

15th November 1940

**THE**  
**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**  
**(Official Report)**

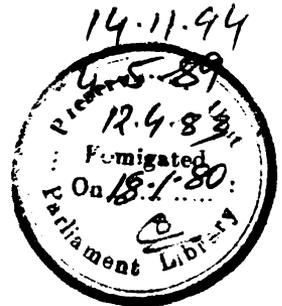
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**Volume IV, 1940**

*(5th November to 18th November, 1940)*

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**TWELFTH SESSION**  
**OF THE**  
**FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,**  
**1940**



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Friday, 15th November, 1940.

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

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### (a) ORAL ANSWERS.

#### TAKING ON LEASE OF A ROLLER FLOUR MILL AT LYALLPUR AND TENDERS FOR GRINDING WHEAT FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCES.

69. \*Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: (a) Will the Defence Secretary please state whether it is a fact that Government, since the year 1922, abolished the system of purchasing wheat products from various flour mills for the use of military forces, and took on lease a Roller Flour Mill at Lyallpur, and since then Government wheat is ground only in that mill?

(b) Is it a fact that the period of the lease of the said mill was originally three years only, but that it was extended till the year 1933, without inviting tenders from other flour mills? Is it a fact that it was only after representations that tenders were invited in the year 1933? If so, will Government please state the different rates quoted by the tenderers and the one accepted? Was the lowest tender accepted? If not, why not?

(c) Will Government please state the difference of grinding cost annually paid by Government to the mill, in excess of the lowest tender received by them?

(d) Will Government please state if they are prepared to consider the question of inviting fresh tenders for grinding flour for military forces, in the present high and urgent demands for war supplies, and save a large amount of money by accepting the lowest tender?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: (a) No. The system of obtaining wheat products on contract from flour mills was discontinued in March 1918 when it was replaced by controlled flour mills. The roller flour mill at Lyallpur was first taken under control in December, 1923, in addition to two other mills doing part time grinding, and it was not till two years later that the grinding of Government wheat was confined to the mill at Lyallpur.

(b) The first agreement was not for three years but for two. The second agreement was reached as a result of selection by open tender and was for five years. It was extended for three more years (i.e., till 1933) without calling for tenders because the service rendered was satisfactory and because Government were satisfied that the rates were reasonable. Government are not prepared to disclose the rates tendered either in 1925 or in 1933. Of the tenders which could be regarded as likely to prove satisfactory, the cost of supply from these Mills was the lowest.

(c) No; and in any case the information would be misleading because the standard of service must be taken into account.

(d) The contract with this flour mill is still valid; but Government have already called for fresh tenders from owners of Flour Mills to meet their increased demand.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** With reference to part (d) of the question, may I ask, will the Government now, leaving out the past, adopt as a measure of economy the cheapest rate for giving the contract and find out whether they cannot get the wheat ground at cheaper rates?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** No, Sir. The work at present is being done satisfactorily having regard to the standard, and is supplied at economical rates. On the question of economy, it should be noticed that the process of grinding is one only of the processes and that the finished product compares favourably as a general rule in price with articles of similar quality in the open market.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** It may be satisfactory as far as the work is concerned; but from the point of view of the taxpayers I think, if you inquire, you will find that this thing can be done with equal efficiency at two-thirds of the price, if not half.

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** Government at present are of the opinion that it cannot be done at a cheaper rate, but the rates of grinding are subject to periodical revision, and if it were found to be excessive they would certainly be reduced.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Has the Honourable Member made any attempt to find out by inquiry whether the others also will give satisfaction as much as this mill gives?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** Now that the demand has increased owing to the rise in the number of troops, more tenders have been put out and we shall see whether other firms can do the work cheaper and better.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** I am not concerned with any firm—X, Y or Z. I am concerned with the rate, and I think, if the Honourable gentleman made an inquiry, he will find that it can be done at two-thirds of the price and this thing can be done even today; and even the same contractor will take on the work at two-thirds of the present cost if he sees there is competition.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is not asking any question.

#### EXTENSION OF THE DURATION OF THE SIMLA SEASON, 1940.

†70. **\*Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state whether an announcement was made that the duration of the Simla season 1940 would be from 4 to 4½ months? If so, will he please state whether it is a fact that Government's stay in Simla was for practically the same period as heretofore?

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

(b) What expenditure was anticipated on the basis of 4 to 4½ months' stay at Simla?

(c) What has been the extra expenditure involved as a result of the extended stay?

**The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell:** (a) Yes, it was announced that, as the annual second Session of the Central Legislature would be held in Delhi between the middle of September and the first part of November, the stay of the Government of India at Simla would be reduced from 6 to 4 or 4½ months. As, however, it was decided not to convene the Legislative Assembly before the 5th November, 1940, it was found to be unnecessary for Government to return to Delhi before the 13th October, and the stay in Simla was in effect just under six months.

(b) and (c). The duration of the Government of India's stay at Simla affects only a few items of expenditure connected with the exodus, for example, telephone trunk calls, carriage of dak bags, house-rent allowances and compensatory allowances. The estimated expenditure on trunk calls and carriage of dak was Rs. 1,00,000 and Rs. 66,744, whereas the actual expenditure was approximately Rs. 45,000 and Rs. 53,000 respectively. The extra expenditure involved in these items on account of the larger stay was roughly Rs. 21,000. The corresponding figures for the allowances, which are granted only to the members of the staff, are not available.

#### UNDULY LARGE NUMBER OF OFFICERS MOVING UP TO SIMLA.

†71. **\*Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state the reasons for which nearly all officers—about 90 per cent.—in the Secretariat moved to Simla, when the major portion of the work was done by 80 per cent. of the clerical staff stationed at Delhi?

(b) Will the Honourable Member please state the reasons for not keeping a larger number of officers at Delhi when about 80 per cent. of the ministerial establishment was detained here during the hot weather?

(c) Is it a fact that most of the Indian Civil Service officers up to the rank of Deputy Secretary have had to work in the plains as district authorities in all weathers, including summer?

(d) Will the Honourable Member please state whether there would be a saving in expenditure on account of movement of files, etc., if, during summer, officers are kept at Delhi in proportion to the ministerial establishment?

(e) Is it a fact that everybody in India is expected to help in the prosecution of war by making monetary and other sacrifices? If so, are Government prepared to give a lead in this direction by stopping Simla exodus and by utilising the savings, if any, towards war purposes? If not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell:** (a) and (b). Important as it is for Officers to be in touch with their clerks, it is much more important for them to be in touch with each other; and as it was not possible to keep both officers and clerks together if the volume of the Simla exodus were to be reduced, the system actually adopted was considered the most advantageous in the circumstances.

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

(c) Yes.

(d) I cannot say without a detailed scheme. In any case the proposal is not regarded as feasible.

(e) While Government are fully alive to the necessity of economy, they must also take into account the necessity of maintaining the efficiency of the administration.

**CONTRIBUTIONS BY OFFICERS OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCES HEADQUARTERS TOWARDS THE DEFENCE SAVINGS PROVIDENT FUND AND DEFENCE SAVINGS CERTIFICATES.**

†72. \*Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Defence Secretary please state if the military and other officers employed in the different Branches of the Army and Air Forces Headquarters are contributing sums of money towards (a) donation to Defence Savings Provident Fund, and (b) Defence Savings Certificates? If so, will he please lay on the table a statement showing the amounts contributed?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** Government have no information on this subject, which is the private concern of the officers themselves.

**OFFICERS AND MINISTERIAL STAFF OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT AND ITS ATTACHED AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES WHO MOVED UP TO SIMLA LAST SUMMER AND EXPENDITURE INCURRED IN THE MOVE.**

†73. \*Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (i) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks of his Department and attached and subordinate offices who moved up to Simla with the Government of India camp offices in April 1940;
- (ii) the number of officers who accompanied the camp office to Simla;
- (iii) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks who were called up in each month during last summer to Simla and the period for which they were called and why;
- (iv) the number of staff and the officers, separately, who were required to attend duties at Simla and New Delhi, and how many times each went to Simla, and what was the period of his stay on each occasion; and
- (v) the total cost on account of the last move from and to New Delhi of his Department under the following heads:

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

- (1) travelling allowance, etc.;
- (2) house rent allowance;
- (3) daily allowance; and
- (4) all other expenditure in this connection?

(b) What efforts do Government propose to make to curtail the expenditure on account of the move of the camp office of this Department?

**The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell:** (a), (i). Four Superintendents, 20 Assistants and 34 clerks.

(ii) Thirty four officers of whom six were recessing at Simla.

(iii) and (iv). Ten clerks in all were called to Simla at different times during the summer owing to the pressure of urgent work connected mainly with the war. They remained there until the end of the season as the work for which they were called up continued. One cashier went to Simla at the beginning of every month to disburse pay. A statement giving the information as regards staff called to Simla temporarily is laid on the table.

(v) Information with regard to the Home Department proper is as follows:

	Rs.
(1) Travelling allowance . . . . .	14,930
(2) House rent and compensatory allowances . . . . .	14,700
(3) Daily allowance . . . . .	37/8

As regards other expenditure such information as is available relates to all Departments and has been given in reply to question No. 70 which I have just answered.

(b) The requirements of the Department will be reviewed afresh before the next season with every regard for economy.

*Statement showing (i) the number of officers and staff of the Home Department and its attached offices who were required to attend duties at Simla and Delhi, (ii) the number of times each went to Simla and the period of his stay on each occasion.*

(i) At Simla—

No. of Officers . . . . .	38	
No. of staff . . . . .	103	(moved with Government of India.)

At Delhi—

No. of Officers . . . . .	11
No. of staff . . . . .	218

(ii) Number of Officers and staff going to Simla from Delhi in addition to those shown above.	No. of times each went to Simla.	Period of stay on each occasion.
Officers.		
1	1	About a month.
1	6	For periods varying from 5 to 19 days.
1	2	About a week each time.
Staff.		
One Superintendent.	1	About a week.
One Stenographer.	3	About a week each time.
One Stenographer.	1	About a week.
Three clerks.	2	About a week.

CONFERENCES, COMMITTEES OR SUB-COMMITTEES HELD AT SIMLA LAST SUMMER UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

†74. \*Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

- (a) the names of the different conferences, committees or sub-committees held at Simla during the last summer season under the control of his Department;
- (b) the name of the chairman or presidents of each of such committees, etc.;
- (c) the names of Government Members stationed at Simla and who were required to attend such conferences, etc.;
- (d) the number of members who came to Simla from outside to attend the meetings of such conferences, etc., and the total cost on account of their travelling and other charges paid by Government;
- (e) the number of ministerial staff sent for from New Delhi to attend to the requirements of such conferences, etc., and the expenditure on their travelling, etc., and other charges;
- (f) the savings in each case if the meetings of these conferences, etc., had been held at New Delhi;
- (g) the reasons for holding each of these conferences, etc., at Simla and for incurring expenditure on account of payment of travelling allowance and other charges to the members who came to attend from outside; and
- (h) whether he proposes to curtail the expenditure on account of all of these conferences, etc., by holding their meetings at New Delhi instead of Simla in future; if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell:** (a) A meeting of Provincial Representatives was held in Simla for the purpose of confidential and informal consultations with the Home Department on a number of questions of common concern including various aspects of internal defence.

(b) I was the chairman.

(c) The Secretary, Additional Secretary and a Deputy Secretary of the Home Department also attended.

(d), (f) and (g). The meeting was attended by 14 Provincial Representatives including five from the Punjab who were in Simla. No expenditure beyond that referred to in the reply to part (e) was incurred by the Central Government on this account. Some Provincial Governments may have incurred an additional expenditure of a few hundred rupees on account of the conference being held in Simla but it would not have been administratively convenient to hold it in New Delhi.

(e) One. Rs. 200 approximately.

(h) Whether future conferences are held in Simla or New Delhi must depend on the circumstances of the case and the urgency of the questions under consideration.

**OFFICERS AND MINISTERIAL STAFF OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT AND ITS ATTACHED AND SUBORDINATE OFFICES WHO MOVED UP TO SIMLA LAST SUMMER AND EXPENDITURE INCURRED IN THE MOVE.**

†75. \*Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

- (i) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks of his Department and attached and subordinate offices who moved up to Simla with the Government of India camp offices in April 1940;
- (ii) the number of officers who accompanied the camp office to Simla;
- (iii) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks who were called up in each month during last summer to Simla and the period for which they were called and why;
- (iv) the number of staff and the officers, separately, who were required to attend duties at Simla and New Delhi, and how many times each went to Simla, and what was the period of his stay on each occasion; and
- (v) the total cost on account of the last move from and to New Delhi of his Department under the following heads:
  - (1) travelling allowance, etc.;
  - (2) house rent allowance;
  - (3) daily allowance; and
  - (4) all other expenditure in this connection?

(b) What efforts do Government propose to make to curtail the expenditure on account of the move of the camp office of this Department?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) The strength of the camp office moving to Simla has been kept at the minimum, and no further curtailment is feasible.

Finance Department. Central Board of Revenue. Office of the Auditor General. Office of the Director of Audit, Defence Services.

(a) (i)—Superintendents.	5	1	..
Assistants	8	..	..
Stenographers	10	1	..
Clerks	10	4	1
(ii)	13*	4	1

\*Excluding the Honourable Finance Member.

(iii) Finance Department. Central Board of Revenue. Auditor General. Office of the Director of Audit, Defence Services. Reasons.

	Superintendents.	Assistants.	Clerks.	Clerks.	Assistants.	Superintendents.	Reasons.
May	..	1(23 days)	..	..	..	..	..
June	..	1(5 days)	..	..	..	1(6 days)	Urgent official work.
July	..	1(13 days)	..	..	..	..	..
August	..	1(32 days)	1(35 days)	..	..	1(6 days)	..
September	..	1(4 days)	1(26 days)	2 { 22 days and 14 days }	1(3 days)	..	..

(iv) Designation. Number of visits to Simla. Periods of stay.

Under Secretary . . . . . two { 5 days. 7 days.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE.

Officer on special duty (1)	one	8 days.
Officer on special duty (2)	two	{ 4 days. 34 days.
Officer on special duty (3)	two	{ 7 days. 4 days.

AUDITOR GENERAL.

One officer	one	7 days.
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NOTE 1.—The information required is presumably in respect of persons who, besides the Camp staff, travelled to Simla in connection with their official work.

NOTE 2.—The information about ministerial staff is given in the Table under part (a) (ii) of the question.

(a)	Finance Department.	Central Board of Revenue.	Auditor General's Office.	Office of the Director of Audit, Defence Services.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
(1) Travelling allowance etc.	17,147 8 0	5,254 4 0	3,295 15 0	1,053 0 0
(2) House rent allowance	6,315 6 0	1,863 8 0	758 0 0	420 0 0
(3) Daily allowance	497 8 0	503 9 0	105 11 0	153 0 0
(4) Other expenditure	8,034 5 0	1,672 11 0	1,741 8 0	429 0 0
	31,994 11 0	9,294 0 0	5,901 2 0*	2,055 0 0

\*Includes Rs. 985 on account of the move of the War Purposes Fund Section, which is a special temporary feature.

CONFERENCES, COMMITTEES OR SUB-COMMITTEES HELD AT SIMLA LAST SUMMER  
UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT.

†76. \*Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

- (a) the names of the different conferences, committees or sub-committees held at Simla during the last summer season under the control of his Department;
- (b) the name of the chairman or presidents of each of such committees, etc.;
- (c) the names of Government Members stationed at Simla and who were required to attend such conferences, etc.;
- (d) the number of members who came to Simla from outside to attend the meetings of such conferences, etc., and the total cost on account of their travelling and other charges paid by Government;
- (e) the number of ministerial staff sent for from New Delhi to attend to the requirements of such conferences, etc., and the expenditure on their travelling, etc., and other charges;
- (f) the savings in each case if the meetings of these conferences, etc., had been held at New Delhi;
- (g) the reasons for holding each of these conferences, etc., at Simla and for incurring expenditure on account of payment of travelling allowance and other charges to the members who came to attend from outside; and
- (h) whether he proposes to curtail the expenditure on account of all of these conferences, etc., by holding their meetings at New Delhi instead of Simla in future; if not, why not?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** (a) to (g). A statement is laid on the table.

(h) From the information given in the statement it will be clear that no curtailment of expenditure would result from the change suggested.

## Statement.

(a) Names of the different conferences, committees or sub-committees held at Simla during the last summer season under the control of the Finance Department.	(b) Name of the chairman or presidents of each such committees, etc.	(c) Government members stationed at Simla and who were required to attend such conferences, etc.	(d) Number of Members who came from outside to attend.	Total cost on T. A. and other charges paid by Government.	(e) Number of ministerial staff sent for from New Delhi to attend to the requirements of such conferences.	Cost on account of their T. A. and other charges.	(f) Savings in each case if these conferences had been held in New Delhi.	(g) Reasons for holding each of these conferences etc., at Simla and for incurring expenditure on account of payment of T. A. and other charges to the members who came to attend from outside.
Committee on Public Accounts.	The Hon'ble Member.	Secretary Finance Department.*	7†	Rs. 4,924	6†	Rs. 865	None. On the other hand, additional expenditure to the extent of about Rs. 1,120 would have been incurred on T. A. and other charges of Chairman, Member and Secretary.	It would have caused great dislocation of work if the Committee was held in Delhi as departmental representatives would have had to come down to Delhi and extra expenditure of more than Rs. 11,000 would have been incurred on T. A. and other charges of these officers alone. It was also not practicable to postpone the meetings till after Government's return to Delhi.

(a) Names of the different conferences, committees or sub-committees held at Simla during the last summer season under the control of the Finance Department.	(b) Name of the chairman or presidents of each such committee, etc.	(c) Government members stationed at Simla and who were required to attend such conferences, etc.	(d) Number of Members who came from outside to attend.	Total cost on T. A. and other charges paid by Government.	(e) Number of ministerial staff sent for from New Delhi to attend to the requirements of such conferences.	Cost on account of their T. A. and other charges.	(f) Savings in each case if the meetings of these conferences had been held in Now Delhi.	(g) Reasons for holding each of these conferences etc., at Simla and for incurring expenditure on account of payment of T. A. and other charges to the members who came to attend from outside.
Standing Finance Committee.	The Hon'ble the Finance Member.	None.	9†	Rs. 4,215	1‡		None. In this case too additional expenditure to the extent of about Rs. 550 would have been incurred on T. A. and other charges of Chairman and Secretary.	In this case too, besides the dislocation of work, additional expenditure of more than Rs. 5,000 would have been incurred on account of T. A. and other charges of the departmental representatives. Moreover it was necessary to take the earliest opportunity to place before the Committee the probable demands for new votable expenditure in connection with the War and other items.

\*The Finance Secretary is a member of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Committee on Public Accounts to examine Military Accounts.

†Two of the members were common to both the Committees.

‡This figure of 6 consists of 4 reporters, 1 assistant and 1 Cashier, from the Legislative Assembly Department. The reporters and the Assistant returned to Delhi after the meeting of the Public Accounts Committee, but the Cashier stayed on for the meetings of the Standing Finance Committee.

**OFFICERS AND MINISTERIAL STAFF OF THE DEFENCE DEPARTMENT WHO MOVED UP TO SIMLA LAST SUMMER AND EXPENDITURE INCURRED IN THE MOVE.**

†77. \*Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Defence Secretary please state:

- (i) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks of his Department who moved up to Simla with the Government of India camp offices in April 1940;
- (ii) the number of officers who accompanied the camp office to Simla;
- (iii) the number of Superintendents, Assistants and clerks who were called up in each month during last summer to Simla and the period for which they were called and why;
- (iv) the number of staff and the officers, separately, who were required to attend duties at Simla and New Delhi, and how many times each went to Simla, and what was the period of his stay on each occasion; and
- (v) the total cost on account of the last move from and to New Delhi of his Department under the following heads:
  - (1) travelling allowance, etc.;
  - (2) house rent allowance;
  - (3) daily allowance; and
  - (4) all other expenditure in this connection?

(b) What efforts do Government propose to make to curtail the expenditure on account of the move of the camp office of this Department?

**Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie:** (a) (i). 56.

(ii) 9.

(iii) April—Nil.

May—One Superintendent for three days.

June, August and September.—One clerk in each month for five, six and three days respectively.

They were required in Simla for duties connected with accommodation and establishment.

(iv) One officer proceeded to Simla from New Delhi five times during the season. His stay amounted to from three to six days. With regard to staff, the information is contained in the reply just given to clause (a) (iii).

(v) (1) Rs. 24,509-4.

(2) Rs. 4,984-14.

(3) Rs. 288-0.

(4) Rs. 5,256-9.

(b) Every effort possible.

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

CONFERENCES, COMMITTEES OR SUB-COMMITTEES HELD AT SIMLA LAST SUMMER UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE DEFENCE DEPARTMENT.

†78. \*Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Defence Secretary please state:

- (a) the names of the different conferences, committees or sub-committees held at Simla during the last summer season under the control of his Department;
- (b) the name of the chairman or presidents of each of such committees, etc.;
- (c) the names of Government Members stationed at Simla and who were required to attend such conferences, etc.;
- (d) the number of members who came to Simla from outside to attend the meetings of such conferences, etc., and the total cost on account of their travelling and other charges paid by Government;
- (e) the number of ministerial staff sent for from New Delhi to attend to the requirements of such conferences, etc., and the expenditure on their travelling, etc., and other charges;
- (f) the savings in each case if the meetings of these conferences, etc., had been held at New Delhi;
- (g) the reasons for holding each of these conferences, etc., at Simla and for incurring expenditure on account of payment of travelling allowance and other charges to the members who came to attend from outside; and
- (h) whether he proposes to curtail the expenditure on account of all of these conferences, etc., by holding their meetings at New Delhi instead of Simla in future; if not, why not?

Mr. C. M. G. Ogilvie: (a), (b) and (c). No formal conferences or committees were held by the Defence Department during the last summer season.

(d) None.

(e) None.

(f), (g) and (h). Do not arise.

79. \*Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad: Sir, question No. 79 is now unnecessary. We have got our grievances redressed, and so I am not putting this question.

RESOLUTION RE APPOINTMENT OF A PERMANENT MUSLIM PILGRIM OFFICER IN THE SECRETARIAT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.—*contd.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume consideration of the following Resolution moved by Mr. H. M. Abdullah on the 6th November, 1940:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that a suitable Muslim be appointed as permanent Pilgrim Officer in the Secretariat of the Government of India to be in charge of the work connected with pilgrimage to the Holy places in the Hejaz, Iraq and Iran and all matters connected with pilgrims."

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

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan):  
Sir, the other day I was submitting . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I may remind the Honourable Member that he has got eight minutes to finish his speech.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani**: Sir, I was submitting to you the other day the necessity of having a Muslim officer to look into the grievances of the pilgrims. In that connection I was submitting that their grievances are not put properly, simply because the non-Muslim officers are not so sympathetic and so conversant with the grievances of the Haj pilgrims. If there is a Muslim officer, on account of his knowledge and also his instinct, he will go into the grievances, make proper representations to the Government and then get all those grievances redressed. The other day I said that for want of a Muslim Officer the construction of the pilgrims' camp at Karachi which was most needed was stopped during the year 1938-39 although provision was made in the Budget. It was not a question of economy because ample money was then at the disposal of the Government out of the quarantine fund. That day I felt that some list of grievances is necessary to impress the Government that a whole time officer is needed. It has been said in reply to a question—unstarred question No. 28—that every year almost about one hundred *Amir-ul-haj* are appointed and they submit various reports; and so it is necessary to analyse their reports. Besides proceedings and reports of various provincial and central Haj Committees, suggestions and inquiries made by other persons and bodies are ample to take up the time of a Muslim Officer. Besides we know that the poor Indian Hajis are robbed not in one place but in various places. Had there been a Muslim officer he would have shown to the Government and invited their attention that they are needlessly harassed and taxed. You know that the Government of India charges per pilgrim Rs. 3 as Kamaran Quarantine fee. Just a day or two when these very Hajis after making quarantine there reach Jeddah, they have to pay Rs. 25 per head; and if you will inquire, the various reports say that there is no arrangement for any medical relief for the Hajis except a few by the British Consul there.

Why is such a thing allowed? Is it not desirable that the Government of India should press in their international relationship with the Hedjaz Government and tell them that either they should make proper arrangements to justify the levy of Rs. 25 per pilgrim or put a stop to imposing such a levy on them. Besides that, Sir, Rs. 66-6-0 per head is charged for various other things, and thus about Rs. 18 lakhs are paid by the Indian pilgrims only to the Hedjaz Government. Over and above again they have to pay about 1 lakh and 16 thousand rupees more for things already included in Rs. 66-6-0 per pilgrim. I do not like to go into the details of all the items. I am in possession of a copy of a Report of the Chairman of the Karachi Port Haj Committee. He personally went there and saw all the complaints of the poor Hajis with his own eyes in 1939. Although each Haji has to deposit Rs. 66-6-0, even then no care is taken of him, and the same charges are levied again and again. If they do not pay a second quarantine fee of Rs. 25 at Jeddah, they are detained and are not allowed to perform their Haj. What kind of a *suloom* is this? The poor Hajis go there to perform their Haj and other religious ceremonies once in their lifetime, and if they fail to pay this sum of Rs. 25, they are stopped altogether from performing their Haj, and thus they have to waste all their

[Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani.]

money and energy. When they reach Minu, there are no proper sanitary arrangements made. They have to pay heavy fees to several personalities.

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

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Alright, Sir. These are the things which necessitate the appointment of a Muslim Officer so that he may draw the attention of the Government of India to the complaints of the Hajis, and there is ample money at the disposal of the Government of India. No money need be paid out of the public exchequer if objected on grounds of economy. The poor Hajis pay amply. The Government of India charge Rs. 57,000 from Hajis of India alone, say Rs. 3 per head as quarantine fee there, and the Government of India can very well spend and find the money out of that amount for the appointment of a Muslim Officer . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has said that already. There is no more time left.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Very well, Sir, with these words, I support the Resolution.

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, as this is a question affecting one of the religious and sacred duties of the people who want to perform Haj, I have full sympathy for the particular grievance, for the redress of which this Resolution has been moved today. I am not a Haji myself and cannot become a Haji. I can become a Haji if I cease to be a Hindu, which I don't want to. Now, Sir, in this Resolution there are only two points of importance,—the first is whether there is any need for a permanent officer, and, secondly, whether the duties connected with this kind of work should necessarily be entrusted to a Muslim officer. The Honourable the Secretary for Education has in his speech tried to make out a case that the work is not sufficient for a wholtime officer to keep him engaged throughout the whole year. As against that, my Muslim friends say that enough work is not being done because there is not a man to look after this work properly, and if there was a wholtime Muslim officer he would be able to devote his attention exclusively to the Haj pilgrim work and there will be enough and more work for him to do. On that point, I am not going to say much, because I do not know what kind of grievances there are, to which he will have to pay attention. Then the second point is, are those duties of such a nature that they must necessarily be performed by a Muslim officer? I believe having heard the grievances of the Hajis and having listened to the speech of the Honourable the Education Secretary, if there is a competent officer, no matter to what race or religion he belongs, he will be able to discharge that duty, and I do not think it is necessary to have a Muslim officer only. Of course, a Muslim Officer will perhaps be able to appreciate the difficulties of the Hajis better, but looking to the nature of the duties, I do not think that necessarily the officer must be a Muslim only. I may say that in appointing an officer, preferably a Muslim may be selected, but to pin down the choice to Muslims only in the Resolution itself is, in my opinion, not correct. Of course, as I

said, if a Muslim could preferably be appointed for the purpose, it would be better, but that condition need not be rigidly laid down in the Resolution itself, and there should be some latitude for the appointment of any officer of any race or religion if, in the opinion of the Government, he is competent and sufficiently alert to take prompt steps for the redress of the grievances of the Hajis. This is the only observation I wish to make. I have, otherwise, full sympathy for the grievances referred to in the Resolution.

**The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai** (Member for Education, Health and Lands): Sir, this is the first occasion when I address the House, not as a Member, but as a stranger, with merely the right of audience; but that makes no difference either to my old associations or to my own old loyalty, and I hope that my colleagues will continue to extend to me in full and generous measure the indulgence that they have extended to me in the past.

Sir, coming to the Resolution, there is one observation made by my friend, Mr. Ghulam Bhik Nairang, whom I do not see in his seat today, that I should like to touch upon. There was a suggestion from him that we probably looked upon this Resolution as having been framed in a spirit of levity. It will be improper for us to draw any such inference considering the religious implications of the subject. It would have been equally improper, considering the earnestness and the sincerity with which Mr. Ghulam Bhik Nairang approaches all public questions. I can assure him, and those who have spoken in support of this Resolution, that there is no such suspicion in our minds at all. The question at issue is a very simple one. Do we need a wholtime officer, all the year round, in order to look after the difficulties of the Hajis, or do we not? Now, Sir, I have had some experience of this department. I have served in every capacity in it. My association with it goes back 17 years, and, therefore, perhaps Honourable Members will give me credit for speaking with some knowledge of what the requirements are. The work itself falls chronologically into two seasons. There is the off season, when there is no Haj. Then the work is fitful; it is merely limited to an examination of reports that come from Jeddah, that come from Haj Committees, that come from individuals. That, on my experience so far as it goes, can easily be dealt with by the department as it is at present constituted. Then, you come to the season immediately preceding the Haj and the Haj season itself. Undoubtedly, the work then is heavy, but I do not for a moment plead guilty to the charge that there has been any casualness so far in the disposal of the work, even during the heavy season. My officers, the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary and the Under Secretary concerned, have done their best. And I would remind my Honourable friends that the Haj Enquiry Committee which went into this question carefully,—I am speaking from memory, but I think I am correct—did not itself make any recommendation to the effect that a wholtime officer was necessary all the year round for the purpose of looking after the Hajis.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** What was the year of the report?

**The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai:** That report is, I think, about ten years old. But the question asked by my Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, has an implication of importance, namely, that times change and with that, needs change too. It is because of our realisation of the possibility of a change and the desirability of a change that we have decided to take this step. We have decided to put an officer on special duty this year, in order to see whether the existing arrangements are in any way inadequate during the Haj season in so far as looking after the comforts and the needs of the pilgrims is concerned. That is the reason why we have made this experiment.

Honourable Members may have drawn from the speech of my Honourable friend, the Education Secretary, the conclusion that we have set in our minds some rigid limit as to the duration of this experiment, that we propose to try this experiment only for this year, that we have already made up our minds that the experiment will be a failure and that, therefore, for the future we do not consider the possibility of repeating this arrangement either on a seasonal basis or on an annual basis. I can assure my Honourable friends that we have not closed our mind in any such way at all. This is essentially an experimental arrangement and it is our intention when we get the report of the officer—and the instructions to the officer will be to make a report on this aspect of the matter—we propose to see for ourselves, in the light of the report, whether a seasonal repetition of this is necessary or whether something more enduring is needed in the best interests of the Hajis.

Now, Sir, I think that Honourable Members who have spoken in support of this Resolution are Mussalmans. My Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, has also supported them, but the majority are Mussalmans. They approach this question as a question of faith. I submit for their consideration that they are equally the custodians of the taxpayers' money, and it is for them to consider, in the light of the report of the officer whom we have put on special duty, as to whether a permanent arrangement is necessary or whether seasonal repetition would suffice.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Would the report come up for consideration here?

**The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai:** I was just going to add that when that report comes, it is my intention to place it before the Standing Haj Committee of this Legislature. They will have the fullest possible opportunity of examining it and tendering advice to Government. I am also prepared to put a copy of the report on the table of this House so that the House may have an opportunity of discussing it.

In brief, the position is this. So far, we have not felt from experience the need of a permanent officer. Now, we feel that Mussalman sentiment is in favour of a permanent officer. Ten years have elapsed since the Haj Enquiry Committee reported, and it seems desirable to review the working of the existing arrangements in the light of the experience gained. Would anything be fairer than the offer which I have made to the House today, namely, that we shall give instructions to this officer to report as to whether this arrangement is necessary on a permanent basis or on a seasonal basis, or whether the enquiry that he would make would be sufficient really to adjust matters for the future. These three questions are open for examination and they will be dealt with in the report. The report will be in the hands of the Standing Haj Committee which is representative

of the Muslim Members of this House. Subsequently, it will be before the House itself. In other words, Government will not only be guided by their own individual and independent judgment, but will have before them the advice of the Standing Haj Committee and this House. I submit that, in the light of the considerations which I have now placed before the House, it is not necessary to press this Resolution to a division and I hope that my Honourable friend will be agreeable to withdraw it on the assurance that I have now given.

**Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazi-i-Haq Piracha** (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): What are the terms of reference which the Honourable the Education Member has given to the officer who would make the enquiry? What are the points on which the enquiry is to be made by the officer appointed?

**The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai**: It is rather difficult, on the spur of the moment, to repeat the instructions which have been given to this officer. *Prima facie* they deal with the actual working of the existing arrangements at the ports for the Hajis, but I am going to go further than that. I am going to ask this officer to report upon the desirability or otherwise of more permanent arrangements in order to ensure that the Hajis perform their religious duty as befits the subjects of an enlightened Muslim State.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): I do not take the Government of India in water-tight compartments, I consider the problems as a whole. I do not believe in the argument that this subject forms part of the Education Department, that subject, of the Defence Department, a third, of the Foreign Department, and so on. In addition to the work that has been outlined by the previous speakers and also sympathetically considered by the Honourable Member in charge, there are two other points which we have also to take into consideration in taking a final decision on this particular question, though my Honourable friend may say that it does not legitimately come under the jurisdiction of his department. One thing is that we have got a large number of houses and other property built up by the Indians for the benefit of Indians. These houses have been taken by persons who have no right to take possession of them. They let them out for their own advantage. I think some of my Honourable friends know definitely about some of these houses. It is necessary that there should be an enquiry as to the houses belonging legitimately to Indians and then we can think over the method of taking possession of them.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Where are those houses?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad**: In Mecca. Several Indians built houses in Mecca for the benefit of Indians who go there for pilgrimage. These houses have been misappropriated by certain persons there and the Indians are not allowed to stay there and they are given to people of other nationalities who derive benefits, but the Indians who go there derive no benefit even as regards the rent charged.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai**: Are other nationalities allowed to go there?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** A large number of Mussalmans, that is, from Java and other places.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** I would like to go there.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Do go. You will probably become a better man after your return from there.

As I was saying, Sir, there is one more important thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the House. And for saying this, I have now got authoritative reasons. I was told by a reliable person that there is a good deal of propaganda which is being carried on in Mecca by the Italians. The Italians are now preparing a certain number of Mussalmans coming from the Italian territories to perform their Haj and to carry on their propaganda among the Hajis during the Haj season. If that is a fact, then I think it is very desirable that the officer whom the Government may choose should also look after this particular thing. We should not divide ourselves into watertight compartments. If it is not the business of the Education Department, let the Foreign Secretary or somebody else look after it. I think it is very desirable that a person who has got some sympathy with the Mussalmans should be appointed to do this work so that the Indian Mussalmans may not incorrectly become the victim of the propoganda from our enemies. I know it also that the Nazis wanted to do their propoganda but they were not allowed to have any access there but the Italians have got some access there and there is reason to believe that they may carry on some kind of propoganda there during the Haj season. So, your officer will be able to do some exceedingly good work if he is properly selected and will be able to do some counter-propoganda and thus the effect of the Italian propoganda will be lost. These are the points which we may consider in connection with the ensuing Haj. You have already got your officer there but you have to consider that he has got to perform not only his ordinary duties but also the other duties which I have mentioned. With these words, I support the motion.

**Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur** (South Madras: Muhammadan): Mr. President, I am a member of the Standing Haj Committee and was also a member of the now defunct Haj Inquiry Committee, and, therefore, I must have my say on this subject. All the speakers on this side have made out a fairly good case in favour of the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Haji Abdullah Sahib. I am glad to say that from the Government side there was no opposition, nor was there any lack of sympathy on their part. The only thing that the Secretary of the Education Department said the other day was that if such an appointment is to be made, the officer would not have full time work. If at all, there would be work for him for about six months, three months before and three months after the Haj pilgrimage.

Sir, so far as I can make out, there will be tight work for six months to this officer and light work for the remaining period of six months. This, I do not think, Government will mind. So far as the quarantine station at Kamaran is concerned, the House may not be alive to the fact that the sum spent for the upkeep of that establishment exceeds one lakh of rupees. This expenditure is not met from the Central revenues but is met, so far as I know, out of the fund of the pilgrims. Though we were

not in favour of having a quarantine station at Kamaran, we were bound to accept it simply because of the International Law. There are about 45 officers and subordinates attached to the Kamaran quarantine station. If I am wrong, the Secretary of the Education Department will correct me. I am open to correction. I am saying this from the reply given by the same officer in answer to a question put to him the other day by my Honourable friend, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad. Now, what is the work that they do? They do only 50 hours work during the whole year. They spend only two hours for every ship. The number of ships that sail from India as well as Java comes to nearly 25 and so, in all, the establishment has to spend only 50 hours. And yet the money spent on the maintenance of this establishment, as I have said, exceeds a lakh of rupees. Now, so far as this Resolution is concerned, the sum involved is very small as compared to that amount. It is only a few thousand rupees. If you appoint an officer on, say, Rs. 600 to Rs. 1,000 or, say, Rs. 800 to Rs. 1,200, the total amount will come to Rs. 12,000 or Rs. 15,000 per year, I do not think the Government will grudge paying this amount for the sake of an important duty which is incumbent on every Mussalman who is financially and physically in a position to do. Such a function is being looked after by the Government, and I am the last man to level any charge against them by saying that they have not done their duty properly. I am not the man to say that. I have been in the Assembly for the last 18 years and I have never said anything against Government when they were doing their work properly. At first, we had Sir Mian Muhammad Shafi and Sir Fazl-i-Hussain in charge of this Department but now we have been having non-Muslim Members in charge of this portfolio. We do not grudge it, since they have been doing their duties in a manner which the departmental officers who have to attend to multifarious engagements can be expected to do. So, our request is that a special officer should be appointed to attend particularly to these duties which are conducive to the Haj pilgrimage. It has been stated in the Resolution that a Muslim special officer should be appointed. There is much significance in saying this. The House is fully aware of the fact that the Government have got the Ecclesiastical Department under their management, and what do they do? They are always cautious enough to have that portfolio under a Christian Member and not a Hindu or a Muslim Member. Do we grudge it? Certainly not, because they have every reason to think that a Christian Member is expected to evince much more interest than a non-Christian Member. The same argument holds good with regard to this Resolution. We say that a Muslim special officer should be appointed not because non-Muslim officers do not do their duty properly but because a Muslim is expected to do it more interestedly, more promptly and more efficiently.

This is our case. Sir, our case is that this should not be opposed by the Department; on the other hand, I expect that my Honourable friend in charge of this portfolio and also his Secretary would lend their support and see that this paltry sum of a few thousand rupees is sanctioned. So I would request Government on behalf of all Muslim Members that they would support this Resolution without any opposition whatsoever. With these few remarks, I resume my seat.

**Some Honourable Members:** I move:

“That the question be now put.”

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The question is: "That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

**Mr. H. M. Abdullah** (West Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, in view of the speech made by the Honourable the Education Member and sympathy shown by him in favour of the Resolution, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution for the present.

The Resolution was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

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**RESOLUTION RE SCRAPPING OF THE LONDON COFFEE MARKET EXPANSION BOARD BY THE INDIAN COFFEE CESS COMMITTEE.**

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza** (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, I rise to move the Resolution which stands in my name which is as follows:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Indian Coffee Cess Committee be instructed to scrap the London Coffee Market Expansion Board, at any rate while the war lasts and divert the funds so released to further develop the Indian market as the activities of the London Board during the last four years have not resulted in the slightest improvement either in sales or in consumption of Indian Coffee in the United Kingdom and the Indian market has proved more responsive and is capable of vastly increased development."

The Resolution comes up for discussion at a very opportune moment. The Indian coffee industry is passing through a most acute crisis due to the closing of the traditional export markets on the Continent of Europe caused by Nazi aggression. Unless an outlet is found for the surplus crop in the immediate future, there will necessarily be a collapse of prices in the internal market, and the industry will be irretrievably ruined. Any disaster to the industry will have far-reaching effects. The capital sunk is over ten crores of rupees. The area under cultivation exceeds two hundred thousand acres giving employment to nearly 2,00,000 labourers. The industry provides more than a crore of rupees to the balance of trade in favour of India so that the importance of the industry to the internal economy, no less than to the foreign trade of India, cannot be exaggerated. I may add, Indian planters are as vitally interested in the industry as Europeans as they own five-eighths of the acreage under coffee and pay about the same proportion of cess. For these reasons I regret to see that my Honourable friends on the Congress Benches are not here to assist in the deliberations as they profess to take a keen interest in Indian agriculture.

**Mr. F. E. James** (Madras: European): They are celebrating the Italian victory.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** So great is the concern of the Government of India in the fate of the industry that I understand emergent legislation for inaugurating a control scheme is on the anvil, and I take this opportunity to give expression to the gratitude of all the coffee planters in Southern India to the Government of India for the promptness with which they have come to our rescue. I have special pleasure in paying a tribute to the

Commerce Member, my Honourable friend, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, for the great assistance which he rendered while presiding the other day at the Merchants' and Planters' Conference at Madras, and for the expedition with which he is preparing emergent legislation for being placed before this Honourable House. He is a great coffee drinker, I may say.

Apart from stabilising the prices in the internal market, the Control Board will have to find new markets for the export of the surplus. And my intention in moving this Resolution is partly to place certain aspects before the Government of India in the hope that they will take them into consideration in their search for new markets. The most obvious market for Indian coffee is the market at our very doors, *viz.*, the home market. It is a vast market not subject to disturbances by war or rumours of war or dislocation by economic forces, such as economic nationalism, tariff walls, quotas, exchange restrictions, etc., and as I shall presently show, it has proved a most responsive market and will be capable of absorbing the entire produce of coffee in the country.

Although the coffee grown in India is amongst the finest grown in the world, it is a curious circumstance that the *per capita* consumption in India is about the lowest in the world. It appears from the latest report on the marketing of coffee by the Agricultural Marketing Officer to the Government of India that in 1932-33 the *per capita* consumption per annum was five cups. To promote sales of Indian coffee in India and abroad this House by Act XIV of 1935 established a Coffee Cess Committee to be financed by levying a cess on all exports. The Committee began its propaganda in India in 1935 and in 1936-37 the *per capita* consumption rose to seven cups or 0.136 pounds. If the rate of consumption increases by another seven cups, or 0.15 pounds per head, all the coffee grown in India would be absorbed, and there would be no need to search for fresh markets.

It is a strange circumstance that no planter has yet made an attempt to tap the Indian market. 96 per cent. of the coffee consumed in India is consumed in Madras, Travancore, Mysore and Coorg, the home of its growth, and only four per cent. outside. It is an unknown drink in Sind, North-West Frontier, Punjab and Northern India, where there is an abundant milk-supply, and where, therefore, conditions are most favourable for spreading a coffee habit. How popular the habit can become even in the short space of two years is proved by the phenomenal success of the India Coffee House opened by the Coffee Cess Committee on Queens Road, New Delhi . . . . .

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar** (Member for Commerce and Labour): Opened by me.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** . . . . . opened by the Honourable the Commerce Member, as he says, and I would ask Honourable Members to pay a visit to this Coffee House and see for themselves what excellent results the propaganda of the Coffee Cess Committee has achieved.

It would be a most hygienic habit if India adopts coffee as a national beverage. Coffee is both a food and a stimulant. It promotes the drinking of milk on a large scale in a most palatable form. Under Prohibition it has been found to be an excellent substitute for alcoholic drinks and it is a

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staple drink in Islamic countries. As an intellectual stimulant its action is well known. It is, I think, the poet Pope, who in describing the effects of coffee just then introduced into England on the politicians of his day, says:

"Coffee, which makes the politician wise,  
And makes him see all things through his half-shut eyes."

Perhaps the most intellectually alert people in the world are the Frenchmen, the Yankees and the Madrassesees. All of them are coffee addicts; their *per capita* consumption per annum exceeds two pounds. Who knows whether the Madrassese politician excels because of the quantities of cups of coffee which he quaffs?

Perhaps the politicians from other provinces will give it a trial. In any case I think coffee drinking is a habit which deserves encouragement at the hands of the national legislature.

Owing to very restricted finances, the Coffee Cess Committee has not been able to open more than 14 coffee houses in India by way of propaganda. A programme for further expanding coffee houses in the most promising parts of India, namely, at Calcutta, Agra, Lucknow and Peshawar or Rawalpindi at a modest total cost of rupees twenty-five thousand per annum was under consideration when the amount was suddenly diverted to London under what I consider to be an unjustifiable demand.

The United Kingdom market has not been a responsive market to Indian coffee. England is not a coffee drinking country. The total annual consumption does not exceed eighteen thousand tons. Between the years 1921 and 1935 her annual consumption of Indian coffee steadily fell from 2,400 tons to about 1,800 tons. The London Market Expansion Board commenced its propaganda in London under the auspices of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee in the year 1936. The Director of the Board, Mr. Oliver, has displayed wonderful technique in advertising Indian Coffee, but notwithstanding all his efforts the sale of Indian coffee in London has steadily fallen both absolutely and relatively. In 1936, the sales amounted to 1,879 tons or 11.5 per cent. of the total consumption, in 1937 to 1,737 tons, or 10.9 of the total consumption, and in 1938, to 1,501 tons or 9.6 per cent. of the total consumption. The reason for this fall was the emergence as producers of mild coffee of Costa Rica and Kenya, in both of which countries British people had financial interests, and it is not likely that they would sacrifice their dividends for the blandishments of Indian coffee.

It is a curious circumstance that the decline in consumption of Indian coffee in the United Kingdom synchronised with a similar decline in the British Dominions. In the quinquennium ending 1934-35—I am quoting these figures from the Report on Coffee Marketing by the Agricultural Marketing Officer to the Government of India, the Commonwealth share of exports of Indian coffee fell from 56 per cent. to 34 per cent. and in 1936-37 they reached the lowest figure of 23 per cent. while exports to foreign countries increased from 44 per cent. to 66 per cent. during the same period. This decline coincided with the coming into operation of the Ottawa Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom and India. I made bold to prophesy at the time that Ottawa would ring the death knell of

Indian coffee within the Empire. But whether it is a case of cause and effect or of a mere coincidence it is for political economists to say. All that I am concerned with is that not even the vigorous campaign of Mr. Oliver has been able to arrest the decline. But he is no more to blame for the failure than Mrs. Partington for her failure to stop the waves of the Atlantic Ocean with her mop. Only few people will be found to finance Mrs. Partington in her operations.

I am a firm believer in promoting trade within the Empire, in strengthening the silken ties of loyalty to the Throne with the golden bonds of commerce. If, as I have shown, the Ottawa policy of the Government of India has completely failed in promoting inter-empire trade, so far at least as Indian coffee is concerned, may I respectfully ask them to press for an increased preference? My Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, on the last occasion, as Leader of the Indian Delegation, vigorously pressed for preference at the rate of 2d. per pound, and we are grateful to him; but, unfortunately, he failed. Now that the results of Ottawa are manifest, another representation may be more successful.

Under present conditions is there any justification for the Indian Coffee Cess Committee for remitting any portion of their dwindling income from India to London? Between the years 1936-40, a total sum of Rs. 1,77,496 has been spent on the London Board; but the results are like Dead Sea fruit. The sales have steadily fallen. The London merchant will not buy any more Indian coffee than is absolutely necessary for blending purposes.

Meanwhile, the income of the Coffee Cess Committee is steadily falling owing to the fall in exports. The receipts in 1940-41 amounted to Rs. 1,89,620; during the year 1941-42 they are estimated to be Rs. 86,980. On the other hand, while the war lasts all propaganda on the Continent will have to be necessarily stopped and in England enormously curtailed. And now that His Majesty's Government has granted a quota of 2,000 tons to Indian Coffee further propaganda will be useless. Nevertheless, this is the time selected by the Coffee Cess Committee to grant a spectacular increase in the salary of the Director from £450-500 to £800-850. This increase has been sanctioned by the Government of India in spite of protests from Indian Planters' Associations throughout the country. And last month a remittance of £2,100 was made to London of which 66 per cent. was to cover the salaries of the Director and his Assistant and 33 per cent. to cover their expenses for the only form of propaganda possible *vis.*, selling Indian coffee to persons taking refuge in air raid shelters. The situation would be comic if the interests of Indian planters were not so deeply affected. Kenya under similar circumstances has disbanded their London Board. The Indian Coffee Cess Committee insists on retaining theirs. People are asking in all seriousness whether the Indian Board is a Board for the expanding of the market for Indian coffee in London or for maintaining the London Director and his Assistant in a *Khushi* job while the war lasts.

Who stands to benefit by this expenditure of Indian money on the London Board? Not certainly the planters who pay the cess; they are financing a losing market. Mr. Clement Lake, the representative of Mysore planters on the London Board, was outspoken in his criticism. He said he did not think much good could be done by carrying on propaganda in the United Kingdom under war condition whereas he felt there was a

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tremendous scope for coffee market expansion in India. He doubted whether the Board's efforts had succeeded in increasing the consumption of Indian coffee. It was said that if the propaganda is interrupted now, much ground would be lost. But admittedly all the ground previously held for propaganda purposes has been abandoned owing to the war. The only ground now held are the canteens in air raid shelters. It is hoped that it will not be necessary to retain these when peace is restored.

The parties who really benefit are the European trading and shipping firms. They have their representatives on the Committee who have managed to obtain a predominant voice in the management of the Committee's affairs both in London and here. They have vested interests in the London trade. When primary producers and middlemen work together the former invariably go to the wall. Incidentally the shippers and traders seem to have obtained the ear of the High Commissioner. But I maintain that to divert the money paid by the impoverished Indian planter to finance the London Board to benefit the European Shipper and European trader is a grievous wrong done to the Indian planter. The Committee is the trustee appointed by the Government to administer the funds for the benefit of the planter. And if the funds are diverted to other purposes or there is a suspicion to that effect, it becomes the duty of the Government as the author of the trust to intervene. It is not open to them to shelter themselves, as the Honourable the Commerce Member seemed inclined to do the other day behind the plea that these matters are really for the consideration of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee. The wrong becomes all the more grievous if propaganda in India which is far more fruitful is starved for the purposes of financing London.

This brings me to a point which was raised by my Honourable friend, 12 Noon. Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, the other day. He asked why it was that when this Honourable House imposes a tax by way of a cess, as for example, cess on cotton, cess on lac, cess on coffee, no facilities are given to this House to examine whether the money so collected is properly spent. The various committees appointed to administer the cesses behave virtually like a Star Chamber. They exclude the press and the public from their deliberations. This is not a healthy state of things, especially when as in the present case, there are representatives of conflicting interests on the Committee. I venture to submit that to prevent one set of interests obtaining a predominant voice in the management to the prejudice of other interests, it is advisable to appoint an independent Government officer of sufficient status to be able to hold the balance even. I am glad to find that Government propose to appoint a Government officer of high status as executive officer of the Central Board to be soon constituted for coffee.

In conclusion, I shall advert to a very interesting question that will arise. Shall we be able to regain the markets which we have lost for our coffee when peace is restored? That is on the lap of the Gods. It would depend upon what would be the new order to be established in Europe. Whether it is going to be a federation of semi-sovereign States with custom's unions controlled by the League of Nations, or whether it is going to be, as at present, a conglomeration of sovereign States, each striving for economic self-sufficiency with all the paraphernalia of tariff walls, import quotas and exchange restrictions, no one can say. In any

case, I feel certain that even without the war we would have, by the play of economic forces, lost the markets in England and on the Continent of Europe, to which we have been so fondly clinging, and the war perhaps from that point of view was a blessing in disguise. I conclude, therefore, with the observation with which I began and that is that the most stable, the most certain and the most ample market for the Indian coffee is our own internal market and we need cultivate no other.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Indian Coffee Cess Committee be instructed to scrap the London Coffee Market Expansion Board, at any rate while the war lasts and divert the funds so released to further develop the Indian market as the activities of the London Board during the last four years have not resulted in the slightest improvement either in sales or in consumption of Indian Coffee in the United Kingdom and the Indian market has proved more responsive and is capable of vastly increased development."

**Mr. F. E. James:** Mr. President, as the only other Member of the Coffee Cess Committee in this House, I feel it right that I should make the House aware of the precise position. My Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, has been diverting as usual, he has diverted from his own proposition, and in fact I think he is so lukewarm about his own Resolution that he forgot to move it!

First of all, let me say that I repudiate very strongly indeed the suggestion made by Dr. DeSouza that the expenditure on the coffee propaganda in the London market is incurred for the benefit of European shippers and traders. The attempt to drag in a racial issue in a matter which is not in the least racial is one of which Dr. DeSouza ought to be thoroughly ashamed.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** Not at all; I assert it with all the earnestness at my command.

**Mr. F. E. James:** That makes things worse.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** Your proposition is absolutely absurd.

**Mr. F. E. James:** I will not say thoroughly ashamed, but I will say that I hope he will in future regret.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** I shall never regret it.

**Mr. F. E. James:** What is the Indian Coffee Cess Committee? First of all what is its composition? Its composition is such that it is quite impossible for what Dr. DeSouza calls the European shippers and traders ever to have a predominant voice. My Honourable friend has forgotten the composition of this committee. I do not want to weary the House, but I may observe that apart from the fact that eleven persons represent the coffee growing industry itself, a big majority are Indians. There are five persons representing the agricultural departments of the various Governments in the South, there is one representing the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and there are three persons only, representing what are described as "trade interests" and of these one is an Indian. Therefore,

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under any combination which is conceivable in any circumstances whatsoever, the European shippers and traders, as the Honourable Member has described them, can never secure anything approaching a preponderance of influence on the committee.

The other point is this. Under the Coffee Cess Act of 1935 which this House passed, an export cess is leviable upon the exports of coffee and so the money for propaganda is derived from the proceeds of this export cess. Presumably, therefore, those who are financially interested in this matter may be trusted to see that the money which is collected is spent in the way in which they wish it to be spent. The expenditure of the money is in the hands of this Indian Coffee Cess Committee, subject, of course, to the review of the Central Government. The budget which is estimated year by year is carefully examined, first of all, by an executive committee and then further by the meeting of the Coffee Cess Committee which all members are invited to attend. This is the Committee which decides on policy with regard to the relative amount to be spent on propaganda in India and abroad. It is, of course, unfortunate, that on this committee, in this particular instance, Dr. DeSouza constantly finds himself in a minority of one.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** I have been excluded deliberately.

**Mr. F. E. James:** My Honourable friend has not been excluded. The persons who are on that committee are the persons who are returned by the trade itself. At the last meeting of this committee, I well remember my Honourable friend making his case either for reduction of the amount spent in London or for the abolition of the Coffee Market Expansion Board; but he did not secure one single vote in his favour at that meeting.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** I was in a minority, it is true and, therefore, I have come here.

**Mr. F. E. James:** I am glad my Honourable friend represents a minority community in this House. But he carries it to an absurd length when he represents himself as a minority in this House from the Coffee Cess Committee.

Sir, it is true that the position with regard to propaganda outside India is difficult, owing to the events of the last summer. The Committee had this matter of the money which is spent on propaganda in London very carefully under examination. As a matter of fact the grant for expenditure in London has been reduced by over 25 per cent. and further reductions have been requested of the London Board during the present year. It is also true,—no one makes any attempt to dispute the figures that my Honourable friend has quoted,—that both the volume and the percentage of Indian coffee consumed in the United Kingdom declined between the years 1936 and 1938. He will, of course, remember that the Coffee Market Expansion Board, in the origination of which I had a large part, only began its work towards the end of 1936, and naturally, the first stages of its work were mainly in the direction of investigation, so that results could not be expected quickly. Actually that Board has not been working fully for more than three years, and my Honourable friend surely cannot expect

quick results. However, there is one encouraging statement. The war has, as I have said, had a disastrous effect upon the European markets. On the other hand in a circular issued on the 10th September by the Ministry of Food we learn that His Majesty's Government have granted quotas for the import of coffee into the United Kingdom during the season 1940-41. India is granted a quota of 2,000 tons which is a 17 per cent. increase upon the average consumption in the London market during the previous three years. On the other hand East Africa is granted a quota of 7,500 tons which is an increase of only eight per cent. over the previous average. Thus, even so far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, India has gained in the quota fixed. It is certainly a matter of consideration as to whether that gain would have been agreed to by His Majesty's Government had there been in London no coffee market propaganda work. Now the matter was referred to the Committee in London and I want to read a telegram which was sent by the High Commissioner for India after considering the communication from India requesting a curtailment of activities. This telegram reads as follows:

"Board considered your letter in all its aspects. They strongly express the extreme desirability of continued publicity in view of the vital importance of the United Kingdom market to Indian producers and the opportunity created by tea rationing and probable restriction of foreign coffee imports and the presence of large dominion forces and refugees. Board strongly believe that any serious curtailment of its activities in the United Kingdom which is the largest market for Indian coffee would undo most of the good work already done and make it extremely difficult to reorganise propaganda after the war."

My Honourable friend suggests that the only work which the propaganda board in London is doing was the encouraging of the drinking of coffee in air raid shelters. He has not even read his own reports. The telegram goes on to say:

"The introduction of Indian coffee to National Service canteens has been extended to industrial canteens thus providing vast scope for expansion."

The Board then goes on to say that they appreciate the difficulties of the Coffee Cess Committee in this country which is faced with a curtailment of available funds. The Board agreed to a reduction of the grant and goes on to say that the Board's recommendations are fully supported by the Indian High Commissioner.

This is dated the 12th September, 1940. It seems to me, Sir, that in view of the almost unanimous recommendation of the representatives of the coffee industry it would be unwise for this House to entertain a proposal which would, in spite of their declared wishes, abolish an institution in London which has done good work and which is capable of doing extremely good work even during war time.

There is one observation which my Honourable friend made to which I should reply. He referred to the money which is spent in the United Kingdom and to the percentage of it which is spent upon salaries. Well, Sir, the success of a propaganda board largely depends upon the success of the propaganda officer; and if my Honourable friend chose to turn to the figures as to the money spent in India upon propaganda he would find that an even larger percentage of that is represented in the salary bill. One cannot do propaganda without propagandists and, therefore, if the salary of propagandists is a reasonable percentage my Honourable friend cannot

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complain. Sixty-six per cent. on salaries is not an unduly high proportion in view of the excellent work of this propagandist. I may say that, although my Honourable friend speaks of protests being received from associations of coffee producers in different parts of the country against the increase of salary which was granted to the propagandist last year on the expiry of his first term, he has not quoted those particular associations by name nor does he reveal the fact that this increase in salary was approved by the Committee of which he is a member. I believe at that particular time he was not present and in his absence the recommendation was accepted unanimously.

I have no further comment to make on this proposal of my Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, except to express to the House the hope that it will not entertain it for one single moment. As I said at the beginning, the money comes out of the pockets of the exporters and it is administered by a committee representing Indian growers who in themselves and through provincial representatives of Governments are in a majority on that committee. If, therefore, the industry itself wants this work to be carried on I do not see why the House should interfere with that decision.

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): May I ask one question? Is there a progressive increase in the consumption of coffee, since the establishment of that Board in London, during the last three years, leaving aside this quota of 2,000 tons this year?

**Mr. F. E. James:** No. I explained to the House that I accepted my Honourable friend's figures which do actually show for the three years,—the last available figures being for 1938,—that there was a decrease in volume and a decrease in the relative percentage of consumption of coffee in the United Kingdom. There are a great many reasons for that and we are satisfied that had there not been a Coffee Market Expansion Board in London that decrease would probably have been very much more. And that is the considered view of the representatives of the industry.

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Mr. President, the purport of the Resolution which my Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, has moved is merely to scrap the London Board which is in charge of the expanding of coffee consumption in the United Kingdom. Various other matters have been raised in the course of the discussion; and another member of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee, my Honourable friend, Mr. James, has controverted some of those issues. I shall briefly deal with the issues that have been raised by my Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza. I am thankful to him for the compliment he paid me for the interest I have taken in the work of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee and in the problems of the planters of coffee in this country. Coming from the South, I have a personal interest in this matter, as a coffee addict myself; and I should like to see this habit growing in Northern India.

My Honourable friend referred to the fact that very recently I had the honour of presiding over a conference of planters and industrialists and businessmen dealing with coffee in Madras. The recommendations

of that conference are now under active consideration in the Commerce Department, and I hope in the course of this Session to introduce a Bill very much on the lines that have been recommended by that conference and by the Indian Coffee Cess Committee, lines which I understand have been generally approved by the trade and business interests engaged in coffee. Two questions have been raised by my friend, Dr. DeSouza: one relates to the utility of the work that is now being carried on by the Coffee Board in London and the second relates to the salaries paid to the staff; and let me say here that it is not quite accurate in describing the salaries as being 66 per cent. of the present expenditure. The salary of Mr. Oliver is £750 and of the lady assistant £300, making a total of £1,050 as against £2,400 which has been sanctioned for the next year for the total expenditure on this business. (A Voice: "£2,100"). Even so, it is not 66 per cent. My Honourable friend objected to the rise in the salary of Mr. Oliver in London. I happen to know Mr. Oliver myself. I met him in London; I had opportunities of watching the work that was being done by the Board in England and particularly of the work done by Mr. Oliver. But there is no need to go into the merits of that work, because my friend, Dr. DeSouza, paid a handsome compliment to the work of Mr. Oliver. The question that he raised was whether the increase of that salary was justified. When the Indian Coffee Cess Committee sent up its recommendation to the Government that the salary of Mr. Oliver should be increased and asked the Government to sanction its recommendation for such increase, I was not personally happy over the proposition at all. The Government of India asked for specific reasons why that salary should be increased; and here let me tell my Honourable friend, Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, that in these matters while we do pay the greatest attention naturally to the recommendations of a committee such as the Indian Coffee Cess Committee constituted for the purpose of organising its own industry and spending the proceeds of the cess in a way most beneficial to the industry; and while from the very nature of the constitution of that committee we are bound to give the highest value to any recommendation that comes from that organisation, Government still do reserve to themselves the right of questioning any particular recommendation and of modifying any particular budget proposal that they may send up or of regulating in other ways, as the Government may think fit from time to time, the expenditure of that Board. Let there be no misunderstanding on that point whatever. It is in pursuance of that policy that when the recommendation came up from this Board, the Government, not feeling quite happy that there was even a *prima facie* case made out for the increase, asked the Coffee Cess Committee to justify in greater detail why this increase was called for . . . . .

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): May I ask one question? Has this House also got the right to criticise these reports and if so, will he supply the reports of the Coffee and Tea Cess Committees to the Members of the Assembly?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** If the Government have got the power to consider the recommendations of this committee and to sanction or to refuse, *a fortiori* the House has got a

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right to do so, because the House can criticise every action of the Government. As far as the reports of the Committee are concerned, the other day in answer to my Honourable friend's question I said I would consider whether the report should be circulated. As a matter of fact, since then I have ascertained that copies of this report are regularly kept in the Library of the House and are available to Members of the House; and if any particular Member is so interested in coffee—and I hope every one of them will be interested—I shall be very happy to supply copies to all the Members. . . . .

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** In order to interest the Members more in coffee, they should be supplied with a copy of the reports.

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I shall accept the suggestion. The Indian Coffee Cess Committee, in reply to the Government's questionnaire, stated:

"The Board strongly recommend that Mr. Oliver, the present Director, whose term of appointment will expire on the 30th September, should be asked to continue in the same post for another three years on the salary suggested."

And, in justification of that, they say:

"The suggested increase might appear to be rather high. The position, however, appeared to be that if the proposal were not agreed to by my Committee, our work in the United Kingdom might seriously suffer, as the experience gained by Mr. Oliver during the past three years would be lost to the Board, who would consequently be hard put to it to find a suitable substitute for Mr. Oliver. As the Board had felt that Mr. Oliver, its chief executive officer, was indispensable to carry on its work, my Committee had necessarily to accept its strong recommendation."

This is the recommendation made unanimously by the London Board and accepted unanimously by the Indian Coffee Cess Committee the constitution of which my Honourable friend, Mr. James, has already referred to . . . .

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Was he offered some other more remunerative job somewhere?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** That is so. As a matter of fact, he was offered another job and they were about to lose him. In the face of that justification I felt that it was not fair, it was not possible for the Government to suggest that the increase in salary should not be granted.

Let me now come to the question of whether the work of the London Board should be scrapped. Here, again, as soon as the war broke out—and in fairness to the Coffee Cess Committee my Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, may have recognised it—the Board itself set up an inquiry whether the work of the London Board should be scrapped and whether the time had not come, owing to the circumstances that have supervened since the outbreak of the war, for that work to be arrested during the period of the war. This is the letter that the Indian Coffee Cess Committee addressed to the Coffee Market Expansion Board in London:

"It does not now appear to my Committee that these hopes will materialize, and my Committee shall be able to get much by way of cess receipts for some time to

come, or, to continue for long to finance coffee propaganda activities in the United Kingdom and in India, on the scale hitherto done.

Further so far as propaganda work in the United Kingdom and on the Continent is concerned, exhibitions and fairs, participation in which is an important item of work of the Board, are unlikely to be held during the period of the war, and the opportunities for making fresh personal contacts with the trade may become few . . . .

In the circumstances explained above, my Committee is anxiously awaiting the proposals the Board would like to make regarding its future programme of work.

In this connection, my Committee is anxious to develop the nearer outlets for Indian coffee . . . ."

It was in reply to that that the London Committee met again, considered the whole position and stressed the fact that at this time it would be disastrous if the work of the board were arrested, though they were willing to consider the suggestion of continuing the work of this Board on a less grandiose scale. Accordingly, from an expenditure of £4,500 they have reduced it to £2,400 in the current year and to £2,100 in the next year. These propositions again were put before the Government: they had been considered both by the London Board and by the Indian Coffee Cess Committee. The executive had strongly recommended it. The Coffee Cess Committee unanimously supported that recommendation, and Government felt again that, in those circumstances, it was not for them to question the wisdom of an organization which was primarily intended to look after the interests of every one, coffee growers, coffee sellers, in this country, shippers and all, that it was not for them to question the wisdom of that unanimous decision, and the Budget has been accepted. I only wish to stress the fact that Government do not automatically accept the recommendations of these Committees, but they do weigh these recommendations and give that weight which is due to them, specially when they are adequately supported.

My friend, Mr. James, has already referred to the composition of the Indian Coffee Cess Committee. It is true that one or two organizations representing themselves to be organizations of Indian planters in certain localities protested against the increase of salary given to a particular Director, but on the Coffee Cess Committee are represented all organized Indian associations separately from the European, and among those nominated by the Government, most of them are Indians, and the Chairman himself is my esteemed friend, Raja Praveena Mr. Madhava Rao, the First Member of the Council of the Mysore Government, and therefore it is impossible for me to accept the position that all aspects of the question were not considered, and that all interests did not have their say in the matter especially when a unanimous recommendation was presented to it. My friend referred to the fact that proposals are now afoot for a coffee control scheme. In that connection I hope to have the composition of this Committee slightly altered, and I can assure my friend that he need have no hesitation at all in thinking that any sort of racial majority will prevail, or that the interests of the Indian planters will not be adequately safeguarded. I would like him to wait and see the composition of that new Board. As it is, in the present Coffee Cess Committee the representation is adequate, but he will find that in the new Control Board the same caution has been observed, and that the interests of the Indians and Europeans alike, are safeguarded. Sir, that is what I have to say on behalf of the Government. I regret it will not

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be possible for me to go against the recommendations of these various Committee and Boards and to advise the scrapping of the London Marketing Board. And may I say this? Reference has been made to the fact that the total quantity of coffee consumed is at present small in spite of the existence of a Coffee Propaganda Committee, but the Propaganda Committee is concerned with many more things than merely with the extent of consumption for the time being. At the present time it is small, because shipping facilities are not readily available. There are also other reasons why the quantity has to be restricted, and India has not suffered very badly by the quantitative restriction, though I am hoping, and the Government of India is using its best efforts to see that the United Kingdom takes even larger quantities of Indian coffee than they have so far done. Incidentally, may I say that my friend Mr. James, while he was accurate in the answer he gave to my friend, Mr. Aney, as to the extent of coffee consumption up to the year 1938, did not give the coffee consumption in 1939, for the simple reason that the figures were kept secret after the war. As a matter of fact, in eight months of 1939 more coffee was consumed than in any one of the previous years, 1939 was in fact a record year, the percentage having gone up to 14.6 per cent. of the total coffee drunk in the United Kingdom as compared with 11 per cent in any of the previous years. The propaganda that is now being done is of this kind. There are various canteens, to which this coffee is supplied, the industrial canteens, army canteens, the canteen at Chelsea and so forth. If you can get these people to interest themselves in coffee at the present time, I am perfectly certain that once that habit is caught on, the habit will stay on, and that is the value of the propaganda at the present time. For all these reasons, I hope my friend, Dr. DeSouza, will consider the advisability of withdrawing his Resolution.

**Mr. Husenbhai Abdullabhai Laljee** (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I had no intention to intervene in this debate as I have no practical experience of coffee planting or coffee industry. But when I heard that East Africa has scrapped the London Office of the Coffee Cess Committee, then as a business man with some connection with East Africa, it struck me that the coffee production of that country is much more than ours, that planters of East Africa had naturally been interested in the expansion of their coffee market not only to England but to all places in Europe, that the Government of East Africa always paid much greater attention to the interests of their coffee planters and gave them all facilities to develop their coffee industry in East Africa. In fact the coffee trade of East Africa has been developed at the cost of the interests of Arabia and other countries. Therefore, I do feel that when East Africa decided to do away with this Cess Committee, our coffee planters in this country should have woke up and realised the position much earlier. My friend, Mr. James, pointed out that had it not been for our officers there, we would not have got the quota of even two thousand tons. That brings me, Sir, to a most important question, and that is, until and unless we have a special officer in England, in the heart of London, this country will not get any quota whatsoever in Great Britain, leave alone the world market. This is the mentality of my English brethren even today, and it is a thing for which we ought to feel very sorry. In season and out of season we

have always found that a great deal has been done to send European exports to various countries,—I do not want to mention the special encouragement given for the purpose by way of export credit, special banking facilities, shipping facilities, insurance, subsidies, protection and what not, but so far as our poor country is concerned, nothing has been done by our Government . . . .

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:**  
Nothing?

**Mr. Husenbhai Abdullahhai Laljee:** Nothing really. It really pains us to see that when a large population of India, nearly 90 per cent of it, is dependent on agriculture, we have got no shipping facilities; we have to depend on foreign companies, we have to go to foreign syndicates, to get shipping orders,—not only to British, but to Italian, German and others. We were often told by our Foreign shipping people in Bombay and Calcutta that they had to go by the International and other shipping conference rules, and preference would be given to those people who have their flags running on their ships, and not to us. This, Sir, is a fact. I wish my friend, Diwan Bahadur Sir Ramaswamy Mudaliar, had not interrupted me. Sir, we have no banking facilities; no bank will accept our shipping documents as they do of European, and this is a well-known fact. Then the same complaint applies to insurance companies. My friends here have been representing many insurance companies. Even after the Insurance Act was passed, they took up the agencies of Italian, American and German companies, but little did they care to co-operate with the Indian companies, and what do we find? We find that the importers insist upon sending the goods insured through foreign companies, not only British, but any foreign company, but not Indian. These are the handicaps under which we are working. The agriculturist has to pay for it very heavily, and this is the interest evinced by our Government in 90 per cent. of our agriculturists.

My friend, Mr. James, says: 'Oh, the cess has been realised from the exporters and they ought to have the voice'. I may say that because the salt tax is realised from the salt importers like myself, therefore it is not paid by the poor Indians. The Export duty on grains and other things is certainly realised from the exporters. But who really pays? The Agriculturist pays. It is the tenant who pays the revenue of the Government, not the landlord, though it is the hand of the landlord that pays it. Everything that is paid as cess or duty or otherwise is, it is common knowledge, paid by the producer and not by the exporter. These exporters like myself, I am one—if I find a better market I will buy from there, I will not buy Indian coffee for the sake of paying the cess. We are business men. Dr. Sir Ziauddin knows the business man very well. He knows what he means by a businessman, I also know very well. A large portion of the exploitation of the country's prosperity is by the hands of the European businessmen. It is on account of these businessmen that this Empire is kept going on, world wars are being waged for the purpose of exports, and that export is carried on all over by these businessmen. Nobody wants to come to my poor country. Nobody wants to remain in this country but for the

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exports. I am really sorry that the poor people are being exploited so very much. I strongly feel that the real voice ought to be of the agriculturist, it is his shoe that pinches. For goodness sake, do not think about others doing your propaganda outside, do not consider anything else than this, namely, you must find out the view of the person who pays it, the person who feels it, the person who has to bear it. It is his point of view and nothing else that should weigh with the Government. With these few words I do urge that the views of the planters, as has been represented by my Honourable friend, Dr. DeSouza, must be respected and looked into.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** I am indebted to my Honourable friend, Mr. Husenbhai Laljee, for bringing it prominently to the notice of the House that one of the countries most vitally interested in propaganda for their produce, namely, East Africa, has withdrawn its London office as soon as the war was declared. They thought that it is useless spending money on a very large scale on maintaining their Board in London while the war lasts, and for obvious reasons. What propaganda is possible there during war? While in London bombs are bursting over you, are you going to participate in exhibitions, or are you going to go and say to people who have taken refuge in canteens, please take this cup of coffee because it is a very much better coffee than Kenya coffee? The whole proposition is ridiculous. Kenya is wise and we are foolish. We are spending £1,200 a year on the London Board, which is a very large slice of our income. We are maintaining an office for a director and a lady assistant and just going round a canteen and saying, well, will you take this cup of Indian coffee? It is much better than any other coffee in the market. It is ridiculous. If anybody else had done it, I would have laughed at it; but, unfortunately, I as a planter feel hurt, that my money is spent in a manner from which no benefit can be derived. I feel that that money has been scandalously wasted over a pampered director and his assistant. For whose benefit? My Honourable friend, Mr. James, got wild. He said that I raised racial prejudice. It was not my intention to raise any racial prejudice. I respect Englishmen, I love them even.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Don't respect them more.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** All that I said was that the shippers and traders and not planters, benefit from the London Board. Many an English planter has told me the same. I am more in touch with the majority of the English planters in Mysore than my Honourable friend is, and they have asked, "what are you doing in London? We are wasting our money there. Oliver and his friends get high prices for their coffee. That is all".

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Today being Friday, the House has got to rise now. But if the Honourable Member wishes to finish now, I can put the question.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** No, Sir. I would like to resume my speech.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can resume his speech at 2-15 P.M.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at a Quarter Past Two of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) in the Chair.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** Mr. Deputy President, my Honourable friend, Mr. James, is a doughty fighter. He has an iron hand and he conceals it in a velvet glove but I assure you that I would not feel the weight of it. Like a lawyer who has a bad case, he resorted to the plan of abusing the advocate of the opposite side.

When the House adjourned for Lunch, I was talking about Kenya withdrawing her supply board in London. If Kenya did that with its vast resources and large interests, why should we, who are far more insignificant in the London market, continue our board at such a large expense? I could not get an answer to this question. The obvious reason why Kenya withdrew her Board was because propaganda under war conditions is impossible and His Majesty's Government have granted a quota of 7,000 tons to Kenya. In these circumstances the quantity imported can neither be increased nor reduced. To Indian coffee they have allowed a quota of 2,000 tons. In these circumstances, I really do not understand what is the work the Director can do during war time. I do not know whether the Honourable the Commerce Member is in a position to say anything about the propaganda that the Director is carrying on now. I am sure he would like to call for a further report and then decide whether he is worth keeping during war time at ruinous expense. I ask him to exercise his independent judgment and not blindly accept the view of the Board. I do not deny that the Director is an exceedingly able man. He is a very capable organiser and has fully realised the meaning of the saying "It pays to advertise". No doubt he might have deserved his salary before the war. But now, during the war, what is the work that he is doing. The entire propaganda on the continent has been stopped. Is he going to take coffee by aeroplanes to Norway, Holland and Switzerland and other countries? He might say: 'Oh, we display Indian coffee at all exhibitions but now they are closed'. Does he expect to have exhibitions while bombs are crashing over peoples' heads. On top of that, he is keeping a lady assistant, on £800 a year. I say that the whole thing is absurd. The Director has a comfortable job and his friends on the Board who are interested parties want to keep him.

The next point is about the decline of the imports in the London market. My friend, Mr. James, said that this expansion board has been working in London for just three years, that it is too short a period and there has not been sufficient time for any improvement to declare itself. May I point out some figures to him. I quoted them this morning. From 1921 down to this day, the imports of Indian coffee in London have been steadily falling and today they are the lowest figure. From 2,400

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tons ten years ago, today it is 1,500 tons and why? For the obvious reason, that John Bull is wise in his generation. He will not trade except with those with whom it profits him to trade. He is the embodiment of the economic man. Why should he trade with us when it is more advantageous to him to trade with Kenya and Costa Rica. In both countries he has invested money and looks for dividends. From Costa Rica he obtains exchange. I had the pleasure of meeting and dining with Mr. Wheeler Williams, the other day, a most esteemed broker in the London market. He said: "Why are you planters wasting your money? We admire your coffee but we do not want your coffee in the London Market." (Interruptions.) Instead of wasting our money to improve our sales in the English market, I say that we have a splendid market at our very doors. Here in India we can expand our sales almost without any limit. If we expand our activities here, I am sure we can command better prices. It is true that at the meetings of the Committee, I find myself in a minority.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-official): I am with you.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** But I have been an official and I have been a non-official and my friend, Mr. James, also knows what Indian Committees, especially those appointed or nominated under official auspices or the auspices of persons who have patronage in their hands count for and what their votes are worth. They are generally "yes" men.

**Mr. F. E. James:** Doctor, you are not.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** It is not a wonder if you get unanimous decisions in Bangalore or in London. In London you have got the authority of the High Commissioner, behind whom the Commerce Member shelters himself. I have the privilege of knowing the High Commissioner. I have the highest respect for his considered opinion. But do you mean to say he can have studied all the statistics? He is simply guided by the opinion of the few men who are in the forefront and who are interested.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** Just as these men are guided here.

**Mr. F. E. James:** Dr. DeSouza is a "no" man.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** One more point and I have done. As for Mr. Oliver, as I have said, I have got the highest respect and regard for him; he would be an acquisition in any job; in fact one of his admirers on the Coffee Cess Committee said that he was a live wire, but although he is a live wire, I regret to say that he has not set the Thames on fire yet. And another thing he said was that he could cleverly tie up the "elephant boy Sabu" and the "drummer boy". But that would qualify him to be a cinema organizer, not a coffee salesman.

As for giving him an enhanced salary, it was said that he threatened to take another job, if he was not given an increase.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman** (Finance Member): Oliver asked for more.

**Dr. F. X. DeSouza:** Next year he will ask for a further increase under a similar threat. Is the Committee going to sanction it? Mr. Deputy President, I do not wish to press the matter any further. I am very glad to find that my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, has given an assurance that the considerations which I have urged before him will receive due attention at his hands and that he will act as far as possible in conformity with my representation. Having that assurance and having the hope of Mr. James' support, who in his calmer moments will realize the force of my arguments, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

### RESOLUTION *RE* APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE REGARDING ECONOMY IN WAR EXPENDITURE.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Mr. Deputy President, Sir, I move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a committee of the Central Legislature to advise the Government so as to secure reasonable economy in the expenditure connected with the war."

Sir, the purpose of the Resolution is very simple, and it does not require much of elucidation. I do not want to indulge in any discussion on the merits of the present war, but I want to face realities. The war is there, and India has been dragged into it,—how and why, is no concern of mine to discuss when commending this Resolution to the House. India is at war with Germany and Italy and has to place her resources at the disposal of His Majesty's Government and her allies and to equip herself for meeting such contingencies as may eventuate in the extension of the war to the shores of India. Sir, nothing is impossible under the sun. Sir, some friends in this House feel that that is still too far. But we do not know what might happen tomorrow. Probably, in England, people used to feel in 1937 that any war like that was not possible on the part of Germany whose resources were very limited, but we have seen what has happened. So we cannot believe for a moment that the Axis Powers with their beastly designs have not got an eye on India and we cannot by only a pious hope try to divert them from India, and we must, therefore, without any question, keep ourselves in the best position to challenge them if at all we are compelled to meet that position. We have got to equip ourselves in the shortest possible time in the little interval that we have as yet got to fight any battle that is thrust on our heads.

This being the position, we have got to meet the evil in a way which will least disturb the people of this country. If it is an evil, it has to be combated with the evil power which is required in a war. Now, I want to state that when I say "with the least disturbance to the people of this country", I mean "in full consultation with the people of this country and with their representatives." It has been an old theory of economics that there should be no taxation without representation; and as we have to pay in money, in men and in resources, and everything else, I think it is the just right of this House, which is the representative of this country, to ask this Government to make them acquainted with the entire

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position in which they are and to receive their advice in the matter of the immediate expenditure to be met with the greatest possible care in economy, especially in the case of a country of poor people, more than 25 per cent. of whose people cannot afford two square meals a day, a country over 70 per cent. of whose people are engaged in agriculture, which is carried on with great disadvantage and by means of uneconomic, small holdings which barely leave the agriculturist in a position to have anything appreciable in their hands, and which only reduces the agriculturist to the position of the Labourer, who only toils on the land and gets just one square meal just to live up to that particular day. I want to impress this fact because we have got to be exceedingly cautious about the expenditure in this country. Also because we have got the extreme and acute unemployment. Most of the people are not able to find jobs. There is no industrial development whatsoever, and naturally the necessity of economy is more acute with us than with any other country of the world. Our resources of industrial development have had not much support from the Government. I am sorry for it. We are mostly exploited by the foreigners, including the Germans and the Italians who were till late the members of the commercial community and the members of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and similar other organisations which are responsible for the exploitation of this country.

Now, Sir, I have been trying to stress the question of the poverty and the incapacity of affording a very big fund for any war. But if the war has come, there is not much of a choice, but we should act with as much alacrity and with as much economy as it is within our power to do. We have got to realise that we are equipping a country whose *per capita* wealth is about Rs. 2 and who is being prepared to take challenge with those belligerent powers who claim the highest scientific equipment and who claim probably bigger resources at the moment. Hitler can finance his war by turning out a community like the Jews. On some pretext or other, he took their wealth for the war and turned them out. But we cannot do that sort of thing. We have got to look to our limitations and we have got to look to our resources. We have got to see that we make the best of the worst bargain in which we have been placed. It is for this reason that we warn the Government that they should be careful. We want them, therefore, to spend money with economy and in consultation with the representatives of the people who will be the best persons to give their consent or to minimise the expenditure in the best possible manner in the circumstances. I have said that we have got to face the realities, and a poor country like ours has to make the use of economy as a matter of necessity as we cannot afford extravagance.

Having said this much, I now come to concrete facts. Immediately after the declaration of the war, a Supply Department was organised by this Government. I wish the Honourable Member in charge of that Department, Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, was in his seat to hear me on this particular point. This Department was organised to control purchases in this country for her own use, for His Majesty's Government, and for her Allies. We expected that the Government of India would realise the position of this country and the extremely poor circumstances of the people to finance the war, but our experience has all along been contrary to this expectation. The Supply Department became the dumping

ground for all sorts of people and all sorts of commodities; and the luxury of extravagance made everybody jubilant about his own prospects. Instead of a feeling of depression and a feeling of horror which this war was bringing to the human kind in another part of the world, here we saw shining faces because people were anxious to make hay while the sun was shining. There was no spirit of sacrifice on the part of the people who came to support the war or who joined the War Supply Department or who came to offer their goods and commodities for the Supply Department. The real spirit was that of bargaining and profiteering. I do not want to stress this question very much, but from the reply which the Honourable Sir Hugh Dow gave in the other House on the 4th of March last, it is self-evident how they have proceeded in the matter of recruitment to this Department. We have known since what the situation now is. It is unparliamentary and also distasteful that I should give the names of those individuals who have received the favours of the Supply Department. I think it is most unpalatable that I should come out with the names of the firms who have been shown favourable treatment. At the same time, if the Honourable Member wants to challenge me, then I have got with me the list of some names which will show that the Government have not been behaving in the way in which they ought to have done. We feel that we have got to proceed very cautiously. Naturally, we expected that the people will come forward with a sense of sacrifice. We had thought that the Government officials, both Europeans and Indians, who were getting such pay and allowances as were more than their work justified, would not expect anything more in the Supply Department. We had expected that the big firms, both Europeans and Indian, would come forward and say that they were prepared to give at the cost price. We had expected that they would take just a little profit to keep the firms and industries going. But instead of that, the spirit of bargaining and profiteering is going on. When the world is burning, they want to make as much profit as they can. Is that the spirit which will help us? It is very nice to talk. I am sorry my friends of the European Group will not appreciate my talk, but they know in their heart of hearts that they have not behaved properly and they have not done what they should have done. They should take a lesson from the mercantile community of England. They are showing great self-sacrifice. Look to the position to which they have been reduced. Here in India a particular piece of skin which could be bought for eight annas was tendered to the Government for Rs. 3/8. I do not want to name the firm. Government cannot come forward and say that they did not know the market rate or that the skin was of an exceptional quality. Not at all: Government know all that. When I spoke to my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, and said that there was the feeling in the country that the Supply Department has become a dumping ground for all sorts of people, do you know, what he said? He said: "Give me the concrete cases." Have we got any such organisation, have we got the one-hundredth part of the office which my friend has, to supply him with all these concrete examples? Are we going to sit as C. I. D. on all the tenders that they are sending out? Are we going to sit as C. I. D. on all the employments that they are giving to different people? We have got no facilities to know what is going on. If we ask a question in this House, the reply is always evasive. We are always told that they do not know anything about the matter inquired into and want us to let them know

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the facts. If you want our support, is that the way to treat us? We are treated just like depressed classes who have got their limitations and who cannot enter into certain temples because of their particular caste. We are, therefore, now asking you by means of this Resolution to take us in your confidence, to take this House in your confidence, and to take such Members of this House in your confidence as are prepared to co-operate with you. I am not going to believe in the argument which Mr. Griffiths advanced the other day in this House. We are not asking for these committees because the Congress is absent. I am sorry, Mr. Griffiths is not in his place now. However, he is not a Member of the Government, and I do not take his arguments seriously. If you cannot get the entire population to subscribe to your view, can you not allow those people, who are prepared to subscribe to your view, to look into things and help you with as much sincerity as possible in their power to do.

I do not want to dilate on this subject any further. As I have said, we are only anxious to see that a gesture is made from the Government and that a definite undertaking is given that we will be given all the information. We should also be assured that all the expenses incurred by the Government in connection with the war are all legitimately spent and that Government are getting the full worth for their money.

In this connection, I want to give some concrete suggestions. The War Supply Board should act in consultation with the Committee in all matters concerning the appointment of officers whose salary is above Rs. 300. I do not want that the Committee should be consulted for petty appointments of *chaprasis* or of clerks. Secondly, there should be a strict watch on the method of open tenders, and avenues should be explored to buy commodities at the cheapest rates, and the contracts should be split up into reasonable divisions. What I mean is this. Supposing the Government of India want 2,00,000 tons of rice. Why should Ralli Brothers alone be considered to be fit to undertake this contract? If no other single firm is willing to undertake this contract why should you not split up the contract into, say, 100 or 200 tons, and say that any merchant who wishes to supply 100 or 200 tons is quite welcome. That will be the cheapest way of getting supplies, and, at the same time, more people will be benefited, instead of a single large firm. There will be competition, a healthy competition; there might be unhealthy competition also; but it will all be to the good of the Government. As the House is aware, owing to the war, most of the avenues of trade, export and import trade, are limited. There is no reason why the Government should not allow a large number of people to take advantage of the Government requirements, and supply them. Why should you give the privilege, or sacrifice, as it is sometimes said, to a favoured few to get all the contracts of the Government? I know the Government of India are fully equipped with information about the prevailing market rate of each and every commodity. They know the price of all sorts of commodities in the world. If the Government should say that they have no means of knowing the price of all commodities, then they stand self-condemned. What I am submitting is this. When a commodity sells in the open market, say, at Rs. 20, why should the Director of Contracts accept tenders for the same commodity at Rs. 40, simply because a particular firm has greater access to the Supply Department? I do not want to cast any aspersions on anybody. But, I am sure, every-

body here knows the notorious Munitions Board case in which even an officer of the standing of Sir Thomas Holland was considered to be very much different from what he appeared to be. As it is said in Julius Caesar "Brutus is an honourable man", we cannot say anything against any body, but there is a feeling that there must be something, otherwise there cannot be such a feeling in the minds of people.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman** (Finance Member): If the Honourable Member would permit me to intervene, I should say that it is not fair for him to cast reflections on an individual who was once a Member of the Government of India and who is not here to defend himself. Everybody knows the circumstances of Sir Thomas Holland's case, and he left the Government, because, having launched a certain prosecution, he withdrew it. But I am not aware that it has ever been suggested that he was, in the words of the Honourable Member, something very different from what he appeared to be or was supposed to be. It seems to me that that is a very unfair remark to make in this House of an individual who rendered great service to India and who is not present here to defend himself.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman**: I am very sorry. I never meant any reflection on Sir Thomas Holland's character. What I meant was this, that there were wild allegations made against him. If the Honourable Member would care to read the proceedings of the Munitions Board Case, a lot of allegations were made and, since the case was dropped, nobody knows what was the real truth.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman**: The only public grievance that arose from the facts of that case was that Sir Thomas Holland, having launched a prosecution against an individual alleged to have been guilty of dishonesty subsequently, without the full concurrence of all Members of the Government, and particularly of the then Viceroy, withdrew that prosecution. That is the only matter which stood against Sir Thomas Holland.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Let not the Honourable Member go into all those controversial matters. The Honourable Member will do well to avoid them.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman**: What I meant to convey was that the Government of India should try to purchase in the cheapest market with as much economy as possible, and that they should adopt a policy which will not give room to say that they are purchasing in a dearer market simply to favour certain individuals. I personally feel that an open tender would be the best system.

The next suggestion that I wish to make is this: that a committee of experts should be appointed to watch the trend of prices and examine the accepted tenders in the light of the cheapest prevailing rate for that particular commodity. All the different Chambers of Commerce and the Trade Associations would be prepared to co-operate with the Government in this matter and send daily list of prices of various commodities. As a matter of fact, I know that my Chamber has been sending such lists, if not daily, at least weekly. As President of my Association, I have

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ordered my Secretary to send such weekly reports to the Government, both to the Supply Department and to the Director of Contracts. My purpose in doing so was to enable the Government to know the prevailing price of commodities, and that would help them in accepting the lowest tenders.

The next suggestion is that a committee of experts should be associated with a committee of this House to advise Government on the possibilities of industrial evolution and subsidiary questions of subsidies, and protection to cottage industries, and so on. At a time when we require the maximum industrial development in this country for war purposes, we have to adopt a long range policy. We should not be thinking only of the present and thus allow an industry to languish as soon as the war is over. We have got to take all possible precautions to see that every industry that is developed on account of the war survives after the war is over, so that it may be useful to the country for all times. Even in the matter of giving subsidies, the Government of India should be guided by the advice of the Committee. They should see the possibility of the development of the industry, what is the best machinery to be adopted for such development, whether the machinery should be imported from America or from any other country, whether such industry, if given the subsidy, will be able to develop in such a way as to be able to survive after the war and stand on their own legs, and so on. All these points have to be considered with the help of that Committee. But whatever industries are there at the moment, the Government of India must see that these industries survive after the war as well. It is no use helping or subsidising an industry which will only serve the purpose of the war. Of course, if it is necessary, you have got to do it, but if, by better financial backing and other arrangements, you can make it a permanent thing, that would be something most desirable for this country.

Last of all, this Committee should examine the financial adjustments with His Majesty's Government, and through this Government examine a workable basis and what results were expected to be got after the war. On this question Sir Ziauddin Ahmad made some remarks the other day, and also, by means of questions, we asked Government to let us know what were the settlements with His Majesty's Government on the financial adjustments. But we have not been given this information yet. It may be a secret for war purposes,—I do not deny that,—but why not take a committee of a few people on whom you can rely and convince them that whatever arrangement has been made is for the best interests of the country and in the interests of the country which is co-operating with us? This is the only other concrete suggestion which I have to make, and I hope the Government of India will accept the Resolution and appoint a Committee that I have asked for.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Resolution moved:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint a committee of the Central Legislature to advise the Government so as to secure reasonable economy in the expenditure connected with the war."

**Mr. C. P. Lawson** (Bengal: European): Sir, I have listened with considerable interest to the speech of the Honourable the Mover  
3 P.M. and also with a certain amount of sympathy to the views that

he expressed, more especially over the question of economy. It is, however, one thing to suspect a complaint and quite another to point to an adequate remedy. The circumstances which attend a matter must receive very considerable attention at the present time. The policy of this Group has been made clear from time to time on previous occasions. In March last, although I was not present myself, this Group advocated the formation of an Estimates Committee as an alternative to the Standing Finance Committee, and showed thereby that they were anxious for a continuous and careful survey of normal expenditure. I submit, however, that the present case is somewhat different; and I will not conceal from Government that the community that I represent are anxious certainly for economy and still more for efficiency but, at the present moment above all, for speed. It is on the last point that my community are perhaps most apprehensive. We would like to be certain that there is all possible speed in the defence of this country and that, Sir, is my main point.

The Honourable the Finance Member in a recent speech, which I may say, we welcomed very considerably, stated that Finance was the handmaiden of Defence. I am glad, Sir, that he used that particular metaphor, because a handmaiden is a servant and Finance must be the servant of Defence and not the master. In normal times it may be necessary to cut the coat according to the cloth but in a question of defence if the coat is not big enough you must get more cloth and more cloth still if you want it.

Now, Sir, what does this Resolution demand? It demands another committee drawn from political parties to "assist"—if you wish—the Government in its purchases of war materials and in the equipment of its forces. I am in considerable doubt whether a political committee drawn from all parties is the best method of effecting this. One must consider the political aspect of such a committee, the political pressure that would be produced and the delays. I believe that at one time, Sir, Nero fiddled while Rome burnt. I suggest that this House avoids fiddling until Rome really is burnt.

Sir, the Honourable the Mover has produced considerable criticism of the Supply Department, and such criticism is not new. He appears to have, although he disclaimed any such possibility, a C. I. D. of his own and he knows a lot that I do not know. But, Sir, I propose to deal with the matter from a totally different standpoint. The Supply Department has to deal with new problems and with new organisations and if mistakes do occur it surely is not surprising. They are bound to occur when a revolution is taking place in production and in organisation. Sir, this is a war of machines and with machines of equipment, and as long as you admit that you must admit the necessity of taking commerce and industry to a large extent into your counsels. You cannot expect any official, a man who has probably spent his life dealing with official channels, to know as much about industry and the various departments of industry and commerce, as the people in industry and commerce know themselves. And if you go to the United Kingdom and to the Dominions you will find that those Governments have already recruited the best brains in commerce and the best brains in industry to help them in this revolution in army equipment development.

[Mr. C. P. Lawson.]

I suggest to the Government that they move on equivalent lines, that they consider tapping the best commercial and industrial brains of this country and for once turn them from sellers into buyers. I think the time has come for them to say: "Come over unto Macedonia and help us", like another country which has recently said. I intend to produce no dogma or suggestion as to how this should be done. I am all too aware of the difficulties that such a proposal must produce; but what I do know is that the people from the industrial and commercial community are anxious to help and I can assure the Government that whenever they call upon this help, it will be forthcoming. I would repeat that the most enormous problems are facing the Supply Department, and I do suggest that the Supply Department should not attempt to face these problems alone. This country is possibly not completely industrially developed, but there are in this country industrialists who would be glad to help, and I do not think that up to now their help has been called upon as it should have been. I cannot support this Resolution as it stands, but I trust that the Government will give full consideration to the points I have raised and I can assure them that if such consideration is given, they will receive the heartiest co-operation from Members on this side of the House.

**Mr. Umar Aly Shah** (North Madras: Muhammadan): Sir, I rise to support this Resolution moved by my friend, Mr. Nauman. It looks an ordinary Resolution but there are many important points in it. The Honourable the Finance Member has told us that the war costs us Rs. 20 lakhs per day. No doubt the war is coming to the door-step of India and India is in danger; and we are ready to supply men and money for the sake of defending the Indian peasant and the Indian taxpayer. But these big amounts are being spent like water and we do not know if they are spent reasonably or not. We are not in touch with the officers, who cannot say how they are spending the money. Government may say the Auditor General and the Accountants General are there to check expenditure, but there are reports circulating in the country that there is no previous sanction of the Finance Department for this expenditure, to see if it is properly spent for war purposes. This habit is spreading everywhere. It may be said that we are merely criticising as politicians, but nobody gives us the truth about these things. There is nothing wrong in our demand and I think the situation should be faced. The war has increased our defence expenditure from 50 to 80 crores a year, and expenditure on Civil Departments also has mounted up. If there is not an advisory committee there is bound to be much waste. The Honourable Sir James Grigg abolished the Standing Finance Committee and wished to put an Estimates Committee in its place. Owing, however, to the opposition to this proposal in the country, the Standing Finance Committee has been restored. But even this committee cannot possibly help in this direction since it is created to meet the needs of normal peace times and is not designed to face up to the strain of war conditions. People have been agitating everywhere, but Government has not taken any step to meet them.

Another thing is that many poor people have been giving donations and other forms of subscriptions; but government officers do not show any gratitude or appreciation: they are drawing thousands of rupees as salary in this time of war but they do not give adequate support in the war effort,

and this advisory board may be able to take some action to check unnecessary expenditure. This board is intended to help the Government, but not to hinder its activities. For all these reasons, I support this Resolution.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I congratulate my Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, on his maiden speech, which he delivered in a very lucid manner. But I differ from him on two small points. One is that he thought that a committee of this type would very much delay the working of the Supply Department. The Committee which we are suggesting is only an advisory committee which is not an executive body; and since it is not an executive body the work need not be delayed. Questions of policy only will have to be referred to it and not the questions of day to day administration.

The second point he raised was about advice from businessmen about the manner of purchase. This is just the point I have been hammering at in the course of my speeches on the Finance Bill and I should like to point out to him just to think for himself—I do not know what business he represents unfortunately—but suppose he represents jute for the time being: if his opinion is invited as to how to purchase jute and which are the best firms from which jute can be purchased, he will, with perfect honesty, only recommend those firms whom he knows; and the persons who are minor people and who probably are not in intimate touch with the Honourable Member will not have any chance. This is just the point we are fighting for and when my friend, Mr. Nauman, suggested that we should have a system of open tender, I also laid stress upon this particular point and I suggested that if we have any order, then that order should be split up into smaller orders, that we should invite tenders from different places, fixing the minimum quantity which a particular individual or firm should offer, and, afterwards, we should try to distribute the orders among the various provinces and among the various interests—Englishmen, Hindus, Muhammadans and so on. The price will be fixed by the quotations from various firms. This is the way in which distribution ought to be made, and this committee will be of very great help in this way—it will examine periodically once a month how orders were received and how they were distributed. In this way it will help the Supply Department in the matter of distribution of orders. It will also help enormously in the fixation of prices because some of these members will know what the real prices are, and they will be able to judge for themselves whether the prices are fair and reasonable. In that way a Committee of this kind will be of the greatest assistance, and with the adoption of an open system of tendering advocated today by my Honourable friend, a good deal of economy can be effected, and the stigma that now attaches to the Supply Department as it is now constituted will disappear. Sir, it is rather unfortunate that the Supply Department is now popularly known as the Department of Loot. I take it as a personal stigma that it should be called a department of loot, because I, as a legislator, am as much responsible for the proper expenditure of the taxpayer's money as anybody else, and I am very anxious that this stigma ought to disappear. Then I should be able to defend in public that the Supply Department is as well administered as any other department of the Government, and the system which now prevails will disappear.

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

There are, Sir, certain suggestions which I should like to make in order to remove this stigma of extravagance, and I am sure when a Committee of this type is appointed it will go a long way to bring about the much needed reforms in this department. We should no doubt have a Supply Department, and I suggest that with it we should associate the Department of Co-ordination, because these two things must go together, but when we come to the question of purchases, then the Indian Stores Department alone should be empowered to order the things. This is a department which we built up under the pressure of the Legislature; we paid a good deal of attention to it in its earlier stages, and it has now developed into a good position, and we should not allow this department to be killed. We should see that during the war it assumes such importance that when the war is over it should continue to maintain its importance and position. What I want to abolish is the neighbouring military department, what is called the Office of the Director of Contracts; that should be merged into the Indian Stores Department. One of the reasons is that at present we have got very few officers in the army to train a large number of recruits. Therefore, every British officer in the army ought to be set free to devote his attention to the training of soldiers, and he should not be allowed to waste his time in purchasing ordinary things which a civilian officer can do much better. We want to relieve all these military officers from the Supply Department and we want them to do their legitimate work. In this manner there should be one department called the Indian Stores Department to be run as at present.

Sir, I find very great difficulty to find out who is in charge of the Supply Department. I call it an Orphan Department, because I do not know who is in real charge of this department. If we say that the Leader of the House is in charge of this department, the question is whether he is so on paper or in reality. I cannot say how far he is responsible for extravagance and loot. People say that the Finance Member has a great deal to do with the Supply Department, but I am not sure how far he is responsible either. Then, it is said that the Commerce Member is also in charge of this Department, because he is really in charge of the Indian Stores Department which forms a fundamental part of the Supply Department. I do not know how far he is responsible for the loot.

**The Honourable Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan** (Leader of the House): I should not go by what people say.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** I do not go by what people say; I only go by what I see.

Unfortunately, the real man in charge of this department is the man who is not before us. He is really the power behind the throne. Who that person is I have not been able to find out, otherwise I would have entreated him to carry out the changes which I am advocating here almost vainly, because the gentlemen sitting before us have not got the power; they are not really the power behind the throne; they cannot carry out any changes, but real power rests somewhere else; who they are, I do not know. My friend opposite will help me enormously if in the course of his reply he will let me know who is the person responsible for the policy of this particular department, whom we may approach and prevail upon to do

what we consider to be the right thing. This person should sit before us and reply to our difficulties, so that we convince the public.

Sir, I said very clearly that this Committee which we are advocating should have nothing to do with munitions. I would like to leave the question of munitions entirely to the army people. It is they and they alone who ought to be made responsible for it. We will give them free and complete latitude; let them do whatever they like; let them requisition any factory in this country that they want to. Let them have anything they want so far as munitions are concerned. Then we will be able to give them every help they would ask for. But if we give them the fullest latitude in regard to munitions, they should not interfere with the legitimate duty of civilians, duties which really can be much better done by civilians than by the military people. I want the Leader of the House to examine and satisfy us as to why he could not follow our advice.

Sir, a Committee of the House will also be of very great use in keeping an eye on the money which we are devoting for the training of technicians. I suggested on the last occasion, and I repeat it today, that though we are voting about a crore of rupees for the training of technicians, a great portion of it ought to be recovered in the shape of finished goods. Things of a minor nature the Army Department may want, which need not be made in large factories, can be made by the students of these technical schools who will be under training at Government expense. I have got a scheme practically ready which I shall be laying before,—I do not know,—whom, because I do not understand whether it is the Labour or the Finance Department or whether it is the Munitions Department or what department it is before whom I should place this scheme, but I shall place it before the Government of India, whoever that Government of India may be. By my scheme a certain portion of the money which we are spending for the training of these students can be recovered.

There is another direction in which the proposed Committee can be useful. We have repeatedly pointed out on the floor of the House about the extravagant salaries paid to officers, about the number of men employed and so forth. This Committee will be able to give very good advice as to what kind of persons should be recruited, what the scale of salaries should be and in what manner they should be recruited; and if the members of the Committee succeed in creating such an atmosphere that the work in the Supply Department should be regarded as work of sacrifice, then we shall be able to induce a number of men to accept posts in this department without any surcharge, and accept the salaries which they were getting before they joined this department. I do not want that the men employed in this department should be out of pocket, but I do think that they should not transform the service to a lucrative profession. Sir, we are all making sacrifices, we are ready to contribute as much as possible for the successful prosecution of the war, and we naturally expect that those people whom we are employing should also make similar sacrifices to carry out our programme, they should show a spirit of self-sacrifice, by contributing their quota, for the successful prosecution of the war. We can compensate them after the war is over either in the shape of titles or some kind of special pensions or in some other way. But I want that people employed in this department should be an embodiment of self-sacrifice and they should set an example to others, and thus remove the stigma which attaches to this

[Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad.]

department now, because the people call this department as the department of loot, and every one there is a Haji Baba. I am quite certain everybody there is not a Haji Baba; we have got there very honest people also, but I am anxious that this general stigma should be removed.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member has got two minutes more.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Thank you, Sir.

I am very keen on this point, and I am sure that when a committee of the type we are suggesting is formed, that committee will fight the battle on behalf of the Supply Department before the public. If any one will say anything about that department, then every member of the committee will challenge the statement made by any person either in this House or outside this House. He shall say, "No, we know very well that everything is right in the department. Your impressions are wrong, all the rumours that are being circulated are not perfectly correct." I think it is in the interests of the Supply Department for the maintenance of the honour and the prestige of the department—it is necessary that we should have a body of men who, in the first place, should be satisfied that everything is right, and once they are satisfied, I am sure they will fight on behalf of the department people outside who are now freely talking about the loot of this department.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-Official): Let the question be now put.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan** (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): The Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Nauman, is a very modest one, and if my Honourable friend of the European Group over there who has just criticised Mr. Nauman's motion had gone carefully through the wording of the Resolution, he would have jumped at it and congratulated him on putting forward such a motion. The Resolution simply says that a committee of the Central Legislature may be appointed to advise the Government so as to secure reasonable economy in the expenditure connected with the war. It does not say that the committee shall consist of at least three-fourths of the elected Members of the Legislature. As the Resolution goes, the Government may very well appoint a committee presided over by the Honourable the Finance Member and consisting of three members of the European Group and three members on the back benches on the other side—seven members of such a character. Let them do what they like, and Mr. Muhammad Nauman will have to be satisfied with it because he himself says that a committee of the Central Legislature may be appointed. It seems to me, however, that Government are very much afraid of the bold and frank criticism of the elected Members of the Legislature and they ought to do something to satisfy them that the money which is being spent upon the war is spent appropriately. We have a complaint that the Government do not trust us, and that the Honourable the Finance Member does not trust us. And there is a talk abroad—I am referring to the man in the street, not to the higher upper circles—that everything the Government do, they do it behind the veil, behind the curtain. They do not allow a corner of that curtain.

to be lifted up so as to enable the public to see what sort of thing is going on. Mr. Muhammad Nauman, when he referred to Sir Thomas Holland—unfortunately he went into personalities—gave Sir Jeremy Raisman an occasion to be very much annoyed and he resented the reference. But I may tell my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, that human nature is human nature all over the world whether the skin is white or dark. Don't you remember the great scandal that rang in the world during the South African war when millions and millions of pounds which were contributed by the British public went into the pockets of certain traders and their supporters among the upper ten of England, the officials. Then there was the Munition Board scandal. We do not say that so and so were responsible for it, but there was a scandal. So, if you want to avoid this stigma,—if you want to remove the stigma in the words of my Honourable friend, Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, you ought to take us into your confidence by appointing a committee. Have your men as well, but have a few from this side also. They would advise you as to the best way in which the money should be spent. The other day, when speaking on the Finance Bill I was saying that if we were only assured that the money was being spent actually on the defence of India we should be prepared to discuss the Bill on its merits. But we do not know where it goes, and we do not know whether the money spent on the obtaining of war materials goes really into the pockets of certain army contractors whom the Government appoints, which enables them to indulge in corruption and invite corruption from a section of the lower kind of officials. Of course, Sir Jeremy Raisman like Caesar's wife is above reproach. But does he think that there are others also of the same character, of the same sterling worth, of the same strength of character? Certainly, they are, after all, human. So, to avoid that and to inspire confidence in us, appoint a committee. With these words I strongly support the Resolution.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): The Resolution puts forward a very modest proposal, and I fail to understand why unnecessary heat has been created on the suggestion or the remarks made by the Honourable the Mover. It is still fresh in our memory that there was a proposal for the expansion of the Executive Council to take advice in matters of war, and now, here it is a question of a mere committee to advise on the purchase of war materials. This should not be resented I think. My Honourable friend, Mr. Nauman, has suggested the system of open tender. That system will in my opinion create a spirit of self-sacrifice. There are people in the country who, seeing the offer of others, will come forward saying, this is not the time to make profits, or to make bargains, this is the time to help the State with all the power that they can. They might come forward with a lower tender. They may be ready to sell their material at a lower rate. Therefore, the system of open tender will, instead of doing harm, be beneficial in the interests of the country. My Honourable friend, from the European Group, said, that it is not desirable to have suspicion. There is no question of suspicion at all. If we advise, if we give proper instructions to any department, it does not amount to any suspicion. If so, then the whole audit department will amount to a suspecting body.

As regards appointments another procedure is being followed here. No higher appointment is referred to the Public Service Commission. I see that in all departments of the Government of India the higher appoint-

[Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani.]

ments are referred to the Public Service Commission, but here the case is quite the reverse. With one exception I find from the statement laid before the Council of State on the 4th March, 1940—that leads us to believe that there is a system of loot as just pointed out by Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, because if he will compare the very first item of the list placed before the Council of State, he will come to know that the recipient instead of getting Rs. 4,000 as is the usual case in peace time is getting Rs. 5,000. Is this the way to help the successful prosecution of the war? Is this the way in which when his countrymen are in distress he should be benefited? He should have followed the example of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi. He is an exception and everybody should have followed his example at least, because this is the time to help the Government out of their own salaries. Here funds have been started at the instance of the departmental heads and poor clerks are making contributions and these people having a long list which I am in possession of, are making profits. I do not like to take the time of the House by enumerating all the names. I have made a reference to the proceedings of the Council of State of the 4th March and that is enough. The poor people are making contribution and persons already drawing high salaries are out to make more and more money. Is this the way to help the Government in the successful prosecution of the war? I fail to understand it. The sooner we put a stop to this the better. I think the Government should seriously consider these things and accept the modest suggestion contained in the Resolution of my Honourable friend, Mr. Nauman. With these words I strongly support the Resolution.

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): I had no mind at first to intervene in this debate, not because the Resolution is not an important one but in my opinion it is a self-evident one. It does not require in my opinion an additional speech to demonstrate the necessity of the recommendation contained in the Resolution. Sir, during the course of the debate on the emergency Finance Bill, various speakers have made references to what they consider as almost colossal mismanagement of affairs in the Supply Department. Many questions were asked which also implied that there was something suspicious about the working of that Department. In fact, the Department is actually charged with indulging in extravagant expenditure when there is great need for economy. These references are frequently made on the floor of the House. It is really difficult for non-official members on this side of the House to prove these things with facts and figures, but somehow or other information leaks out which makes them highly suspicious: and they entertain serious doubts as to whether the things are running in a proper manner in that Department. This is the most important Department connected with the prosecution of the war at the present time. When the Government are anxious to secure the co-operation of the people in the raising of the funds that they require either in the form of taxation or in the form of voluntary donations, it is necessary that the Government should be in a position to explain very clearly to the House that the funds already available to them have been spent with due caution and due regard to economy and the financial exigencies of the situation. Now, Sir, if the Government actually see that there is a suspicion lurking in the minds of so many Honourable Members on this side of the House, who of course

take their information from people who are more or less remotely or intimately connected with some activities connected with the Supply Department, Government themselves should come forward and welcome a suggestion of that kind, which is contained in this Resolution. Now, what is the suggestion made in this Resolution. The suggestion does not mean that the Supply Department should stop its work. It only requires that the Department should have by its side a standing committee of advisers; the committee proposed is a mixed committee, if I mistake not, and, of course, not a committee of purely nominated members. It is bound to be a mixed committee at any rate, to say the least of it. There is a committee of advisers associated with almost every department of the Government of India and almost all departments have appreciated the utility of having Standing Advisory Committees by their side to help them. Then, why should this new born child be allowed to play free and unrestricted, unaided and unassisted by some elders from this House. This new child if it is not properly controlled in time promises to be a source of trouble and mischief. It is a kind of imp which requires to be properly disciplined and checked. We are asking for nothing else. With these words, I support the Resolution.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** Sir, I have listened with great interest to the remarks which have been made by various Honourable Members who have taken part in this debate and I would like to say that I have a very open mind on this question, because it is a matter to which for a very long time I have given considerable thought. As my Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, said just now, it is desirable in the interests of Government as well as of the Legislature that many of these vague, un-savoury reports and rumours should be dispelled. The question is what is the best way to tackle this sort of thing. Now, I did, in the course of the last Session when certain questions were asked on this subject, try to indicate to this House the extraordinary difficulties with which the Government and particularly my department were faced in devising and ensuring proper control over the vast number of new transactions which had come within the scope of Government's duties owing to the outbreak of war. The position is that in addition to all the other forms of financial control which it was necessary to exercise before it has now become necessary to exercise control over a huge number of business transactions. In fact, Government have become one of the largest, in fact the very largest business concern in the country.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** The very largest purchasing authority.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** . . . the very largest purchasing authority. We have had business interests in the past. After all, we run the Railways, we run the Post Office and we run various other lesser commercial concerns, but for those a regular form of financial advice and control had already been created in times of peace and no special problem arose; and I am free to admit to the House that we were not very well equipped to do this sort of thing. As I pointed out last Session, a very great strain indeed was placed on my Department and on all the reserves of officers who possessed any kind of financial and accounting experience. It became necessary to allot men to this Branch and men to that Branch and thus a very large proportion of my qualified officers had to be taken off their ordinary duties and placed in these new positions in order to control these new activities on the financial side. Now, Sir, it

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

is suggested by the Mover of this Resolution and by some of the Members who supported him that that control may not be as effective as it should have been. On the other hand, it is now strongly advocated on behalf of the business community with whom the Supply Department has to deal that there is far too much control, that there is what they call "red tape" and that it is impossible to get anything done in reasonable time . . . .

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** May I say that the complaint is that it is late payment, not that it is one rupee instead of four rupees.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** My friend knows that the stage at which Government endeavour to exercise control is before the money is paid out: and, therefore, whereas the executive officers may complete transactions and bills may be presented to Government, it is precisely at that stage that delay is liable to occur, because it is before the money goes out that we have to be satisfied that everything is in order and that the money is really due. I was merely pointing out that you have these two entirely opposite and conflicting points of view. On the one hand, it is complained that there is extravagance, lack of control, that excessive prices are paid, and so on. On the other hand, there is a growing feeling and it has been voiced in authoritative circles that the purchasing machinery of Government is tied hand and foot by financial control and financial regulations and that it is impossible to get anything done in reasonable time and in a business-like way.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** You might consult the Finance Committee. Have you done that?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** My Honourable friend, Sir Ziauddin Ahmad, suggests that his Committee might be able to solve all those difficulties. Well, Sir, I have very great respect for the mathematical and other attainments of my Honourable friend, but I do suggest that the problems which arise in this sphere are much more difficult than he imagines.

Now, I will give the Assembly an example of the sort of thing that occurs. Government desire some entirely new article which has never been made in India to be made. They approach certain firms who are making something which is similar to that or at any rate who possess machinery which is capable of being used for this new product. You have this curious position that Government approach the firm,—not that the firm comes to Government. Now the representative of the Government says, "can you make a thousand of these articles?", and the firm says, "well, we will try, we have never made anything like that, but we will try". Then they say, "what will you pay?". "Well," the Government official points out, "we are making it in our Ordnance factories at Rs. 2-8-0 I suppose" but the business man says, "Well, I am not interested". Then the Government say to him, "How much do you think you would make it for?" The business man might say, "I calculate it would cost me Rs. 20 to make this thing". Now this is the type of problem you have got. It is entirely different from anything which is ever encountered in ordinary purchasing. You have a demand and no supply, you have a demand which has to be met and it is essentially, obviously, in the interest of the tax-payer . . . .

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** Such occasions must be rare?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** On the contrary, the purchase of ordinary merchandise in the country is a thing which can be done by anybody and there financial control merely consists in verifying what is the market price, and that is simple, but the problem is different when you ask people who have never made or supplied a kind of article to supply it now and possibly to supply it in large quantities. I merely give that as an instance. The Honourable Member is entirely wrong in thinking that it is an uncommon type of case; on the contrary, it is a common type and one which is becoming increasingly common; in our efforts to explore and expand the productive resources of this country, we are constantly up against that particular type of problem—how much we should pay for this new type of product, and what is the method by which we can ascertain what is a fair price to pay the purchaser. Now in England and I understand in some of the Dominions they have very large numbers of professional men known as "Cost accountants". Cost accounting is a highly specialized form of accountancy; it is not like the usual accountancy with which we are familiar in this country. We have a few cost accountants and Government employs a few, but in order to complete this kind of transaction on a really scientific basis you may have to set a man down to do cost accountancy in that particular concern for weeks on end. It may be a very difficult calculation and until the thing has been done in that scientific way, neither Government nor the producer knows what the price should be or what it would cost him, and of course, obviously the price varies with the outturn or the output; it depends on the number of units which has to be purchased and there again a difficulty arises because until the producer can be assured of a certain quantity, it is not worth his while to organize his factory and his plant in order to produce the thing at all. Well, Sir that is merely by way of illustration.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** May I just interrupt the Honourable Member? My Honourable friend is confusing between the development of new industries and ordinary purchases. Whenever a thing is entirely new and it was never manufactured before and he wants it to be manufactured, that comes under the category of the development of new industries for which we are prepared to pay the money. But it is quite different from ordinary purchases.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I do not know what are the difficulties which the Honourable Member has in mind in relation to the purchase of ordinary commercial commodities which are regularly bought and sold in this country.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** I mean commodities which are not already manufactured in this country.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** May I also interrupt the Honourable Member?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** The Honourable Member will have a chance of making his own speech.

I have been on the look-out for concrete suggestions as to how a Committee of this Legislature could help with the kind of difficulties with

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

which I am familiar because, after all, I sit inside this machine and cases come up to me and I realise the sort of difficulty which my officers are encountering. I find it very difficult myself to give the answer. I have been trying to visualise in what concrete way a Committee of this Legislature could assist in controlling war expenditure of this kind and in ensuring economy in the interests of the tax-payer. Now, one of the suggestions which the Honourable Member made was that open tenders should be insisted on in all cases. Well, Sir, in the conditions of war and in dealing with the kind of problem with which the Supply Department is often faced, it may happen that the open-tender system may be a very bad one. If you know that an article which you require is only produced by A or by A and B or by A, B and C and you know that they have already got together on this matter, then what is the use of your issuing an open tender? You will get a price which you may not be prepared to accept. The open tender can obviously be useful or desirable only in conditions of effective competition, and in purchasing or in obtaining the requirements of war you cannot always be sure that you will have effective competition. Now, again, the Mover of this Resolution said that all Chambers and commercial organisations would be prepared to send reports to the Supply Department. Well, Sir, I realise that there may be some value in a suggestion of that kind. As regards the market prices of ordinary goods in commercial use, I do not think that there is any difficulty either, on the one hand, in the Executive officer finding out what the price should be or, on the other, in the audit or financial control verifying what the price should have been on that day. But the difficulty arises in deciding on the prices at which large contracts should be made. There, it is often exceedingly difficult to get expert financial advice or business experience without going to the very people who are interested in what you are doing. The question is: how are we to get objective and disinterested advice? It has been suggested that these large contracts should be split up and when you want 100,000 tons, you should put it out in lots of a thousand tons a time. Well, Sir, that may on occasions be possible but it may also have the effect that you derive the worst bargain you could because obviously a supplier of 100,000 tons ought to be able to quote you a better price than a supplier of 1,000 tons. Although it may be desirable on other grounds that the economic advantage of contracts should be widely spread, it certainly is not in the best interests of the tax-payer, because from his point of view what you want is to get the goods at the lowest possible price.

Well, Sir, I have merely tried to indicate some of the difficulties with which we are faced in controlling this type of activity from the financial point of view. But there is one thing which has been bandied about very freely and on which I myself feel quite strongly. That is the question of appointments in the Supply Department. Now, Sir, I said in this House the other day that these appointments had been made with the concurrence of the Finance Department and I entirely deny that there are any such monstrous scandals as are regularly alluded to and darkly hinted at by everybody who speaks on this subject. I am prepared to lay before the Standing Finance Committee the details of the pay and the previous pay and the status of all the officers who have been appointed to the Supply Department. I am prepared to sit round the table with the Standing Finance Committee and go through all these cases with them and

explain why these salaries were fixed. I am prepared to invite the comment of the Standing Finance Committee on the principles on which the salaries of these appointments were fixed and I should welcome their observations and their recommendations as to how these matters should be regulated in future. I am confident that I shall be able to dispose of the greater part of these ill-founded rumours and misapprehensions which have taken root in the minds of Members. I entirely agree with my Honourable friend, Mr. Aney, that it is highly desirable that this should be done both from the point of view of Government and from the point of view of Members of this House. I do not believe it is desirable or possible to call into existence another Committee in order to deal with this particular matter. But there does remain the other question which was touched on by my Honourable friend, Mr. Aney. That does not concern me directly: it is the concern of the Supply Department. But I understand from my Honourable Colleague, the Leader of the House, that he already has under consideration the question of associating a Standing Committee with the Supply Department. His object is that it should be an elected Committee of the Legislature. This Committee would advise in the same way as the other Advisory Committees of this House have been appointed to advise regular Departments of the Government.

Sir, I think that these two offers should cover the whole ground which the Honourable Member has in mind and should enable this House without setting up machinery which would actually interfere with the executive processes of Government in relation to which, as the Honourable speaker from the European Group rightly pointed out, speed is of the utmost importance. We cannot possibly set up anything which will delay the work of Departments which are concerned with the day-to-day prosecution of the war. I say leaving aside that possibility as quite impracticable, the two offers which the Government now make, namely, the question of appointments made and the salaries paid shall be laid before the Standing Finance Committee and that an Advisory Committee shall be set up to advise the Department of Supply—these two offers, it seems to me cover everything which this House can legitimately expect the Government to do. In view of these proposals, I trust the Honourable Member will withdraw his Resolution.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Sir, in view of the fact that things are moving very fast now-a-days on account of the war, that the Finance Committee holds its sittings once or twice a year, will the Honourable the Finance Member consider the advisability of convening the meeting of the Finance Committee oftener to deal with this question so that we may discuss all matters expeditiously and the objection of delay raised by my Honourable friend will be avoided.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I shall take as early an opportunity as I can to put the matters which I have mentioned before the Standing Finance Committee.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** When will this Advisory Committee for the Supply Department be formed?

**The Honourable Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan:** I shall be able to inform the House either tomorrow or on Monday with regard to the setting up of the Advisory Committee for the Supply Department.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman:** Sir, I have heard the Honourable the Finance Member with all possible attention, and, as regards the remarks which he made regarding the Resolution, I wish to express my thanks to him that he has been giving this matter his attention, and I am thankful for the definite statement which he made that an Advisory Committee would be set up for the Supply Department. We are satisfied with that.

I would just make one personal explanation to the Honourable the Finance Member. What I meant was this. In the matter of purchase, the articles of daily use were probably of much larger volume than those articles which are not of daily use. I gathered that impression. I do not know the real state of affairs. For instance, the purchase of *ghee*, grain, wool, tents, and so on, are probably much more in volume, probably 80 per cent. of all the purchases made by the Supply Department, whereas those things to which the Honourable the Finance Member referred in which he finds difficulties, and there are certainly difficulties because of the new arrangements being made in this country, probably those commodities are less. We have got to evolve certain formulæ as regards these industrial enterprises where the volume is certainly less. I may be wrong. I hope the Honourable Member will correct me if I am wrong. With these words, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave of the Assembly, withdrawn.

#### RESOLUTION *RE* APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE THE CONDITIONS OF DETENUS UNDER THE DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated: Non-Official): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should take immediate steps to appoint a committee to examine and report without delay:

- (a) whether conditions under which the detenus under the Defence of India Act have to live in prisons are suitable and adequate; and sufficient privileges are granted to them for communication outside by way of letters and interviews; and, if not, what improvements should be made therein;
- (b) whether their families are provided with suitable maintenance or not; and, if not, what assistance Government should give them;
- (c) whether those who are interned or externed under the Defence of India Act have difficulty in maintaining themselves or their families, and whether it is necessary to give them any assistance from Government; and in case, it is necessary, what should be the amount of such assistance."

Mr. Deputy President, the recommendation which my Resolution makes is a very modest one. As the House is aware, immediately after the declaration of the war, the Government of India passed the Defence of India Act. During the discussion on that legislation, I had stated as my view that legislation was unnecessary and too drastic. But, Sir, on this occasion, I do not wish to discuss that point. I do not even wish to discuss the question whether the legislation has been applied fairly and justly. In my view, the application has been too severe, if the legislation itself was too drastic. But I do not wish to discuss that question. The only question which I want to discuss on this occasion is whether the detenus or the people to whom the Defence of India Act has been applied and their movements restricted were getting fair, just and humane treatment. Sir, it is difficult to make an estimate of the number of people whose movements have been restricted, to whom the Defence of India Act has been

applied in one way or another. In my view the movements of more than 3,000 people perhaps more, and many more have been restricted under the Defence of India Act. If the Honourable Member has got figures, I am sure he will correct me.

Sir, there are various kinds of restrictions placed upon the movements of persons who come under the Defence of India Act. Some people are sent to jail with trial and in their case they have at least an indication as to the reason for which the Government of India have applied the Defence of India Act. But there are people whose movements are restricted and who are sent to jail without trial. Then there are certain other people who are not sent to jail, but who are what I may call externed and not permitted to go to certain places.

[At this stage Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) resumed the Chair.]

There are some people who are, I may say interned and whose movements are restricted within certain area. Even with the restriction of living in a certain area, the movements of some of these are still further restricted by being asked not to take part in certain movements.

Then there are certain classes of people who hold certain political opinions and who are described as communists whom the Government have practically declared as outlaws. The Government have declared it as their policy to restrict the movements of people who are regarded as communists as well as of those whom the Government suspect to be communists.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Are you one of them?

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** This is not the occasion to discuss that question. I have already said, Mr. President, that I do not wish to discuss whether these restrictions are justifiable or not justifiable. But in order to avoid any misunderstanding I must state that I do not admit that the application of this Act has been fair and just.

Now, Sir, coming to the treatment given to the detenues, the first point which I should like to make is that in the case of those people who have been detained without giving them any reason and without any trial Government have no right to deprive them of their means of livelihood. If Government put certain people in jail without trial they feed them when they are in jail, but they do not take the responsibility upon themselves to feed and maintain their families when they deprive the breadwinner of the family by his detention in jail. Similarly, when people are externed or interned they very often lose their jobs in those circumstances. I think it is the duty of Government to maintain them and maintain their families. The Government of India and the Local Governments do not take this responsibility which I think is very unfair and unjust. Sir, before the Defence of India Act was passed there were some movements during which the Government of India resorted to some emergency powers in order to detain people without trial. And on former occasions; when people were detained, the Government of India in many cases took upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining these people and also their families. But the Government of India have now changed their policy. I should like the Government of India

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

to consider this question very seriously, whether they should detain people without trial and not leave them the means of livelihood and maintain their families.

Then, Sir, there is the question of people who are already in jail. The Government of India feed them in some way and I have not heard many complaints about the food. Perhaps these people are too shy to complain about their food; but I have heard very many complaints from some of the detenus whom I know, that the Government do not give them some very ordinary and reasonable comforts. For instance, people are not supplied at Government expense with soap and they are not supplied with material for shaving. In some jails the detenus are allowed to purchase these articles at their own cost but I do not know why they should do so, and in many cases the detenus have not got money. I know of some cases of people who are put in jail under the Defence of India Act and who had asked me to send them some money for soap and such other small comforts. Then, Sir, they are not allowed to smoke. Smoking is a very ordinary comfort and if you detain people in jails without trial you should at least give them the ordinary comfort of a smoke. Then there are other matters also. Take for instance the question of newspapers and books. The Government of India, in the case of those who are given "B" class, give some newspapers but they give them newspapers conducted by European publishers. In Bombay, they give the *Times of India*. I do not know what papers they give in other provinces; but if they ask for the *Bombay Chronicle* they will not get it. And if they give it at all they will ask the detenus to pay for it. I think the Government of India should leave it to the detenus to say which paper they would like to have. Then, Sir, there is the question of communication with their friends by interviews and by letters. In this matter also I have heard several complaints. In the first place the detenus, at least in Bombay, are allowed to have only one interview in a month if they are given "B" class. If they are given "C" class, I think they get an interview once in three months. Similarly, they are allowed to have two letters in a month. I think, Sir, this facility should be extended. In the case of letters they have got other complaints, that when any letter is sent to them, it must of course be sent through the Superintendent of the prison; but the Superintendent of the prison is not trusted by Government. The letter is first sent to the C. I. D. and if they permit then only can the letter be sent to the Superintendent. This causes delay and I have heard complaints from the detenus that many times they did not receive their letters at all. I should like the Government of India to have this question examined.

Then, Sir, there is the question of detenus in jail communicating with each other. In some cases the detenus are allowed to stay together in one block, but in some cases they are not allowed to live together. I think if Government detain people in jail there is no harm in putting them in one ward so that they can live together and have the company of one another. Then there is the complaint that they do not get medical treatment free. I have got a letter here from one gentleman who writes to me that four of his teeth were aching and he wanted to have them extracted, and Government told him that he must find the money for it. He had no money and so the poor man was permitted to suffer from

toothache. This is not only not fair but it is not even humane. Then, Sir, they have a complaint that they are not allowed any means of recreation in the jail. The detenus are generally given simple imprisonment they are allowed some books but they also want some kind of recreation. I have got complaints in letters from detenus that in many prisons they are not allowed to have any kind of recreation. Sir, the detenus are people who do not complain about being detained if they have done something for which they deserve to be detained. But as regards their treatment the Government of India themselves should consider the question of giving them fair and just treatment very seriously. Many of the letters that I have received from the detenus complain about one point. They say that the Government of India are looking after the German and Italian detenus with greater care than they give to Indian detenus. These Italians and Germans are fighting them with guns and other weapons while these poor Indian boys may have made speeches at the most. I cannot understand why the Government of India should give greater comforts and facilities to the Germans and Italians detained in India than they are giving to Indian detenus. I think, Sir, this is a point which will appeal to the House. Sir, I have pointed out some of the complaints which I have received from the detenus and I myself feel that the Government of India should investigate into those complaints and effect improvements.

My Resolution is a very modest one, as I have said. I have asked the Government of India to appoint a committee. I do not want a very large committee: a large committee will delay matters. I shall be quite content with a small committee of three persons: let one of them be an officer and two non-officials who would have some sympathy with these people.

**Mr. M. S. Aney** (Berar: Non-Muhammadan): Including the Mover.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** If the Mover is asked to help the committee, he will be very glad to do so. But I would like the Government of India to appoint a committee because I have heard these complaints from many detenus. I have got here so many letters from them and I am quite sure in my mind—they are most of them people ordinarily who would not complain about treatment in jails. A few of them are accustomed to stay in jails and I am quite sure ordinarily they will not make complaints; but they feel that in some matters the treatment given to them is not humane. I would therefore like the Government of India to accept my suggestion to appoint a small committee of three persons who should visit the prisons in which these people are detained: they should also interview some of the externees and internees and find out what their grievances are and also find out and report to the Government how the treatment given to the detenus of all kinds should be improved. I hope that this modest request of mine will be accepted by the House and also will be accepted by the Government.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he should take immediate steps to appoint a committee to examine and report without delay:

- (a) whether conditions under which the detenus under the Defence of India Act have to live in prisons are suitable and adequate; and sufficient privileges

[Mr. President.]

are granted to them for communication outside by way of letters and interviews; and, if not, what improvements should be made therein;

(b) whether their families are provided with suitable maintenance or not; and, if not, what assistance Government should give them;

(c) whether those who are interned or externed under the Defence of India Act have difficulty in maintaining themselves or their families, and whether it is necessary to give them any assistance from Government; and in case, it is necessary, what should be the amount of such assistance."

There is an amendment to this Resolution of which notice has been given by Dr. Banerjea. It seems to the Chair that it extends the scope of the Resolution and, in fact, deals with a different subject.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): May I make a submission? My amendment relates to the Defence of India Act and the rules framed thereunder.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Joshi's Resolution relates purely to jail administration. There is nothing in it about the merits of the Defence of India Act and its effects. I rule the amendment out of order.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea**: May I speak on the main Resolution?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Certainly.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea**: Sir, I rise to support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi. When the Defence of India Act was passed, some of us expressed the view that its provisions were in many respects very stringent; and it is the belief of many persons, including myself, that the rules which have been framed under that Act have made the provisions still more stringent. But I shall not discuss this question just at the present moment, because I may be ruled out of order. Mr. Joshi's Resolution is a very modest one and it is divided into three parts. I will deal with these three parts *seriatim*.

The first part deals with detenus. Detention without trial has been in vogue, particularly in Bengal, for a long time past,—for over thirty years. But in recent years, specially since the commencement of the present war, the number of detenus has been very large. Now, coming to the treatment of these detenus, it is the general opinion that that treatment has never been wholly satisfactory. But in recent times the treatment has been too severe and extremely unjust. I confine my remarks mainly to Bengal because I am not acquainted with the details of treatment in other provinces. In Bengal, formerly the daily diet allowance of detenus used to be at least 14 annas.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi**: In Bombay there is no allowance.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea**: "Used to be", I say; and rupees ten a month was given as an allowance for clothing, books, papers, etc. In addition, an initial allowance of Rs. 60 was given for bedding, etc. Now, at the present moment, things have changed very drastically. No initial allowance is made; any monthly allowance for clothing, books and papers is not made in all cases, and the daily diet allowance is much less—it is

only 9 as. 6 p. per day. Each detenu is supplied with a few pieces of cloth and a few shirts; he is not allowed any allowance for washing, but he has to do his own washing with a few pieces of soap supplied to him. Besides these, there are many other discomforts and when these matters are placed before the authorities, these complaints almost always go unheeded.

The medical aid that is supplied to these detenus is generally very deficient. Doctors are not always available, with the result that the health of many of these detenus breaks down while they are under detention. I can cite many instances where this has happened. I can cite the instance of one gentleman—Mr. Satya Ranjan Bakshi—who is a highly educated man and was connected with several newspapers as editor. This gentleman has now been released, but he is in a very bad state of health, even at the present moment and it is not known whether he will survive the ordeal.

Then, again, interviews are not allowed regularly; they are granted very infrequently. It sometimes happens that even when these detenus become ill, their nearest relations and friends are not allowed to visit them. Again, when visits are allowed, the interviews take place in the presence of police officers. The detenus would not have complained if the interviews took place in the presence of the Superintendent; and the result is that they are prevented from acquainting their relations or friends with their actual needs, their physical condition, their inconveniences, their discomforts, and their grievances.

So the treatment meted out to these detenus is very harsh. The time has come when these complaints should be regularly considered and proper remedies applied. There is no reason why these detenus should be subjected to various sorts of pin-pricks, humiliation, and harsh treatment by the jail authorities. They are, as a rule, respectable men; they are not convicted prisoners, and they have been detained only on suspicion. When that is so, it is not at all desirable to adopt a vindictive attitude towards them and treat them badly.

Sir, I come next to the question of family allowances. In most cases the families of these detenus do not get any allowances. The detenus are in some cases the sole bread-winners of their families, and if no provision is made for the maintenance of their families, you can easily imagine to what straits their families would be reduced. I have received here numerous complaints from the relations and friends of many of the detenus, but time will not permit me to go into all these complaints. But I would request the Government to consider this matter with that amount of fairness and sympathy with which the question should be discussed and looked at.

Coming to the third part, the internees and externees, their position is much worse than that of the detenus, because the detenus, while they are detained in jail, have their food supplied to them, while the internees and the externees do not get their food. It becomes practically impossible for them to earn their livelihood. When a person, for instance, from Bengal, is externed to Bihar or the United Provinces, it is very difficult for him to maintain himself. Besides, when no maintenance allowance is given, his family suffers untold hardship.

[Dr. P. N. Banerjee.]

Sir, these are cases which should be sympathetically considered. On principle, detention without trial is bad, but it becomes necessary for the State to put persons in detention in abnormal circumstances, the detenus, the externees, and internees should be given fair, just and humane treatment.

My friend, Mr. Joshi, has asked for a committee. It would be a very good thing for the Government to accede to the request. If that is done, a great deal of misapprehension will disappear, and it will be possible to remedy the grievances—if grievances are real. If these grievances are not real, Government will be able to say 'we have a committee here, the committee has gone into the grievances, and our conduct is irreproachable'.

Sir, repeated representations, I find, have been made to the Provincial Government, but the Provincial Government have not listened to them, they have not even acknowledged these representations. This is very wrong, and if such treatment is continued, then what will be the result? Many people will be driven to desperation. Would that be a desirable thing from the Government's own point of view? I say 'no'. I think, therefore, if a Committee of this kind is appointed, it can go into all these matters thoroughly, it can do justice to the detenus by remedying their grievances and lessening their sufferings.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan** (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I only want to say just two words in support of the Resolution that has just been moved by my friend, Mr. Joshi. The Treasury Benches seem to be today in an accommodating mood and the very modest Resolution of my friend, Mr. Joshi, should have a claim on their acceptance, and I do think that it will be accepted without demur. Sir, there were times when jail life was very hard,—I am speaking of the past when I was also a prisoner about 20 years ago. In those days the ordinary criminals who had committed offences involving moral turpitude were treated better than the political prisoners. Any man who made a speech against the Government was clapped into jail, and the Government officials in charge of the Jail Department were so vindictive that they used to put him into all sorts of trouble and inflict upon him the greatest of punishments that they could possibly conceive of. Well, since then conditions have changed and certain reforms have been brought about in the working of the jail department, but the same ideology of the upper ten among the officials remains unchanged. Under the Defence of India Act the Government officials are empowered to pounce upon any man against whom they have any suspicion whatsoever on the plea that he is a man who belongs to the Fifth Column such a man is at once clapped into jail. Now, there are many cases in which a person who is the sole bread-winner of the family is sent to jail. His wife, his mother and his children are all left unprovided for. It is manifestly the solemn duty of the Government which places a restraint upon the freedom of such a man to provide for his family, but the Government don't care. Then certain people who have not committed any offence whatsoever are suddenly arrested, and no information is conveyed even to their relatives to tell them that they have been arrested. They are interned or externed, and kept under conditions which are not favourable to their health, nor to the growth of their moral and intellectual needs. Such people are kept out of the

world; they are not allowed newspapers, and you know how very agonising it is for a man who has been accustomed to have his morning newspaper to go without it for a year altogether. Then again interviews are not granted, and if they are granted at all, they are granted at long intervals. Food is not provided of the sort to which these people were accustomed while living in their own homes. In the case of Europeans, of course, an exception is made as I pointed out the other day. Take the case of Mr. Abdul Sattar Khairi. The only charge against him is that he had gone to Germany, that he could read and write the German language as well as any German could do and that he married a German lady. Under the Defence of India Act one fine morning we came to know that the police had come overnight and raided his house, caught hold of him and conveyed him to the Jhansi Jail. He has many children and they are all left unprovided for. His wife of course, because she is a German lady, has been provided for,—while the daughters and children—because the texture of their skin is brownish, because they are darkies, are not provided for. The mother of the children, because she happens to be German although belonging to a race of scientific savages and barbarians, is sent to Dehra Dun where all her European needs are supplied. She lives according to the status of a European, but poor Abdus Sattar Khairi is in Jhansi jail and his children are unprovided for.

**An Honourable Member:** He is now in Dehra Dun.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan:** After we raised a hue and cry. Then there was another gentleman, by name, Sharaf Athar Ali. He is a young man, nobody knew anything about his whereabouts, even his father did not know anything. He was shut up in Nainital. He did not make a speech and for aught we know he was quite innocent, but the Defence of India Act was all powerful, all embracing. When the conditions are such, I think, Mr. Joshi's Resolution asking the Government to appoint a committee to go into each case, find out what sort of treatment is being meted out to the externee or the interneer or the prisoner as the case may be, to look after his material welfare, after his intellectual needs, grant him interviews with his relatives, give him newspapers to read, to let him have his letters. These are the ordinary amenities of life to which every man is entitled, and especially political prisoners who have committed no other offence except that occasionally they have given vent to the sentiments that were nurtured in their heart of hearts. The country has bowed down its head before the Defence of India Act although occasionally when the conditions have become very unbearable it raises its head. So, I think I am justified in appealing to the good sense of the Treasury Benches to accept Mr. Joshi's Resolution and give us some satisfaction. With these words I support the Resolution.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** The Resolution which Mr. Joshi has moved ought to appeal to everybody who has some sense of fairness and justice left in him. Here the Resolution deals with the cases of persons against whom the Government are not prepared to make any definite charges and whom they are not prepared to bring up for trial before a tribunal to prove the charges against them. Government may have very good reasons for entertaining suspicions and for proceeding under the powers

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conferred upon them by the Defence of India Act to keep the person out of the way for the time being. It becomes a matter of administrative necessity. Whether they are justified in doing that or not is a point into which it is needless to go when we are considering the particular Resolution before the House. But it can be conceded that in times of emergency even the civilised Governments claim certain powers of that kind and they have to use those powers against persons about whom they have got certain misgiving or suspicions. That may be necessary in the interests of the State in general, but this Resolution wants to point out that in the discharge of their duties towards the State the Government ought not to forget their obligations towards their subjects or the individuals with whom they deal. And what are the obligations on which this Resolution particularly lays emphasis? The obligation is this. A man who is dealt with under the Defence of India Act is not a solitary individual living in this world isolated from the whole world and with whom nobody has anything to do at all. He is a member of a certain family and many times he is the only member of the family on whom the family depends for its maintenance, and therefore the proposition on which Mr. Joshi lays on a good deal of emphasis in paragraphs (b) and (c) of his Resolution is that Government must assume the responsibility of providing for those who are mainly dependent upon the person whom they have to remove owing to the exigencies of the State and for their own reasons. They must step into the place of the person whom they remove from the scene; that is, in fact, the principle which Mr. Joshi lays down. And it is not a new principle at all. In the case of persons dealt with under the old Regulations of 1837 and 1818 which were not worse than the Defence of India Act, so far as I know there was a statutory obligation put upon the Government to provide for those persons and their families left behind, suitable allowances had to be given to them, and until recently Government adhered to that practice. But when drastic laws, no less drastic than the Regulations to which I have just referred, were made, the Government took jolly good care to absolve themselves of any such responsibility. Why? The practice that was in vogue, the method that existed in India some time before the Defence of India Act was passed, was more humane in its operation and in its outlook than the one which the Government wants to pursue in the year of grace 1940. Are we marching towards progress and evolution, or are we going back? What are we doing? In fact, it is a retrograde step that the Government have taken, and I believe that Mr. Joshi has really done a great service to the Government itself by drawing pointed attention to the fact that the present administration of the Defence of India Act lacks in one essential feature to make it an administration a bit amenable to civilised people. That when you for your own interests, for your own reasons, which you are not prepared to disclose to the world and which you cannot probably disclose to the world, have to remove a man from his family, you must at the same time assume responsibility for seeing that the family is not unnecessarily inconvenienced by his absence or by your arbitrary removal of that man from them. You must take that responsibility.

After doing that, there is another responsibility also which Mr. Joshi wants to throw upon the Government and that is contained in para. (a) of his Resolution. When you take a man inside a jail and detain him

and call him a detenu, you think that all your responsibility is at an end and the man should remain there for such indefinite period as the Government may seem proper in his case. Mr. Joshi says as there is responsibility on the Government to provide for the members of the family who are made helpless on account of the removal of this man, there is also the responsibility of seeing that he can live the life of a man and not be reduced to the life of a beast inside the jail. That is another thing which Mr. Joshi wants to urge on this House and what are the amenities which he is asking for. Any ordinary man who wants to call himself a decent man of society requires all these things. He must have suitable opportunities for communication with his own men living outside. He must live comfortably inside the jail, not a life of luxury but he must get at least the bare necessities of life. Provisions have to be made for these. Those who have been in jail know how at times the jail authorities themselves become callous. The rules do not make any generous provision at all and when there is no provision at all under the rules, then the position becomes still worse. One or two letters I have received from detenus show that ordinary comforts are denied to them. For example, a man has to live without a shave for months together. Why should that happen. Where is the difficulty for the Government to provide a little apparatus for shaving. If they think it is dangerous to provide the man with a razor, you can arrange for your own barber to shave and enable the man to live a clean life.

**An Honourable Member:** It is five o'clock now.

**Mr. M. S. Aney:** If it is 5, then I shall have to stop at this stage. But I need not look at the clock. The Honourable the President is doing it for me. My point is this. There are certain matters which it is necessary that a man should have, to which the Government must give due attention, if the person concerned has to live a decent life. Now, take the question of the provision of papers to read. I do not make any reference to personal matters. I have taken a-vow not to refer to my own case or make any complaint about it. So, I shall not refer to it but I am told that generally the demand for some kind of paper to read goes unheeded. For months together the man makes a demand. He sends chits to the Superintendent and nobody takes any notice. When notice is taken, he is asked to produce a list of what papers he wants. Then the Government shows him the approved list of papers. Those are papers which he would not like to read. That is the trouble. If the matter is left to the discretion of the Superintendent or the Inspector General of Prisons then the man will only get such papers as the *Fauji Akhbar* and papers of that kind. Some people are supposed to read nothing else but that in the world. If they are supplied with this kind of paper, then it is as good as not supplying any paper at all. That is a matter in which the taste of the man ought to be consulted. I do not mean to suggest that Government should supply him with revolutionary papers but short of that, you should allow him to read papers which any gentleman will be allowed to read without censorship outside jail. Why should there be unnecessary restriction in this matter? Why should there be one law of censorship for a man outside the jail and another for a man inside the jail, where the discretion of the jail authorities will dominate more? That is another matter which the Government have to take into consideration. I do not want to say more. I will only say

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that Mr. Joshi has put down a Resolution which is not to my taste. I do not think it is a satisfactory one. Where is the need for an inquiry. These are grievances which exist and I would ask him to make a recommendation to the Governor General in Council to proceed at once to remove all these disabilities. If you ask for an inquiry, you only postpone action to a distant day and as there is going to be no non-official day this Session, this will be postponed to the next Session. I do not want to prolong the agonies of this House by making a long speech. My friend wants the appointment of a committee. The disabilities of which he has made a complaint are real but if the Government has any doubt, this Resolution gives them a chance of looking into the matter for themselves through the accredited representatives who will sit on the committee to be appointed. Sir, I commend the Resolution for the acceptance of Government.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** May I suggest, Sir, that the House may sit a little 5 P.M. longer and finish this Resolution?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is that the general desire of the House?

(There was no response.)

As there is no such general desire, I shall adjourn the House.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Saturday, the 16th November, 1940.