The Honourable mover of the Motion himself showed that the salaried workers get a month's leave each year and the other workers get from 16 to 31 days' leave each year on full pay. I would ask him if he will find many groups of industrial workers in India or anywhere else where the leave terms are so good.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY: The whole point of my case is to make all the piece-rate workers into salaried hands and enjoy the same privileges as the permanent hands.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL: The grievance is that the piece-workers are not so well treated as the salary workers; not that the salary workers or piece-workers are badly treated.

THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE: I asked for the abolition of the piece system in my note of dissent 13 years ago.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL: Government has been taking up the question of this piece system. It has been considering it for many years past. I am not intimately acquainted with its history, but the last incident of which I am aware happened in July last, when in the Delhi Press at the instance of a group of binders and machine men a number of salaried workers were put on piece-work at their own request. They made an application and special permission was accorded to enable them to work on the piece system. That is the last development in the history of the piece-work movement.

Then one Honourable Member referred to the hours of work. The hours of work are 8½ and 5½ on Saturdays; that is, 48 hours per week. This House

not very long ago passed a Bill which made the maximum 56 hours a week. This means that the workers in Government Presses work for one hour a day less than the ordinary workers in factories. I do not think there is any cause for the appointment of a special committee on this head.

Now, Sir, I have tried to make out a case for showing that the condition of these industrial workers is not so grave as to require the special step of the appointment of a committee. The next thing I will endeavour to show is that machinery already exists. These men are all Government servants. They can make an appeal to their immediate departmental superiors. They can form themselves into trade unions and become recognised and make representations to Government. In addition to that there is a particular system which has been encouraged very much—

**THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE :** Do these circumstances take away the Council's jurisdiction over the matter ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL :** I shall come to that. As I said, in addition there is a system known as Works Committees which was very much encouraged by the last Controller, Mr. Letton. They are small committees of the workers in each press who are allowed to represent by personal contact with the departmental chiefs concerned any grievances about the working conditions of the workers in the press. There is nothing to prevent the workers in these presses from representing their cases to Government through their departmental superiors in the ordinary way, either through the Works Committees and their departmental superiors, or by means of recognised unions. When these representations reach the Government of India they will be dealt with in the first place by my colleague Mr. Clow.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. G. S. KHAPARDE :** Do I understand that even if the Government of India do not decide a case for 30 years, they need not or ought not to come to the Council ?

**THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL :** I have not mentioned the word "Council." They will come in the first place to my colleague Mr. Clow, whom I think nobody could accuse of lack of sympathy with industrial labour. In the last instance they would be dealt with by my Honourable Member Sir Frank Noyce, who, I think the Council will also admit, cannot be charged with hardness of heart. I can assure the Honourable Members who have spoken on this Motion that if these industrial workers in the presses will get together and form themselves into proper unions and get themselves recognised, they have a complete machinery now for the representation and redress of all grievances, and I can give them every assurance that any grievances properly represented through the ordinary departmental channels in this way will receive the most sympathetic consideration.

There has been a great deal said about the Railway Presses and the recent history of representations of workers in these presses. Now I know a little of the inner history myself. Last year about this time the Honourable Mr. Abdul Hafeez gave notice of a very similar Motion. He had a talk with my Honourable Member who gave him an assurance that he would ask the Railway Member to look into the grievances which the Honourable Mr. Abdul Hafeez had been representing. About the same time the same grievances were discussed on a token out in the Assembly and the Railway Member himself gave an assurance that he would have them enquired into. This was in the month of March last. Very prompt action was taken and a small committee

[Mr. D. G. Mitchell.]

was appointed consisting of two Deputy Agents and a senior Accounts Officer who proceeded at once to make the enquiry. I gather that when Mr. S. C. Mitra approached the Agent of the East Indian Railway, he did so many months after the appointment of the Committee—

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY : After the Committee's enquiry was over ?

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : The Committee was appointed very shortly after the month of March and Mr. Mitra did not approach the Agent of the East Indian Railway till October. The result was due to promptness of action of the railway authorities and not to any lack of sympathy or consideration.

Now, there has been a great grievance made that a trade union official was not allowed to approach the Agent of the Eastern Bengal and other railways concerned. Honourable Members of this House must know perfectly well Government's position in regard to unions of industrial workers composed of Government servants. It is that the unions must consist of a definite class of Government servants and of Government servants only. Government cannot recognise or have any dealings with a union which consists partly of Government servants and partly of outsiders. It is against the existing rules and against obvious policy. Further, I would ask Honourable Members who have supported this particular part of the Resolution just to reflect in their own minds what is the best procedure for a group of workers who have grievances to represent. Do they want to go and hire outsiders to represent their case before departmental superiors ? Is it not better that they themselves should go in person, sit round the table and have a talk, a talk about things which are matters of day-to-day experience on both sides ? Is not that much better than having—

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY : Certainly it is much better if the departmental superior hears them.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : I would only suggest to the House that if Government should accept this contention of the workers, then Government would be entitled to adopt the same method, and deputations from workers might find themselves talking to a Government pleader—a position which they do not like. The attitude of the Government is let the workers come themselves ; let them talk their grievances over with their departmental superiors in a friendly fashion and their grievances will be properly enquired into. There is no reason why this should not be done. There is no reason in particular why these industrial workers in presses should not represent their own grievances. They are not illiterate people, but as the Honourable Mr. Khaparde said, highly educated gentlemen.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY : They must appoint a representative of their own choice to speak.

THE HONOURABLE MR. D. G. MITCHELL : I have already mentioned that a Committee was appointed to enquire into the grievances of the Railway press employees. That report has just been received. It is a most formidable document and is now receiving the very sympathetic consideration of the Railway Board. I would ask my Honourable friend Mr. Suhrawardy not to

describe this as whitewash until he has had an opportunity of reading it. As it was only presented a week or so ago, neither he nor those who briefed him have had the opportunity of discovering whether it is whitewash or not. But I can assure the Honourable mover that the report will have very sympathetic consideration from my Honourable friend Sir Guthrie Russell. Sir, I oppose the Resolution.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MAHMOOD SUHRAWARDY :** Sir, I listened with patience to the arguments advanced by my Honourable friend Mr. Mitchell, who is the Secretary of the Industries and Labour Department and who is the authority concerned in this matter, but I am not going to accept his statement that if a committee of enquiry was appointed it would be tantamount to a censure. There have been so many committees appointed at the Round Table Conference and India is sharply divided in its opinion. Again, the Joint Parliamentary Committee was appointed. Does the Honourable Member mean this is a censure on the British Parliament? This is no argument. But having regard to the financial aspect and the present condition of India, I am not going to press for the appointment of a committee, as the Honourable Member gave me an assurance that if the grievances are put by the workers themselves or by their representatives or by deputation, they will receive due consideration of the department individually and their individual grievances will be remedied. On that assurance alone if I have understood him rightly, I am not pressing this Resolution.

The Resolution \* was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

#### RESOLUTION *RE* ADVANCEMENT OF LOANS ON THE SECURITY OF POSTAL INSURANCE POLICIES.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR** (Central Provinces : General) : The Resolution that stands in my name runs thus :

" This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to issue instructions to the Postal Department so to alter the existing Postal Insurance Rules as to provide for the advancing of loans on the security of the postal policies to their policy holders ".

Sir, my Resolution contains a proposition which is I think most non-controversial. I move this Resolution in the interests of the Government servants, and particularly of low paid Government servants. Sir, on this point a question was put by me and the answer that I read in the papers was to the effect that Government do not want to compete with private concerns in this matter and moreover in the interest of the families of the policy-holders they do not think it advantageous to advance loans and therefore they do not want to change their policy. Well, Sir, I submit that the Government have competed with private concerns in this matter, because by issuing policies they have to some extent competed with insurance companies and other concerns. So far as loans are concerned, Government do advance loans for house building purposes ; they also advance loans for the purchase of conveyances, and if my information is correct Government do advance loans to their employees from the General Provident Fund for meeting expenses in connection with illness in their families, for marriage purposes, for religious rites, etc. I am induced to take up their cause, Sir, especially of the low paid Government servants, because in my province I find nowadays the money market very tight. Certain Acts have been passed during the last two or three years in

\* Vide page 311 ante.

[Mr. V. V. Kalikar.]

my province on account of which the ordinary money-lenders do not or are not inclined to advance loans to these low paid Government servants without any security, and in some cases they demand the security of land or landed property. The result of this is that these poor low paid Government servants come into the clutches of money-lenders who charge exorbitant rates of interest. In order to facilitate the advancing of loan to these low paid employees, I thought over the matter and I put this proposition up before the Government for their acceptance. It is in the interests of the Government that their employees should be free from financial embarrassments. For the efficiency of the administration it is necessary that their servants should be well fed, well clad, and should have facilities to meet their demand when unforeseen circumstances make them or force them to take loans. I wish they had no opportunity of taking loans, but nobody can control these things and in certain circumstances they are forced to take loans. So my submission is that as in many cases many of the low paid Government servants do not contribute or are not in a position to contribute to the general provident fund and therefore they are denied the facility of getting loans from the General Provident Fund, this sort of facility should be afforded to them so that they may be free from the clutches of exorbitant money-lenders. I therefore appeal to the Government to think over this problem seriously and accept my innocent and most non-controversial Resolution.

Sir, I move.

THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANK NOYCE (Industries and Labour Member) : Sir, in a few days I shall be presiding at a meeting of the Posts and Telegraphs Compassionate Fund. That Fund has been constituted to enable us to give some help to the families of employees of the Posts and Telegraphs whose bread-winner has been taken away from them during the course of his service and who has left them in poverty-stricken circumstances. The amount at our disposal is unfortunately very small indeed, far too small to enable us to deal at all adequately with the number of claims on the Fund. I hope that before long, when financial conditions improve, I shall be able to soften the hard heart of the Finance Department and get an extra allotment, for it is distressing to find the number of cases which come to us in which wives and children have been left very badly off indeed and in which we can do so little to help. It was with that in mind, Sir, that this postal insurance business was embarked on by the Post Office. What I wish to impress upon the House is that the whole object underlying our postal insurance is to enable the bread-winner to make provision for his family not for himself and that object would be largely frustrated if my Honourable friend's suggestions were accepted. We wish to encourage our employees to think about their families and, unfortunately, at the present time, many of them are not nearly as much inclined to do as they should be. Once we depart from our present system, I hesitate to think to what extent we should have to go. We should find that the claims on our compassionate funds are far greater than they are now. That is the main reason for which I am unable to accept my Honourable friend's suggestion. I realise his sympathy with the employees of the Posts and Telegraphs Department and I share it. I hope he will realise that. One of the reasons why we are able to give this postal insurance at a rate which, I think I may say, speaking in the presence of an expert on the subject, my Honourable friend, Sir Phiroze Sethna, compares very favourably with that offered by the insurance companies is that we do not advance loans on the security of the insurance policy. It is not Government's business to do money-lending and if once we



started on it, it would obviously increase our administrative expenses greatly and send up the cost of the policies. Employees who are in need of money can get it from banks or firms of standing on the security of their insurance policies but for the reasons I have explained, I do not think it is in the least desirable that they should do so and I hope myself that they find it rather difficult.

I think, Sir, that is all I need say to explain why we are unable to accept this Resolution. There is only just one point I would add. We fully realise the evils of indebtedness and there is a Bill now under consideration in the other House which should make the lot of the Government servant somewhat easier as it provides for the protection of the pay of the low paid Government servant from attachment. I would again repeat, Sir, that this postal insurance system involves very valuable concessions. It is of very great help to the low paid postal and telegraph employees. I can only wish they used it to a far greater extent than they do but I should very much deprecate their using their insurance policies in the way that my Honourable friend suggests. I hope that I have made our position clear and that, when he realises the implications involved in his proposal, he will not press it.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA** (Bombay : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Kalikar, began his speech by saying that it would be a great help if the Postal Department made loans on the security of postal policies as it would save the borrowers from grave financial troubles. I do not agree with him. A man would not be in financial troubles if he is able to afford the premium for his postal insurance. But of course it may be that at a later date he might be involved in financial troubles and if he is so involved, then the question is whether any loan would be given to him by the Post Office. The Honourable Member for Industries has told him, and I believe it is a fact, that if he offered his postal insurance policy as security a bank or a money-lender would advance money on that security. May I know from the Honourable Sir Frank Noyce whether there is any objection to a Government servant offering such a policy as security to any bank which lends him money on the security of that policy ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANK NOYCE** : I do not think so.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA** : If there is no objection then he can always borrow on the security of the policy ?

**THE HONOURABLE SIR FRANK NOYCE** : I think so. That is the information I have obtained from the head of the department who says that such employees as are in need of money or wish to borrow on the security of their insurance policies can do so from any bank or insurance company of standing or co-operative society on the security of those policies.

**THE HONOURABLE SIR PHIROZE SETHNA** : Well, if that is so, Sir, that answers the objection raised by Mr. Kalikar.

As regards the observation which fell from Sir Frank Noyce that the postal insurance rates are lower than those of other insurance companies, they certainly are and are therefore a great help not only to members of the Posts and Telegraphs Service as he said but also to all Government servants who wish to insure and the limit of postal insurance that was formerly fixed at Rs. 6,000 has, I believe, now been raised to Rs. 10,000.

**THE HONOURABLE MR. V. V. KALIKAR:** Sir, I fully agree with the Honourable Member for Industries and Labour that the families of these low paid Government servants should be protected. But at the same time I desire that they should be protected. It seems, Sir, that public opinion has yet to crystallize on this matter. I may, for the information of the Honourable Member for Industries and Labour, state that in my province these banks, except the Allahabad Bank, do not advance loans to the holders of postal insurance policies. The Allahabad Bank advances loans only at a very high rate of interest from 7 to 7½ per cent. or even 8 per cent. My object in moving this Resolution was only to help these low paid Government servants in time of great difficulties and emergency. However, I think that when public opinion becomes irresistible, then Government will have to reconsider their decision. I therefore beg leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution.

The Resolution\* was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

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**THE HONOURABLE MR. HOSSAIN IMAM:** I do not intend to move my Resolution, Sir.†

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### RESOLUTION *RE* INQUIRY INTO CONDITIONS OF HORSE BREEDING COLONISTS.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN** (West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, the Resolution which stands in my name runs as follows :

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to order an inquiry into the conditions of horse breeding colonists and to suggest what modifications should be made in the conditions imposed by the Army Remount Department when the lands were originally granted to them".

I must confess, Sir, that the subject-matter of this Resolution is foreign to Members of this House, because it concerns a matter which is merely confined to a part of the Punjab. But considering the fact that some Members of this House take a very keen interest in horse breeding, I am sure that they will listen to the discussion with interest and I hope they will support me in my proposition. In the beginning of the 20th Century, the Army Department, persuaded by very noble motives, started a scheme with a view to get remounts from this country instead of importing them from outside. With this object in view, they, in consultation with the Punjab Government, prepared a scheme allotting about 250,000 acres of land to various zemindars on the condition that they would maintain mares in their lands under the supervision of the Army Remount Department. Since then, Sir, horse breeding in this country has made very great progress. As a matter of fact, it is mainly due to this interest which the army people have taken in horse breeding that you find the Horse Show in Delhi such a great success, because some of the beautiful mares which you see here in Delhi come from the Sargodha, Montgomery and Lyallpur districts. This allotment of land may be divided into two classes. One may be called the small grantees and the other the big grantees. The

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\* *Vide* page 325, ante.

† "This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to take practical steps to check the increase in the population of India."

small grantees consist of those ordinary zemindars who were allotted about 30 acres of land, and they were asked to keep one mare which would be approved by the Army Remount Department. When this announcement was made, most of the people living in those districts where there were no canals, and who were very poor, sold off little holdings they possessed in their native district and invested that money on buying mares, the average price of which was between Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,000, per mare. They brought these mares to the Army Remount Officer for approval and they were then allotted that small piece of land. Then, there are those big grantees who consist of not only Punjabis but some people from outside as well. For instance, some officers of the Army Remount Department who on their retirement on pension, thought they will be able to live in India for some time—they were also allotted lands on similar conditions as those in the case of the other grantees. The area of land granted to them was very large; in some cases 5,000 acres and in other cases, 10,000 acres. I must admit that some of them are really taking a very keen interest in horse breeding. I wish some Members of this House like my Honourable friend, Sir Phiroze Sethna, who are very keen on horse breeding, would request His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to allot them certain lands in the Punjab so that they may also start horse breeding. Now, Sir, when these lands were originally granted to them the price of land was very much different from what it is at the present moment. The cost of living was also much cheaper. So, these poor zemindars somehow or other managed to live with their families on these small holdings. But since then prices have fallen. I feel that the time has come when the Government should make an enquiry whether it is necessary to revise the conditions upon which the lands were originally granted. Besides, Sir, there is one great difficulty under which these people labour. There is a sort of dual control. There is the local Government, the Government of the Punjab who hold control over them and can sometimes even order the confiscation of land or can fine them for various offences. They are also under the authority of the Army Remount Department. The result is that sometimes, when a question is asked about the grievances of these horse breeding colonists in the local Council, they are referred to the Government of India, and when a question is asked here in the central Legislature, most of the replies are to the effect that a copy of the question will be sent to the local Government. Therefore, they can neither get their grievances redressed through the central Legislature or the provincial Legislature. As an instance, I may draw the attention of His Excellency to page 277 of the Assembly Debates, Vol. V, 1931, where quite a large number of questions were asked about the grievances of horse breeding colonists and the reply in almost all the cases was the same. For instance, Mr. Young said :

“The matter concerns the local Government to whom a copy of the question is being sent”.

Another question was asked by Sardar Sant Singh and again the reply was :

“ Rules have been framed by the local Government to whom a copy of this question has been sent ”.

Another question was asked and the reply was :

“ A copy of this question is being sent to the local Government ”.

If any question is asked in the local Council, they give a similar reply. I raised this question in 1927 although this was not actually moved in the

[Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan.]

Assembly when I was a member in 1927. I had sent in a cut on the army budget to censure Government over the grievances of the horse breeding colonists, but I did not move that cut, because before the time came, I received a message from His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that he would be pleased to hold a small enquiry at which he would consider all these grievances. Immediately on receiving this message I dropped the idea of moving that Motion, because the real object was not to censure the Government but just to invite the attention of the Army Department to this matter, which being comparatively a minor one concerning only one part of the country might easily be overlooked in the pressure of other important matters. Now, Sir, this Committee was held in Simla when Mr. Young was Secretary and I had supplied to him about 25 questions relating to these horse breeding colonies, in regard to which he obtained replies from the Army Remount Department. Naturally there were fundamental differences on facts in the replies and my information, because Government's source of information was the Army Remount Department and mine the horse breeding colonists who were affected. Unfortunately the question as to what steps should be taken was still under consideration when the term of that Assembly expired; I did not return to the Assembly and this question was left where it was. I would now request His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief if he could very kindly see his way to agree to the appointment of a committee, not an elaborate committee to make a public inquiry and take evidence, etc., but a small committee of one or two officials and one or two non-official Members who would look into these grievances and suggest remedies. I would even go a step further and ask His Excellency kindly to consider whether it would not be possible for him to appoint a sort of advisory committee, as they have in the Government of India in every department, whose function it is to advise Government on matters concerning the work of that department, like the Railway Advisory Committee. Why not have a small advisory committee which would bring these complaints from time to time to the notice of the authorities? I would prefer to have such a committee appointed at Sargodha where these horse breeding colonists are centred. It could work under the guidance and supervision of the Army Remount officer who is stationed at Sargodha, and it could meet once in six months. But the membership of this committee should be confined to those people who have no direct interest in the Army Remount Department, I mean those who are not themselves included in the big landed grantee class; because naturally the treatment meted out to the smaller zemindars is somewhat different from that which is meted out to these big influential people, and the latter will not be able to represent the grievances of the small agriculturists.

THE HONOURABLE NAWAB MALIK SIR MOHAMMAD HAYAT KHAN  
NOON: May I point out that in the large grants one and a half squares are given per mare, and in the case of small grants two squares?

THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN: I am very much obliged to my Honourable friend for having supplied me with information which I already possessed, but the fact is that by the small grantee I meant a grant of just over 30 acres of land and a grantee who keeps only one mare. By the big grantees I mean those who keep 20 mares and who have two or three thousand acres of land. There is a big difference.

THE HONOURABLE NAWAB MALIK SIR MOHAMMAD HAYAT KHAN  
NOON: The area is smaller per mare.

**THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN:** The area is smaller and I can assure you that if they also feel dissatisfied with the smaller areas then I would plead their case also and would welcome the Army Remount Department considering their case for increasing their areas. But the essential factor in the case of the smaller horse breeding colonists is their economic condition. When a mare is declared unfit they have to buy a new mare within three months. The price of a good mare is Rs. 800. You can imagine the condition of a poor zemindar with about 30 acres if his mare dies or is declared unfit. He has to spend Rs. 800 at once for a new mare. I would request His Excellency very kindly to consider whether it is fair that that poor zemindar should replace the mare himself, and whether the Army Remount Department would not be prepared to supply a mare if the zemindar's mare is declared unfit through no fault of his.

Then, Sir, a committee was appointed by the Punjab Government in 1930, a small committee to inquire into some of these grievances. They reported and their report has now been published, although it is for the first time I am seeing it in the Colony Manual. I have received complaints from the horse breeding colonists that they do not know what the rules are and what remedies have been suggested. But I am sure it will now be published in Urdu and that copies will be supplied to them. The committee have suggested some remedies, but there must be some machinery or organisation at Sargodha itself which can readily bring these grievances to the notice of the Army Department.

Another point, Sir, is that during the last 10 or 15 years I understand the strength of the cavalry has been considerably reduced and the demand for remounts has naturally decreased. At the same time the supply of colts amounts to 4,000 per annum, and in view of this would it not be desirable to release some of the grantees from this condition of keeping mares? I do not wish to discuss detailed items here as it would only prolong the debate. I only hope that the Government will very kindly see their way to meet me reasonably on this most important question.

**HIS EXCELLENCY THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF:** Sir, the Honourable mover so far as I can make out has put two principal points to the House. One is that the present conditions weigh very heavily on the grantees, who are really worse off, he makes out, then the non-breeding grantees who are almost next door to them. The answer to that is that everybody when they took up those grants knew the conditions perfectly well and they got one and a half or two squares of land against the one square each given to their non-breeding neighbours, and their land was especially chosen for them. And what has convinced me all the more is that, whenever there is a square of land available, a great many people are ready to take it up.

The second point was that owing to mechanization and the reduction of cavalry the demand for cavalry horses has fallen off. But although the need for army remounts is not quite as great as it was, undoubtedly it is very desirable, I think the Honourable mover will agree, to make India as self-supporting as possible in this matter. If we altered the present arrangements, all the money that at present goes into this horse breeding industry in India will go out of India and probably go to Australia, and in addition India may find herself in a very serious position if war were to come. I can understand the Honourable Member taking all the trouble he has to represent this case and the grievances of the people who live in the horse breeding colonies and take Government land under these terms. He comes from there himself and nobody knows better than himself what the conditions are. If this was the first

[His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief.]

time that the subject had been raised and ventilated, I am sure there could have been no objection at all to institute an immediate enquiry and I certainly would have asked the Government to do so. But as he knows very well, the question was first enquired into in 1922 whether certain of those grants in fact could be converted into ordinary non-service colony grants and it was thoroughly well gone into and also the sale of proprietary rights of the land was fully considered by the Government of that day and it was decided that no alteration was possible in the conditions of the original contracts. Then again it was gone into in 1926 and the Government then considered whether greater efficiency could not be brought about at less cost by modifying the conditions in the Lower Jhelum Colony on the lines of the Lower Bari Doab Colony but the adoption of the Lower Bari Doab method in the Lower Jhelum Colony would have necessitated the purchase by the horse-breeding peasant of proprietary rights of one square of his grant and the remaining square would have reverted to Government for lease on horse breeding conditions. In order to ensure that no land held on horse breeding conditions was less than one square, it would have been necessary to provide extra land for the purpose and none in fact was available. Further, this method of readjusting the conditions would have resulted in a considerable reduction in the number of brood mares in the colony, and as such reduction would have vitiated the policy that had been decided on and arrived at after much consideration, the proposal also was turned down. In 1927, as the Honourable Member has just said, he himself took an interest in this matter, when he was a member of the other House, and asked certain questions. He was supplied with the answers to those questions and he appeared then to have been satisfied with them. In 1928, another agitation was started against the conditions in the Shahpur district. After consultation with the Punjab Government, the Government of India reiterated their opinion that no alterations of the horse breeding conditions attached to the tenancies of the colonists were possible. In August, 1929, a committee was constituted by the Punjab Government to investigate into certain matters in connection with breeding in this area. This committee made certain recommendations and they made certain rules with regard to unproductive lands. They made a rule that in certain cases immediate exchange was essential, because of their location in *surra*-infested areas, and because the quality of the soil was such that it was impossible for the grantees to fulfil their grants. They suggested that the exchange of such grants should be expedited, because there appeared to be sufficient Government waste land in the colony to accommodate all such grantees. With regard to the inadequacy of water supply, the committee felt that complaints of inadequacy of water supply were genuine in several cases, and if it was found that, under the existing arrangements for the supply of water, such cases were incapable of rectification, some other form of supplying water might be investigated, and, if found possible and advantageous, applied. The rules were approved by the local Government, who also took the following steps. They made endeavours to provide horse breeders whose land was water-logged with other suitable land. For this purpose the Government of India transferred to them the 22nd Cavalry run, 1,500 acres. They also decided that the cases of inferior land allotted to breeders should be examined and such persons were as far as practicable, moved to better land. Also steps were to be taken to ensure a fair supply of water to all horse breeding *chaks*.

I think in view of what I have read out—so that I could be certain that I made no mistake in this complicated matter—in view of the above, the Honourable Member cannot say that the Government have turned a deaf

ear to the demands for enquiry and fair treatment. The original grantees, as I said before, knew the terms perfectly well when they took up the land and I think it must be admitted that they were generous compared to their neighbours.

In conclusion, I would like to say though on the larger question there can be no alteration, the Government do recognise and have always recognised the need of the most sympathetic treatment in regard to this horse breeding and the grantees and I think this is obvious from the sympathetic behaviour of the remount officers who have to deal with them. It is in that spirit that we will now examine every suggestion that has been made by the Honourable mover. The one that struck me most, I admit, was the possibility of having an advisory committee and I will examine that and will also see what action is necessary with regard to each suggestion that he has made as soon as we get it from the shorthand writers of the House. With this assurance, I hope the Honourable Member will see his way not to press this Resolution to a division.

THE HONOURABLE RAJA GHAZANFAR ALI KHAN : Sir, I am really very grateful to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief for the kind assurance that he has given and therefore I very gladly withdraw the Resolution.

The Resolution\* was, by leave of the Council, withdrawn.

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#### RESOLUTION *RE* PREVENTION OF THE IMPORT OF FOREIGN RICE.

THE HONOURABLE THE PRESIDENT : Honourable Diwan Bahadur Narayanaswami Chetty. As this is a very important Resolution and will take some time to discuss and in order that you may not lose your priority, you had better read the Resolution today and you can make your speech on Wednesday.

THE HONOURABLE DIWAN BAHADUR G. NARAYANASWAMI CHETTY (Madras : Non-Muhammadan) : Sir, the Resolution that stands in my name runs as follows :

"This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council to take immediate steps to prevent the import of foreign rice into this country and to adopt other substantial measures to improve the present low prices of rice with a view to alleviate the lot of the agriculturists".

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The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 27th February, 1935.

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\* *Vide* page 328, *ante*.