

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

FRIDAY, 2nd APRIL, 1943

OFFICIAL REPORT



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Friday, 2nd April, 1943.

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

THE DELHI MUNICIPALITY BUDGET.

462. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is a fact that the Municipality of Delhi has a practically deficit budget this year for the reason that its expenditure under the head Establishment is more than half of the ordinary income of the Committee?

(b) Is it a fact that the general discussion on the budget was not allowed this year only contrary to convention?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The budget for 1943-44 shows a revenue deficit of 3.38 lakhs but it is not a fact that the expenditure on Establishment is more than half the ordinary income of the Committee.

(b). Yes. The municipal by-laws do not specifically provide for a general discussion of the budget.

Sardar Sant Singh: What is the proportion of the expenditure to the total income of the municipality?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid I have not got the figures.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: The Honourable Member says in reply to part (a) that it is not a fact. Then what is the fact?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I said I had not got the figures.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if the Honourable Member cared to examine the figures of the proportion of the expenditure to the total income of the municipality?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir. I have not got the figures here at all.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Will the Honourable Member get the figures and place them on the table?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: If the Honourable Member would let me know what figures he wants, I shall get them.

Sardar Sant Singh: With reference to the answer to part (b) may I know what is the practice in the municipality of Delhi? Is it different from other municipalities where I know the budget discussion is carried on for several hours?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know what the practice is at all. But the fact is that the municipal by-laws in Delhi do not provide specifically for a general discussion. I believe that the question of amending the by-laws is under consideration.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know whether the Government propose to advise the municipality on this important question?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: It does not rest with the Central Government in the first instance. It is a matter which rests with the Chief Commissioner.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member enquire from the Chief Commissioner as to what is in his mind about this budget discussion? This is a very important subject.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, I will enquire.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With reference to part (a), the Honourable Member told us that it is not a fact that expenditure comes to half the ordinary income of the municipality, he also told us that he had not got the figures. May I know how then did he satisfy himself that the answer that has been prepared for him is correct?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The Chief Commissioner informed me.

EXPENDITURE FROM THE RESERVE FUND TO MEET DEFICIT BY THE DELHI MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE.

463. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is a fact that after disposing of all its lands worth more than rupees ten lakhs (which were purchased from reserve investments), and after spending this money not in any capital but in day to day expenditure, the Delhi Municipal Committee now proposes to spend its last Reserve Fund to meet its deficit of about rupees four lakhs?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: A statement showing the income of the Delhi Municipal Committee from sale of lands from 1935 and expenditure therefrom is laid on the table.

<i>Statement.</i>	
(1) Gross income from sale of lands from 1935 up to 28th February, 1943	33·31 lacs.
Expenditure on acquisition and development	15·92 "
	17·39 "
(2) Details of net income—	
(a) Invested in Treasury Bills	4·00 lacs.
(b) In cash Balance	6·00 "
	10·00 "
(c) Expenditure on emergency measures during 1942-43	7·39 "
	17·39 "
(3) Government contribution towards expenditure on emergency measures expected	5·14 lacs.
Spent from Municipal funds on emergency measures	2·25 "
	7·39 "
(4) The position for 1943-44 is as follows:—	
Expenditure	47·19 lacs.
Income	43·81 "
	Revenue deficit 3·8 "
This is proposed to be met as follows:—	
From sale of investments which are really receipts from sale of lands	·97 lacs.
From sale of land in 1943-44	·28 "
From Joint Water Board income	·17 "
From Cash Balance	1·96 "
	3·38 "

PAY OF THE DELHI MUNICIPALITY HEALTH OFFICER.

464. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is a fact that the present grade of pay of the Health Officer, Delhi Municipality, is higher than that of any other Municipality in India even including the Karachi Corporation?

(b) Is it a fact that only last month when the Health Officer was made permanent, nearly all the elected members complained about the sanitation of Old Delhi and none spoke in favour of him and in spite of this he was made permanent by a majority of official and nominated members?

(c) Is it a fact that when the question about making him permanent came before the meeting, the President ordered that the meeting should be held *in camera*? If so, why?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) No.

(b) The reply to the first portion is in the affirmative. No record of the speeches made in that connection was maintained, but only 11 out of 34 elected members dissented.

(c) As the resolution was to entail discussion of the fitness of one of the Committee's principal officers for reappointment, the Chairman in his discretion decided that the meeting should be held *in camera*.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What is the pay of this Health Officer?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: His present grade of pay is Rs. 750—30—840—40—1,000. He is at present drawing Rs. 880 in that scale.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is it a fact that he is a qualified gentleman?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know about his qualifications.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Since how long has he been there?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: He was appointed as Assistant Medical Officer of Health in 1933.

ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS PARTY IN THE DELHI MUNICIPALITY BY ITS OFFICIAL PRESIDENT.

465. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is a fact that a mandate is issued by the President, Delhi Municipality, to all official and nominated members to be present and to vote with him whenever such questions as the appointments of the Secretary or the Health Officer or the budget are discussed, and that the President who is also the District Magistrate, on all such occasions raises his hand, whether there is a tie or not, before calling others to vote?

(b) Is it a fact that it was decided that no proposals for a fresh scheme or for the creation of new post would be taken into consideration unless a certificate had been obtained from the Secretary that a budget provision for it could be made, that this decision was not acted upon and that a number of new posts were created?

(c) Is it a fact that the official President has established his own party in the Committee, and through this party he carries on work of the Committee as a Government Department, and, therefore, there is no local Self-Government, now-a-days, in Delhi?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part, under section 29 of the Punjab Municipal Act, 1911, the Chairman of a meeting is entitled to a vote and in addition has a second or casting vote.

(b) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The decision referred to by the Honourable Member could not be adhered to on some occasions.

(c) The reply to the first part of the question is in the negative, the other parts do not arise.

NEGLECT OF HINDU AND SIKH MONUMENTS IN THE FRONTIER ARCHÆOLOGICAL CIRCLE.

466. *Sardar Sant Singh (on behalf of **Bhai Parma Nand**): Will the Education Secretary be pleased to state if it is a fact that since 1941, the Hindu and Sikh monuments in the Frontier Circle of the Archæological Survey of India are being neglected, and whether any complaints to this effect have been received? If so, who is responsible for this neglect, and what action do Government propose to take on the complaints received?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Government have no reason to believe that Hindu and Sikh protected monuments in the Frontier Circle have been wilfully neglected. A complaint that certain Hindu monuments in the Kangra District are being neglected was received and the matter is under inquiry. Another complaint that certain monuments associated with the Sikh community had been allowed to fall into disrepair was also received. In the latter connection Government have issued instructions to the Director General of Archæology in India to ensure that, as far as funds permit, Sikh monuments requiring repair are not neglected.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I ask if it is a fact that the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Lahore, have been making these complaints for the last three years and so far the Government did not even show them the courtesy of acknowledging that letter?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know for how long they have been complaining. But they received a detailed answer to their complaint of the 14th December, 1942.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: May I know if it is the policy of the Government of India to look after only those monuments which have got archæological value or to protect any and every monument which has been left by any community?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: It is a matter of whether they are of historical or archaeological value.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know if this Superintendent has been attending to these works through his subordinates or he has been attending them himself?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have no information.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member obtain the information and give instructions to the Superintendent that he should attend to them himself?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I will get the information and I will then give such instructions as are indicated by the result of the inquiry.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Has the Honourable Member got before him definite instances where monuments have not been preserved and whether his attention has been drawn thereto, what reply did he give?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, Sir. I have got definite allegations before me both as regards Kangra district which is a matter still under enquiry and as regards other monuments referred to which are in Lahore.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Has the Honourable Member got before him the complaint which was made by no less an authority than the Adviser to the Governor of U. P. saying that a monument which was protected in Meerut had been given up altogether and it is lying in ruins?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have not myself seen or heard of that.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I will bring it to the notice of the Honourable Member.

FRONTIER ARCHÆOLOGICAL CIRCLE SUPERINTENDENT'S TRAINING IN EXCAVATION WORKS.

467. ***Sardar Sant Singh** (on behalf of **Bhai Parma Nand**): (a) Will the Education Secretary please state if the Superintendent, Frontier Circle, Archaeological Survey of India, Lahore, has had any training in archaeological excavations, excepting brief visits to sites of excavations?

(b) Has he ever conducted excavations independently?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The Superintendent, Frontier Circle, has not undergone any course of training in archaeological excavations.

(b) The Superintendent, Frontier Circle, in his capacity as Superintendent, Frontier Circle, and formerly as Superintendent, Central Circle, was in general charge of excavations carried out at Nalanda, Rajgir and Harappa by the Custodians and Excavation Assistants at those places.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know what qualifications has the Superintendent got for being put in charge of this Circle?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid I have not got any particulars here. He has long service in the department, but I am afraid I have not got any details of his experience.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is it the view of the Honourable Member that long experience in the department makes one an expert in this branch of science?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No, Sir.

Sardar Sant Singh: Then how is it that employees in the department are given charge of such important works which relate to a particular science?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: He was not conducting these archaeological excavations himself at all. They were going on in his circle and as Superintendent of the Circle he was in general charge of that activity along with others.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member aware that he holds a degree of Doctorate from Cambridge University and the gentleman who is being superseded by him is only a third class M.A.?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes. He holds a Doctorate degree.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is the Honourable Member aware that this Superintendent has done excavation work at Mohenjo-Daro under Sir John Marshall?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: May be, Sir. I have not any information.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Then, before making up his mind will the Honourable Member please make full enquiries and make himself familiar with the local conditions of the office?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know what I am expected to make up my mind about in this particular case.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: I am asking that before coming to any final decision on made-up reports he should make himself familiar with the local conditions of the office.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: No decision is called for under this question, as far as I can see.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member whether it is a fact that this officer has been publishing reports of excavations in his own name though the work was done by subordinates.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Is it a Hindu-Muslim question?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member whether it is a fact that his confirmation was postponed for reasons of inefficiency?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: As regards his reports, in his capacity as Superintendent, he submitted the reports to the Director General of Archaeology after scrutinizing and correcting them. That was his part in the reports.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I am asking about his confirmation. Is it a fact, or not, that his confirmation was postponed on account of his inefficiency?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have not got the information here. The confirmation of one officer in the department was postponed, but whether this is this one or another I cannot say off hand.

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

PROVISION OF TAPS FOR UNFILTERED WATER IN COMPOUNDS OF ORTHODOX QUARTERS IN NEW DELHI.

468. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: (a) Is the Honourable the Labour Member aware:

(i) that sometime back his predecessor promised to provide taps for unfiltered water in the compounds or courtyards of the orthodox quarters of the ministerial establishment in New Delhi but later on decided to keep the taps already installed outside the quarters open during the summer months which concession was withdrawn during the last summer owing to thefts of the connection-locks;

(ii) that that sort of arrangement was most inconvenient and in many cases the water had to be carried to the quarters from great distances by ladies and children in the sun during the summer months; and

(iii) that there are fairly big compounds in front of the quarters which can be usefully used by the tenants for growing vegetables and other things in accordance with the Government propaganda for growing more food?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to consider the desirability of having unfiltered water taps installed in the courtyard of each quarter as in the case of unorthodox quarters? If not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) (i). Presumably the Honourable Member is referring to the reply given by my predecessor to starred question No. 230 asked by Bhai Parma Nand in this House on the 28th February, 1940. My predecessor did not promise to provide taps for unfiltered water in the compound or courtyards of the orthodox clerks quarters in New Delhi and he stated that he was considering the desirability of doing so. It was decided to keep the hydrants (and not taps) in front of these quarters open during the summer months and to fix some mechanical contrivance on the hydrants, and this arrangement was continued during the last summer season except in cases where the attachment was either damaged or stolen.

(ii) I cannot say that the arrangement was most inconvenient.

(iii) Yes.

(b) No. In view of the financial stringency and non-availability of the material the question of providing unfiltered water taps in the courtyards of these quarters cannot be considered until normal times. I may mention for the information of the Honourable Member that taps have not been provided in the courtyards of the unorthodox clerks quarters and that the mechanical devices similar to the one fixed on the hydrants in front of the orthodox clerks quarters has been provided on the hydrants in the unorthodox quarters.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member what is the free allowance of water given to these orthodox quarters?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I would like to have notice of that.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: In view of the fact that the Government is not able to give them unfiltered water now, will the Honourable Member consider the question of increasing the free supply of filtered water to 10,000 gallons.

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I will consider that.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

MAINTENANCE OF THE DEPENDENTS OF PIR OF PAGARO, ETC.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: (a) Will the War Secretary be pleased to state what provision has been made for the maintenance of the widows, children and dependants of the late Pir Pagaro who was executed under the sentence of a Martial Law Court in view of the fact that all his property has been confiscated by Government?

(b) What Government propose to do with his property which has been confiscated under the same order?

(c) Are Government aware that the property of the late Pir Pagaro which has been confiscated by Government was not his private property, earned or acquired by him, but was presented to him by his followers and others and was held by him in trust to be used by him for the benefit of the Muslims?

(d) What provisions are being made by Government to carry out the intentions of the donors?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) This matter is under the consideration of Government.

(b) The question of the disposal of the confiscated property will be considered along with other questions when Martial Law is withdrawn.

(c) Government are not aware that the property referred to by the Honourable Member was not the private property of the late Pir, or that it was held by him in trust to be used for the benefit of the Muslims.

(d) Does not arise.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: May I ask when the Martial Law is going to be withdrawn?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Martial Law will be withdrawn as soon as the circumstances permit of that action being taken.

Kunwer Hajee Ismaiel Alkhan: In reply to my question the other day, the War Secretary stated that the landed property of Pir Pagaro is not confiscated.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: When I replied the other day, the trial of the Pir had not been completed. The order of confiscation of immovable property was passed subsequently by the Martial Law Tribunal which tried the Pir.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: With regard to (a), will the Honourable Secretary be pleased to state that during the time that this matter is under consideration, how are the dependants of the late Pir Pagaro going to live?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I understand, Sir, that the two sons of the pir and their mother are being maintained in a manner suitable to their position.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: At Government expense?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Yes, Sir.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: What about his other wives? I understand he left behind four.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I shall enquire about that.

DEPUTATION ON BEHALF OF THE COAL INDUSTRY IN BENGAL AND BIHAR.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether he received on the 25th March last a deputation on behalf of the different organisations representing the coal industry in Bengal and Bihar? If so, what was the subject matter of the representation made by the deputation, and what action is proposed to be taken by Government thereon?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: A deputation of the organisations representing the coal industry in Bengal and Bihar was received on the 25th March as stated by the Honourable Member.

The subject matter was their anxiety concerning future arrangements to replenish their existing rice stocks. The deputation stated that their Associations saw no certain prospects of maintaining their stocks as the Provincial Governments concerned, whilst promising whatever help they could give, did not feel able to guarantee supplies. The Central Government pointed out that they had asked the organizations some time back for a combined distribution scheme which had not been received. The deputation was informed that the Central Government were importing considerable quantities of rice into Bengal and that if it were found the Provincial Governments were not able to help, then assistance would be given by the Central Government. Since then representatives of the organisations have had an interview with a representative of the Food Department in Calcutta, and the food position of coal mining labour has been secured for a further period by the provision of certain supplies by the Central Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member referred to replenishing existing stocks of rice. Is the Honourable Member in a position to state approximately the quantity of rice that may be available now to the different collieries?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As I stated in my reply, the food position of the coal-mining labour has been secured for a further period by the provision of certain supplies by the Central Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: What I was referring to was the existing rice stocks which the Honourable Member referred to. What is the amount of these existing rice stocks?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The position differed in Bengal and Bihar, and if I remember correctly, what was stated by the deputation was that they had stocks for four or five weeks.

SCHEME FOR CHEAP GRAIN SHOPS FOR BENGAL AND BIHAR COLLIERY LABOUR.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that in a communication to the Governments of Bengal and Bihar, the Labour Department of the Government of India proposed a scheme for the establishment of cheap grain shops in April 1942, for the benefit of colliery labour? If so, what response did the scheme meet with at the hands of the two Provincial Governments and of the organisations of the coal industry?

(b) Has any effective action been taken by either of the two Provincial Governments as an alternative to the above scheme for ensuring a cheap supply of food grains to colliery labour? If so, on what lines, and when?

(c) What action, if any, has been taken by the organisations of the coal industry or by individual collieries for the supply of cheap food grains to labour; and what help, if any, has been rendered by either of the two Provincial Governments to them in the matter?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. The Bihar Government considered that other methods of dealing with the problem were preferable. No reply was received from the Bengal Government.

(b) So far as the Central Government's information goes both the Provincial Governments have through their local officers taken all possible steps to ensure a supply of food grains at cheap rates to colliery labour.

(c) It is not understood what the Honourable Member means by cheap food grains. The principal Employers' Organisations in the coal industry made arrangements to supply food grains at reasonable prices to their labour. The Provincial Governments assisted them in obtaining food grains.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am afraid I have not received a reply to the second part, clause (b), of my question, *viz.*, "Has any effective action been taken by either of the two Provincial Governments: if so, on what lines and when?"

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As I said, they helped them to secure food supplies.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But exactly in what way?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: They helped them in getting them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: But in what way was that help rendered, because we have instances in which there was actual hindrance?

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What steps have the colliery owners taken to supply food to their labour?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: As I said, they maintained stocks and were also helped by the Provincial Governments to maintain them.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to an instance in which certain stocks of rice which certain colliery owners acquired for their collieries were actually commandeered by the Government and a complaint to that effect was made by them to the Provincial Governments and here?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have no such information.

SCHEME FOR REGULATING THE PRICE OF DRUGS.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: With reference to his statement in the House on the 17th of March, 1943, upon the subject of a scheme for regulating the price of drugs, will the Honourable Member representing the Commerce Department be pleased to state:

- (a) how far the scheme has progressed;
- (b) the range of drugs embraced by the scheme;
- (c) the date on which it will come into operation;
- (d) the maximum penalties that should be imposed under Defence of India Rules for those who disobey the control orders;
- (e) the price of quinine sulphate powder and of quinine hydrochloride per lb. prevailing in the local markets of Calcutta, or Delhi, or Madras, or Karachi, or Bombay, on the 1st of March, 1943, and the price of these products before the war; and
- (f) the steps taken immediately to license the sale of quinine, and to prohibit its sale without such a licence?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: (a), (b), (c) and (d). I am sorry that the matter is still under consideration and I am not in a position at present to state the scope of the scheme or the date on which it will come into operation or the penalties that should be imposed for breach of control orders.

(e) Government have no reliable information but it is understood that the trade stocks of quinine in the local markets are small and that such stocks as are available are being sold at the price of Rs. 200 a pound or more. The retail price of quinine before the war was, I understand, about Rs. 45 a pound.

(f) Government quinine is sold by licensed retail dealers. About 145,000 pounds of quinine have been allotted to Provincial Governments for sale to the public since 1st April, 1942, and it is hoped that this will relieve the situation regarding the availability of quinine at reasonable prices. I may add that quinine is freely available at all hospitals. No other step is considered necessary at present.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: May I ask what steps do the Government propose to take to ensure that this quinine which has been given to the Local Governments does not get into the possession of these small dealers, but gets only into the possession of those people who really require it?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: As far as I know, Provincial Governments have got licensed dealers and they keep complete control over their transactions.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: What is the control price?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I do not know.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With regard to (a), (b), (c) and (d), may I know whether the scheme will be ready during the war or after the war?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: The scheme will be ready as soon as possible; certainly before the termination of the war.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know from the Honourable Member at what price is the quinine being sold by the Provincial Governments and also at what price is it being sold to the public.

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I have already answered that I have no information on that. If the Honourable Member wants, I shall get the information for him.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Yes, I shall be grateful for the information.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: Did I understand the Honourable Member to say that supplies of quinine were freely available?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: At hospitals.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: At hospitals? But are these hospitals selling quinine?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: No.

Sir F. E. James: What is the position in the Indian States? What steps have been taken to make quinine available in those States and at what price? Is he aware, for example, that it is extremely difficult to get quinine in Travancore where it is being sold in the market at Rs. 300 to Rs. 400 per lb.?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: Certain Indian States are being put in touch with the Provincial Governments. I have no detailed information about all the Indian States.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: May I inform the Honourable Member that my information is that quinine which was being sold at Rs. 28 a lb. is now being sold at Rs. 400 a lb. and in view of the fact that practically all the subsections of my question are still under consideration, may I ask him to accelerate the inquiry into these matters and put into effect a price control as quickly as possible?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I have already said that the scheme is under active consideration of the Government of India and every step will be taken to accelerate the matter.

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: May I also ask whether he will take steps to ascertain whether an organisation has been set up to corner stocks of quinine and what steps he proposes to take to break that organisation?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I am not aware of that organisation, but we shall make inquiries.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I ask if the quinine is being adulterated and then sold? Is the Honourable Member aware of it? What steps does he propose to stop this practice?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I am not aware of it.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask if the Government will make arrangements with the Provincial Governments for stocks to be made available to the people in rural areas through post offices by asking them to carry small stocks of quinine, a practice that was in vogue in the past?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I shall pass on that suggestion to the Provincial Governments.

Sir F. E. James: May I ask if his Department is really unaware of the fact of which everybody else is aware, namely, that there has been for some time an organisation in Bombay which has bought up all available stocks of quinine there, has sequestered them in a neighbouring Indian State from where it is being transferred to British India in small lots and sold at exorbitant prices?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: My Department is not aware of that.

Sir F. E. James: Then whose Department should be aware of it? Everybody knows it to be a fact.

(No answer.)

Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt: May I suggest that the Police be asked to inquire into this matter if it is not the business of any other Department to do so?

Mr. T. S. Pillay: I have already answered that we shall make inquiries.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to starred question No. 66 asked by Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra on the 16th September, 1942.

EMPLOYMENT OF NON-INDIAN BURMA EVACUEES IN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SERVICES.

(a) The number of European, Anglo-Indian and Anglo-Burman Officers of the High-

services of the Burma Government employed in the services under the Government of India is as follows :

Community.	Number employed.	Scales of pay.	Conditions of service.
Europeans*	30	Pay according to the terms laid down in the attached summary of the principles regulating the pay of Burma/Malaya Officers appointed in India, or according to rank and appointment in the Armed Forces.	Temporary, or for duration of the War.
Anglo-Indians	3	Ditto	Ditto.
Anglo-Burmans	2	Ditto	Ditto.

(b) No.

(c) The number of non-official European and Anglo-Indian evacuees from Burma employed in the services under the Government of India is as follows :

Community.	Number employed.	Scales of pay.	Conditions of service.
Europeans	192	Pay according to the intrinsic value of the post or pay according to rank and appointment in the Armed Forces.	Temporary, or for duration of the war.
Anglo-Indians	38	Ditto	Ditto.

*Among the civilian officers only one officer is drawing more pay than he was receiving in Burma

Summary of principles regulating the pay of Burma/Malaya officers appointed in India.

Generally speaking, Burma/Malaya officers appointed in India are treated as if they were first appointees to the various posts and no account is taken of the fact that they have service rights under the Government of Burma or Malaya which it would be necessary to recognise if they had been seconded for service in India in the normal manner by their respective parent Governments. The exceptions to this general rule which have been recognised are :

(1) officers belonging to what were the common Imperial services e.g., I.C.S., I.P., etc. When appointed to posts normally held by officers of such services. Burma officers of these services have been allowed their basic pay plus overseas pay as admissible from time to time under their original conditions of service. They are however treated as first appointees in all other respects (e.g., leave, etc.).

(2) essential personnel who possess qualifications and experience which are in short supply in India and which it is essential to obtain in the interests of the administration. The scale of pay which has been allowed in India in these cases, is the scale to which they would have been entitled had they rendered equivalent service in corresponding posts in the Government of India. The Government of India have also accepted in these cases liability for leave and pension contribution on account of their service in India. In the case of the Malayan officers, however, only pension contribution is payable.

The Government of India have not accepted any other liability in respect of these officers, e.g., maintenance of their Provident Funds and/or gratuity etc. Special pay and allowances admissible in Burma formerly are not allowed, in any case.

Information promised in reply to starred question No. 207, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, on the 2nd March, 1943.

REPRESENTATION AGAINST COMMUNAL RESERVATION BY THE WORKS MANAGER, CARRIAGE AND WAGON SHOP, LUCKNOW.

(a) to (e). Government cannot agree to disclose the details of correspondence between Railway Administrations and their subordinate offices.

(f). No specific posts in specific trades have been reserved for Muslims in view of the difficulty encountered in securing the necessary personnel, but the required reservation for Muslims in the category of Journeymen and Charge-hands as a whole has been maintained. A total of 115 permanent and 161 temporary vacancies were filled during the years 1940-1943, of which 32 and 52 respectively went to Muslims which is more than the 19 per cent. allotted to them.

(g). No.

Information promised in reply to parts (b) to (f) of starred question No. 251, asked by Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya on the 5th March, 1943.

FILLING UP OF VACANCY OF PROGRESS AND PLANNING SUPERINTENDENT, MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT. EAST INDIAN RAILWAY, ALAMBAGH.

(b) and (c). Yes.

(d) Government do not make such selections, but are informed that the Railway followed the procedure laid down by it in the case of the vacancy which arose in the Alambagh Shop in June, 1942.

(e) Yes, but this was a temporary arrangement. As regards the second and third parts, no action is necessary.

(f) No, as no appointment has yet been made. It is, however, possible that the person the Honourable Member has in mind may achieve selection. Transfers between groups are not prohibited and may be made in the interest of the Railway. Government do not propose to take any action as they do not consider any is called for.

Information promised in reply to part (a) of starred question No. 298 and starred question No. 299 asked by Mr. Muhammad Ahsan on the 15th March, 1943.

DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN MUSLIM AND NON-MUSLIM PLATFORM TICKET BOOKING CLERKS IN THE HOWRAH DIVISION.

No. 298.—It is understood from the East Indian Railway that the facts are not as stated by the Honourable Member.

DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN MUSLIM AND NON-MUSLIM PLATFORM TICKET BOOKING CLERKS IN THE HOWRAH DIVISION.

No. 299.—Booking Clerks (Platform Tickets) are inferior servants and their inclusion under the heading "Subordinates" in the Revised Pay Pamphlet, 1934, was wrong. They have to achieve promotion to subordinate posts through Selection Boards constituted for recruitment.

It is true that no Muslim Booking clerks (Platform tickets) have been promoted to subordinate categories during the years 1940 to 1942. The reason was that they were not selected for such promotion by the Selection Boards.

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 63 asked by Mr. K. C. Neogy on the 24th March, 1943.

SUPPLY OF WAGONS TO BENGAL AND BIHAR COLLIERIES FOR LOADING COAL.

(a) Total number of mines working in the Bengal and Bihar Coal fields—529.

Number of mines with daily bases of 10 wagons and under—413.

(b) Rakes and half-rakes are allotted according to the loading capacity of the collieries, the urgency of demands from the consumers and the operating capacity of the Railway concerned. In order to conserve wagons, particularly during periods of abnormal shortage as in January and February, 1943, advantage has to be taken of facilities at collieries with bases of above 10 wagons. These collieries have greater loading capacity, produce a superior class of coal, and raise approximately twice the total tonnage of coal raised by the mines with daily bases of 10 wagons and under. There are very few collieries with bases of 10 wagons and under which have sufficient siding accommodation to load a half rake of 26 wagons and of those having accommodation extremely few can load at short notice.

Total No. allotted for loading coal in the Bengal and Bihar coalfields. No. allotted to collieries with daily bases of 10 wagons and under.

	January 1943.	February 1943.	January 1943.	February 1943.
(c) Full rakes	41	21	11	11
Half rakes	145	141	13	15
(d) Wagons	73,527	70,283	13,900	15,451
(e) Wagons under special allotment	1,525	1,489	373	216
(f) Wagons allotted for loading coal other than for Loco Shipment and Iron and Steel Factories	29,643	23,836	6,915	8,614
(g) Wagons allotted under the Provincial Quota System		4,017		

Information promised in reply to starred question No. 414 asked by Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha on the 29th March, 1943.

DISCRIMINATION IN ISSUING RAILWAY PRIORITY CERTIFICATES FOR TRANSPORT OF BONES, ETC.

(a) & (b). The transport of bones, raw or crushed, bone meal for manure, hooves and horns is not closed by goods train, and they may be booked whenever wagons are available, but priority movement can only be arranged under orders of the Controller of Railway Priorities at Delhi or of the Regional Controllers of Railway Priorities concerned. They may also be arranged by Railway administrations on the advice of a Provincial Transport Board. In order to eliminate long and cross hauls and inconvenient movements, and to ensure a reasonable quota of wagon supplies for raw materials, certain zones for the movement of bones, hooves and horns have been prescribed by the Regional Controller of Priorities, Calcutta, in the area under his jurisdiction. A copy of the orders prescribing these zones is laid on the table. These orders lay down that all bones traffic from certain areas shall be booked exclusively to certain mills and that certain wasteful movements shall not be allowed. Within the limits laid down, it is for the mills to make the necessary representations in regard to their requirements along with details of areas and stations from which they wish to draw their raw materials.

(c) I am not aware of any applications for priority having been made, except the following :

(1) An application from Messrs. Haji Mohd. Said Mohd. Sharif of the Bone Mill, Hapur, East Indian Railway, for railing 1,500 tons of bone meal to Karachi for Colombo and for general priority for bringing bones to their factory dated July 5th, 1942. This application was refused.

(2) An application from Messrs. Burjor, Ardeshir & Co., of Bombay on behalf of the above firm dated 15th August, 1942, for the movement of 100 tons of crushed bones and

bone meal from Hapur to Bombay required for shipment to the U.K. on a named steamer. Priority was given.

(3) An application by the above firm for general priority for bones and bone products, dated 13th January, 1943. The firm was informed that applications for the movement of particular consignments requiring urgent despatch for shipment should be referred to the Agent of the British Ministry of Supply at the Port who would take necessary action to arrange for the movement.

(d) No. I am not aware of this feeling or of any deliberate preference to non-Indian firms. The sole consideration has been to rationalise traffic distribution and to keep the volume of traffic down to manageable proportions.

(e) Does not arise.

Re. Bones Traffic to Bally (E. I.), Santragachi (B. N.) and Chingreehatta Bone Mills (B. and A. Railway).

As a tentative measure and pending further investigations which are in progress, the following orders are made in exercise of powers vested in the undersigned under Rule 85-A of the Defence of India Rules.

(i) All bones traffic from stations on the B. N. Railway will be booked exclusively to the Bone Mills at Santragachi. The necessary restriction should be imposed accordingly by the B. N. Railway authorities. No re-booking or diversion of wagons booked to Santragachi will be allowed. A quota of 60 wagons per month is allotted to such traffic. Ten days before the end of each month the Mill should send the Transportation Manager, B. N. Railway a programme of traffic to be moved from each station during the month following and the Transportation Manager, B. N. Railway will issue the necessary instructions to the District Officers concerned as regards wagon supplies.

(ii) All bones traffic from stations on the B. & A. Railway will be booked exclusively to the Chingreehatta Bone Mills, Ultadanga and the necessary restriction should be imposed accordingly by the B. & A. Railway authorities. No re-booking or diversion of wagons will be allowed.

A provisional quota of 30 wagons a month is given for such traffic. The Mill should send the Chief Transportation Manager, B. & A. Railway, a similar programme as provided for in the case of Santragachi.

(iii) All bones traffic from:—

(a) All stations on the Howrah, Asansol and Dinapore Divisions of the E. I. Railway, and connected light Railways.

(b) Stations on the Allahabad Division below Cawnpore (exclusive) and stations on the Lucknow Division, below Unao and Lucknow (both exclusive).

(c) *Via* Mokameh Ghat and *via* Bhagalpur from stations on the B. & N. W. Railway shall be booked exclusively to the Bone Mills at Bally. The necessary restrictions should be imposed accordingly by the E. I. Railway and no re-booking or diversion of wagons allowed. A provisional quota of 90 wagons per month is given in the case of (a) and (b) and 15 per month in the case of (c). The mill should send a similar programme to the Chief Operating Superintendent, E. I. Railway and Traffic Manager, B. & N. W. Railway respectively as provided for in the case of Santragachi.

(iv) Except in respect of any movements allowed by general or special order no movement of bones traffic from—

(a) Stations on the M. & S. M. Railway. (b) G. I. P. Railway and *via*. (c) B., B. & C. I. Railway, and *via*. (d) N. W. Railway and *via*. (e) R. & K. Railway. (f) All stations on the E. I. Railway other than those and except as provided for in para. (iii) (a) and (b) to (a) Stations on the B. N. Railway and *via*., and (b) All stations on the E. I. Railway and *via* (including specifically all stations on the B. N. & B. & A. Railways below Moghalsarai), shall be permitted and the necessary restriction should be imposed by the receiving Railways concerned.

(v) The restriction in para. (iv) does not apply to traffic in crushed Bones or Bone-meal consigned by the Bone Mills at Magarwala and Hapur.

C. A. CRAWFORD, *Regional Controller of Ry. Priorities.*

Re. Horns and Hoofs traffic to Bally (E. I.), Santragachi (B. N.) and Chingreehatta Bone Mills (B. and A. Railway).

In exercise of the powers vested in the undersigned under Rule 85-A of the Defence of India Rules, it is directed that Hoofs and Horns traffic shall be included within the purview of the order dated 17th October, 1942, issued in connection with the movement of Bones traffic to Bally (E. I.) Santragachi (B. N.) and Chingreehatta Bone Mills (B. & A. Railway).

Accordingly wherever the word "Bones" appears in the aforesaid Order it shall be read as "Bones, Hoofs and Horns".

C. A. CRAWFORD, *Regional Controller of Ry. Priorities.*

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 78 asked by Hajee Chowdhury Muhammad Ismail Khan on the 29th March, 1943.

TIME ALLOWED FOR INSPECTION OF STATION ACCOUNTS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

(a) No such case is traceable at least within the past 12 months.

(b) When Inspectors have complained about the time allowed, for a particular station being insufficient and the complaint appeared *prima facie* reasonable, the stations concerned have been inspected in the past by Accounts Officers and the time re-fixed wherever considered necessary.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

REFUSAL OF PERMISSION TO THE BOMBAY CONFERENCE DELEGATION FOR INTERVIEWING MAHATMA GANDHI.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of a motion for adjourning the business of the Assembly from Mr. Krishnamachari who wishes to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the refusal of the Government of India to permit the delegation of the Bombay Conference to interview Mahatma Gandhi.

Was it under the Defence of India Rules that the Government of India refused this permission?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, permission was not sought under any definite rules, but permission has been refused on behalf of the Government of India by the head of the Government of India.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was that permission sought under the Defence of India Rules?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member). May I explain, Sir? The conditions of detention of Mr. Gandhi are determined by the Government of India under the Defence of India Rules.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is what I wanted to know, whether this application of the Bombay Conference was made under those Rules? (To Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari) I hope the Honourable Member has followed what I said. Was the application made under the Defence of India Rules to the Government of India for permission being granted to the Bombay Conference to interview Mr. Gandhi?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to submit, Sir, that the deputationists did not specify under what rules they wanted the interview.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Did they apply to the Government of India?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: They applied to the Viceroy as the head of the Government of India and the reply of the head of the Government of India categorically states that his own obligations and those of the Government of India do not permit this interview being granted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was it under the Defence of India Rules that the application was made?

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I would like to submit again that no specified statement has been made as to the rules under which the application was made and under what rules it was refused.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Perhaps the Honourable the Home Member might have something to say to throw light on this question.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Sir, the application was presumably made to His Excellency the Viceroy as head of the Government of India and his reply to the deputation merely represented the policy already laid down by the Government of India in regard to the conditions of detention of these persons, a policy to which they have consistently adhered. There has been no change of policy and the policy has been in existence for a considerable time. The same matter arose on Mr. Joshi's motion at the beginning of this Session. He wanted to move the adjournment of the House on the ground of the previous refusal to allow Mr. Rajagopalachari to interview Mr. Gandhi. He did not move it at that time, but the House had an opportunity of discussing it then, only it was not moved. What I wish to represent is that there has been no change of policy since that time nor have any fresh circumstances arisen which would warrant it and that the matter has often been before this House already.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was the interview sought for political purposes?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: It appears so.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, may I say one word? The Honourable the Home Member states that there has been no change in the situation. There has been a very great change in the situation. In the first place, after that Mahatma Gandhi's fast came and then he broke his fast. . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir, Abdur Rahim): I do not want a speech from the Honourable Member at this stage.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I am not making a speech: I am only showing the change in the situation. After that the Government of India published a book containing certain facts about the situation. I, therefore, feel that there is a change in the situation. . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. I take it that this interview was sought for political purposes in order to do what was considered necessary to resolve what is called the political dead-lock. That question has been under consideration for a long time indeed. It is not a new or urgent matter within the meaning of the Rules. I therefore rule that the motion is out of order.

THE HINDU CODE, PART I (INTESTATE SUCCESSION).

NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Law Member): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the following Members of the Legislative Assembly be nominated to serve on the Joint Committee to consider and report on the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, namely:

1. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya; 2. Pandit Nilakantha Das; (3) Mrs. Renuka Ray; 4. Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta; 5. Babu Baijnath Bajoria; 6. Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh; 7. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai; 8. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, and 9. the Mover."

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

"That the following Members of the Legislative Assembly be nominated to serve on the Joint Committee to consider and report on the Bill to amend and codify the Hindu Law relating to intestate succession, namely:

1. Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya; 2. Pandit Nilakantha Das; (3) Mrs. Renuka Ray; 4. Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta; 5. Babu Baijnath Bajoria; 6. Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh; 7. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai; 8. Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, and 9. the Mover."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): In connection with this, may I put one question? When will this Committee meet and where?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I cannot say anything definitely about it. It depends entirely upon conditions. If accommodation is available we shall try to have the sittings in Simla some time in June. If, however, accommodation is not available there, obviously Members would not like to come to Delhi in June, though, if I am here, I shall be very pleased to welcome them!

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume consideration of the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani will continue his speech. But before he does so, I must ask him to come a little nearer because I cannot follow him, the Reporters cannot follow him, and the Government Benches cannot follow him.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): (After coming to the Front Bench) Sir, the other day I was speaking about railway expenditure. I want to add one point more. The percentage of objectionable expenditure under railways is increasing. In the year 1939-40 it was 33 per cent. and in 1940-41 it rose to 44 per cent.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar (Financial Commissioner, Railways): May I know what page of the Report the Honourable Member is referring to?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I quoted the figure from the Railway Appropriation Accounts.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was this matter discussed in the Committee?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Yes.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What page of the Report?

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am referring to the Railway Appropriation Accounts page 94.

An Honourable Member: Look at page 8.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I finished yesterday page 8. I quoted yesterday items of saving as mentioned in the Proceedings of the Public Accounts Committee, page 8, and in that connection I find that the percentage of objectionable expenditure has risen from .33 per cent. in 1939-40 to .44 per cent. in 1940-41.

Now, I want to make mention of certain facts for the information of the House which were brought forward before the Committee. The Committee made necessary recommendation to the Railway Board and to the authorities concerned. In the year under report the Bengal Dooars Railway was purchased out of a saving made by reappropriation, but the Committee observed that the Legislative Assembly was not given an opportunity to discuss this particular item. Therefore, the Public Accounts Committee asked the Railway Board that in future all such matters should be brought before the Legislative Assembly, so that the latter might give their assent or dissent. Another instance is this. When audit was being made in expenditure in the year under report, the G. I. P. officials refused to give explanation for high variations in expenditure, and this fact was brought to the notice of the Public Accounts Committee. The Committee asked the Railway Board to see that all the railway administrations, and particularly the G. I. P. Railway should take note,—that they must furnish explanation for such variations.

In connection with the North Western Railway, a company under the name of North West Transport Motor Company was started at Peshawar and registered with a capital of Rs. 5 lakhs. The company floated its share and the railway authorities, namely, the N. W. R. purchased 60 per cent. of the first call of Rs. 72,000, and paid Rs. 43,200 as the first instalment, and out of the second call of Rs. 1,36,000 the North Western Railway purchased shares to the value of Rs. 81,600, altogether Rs. 1,24,800. The question is whether the railway company should make it a policy to purchase shares of a private company, because the railway is a State-managed railway and it should not enter into contract with privately managed companies. It was said that this private company gave a dividend of 20 per cent. for the year ending the 31st May, 1939, but it fell to 6 per cent. in the year ending the 31st May, 1940. I cannot say what the condition of the company is at present, because in these days of scarcity of petrol I think the condition may have become worse. My objection to this is that, where an Act was passed for the co-ordination of rail traffic and road traffic—I see that the railway are entering into business with private companies. This company runs 31 stage carriages from Peshawar to Abbottabad and from Peshawar to Rawalpindi. This has nothing to do with the railway passengers. Had it been the case that this company was running this motor traffic in order to give facility to railway passengers from one station to the next station. . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may be right in his criticism but it is a question of policy and he cannot discuss policy on this Report. ✓

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The Railway company should not have entered into contract with the private company. This item of expenditure is objectionable.

Now, I want to mention another fact about the Hydro-electric company. A contract was made with it for 15 years to supply energy to the suburban electric service between Bombay and Kalyan. When the company was asked to supply more energy the company refused and thereupon the Railway Administration built their own power house at Kalyan and it ultimately cost one crore and 33 lakhs. It commenced running and it proved successful and the current was supplied at a lower rate than that at which it was purchased from the company. Then, when the company saw that they are going to lose, they offered their services. Formerly this very company raised the plea that it could not give so much current because their power house was not so powerful. Now, when the Government built their own power house and commenced running, the company came forward and offered their services at low rates. Now, this low rate was accepted and the power house which cost the Government one crore and 33 lakhs is kept as a stand-by.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That may be right or wrong but it cannot be debated on the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. The question that arises out of the Report is whether there has been proper appropriation or not and other matters relating to that.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I make mention of this, because it was discussed in the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That may be.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The majority of the members came to a certain finding and I differed from that. I therefore want to bring it to the notice of the House. It is not that I am introducing new things.

When this kind of thing was objected to, then it was argued on behalf of the department that there is a saving of 19 lakhs; the company is supplying current at lower rates and that there is a saving of 19 lakhs when compared with the previous price paid to the company. Now, the question is whether it is desirable to spend such a huge amount over the erection.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member wishes to discuss that, then the whole of the railway administration will be liable to be reviewed on consideration of this Report on Accounts.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: This is one item on one railway only and it was discussed in the Committee and I raised objection to it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot go on discussing on this Report the administration of railways in this country.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The Public Accounts Committee discussed the desirability of such expenditure and.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I want to draw the attention of the Honourable Member to Rule 52 regarding the scope of the discussion on the reports of the Public Accounts Committee.

The scope of the Public Accounts Committee is to satisfy itself:

"that the moneys, shown in the accounts as having been disbursed were legally available for and applicable to the service or purpose to which they have been applied or charged; that the expenditure conforms to the authority which governs it; and that every reappropriation has been made in accordance with such rules as may be prescribed by the Finance Department."

That is the scope. It has nothing to do with whether there has been good or bad administration in any department of Government. You cannot go into that.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am not going into detail.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is going into questions of administration.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am simply referring to para. 20.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has done that. That is not the scope of the discussion.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I not draw the attention of the House to certain paragraphs in the report? In paragraph 20 of the Report or page 10, there is mention of Chola Power House. In the Committee, I raised my objection to this expenditure, on the ground that it is a mere waste of money of the taxpayer.

As regards certain irregularities in the Engineering Department, I want to draw the attention of the House

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If there are any irregularities, the Honourable Member has a right to refer to them. He cannot discuss questions of policy.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am simply drawing the pointed attention of the House to certain parts of the Audit Report.

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

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: This is another item under Engineering. I want to draw the attention of the House to the Railway Audit Report, para. 25. In that case, a sum amounting to Rs. 41,560 was spent over a plant for brick manufacture. Now, it was estimated that brick will be avail-

able to the Railway at a cheaper rate, at Rs. 14-8-0 per thousand but ultimately it was calculated at a higher rate of Rs. 25. Even then the loss amounted to Rs. 23,205 and this plant is running at a loss since then. I think this sort of thing should be put an end to.

Now, I want to draw the attention of the House to another item, para. 28, in which serious irregularities in an engineering division occurred. They are dealt with in 8 items on pages 14, 15 and 16. Now, the matter was brought before the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Accounts Committee was of opinion that the punishment inflicted in these cases was very insufficient. And the serious attention of the department should be invited to this

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It has nothing to do with this report; it does not come within the discussion of the report that is allowed.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: The loss in this case was Rs. 1,03,447. In the year under report there was one item which was discussed by the Public Accounts Committee at page 6

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): All that is before the House.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am not going to read what is down there

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is what the Honourable Member is trying to do.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: No, Sir, I simply draw the pointed attention of this House that this matter is mentioned at such and such a place, because sometimes Members put questions and want reference

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is aware that there is no question to be put and there can be no division now.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: However, I shall proceed. The money set apart for the sugar excise fund was meant originally for giving an opportunity to the sugarcane growers to get fair price for their sugarcane; but instead of being spent for that purpose, for which it was meant, the money was diverted and utilised—partly for the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research and partly for the Imperial Institute of Sugar Technology at Cawnpore. The diversion was not brought before the House and the Committee agreed that a mention should be made to the House; and in this connection I will suggest that, whatever wrong has been committed, should be compensated and the original purpose of the fund should be carried out now and the sugar excise fund

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I must really ask the Honourable Member not to occupy the time of the House by reading the report which is before the House.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: I am saying that the purpose for which the fund was sanctioned, was not achieved and the money was diverted to another

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has said that; it is there in the report.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Then if everything is there in the report and I discuss it, there is no use of discussing it any further. I resume my seat.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I should like to confine my observations to what is known as the financial settlement and the allocation of defence and war expenditure between India and His Majesty's Government

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member does not wish to discuss the policy?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: No; I am confining myself to the duties of the Public Accounts Committee in exercising scrutiny over this matter. The matter is referred to in para. 12 of the Public Accounts Committee's Report at page 6 and this should be read with the observations of the Report of the Military

[Mr. K. C. Neogy.]

Accounts Committee, para. 2 at page 12. The Public Accounts Committee merely generally endorses the findings of the Military Accounts Committee in this particular matter. A pointed discussion was raised on this question in connection with the Finance Bill at the instance of my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, but I am not going to deal with the merits of his proposal that a separate committee should be set up for the examination of this very important subject, as he did not consider that the Public Accounts Committee was fully competent to deal with it. My Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir, on that occasion seemed to me to question the capacity of individual members to handle such a question

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): He wanted another Committee to go into the matter—not the Public Accounts Committee?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: He justified his demand for the appointment of a special committee on the ground that he did not consider the members of the present Public Accounts Committee to be competent enough to deal with this question. That is the impression that is left on many of us. I should, with your permission, deal with the position of the Public Accounts Committee itself.

It is a statutory committee formed under the rules framed under the Government of India Act and we find that it is to consist of not more than 12 members, including the Chairman, the Chairman being the Finance Member, himself, of whom not less than two-thirds shall be elected by the non-official Members of this Assembly according to the principle of proportional representation, and the remaining members shall be nominated by the Governor-General. This Committee was set up for the first time in 1921, the year of the inauguration of the new constitution; and although we are now in 1943

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What is the Honourable Member's point now?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: My point is that the Public Accounts Committee, in so far as it is composed under these very rules, is not perhaps in a position to discharge its functions as independently as is expected

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That may be; but that question does not arise now.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): The Honourable the Finance Member in the course of his speech said that this matter had been discussed

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Mr. Neogy is on his legs and he can take care of himself as much as anybody else.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I just wanted to point out the attitude of the Government in so far as they have treated

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I must hold that the question does not arise on this report.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Then, I shall come to another point which is also of a somewhat constitutional character. It will be observed that so far as the Military Accounts are concerned, the Public Accounts Committee does not scrutinise the accounts directly. The arrangement is—and I recognise that it is the result of a sort of convention established in 1929-30—the arrangement is that the Military Accounts Committee, which is not a sub-committee of the Public Accounts Committee, goes into the military accounts and deals with the appropriation accounts and the audit report, and then submits a report for the consideration of the Public Accounts Committee, and the Public Accounts Committee

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is that an independent committee?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It is a sort of an independent committee. I have the report of the year 1929-30 where the constitution of this committee is referred to. It appears from para. 31 of the report of that year that there was a pre-existing official committee called the Military Accounts Committee, consisting of the Honourable the Finance Member, the Financial Secretary and the Controller of Civil Accounts. The Public Accounts Committee of that year

suggested that this committee might be expanded by the addition of three nominees of the Public Accounts Committee, and that the accounts of the military department should be scrutinised by this committee, which is not a sub-committee, because its composition is not altogether that of a sub-committee: it consists of at least one member who is not a member of the Public Accounts Committee; and the Public Accounts Committee virtually delegated its authority to this independent committee, which I maintain is not constitutional. I should

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): How long has this been going on?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: It has been going on from 1929-30 onwards. As a matter of fact it was

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): A matter like that ought to be raised on a proper motion?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: This is the opportunity that I have got for raising it. As a matter of fact, the question of military accounts did not assume such great importance

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Surely during the budget discussion the Honourable Member had plenty of opportunity.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am very sorry that it did not strike me that the scope of this discussion would be so narrowed as not to enable me to point out that the Public Accounts Committee has not done its duty properly

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has to take the committee as it is.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Yes, what I maintain is that the military appropriation accounts have got exactly the same position as the appropriation accounts of any other Department, as admitted in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee of 1931. There is no reason why for the scrutiny of the military accounts a different procedure should be followed under which a different committee would be expected to deal with the work which is actually expected to be done by the Public Accounts Committee. Now, Sir, I wish to leave it there.

Then I come to the question of allocation of expenditure. The Honourable the Finance Member in his budget speech in paragraph 18 made a point that the application of the principle of financial settlement is closely watched by the Auditor General and a further scrutiny is exercised by the Public Accounts Committee, in regard to that matter. Now, Sir, what was the material before the Public Accounts Committee this year on this particular subject? I wish, first of all, to turn to the appropriation accounts of the Defence Services for the year 1940-41, and I draw the attention of the House to paragraph 6 of the Report. It starts at page 3. This report is signed by the Financial Adviser, Military Finance. It reads:

"These methods of assessing India's liabilities under Settlement were evolved in consultation with the Director of Audit, Defence Services, to whom the detailed calculations were in all cases submitted for scrutiny. It will be recognised that having regard to the extremely broad nature of the Settlement itself, attempts to achieve meticulous accuracy in these calculations would have been inappropriate besides involving a great waste of time and energy. The allocations made for the year under review are, however, in conformity with the principles of the Settlement."

In the first place, we find that there were certain detailed calculations. I should like to know whether the Public Accounts Committee as a whole had any opportunity of looking into those detailed calculations, which really were of the highest importance. In the next place, I would in passing stress the implications of the observations made by the Financial Adviser, Military Finance, that the Settlement itself was extremely broad in nature which obviously facilitated the work of audit as it did not need any meticulous accuracy. I should like to know something about the broad nature of the Settlement itself which makes the work of Audit very easy.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is trying to go back.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I do not understand whether or not I am entitled to refer to the papers.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is certainly entitled to refer to the papers, but if he raises another debate on that point, he cannot do so.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am simply wanting to find out whether the Public Accounts Committee has done its duty, and whatever you may say I hold that I am perfectly in order to discuss the matter in that light. If you do not permit me

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I did not say I do not want the Honourable Member to go on. But the Honourable Member must confine himself to matters arising within the proper scope of this Report.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Well, I confine myself to the matter before the House, but I wish to know whether it would be in order, for me to discuss what the Public Accounts Committee should have done to exercise proper scrutiny

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What I pointed out was that the Honourable Member could not raise a debate on the policy of the settlement made.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I respectfully submit that if you look into the debates on the motion in respect of previous reports of the Public Accounts Committee, it would be found that the scope of previous debates was more elaborate.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not accept the Honourable Member's statement.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Then it is not possible to do full justice to this important subject.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must accept my ruling which is strictly in accordance with the rules of the House.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Sir, am I entitled to discuss the observations made in the report or not?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can discuss the observations all right, but as I have held he cannot raise a debate on the policy of the Settlement.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable the Finance Member claims that the Public Accounts Committee scrutinizes the accounts in this matter. What I want to know is whether the Public Accounts Committee has discharged its obligation properly or not.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is perfectly in order to do so.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Then I want to make a suggestion that in future the Public Accounts Committee should go into these matters and tell the House

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is entitled to make that suggestion.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: That is what I am exactly going to say. What I mean, in the first place, is that the Public Accounts Committee should go into these matters. Further, I should like to know whether the Public Accounts Committee has satisfied itself about the extremely broad nature of the settlement to which the Financial Adviser, Military Finance, referred, and whether the position was properly scrutinised by the Auditor General himself and by the Public Accounts Committee. I should like on behalf of this House, and I do not know whether I have the support of the Honourable Members on this side of the House, to demand that in future, in dealing with this question, the Public Accounts Committee should exercise proper scrutiny into this matter. It is no use merely endorsing in two lines the observations made by the Military Accounts Committee, and it is no use the Honourable the Finance Member getting up in this House and saying that the Public Accounts Committee has exercised the scrutiny on behalf of you all.

Another point which I should like to make is in regard to the Audit Report on the Defence Services 1942, which is also a very important paper and which the Public Accounts Committee is supposed to have got before it. In this connection the observations to which I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Members are to be found in para. 24 of that report. It says:

"Some readjustments were made in the accounts of the year as a result of audit observations. In a few cases, however, the correcting readjustments (the net effect of which is comparatively small) could not be completed in the accounts of the year."

I demand from the Public Accounts Committee that in future it should go into these readjustments and report for the information of this House as to the nature of those readjustments, so that we may get an idea as regards the character of the differences that arose between the Financial Adviser, Military Finance, and the Audit Officer in regard to this very important question of allocation of expenditure between India and England. I would in this connection like to test the extent of the powers of the Public Accounts Committee as regards scrutiny of expenditure on military works and the allocation of expenditure between India and England. Sir, in reply to a question of mine, the Honourable the Finance Member gave a statement on Wednesday last, 31st March, indicating the division of expenditure. I am merely referring to this by way of illustration for the purpose of indicating the nature of scrutiny that I, for one, would expect the Public Accounts Committee to exercise. It will be seen from that statement that in 1940-41, the expenditure on aerodromes and air fields totalled 46 lakhs and the whole of it was borne by His Majesty's Government. Next year, 1941-42 we find that the total expenditure on this account was one crore and seven lakhs which was divided as follows—India 82 lakhs and His Majesty's Government 25 lakhs. I would be entitled to know whether the attention of the Public Accounts Committee was drawn to this aspect of the question, and whether the members of the Public Accounts Committee satisfied themselves that this particular allocation of expenditure was properly scrutinised by them, and whether they were satisfied that the right principle of allocation was applied because, we find that in the previous year, the whole expenditure was charged to His Majesty's Government. I take it that the terms of the settlement had not undergone any change between these two years. How is it that in the very next year, we find a very much larger amount namely, 82 lakhs, charged to India as against 25 lakhs to His Majesty's Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Does the Honourable Member realise that although this is called Audit Report, 1942, it is dealing with the Appropriation Accounts for 1940-41?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I expect the Committee to report next year as to whether this departure has been justified. I would also expect the Committee to report hereafter as to whether according to the financial settlement the expenditure of 63 crores and 27 lakhs which represents this particular item, namely aerodromes and air fields in the year 1942-43, was rightly charged entirely to India, not a picc of it being charged to His Majesty's Government. I realise that the Honourable Member stated that it had been accepted that this amount should be entirely charged to the Government of India. There again comes in the question of the scope of the duties of the Public Accounts Committee. When the Honourable Member says, we have accepted this, the Public Accounts Committee is absolutely precluded from questioning the propriety or soundness of that decision. The duty of the Public Accounts Committee is confined merely to the interpretation of the accounting rules so to say, and the Auditor General and the Public Accounts Committee have no authority to go behind the *ipse dixit* of the Government of India, the arbitrary decisions of the Government of India. Therefore, I maintain that it was not quite right for the Honourable Member to try to create the impression that the Public Accounts Committee was there as the guardian of public expenditure in this matter.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Does it relate to the financial settlement which the Honourable Member carried on in England?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member was a Member of the Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Yes, Sir. I want to know whether my Honourable friend wants the Public Accounts Committee Members to give an explanation about the expenditure on account of the financial settlement or does he want

[**Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali**]

that in future when the Public Accounts Committee sits, they should examine the division of expenditure hereafter?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Yes. I say that the functions of the Public Accounts Committee are extremely limited in character. So that, there should be no misapprehension created in the public minds as regards the authority of this Committee to control public expenditure in these matters. That is one thing. In the second place, I wanted to suggest certain lines on which the Public Accounts Committee might exercise their scrutiny in future so that their reports might contain more particulars about these very important matters. That is all I have got to say.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: Mr. President, Sir, I will confine myself to the points raised in this debate on the railway portion of the report under discussion. My Honourable friend, Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, has been kind enough to say some words of appreciation about Government officers appearing as witnesses before the Public Accounts Committee, though, in his speech, he was mainly patting himself on his back as against certain reflections made on the committee by my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasjee Jehangir. We, on this side, Sir, have always been fully conscious and appreciative of the great services done by the Public Accounts Committee both from the point of view of the taxpayer and from the point of view of us, Government officers, entrusted with the responsibility of controlling a vast expenditure of the taxpayer's money—services, which the Committee renders under the able lead given by the Auditor General in India and under the able guidance of the Chairman, the Honourable the Finance Member.

In the spirit then, Sir, in which my Honourable friend approached the subject, I think I should mention, for the information of the House, the action we have taken as a result of the Public Accounts Committee's observations on the points which he has referred to in his speech. I will first take up paragraph 15 of the report to which my Honourable friend made reference. The Committee themselves have recognised that, in such a vast organisation as Railways, some defects and mistakes in budgeting are unavoidable and that the achievement was on the whole satisfactory. Nevertheless, they have pointed out quite rightly that attempts should be made to check the tendency for the defects to increase. In defence of these observations, the House will, I daresay, be glad to hear that I have with the approval of the Railway Board arranged for our Budget Officer, the Director of Finance, to pay visits to headquarters of railway administrations during the non-busy season in order to find out by personal examination and discussions where the defects lie and to suggest means of remedy. Further, Sir, it is relevant to point out that the accounts which are being discussed now related to the first year after the commencement of the present war, and I submit, it is not unreasonable to expect that railways should be allowed to take sometime to settle down to altered conditions.

Then, Sir, reference was made both by my Honourable friend Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali and by my Honourable friend Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Gham to paragraph 19 of the report in which our failure to place a token demand before the House has been brought out. Sir, the failure is an oversight and is readily admitted. But I submit, Sir, it is only a technical defect, the money having been found from the grant available, and the Honourable Member was not correct in saying that the matter had not been brought to the notice of the House. The purchase of the railway in question

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. It is not my view, but it is the view of the Public Accounts Committee, as a whole.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: We are accepting the view of the Public Accounts Committee. We are not rebutting it. I am only stating the extenuating circumstances.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: All that we have mentioned in the report. What is the occasion to say that the Honourable Member is not correct in saying so?

[At this stage, Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim) vacated the Chair which was then occupied by Sir Henry Richardson (one of the Panel of Chairmen).]

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: The purchase of the railway had already been approved by the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, and the House was fully seized of the facts of the case relating to the purchase in paragraph 10 of the Honourable the Railway Member's Budget speech. My Honourable friend, Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani, then referred to the high percentage of savings in the grant for expenditure under capital and depreciation fund. I would first draw his attention to the remarks made by the committee itself after full and careful consideration. They said, "Allowance must be made for the uncertain conditions brought about by the war, and having regard to all the circumstances we consider the result of the year to be very satisfactory". The savings are due entirely to the fact that, like other departments of Government, we were not able to obtain the materials required for the various works owing to existing war conditions in the time in which we expected them. I may add, for the information of the House, that in this respect the Railway Department have, in consultation with the Army Department, succeeded in securing some higher priority for railway needs and it is hoped that the position will considerably improve in the future.

Then, Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Ghani, referred to certain particular paragraphs in the various reports relating to financial irregularities. I want to make only one general observation with reference to these paragraphs. He referred for instance, to the remark made by the Public Accounts Committee that the punishment accorded, in some cases were not considered sufficient.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Have been lenient.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: Yes. I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that these cases are examined and discussed fully in consultation with the Auditor General and his deputy, the Director of Railway Audit. These officers, it will be admitted are most impartial judges, and it is only when they are satisfied that the punishment we have decided on is adequate that the case is closed. Nevertheless, Sir, we have noted with care and attention the observations made by the Public Accounts Committee, and we shall certainly bear them in mind when we deal with similar cases in future.

Sir, referring to certain shares taken by the North West Railway Company in a certain Motor Transport Company in Peshawar, Mr. Abdul Ghani said it was not desirable. I have only to observe that an experiment in this direction was made even before with the Lyallpur-Jhang Motor Transport Company, and there the experiment has been proving quite a success. It has been of great advantage both to Railways and to Road transport.

I do not think that any other case referred to by the Honourable Member needs observations from me.

Mr. Muhammad Nauman (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to make very brief observations in connection with the Report of the Public Accounts Committee. Sir, the question of examination of the war expenditure has been very ably dealt with by my Honourable friend Mr. Neogy, Member from Bengal. What we on this side of the House are anxious about is to see that the Public Accounts Committee is given full opportunity of examining the defence expenditure and the military accounts. It may be said that the constitution of the Military Accounts Committee has been in existence since 1930 or 1932 and the matter was never before brought in this House to say that that examination alone by Military Accounts Committee could not be considered satisfactory. But to that my submission would be that the position of military accounts between 1932 and 1939 was very very different from what it is now. Probably the expenditure on the military side has increased two or three times, if not more. The liabilities have increased under the financial settlement. We have been allotted a certain quota of the general war expenditure by His Majesty's Government and naturally the taxpayer and the representatives of the tax-payer, in India have to be satisfied that the quota given to them is properly accounted for and that expenditure on

[Mr. Muhammad Nauman.]

that account is scrutinized and examined by their representatives on the Public Accounts Committee. I am not here particularly concerned with the suggestion which was made on the floor of the House regarding a separate committee, but I am certainly concerned with the fact that we have got to be satisfied that our representatives in some committee or even on the Public Accounts Committee are given enough opportunities so that they may be able to justify their presence here. It would not do for the Government just to say that the Public Accounts Committee has been looking into the expenditure.

The second point which I would like to mention is this: Looking into the report, I find that in some cases there has been transfer of accounts without the knowledge of this House; it has been admitted in the Report. I will refer to the Sugar Excise Fund of rupees seven lakhs as an instance. We do not know really whether the Government are justified in making such allocations without reference to this House and then recording in the Report that this has been done for some reason or another which could not be explained earlier through an oversight. Again, Sir, in connection with the Broadcasting Department, I find that no report was published in respect of the kind of propaganda which the department were carrying out, in respect of the entire work the department did. And the explanation given in respect of that is not at all satisfactory. What I want to impress upon the Government is that in the case of such departments, which are of recent origin, there should be more vigilance in the matter of expenditure and its justification of the expenditure. Sir, I do not want to take up the time of the House in dealing with other items but I just want to point out again that looking to the report in some cases, we feel that the Public Accounts Committee are not given enough opportunities to scrutinize expenditure. With these observations, Sir, I resume my seat.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have only one point to refer in regard to the examination of the report of the Public Accounts Committee, namely, that portion which relates to the Military Accounts Committee's observations on the manning of the Supply Department. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the opinion expressed by the Military Accounts Committee in this matter, namely that they are satisfied with the principles followed in the recruitment of Honorary Advisers, or part-time employees, or full-time employees to this department drawn from amongst the commercial firms—the commercial organizations that exist in this country—are similar to those that are being followed in the United Kingdom. Sir, there is no further information disclosed to us, except the memorandum drawn up by the Supply Department stating the terms under which these people have been and are being recruited. The declaration that they are supposed to give in cases where they are permanent employees is that they are completely dissociating themselves from the firms under which they were previously employed. But, Sir, there is one very relevant point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member. I would like to say at the outset that it is not based on any racial prejudice. But it is a fact nevertheless that conditions of the business community in this country and the relations that exist between them and the interests of the country are not identical with the relationship that exists between the business community and the Government in the United Kingdom. In the case of the United Kingdom the businessmen happen to be the nationals of the country and I venture to submit that the circumstance is absent in India. That is a point which I think has escaped the attention of those members of the Committee who have given their imprimatur to this arrangement of employing honorary advisers, part-time advisers, and full-time employees drawn from among the business organisations in this country. Sir, I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I mention that a large percentage, in fact, almost the entire staff that has been recruited—with few exceptions here and there—notably from the steel industry, are drawn from one community among the businessmen in this country. I feel, Sir, that the safeguards as have been provided by the memorandum annexed to this report and drawn up by the Supply Depart-

ment are not adequate. The question has got to be gone into further. The feeling of the people in this country is that here in this Supply Department, manned as it is today by various types of persons, with varying degrees of influence, the grip of one section of commercial community over the Supply Department is all embracing and the effect of it will be that when peace comes in and there is to be a readjustment of the position it will be very difficult for other interests to assert themselves. That is a point which I would like the Public Accounts Committee to go into, and I would like an assurance from Government that they are fully seized of the position and that they will make a further examination of the position as and when the occasion arises and they will satisfy themselves that because there is an honorary adviser who has some connection say with the jute industry, the interests of that industry will not be indirectly advanced. It does not mean that the honorary adviser will manipulate contracts in favour of his firm, but it is quite on the cards that their interests can be furthered in various other ways. A suspicion exists that such interests are being advanced against the country's own interests. I voice that fear, the fear of the country, not from the point of view of racial prejudice but from the sole objection that the taxpayer's money should be well-spent and the interests of the country should be safeguarded.

I would like, Sir, before sitting down to tell the House that there have been lapses in the past, and there have been serious lapses in the last war. This house and the public are aware of a notorious instance, and therefore greater caution is necessary and we should do our utmost to disabuse people from the impression they have today, viz., that here is one way of one particular business community entrenching themselves securely to the detriment of the future economic position of the country.

Sir, I would like that fear to be disabused from the point of view of fairness to the Public Accounts Committee and from the point of view of fair play so far as Government is concerned.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): I do not want to detain the House for more than two or three minutes. In the first instance I would like to draw the attention of the Financial Commissioner to Appendix IV about the Amortisation Funds and I hope that this point will be considered by the Committee which is appointed to review the Convention of 1924. This is one of the points which ought to be discussed and reviewed by that Committee. The second point to which I would like to draw attention is the question of the expenditure of the Supply Department. My friend, Mr. Neogy, pointed out the desirability of reviewing the expenditure in connection with the Army Department, and I think it is very desirable that we should know something of the manner in which the expenditure is incurred by the Supply Department, as well because this Accounts Committee is the only committee of the House which is in a position to examine their accounts. The Standing Finance Committee has got no access, and even the Advisory Committee of the Supply Department has got no access as to the manner in which expenses are incurred.

I would now just draw attention to one or two paragraphs in the Public Accounts Committee's report. On page 76 they have drawn attention to the price of jute articles, i.e., jute manufactured articles and they say that a quantum of profit should be allowed while fixing the purchase price. I think, even in this case, the amount fixed is rather heavy, but I am sorry to note that nothing was done by the Public Accounts Committee about the fixation of the price of cotton piece-goods. There you will find that the margin of profit is not 10 per cent. but probably it is 200 or 300 per cent. Prices have gone up so much that I think it is the duty of the Accounts Committee to review the prices of cotton piece-goods and compare it with the prices of the raw cotton and the prices of labour, and I hope that at the next meeting they will go very thoroughly into this question as it is a very important one, and if the Supply Department, for reasons which are known to us, fail to do

[Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad.]

this particular duty, I think the Public Accounts Committee ought to draw the attention of this House and the attention of the officers to look into this question more thoroughly.

Now the Supply Department, according to the Finance Member, spends Rs. 18 crores a month in purchases. This is a figure probably a few months old. The expenditure now may be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 25 crores a month. When such a big expenditure is incurred on behalf of the taxpayers of India, it seems desirable that the Public Accounts Committee should look into this question more thoroughly and an opportunity should be provided to the Committee to examine the matter and lay before us a report for discussion.

With these few words I resume my seat.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have only a few observations to make because I do not feel that most of the points touched in the course of the discussion call for any reply, other than such as is already provided by the report itself.

The matter which I would like to touch on is the one which my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy raised, and which has also been mentioned by Mr. Neuman. Mr. Neogy was at pains to point out the relation of the Public Accounts Committee to the Military Accounts Committee and the nature of the material which is placed before the Military Accounts Committee, and wished to emphasize to the House the importance of seeing that the Public Accounts Committee dealt thoroughly with this aspect of its duties. Well, Sir, what I wish to say is that I entirely welcome that. After all, it was I myself who drew attention to the fact that machinery does exist whereby matters of this kind can be examined with some care.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: But you are responsible for raising the whole controversy?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, certainly. I brought to the notice of the House the machinery which deals with this matter of the relations of the two countries in regard to expenditure, some part of which is allocable to one and some to the other, and I repeat that I entirely welcome such opportunities as exist and as will exist in future for throwing more light on this subject and making clear to Members of this House the principles on which these matters are adjusted. But I would like to remind the House of one thing. This is not a matter which rests solely within the arbitrament of this House. The Members of this House are no doubt zealous guardians of the interests of the Indian tax-payer, but there is also another democratic institution which has to deal with this matter, and that is the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament. Now the machinery for dealing with this subject, in the first instance, is located in India. It consists of our own departments and it is examined by our own Public Accounts Committee. Then, the Public Accounts Committee of the Parliament is entitled to satisfy itself that no injustice has been done to the interests of the British tax-payer.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: They look at the question from their own standpoint.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Naturally. It is quite clear that you have here two points of view which have to be reconciled and therefore the duties of audit in this matter and particularly of the Auditor General of India are of an exacting and delicate nature. The Auditor General of India has been entrusted by the Controller and Auditor General of the United Kingdom with the functions of the latter officer in regard to this expenditure. He is, therefore, not merely in the simple position, so to speak, of trust in which he usually is. That is, it is his normal duty to report to this House the results of his scrutiny of the accounts and to indicate the extent to which the wishes of this House and the decisions of competent authority have actually been carried out in the financial administration of the year. He not only has that duty in this case but he also has the duty of satisfying himself that the financial administration has been in accordance with the agreement reached by His Majesty's Government and the Government of

India. And in that respect, he has to bear in mind the interests of both Governments.

I do not want to dilate on the question except to say that the whole of our machinery has been put in a position of exceptional trust, that is to say, the institutions in Britain who have a responsibility placed on them by the Constitution have been content to allow these matters to be dealt with in India in the first instance and have hitherto accepted the results of the scrutiny made by the Auditor General of India and by the Public Accounts Committee of India. Hitherto, there has been no suggestion that anything has been done otherwise than in accordance with the principles which have to be observed both on behalf of India and on behalf of England.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: This is done with regard only to the audit aspect, but the aspect of policy neither the Auditor General of India nor the Auditor General of England is entitled to raise. Is that correct?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The position is that the agreement which is of a broad kind indicates that certain expenditure will be debited to India. Expenditure for the local defence of India is expenditure which is debitable to India. In regard to, say, the construction of an aerodrome, the question arises whether that is an expenditure for the local defence of India, and the first decision taken by the Executive would have the result, say, of allocating that expenditure to India. Now, it is open to the Auditor General to say that on the facts he does not agree that this is expenditure for the local defence of India and, therefore, it does not seem to him that allocation to India would be in accordance with the settlement. That is a point which, it seems to me, might arise.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Is that quite clear that the Auditor General is entitled to raise that point?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I think it is quite clear. I think it is quite clear that the Auditor General is entitled to say "you may debit to India expenditure for the local defence of India, but I am not satisfied that the particular item which has been debited to the Indian accounts falls within that category and therefore that item, unless I am furnished with information which leads me to accept that position, I do not regard as being properly debitable to the Indian accounts." The opportunities which should arise in the course of the examination by the Military Accounts Committee would enable matters of that kind to be discussed and to be cleared up.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Does the Honourable Member mean that it is, after all, a debatable point?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My own attitude is that where we have accepted the cost of an aerodrome as being debitable to India it is because we think that it is a measure for the defence of India, but, since my friend Mr. Neogy touched on that, I merely indicate how the matter would stand in relation to audit and in relation to the investigations of the Public Accounts Committee. It is true they will come a long time afterwards, but it would be open to them to ask, "On what basis do you debit this cost to the Indian Budget?"

Now, there is one other point on which Honourable Members touched and which I think it is strictly relevant to discuss on this motion, and that is what happened about the Sugar Excise Fund? It has been admitted on behalf of Government that there was an oversight but I would say that the way in which this occurred is not unnatural and that the final position is not one which I think would not have been acceptable to this House if Government had realised that it should have been brought before this House and if it had been brought before this House at the due time. The original purpose of this Fund was expressed in somewhat limited terms by Sir George Schuster at the time when he created it. Even at that time Government had in mind that the Fund would only be devoted to this purpose for a limited number of years and they did bring this fact to the attention of Provincial Governments. Then, a stage was reached at which it was felt that these moneys should be applied for certain wider purposes. As I say, these

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

1 P.M. are purposes which I have every confidence this House would have approved if the matter had been brought before the House. It was, however, overlooked that it should have been brought before the House. It is true that we were guilty of a technical breach of the requirements, and we admit that. My only plea is that no harm has been done because, if the nature of the purposes on which the money is now spent is examined, I do not think any Member of this House would object to the money being spent in that way. That is all I have to say.

DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS FOR 1940-41. CIVIL.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): I shall now take up the Demands for Excess Grants for 1940-41.

DEMAND No. 4.—SALT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 17,432 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Salt'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 17,432 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Salt'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 12.—EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,513, be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Executive Council'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,513 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Executive Council'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 17.—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,308 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Department of Education, Health and Lands'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,308 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Department of Education, Health and Lands'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 19.—COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,680 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Commerce Department'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,680 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Commerce Department'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 23.—INDIA OFFICE AND HIGH COMMISSIONER'S ESTABLISHMENT CHARGES.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 59,505, be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'India Office and High Commissioner's Establishment Charges'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): Motion moved:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 59,505 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'India Office and High Commissioner's Establishment Charges'."

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions; Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have to say a few words on this item. Not only is the figure

relating to this item big, but every year in the Public Accounts Committee we find that the India Office and the High Commissioner's Office are very late in sending their accounts. It is not the experience of one year only; it has been seen from year to year—that accounts are late, or there are big excesses. I think that some action should be taken in order that the High Commissioner's Office in England may submit their accounts in due time so that the Committee may be in a better position to examine the accounts in detail. When the Public Accounts Committee examines the figures and examines them critically, I am very sorry to hear from one of the Members of the Government from the Railway Department saying that we all pat ourselves on our backs. It is not that we are patting ourselves on our backs for the duties that we do; we shall continue to criticise Members of the Government if we find that they are wanting, that they are concealing anything, or that they are deceiving members not only of the Public Accounts Committee, but they are deceiving the Government itself and their own department.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar (Government of India: Nominated Official): I did not mean any reflection on the Public Accounts Committee.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Is the Honourable Member (Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali) in order on this excess grant?

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member must confine himself to a criticism of the actual motion under consideration.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: When I come to the railway department I shall speak on that.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 59,505 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'India Office and High Commissioner's Establishment Charges'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 32.—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 646 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Geological Survey'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 646 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Geological Survey'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 38.—EDUCATION.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 455 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Education'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 455 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Education'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 40.—PUBLIC HEALTH

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 16,242 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Public Health'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 16,242 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Public Health'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 68.—PANTH PIPLODA.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 266 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Panth Piploda'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 266 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the

[Mr. Chairman.]

expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Panth Piploda'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 10.—INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 7,81,660 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): Motion moved:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 7,81,660 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department'."

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): The amount involved in this excess grant is a pretty large one and discloses lack of foresight and inaccurate budgeting on the part of the Department. Therefore some explanation is needed.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor (Secretary, Posts and Air Department): I agree that the amount is large, being seven lakhs, 81 thousand but I would like the Honourable Member to compare it with the final grant which was 11 crores, 12 lakhs: the amount represents only 7 per cent. But, Sir, I do not go merely by that. The Accountant General in his report has explained on page 13 what the main causes of the excesses were. For example, one of them is smaller credits to working expenses due to a fall in the number of Savings Bank transactions. The Savings Banks work is performed by the post office on behalf of the Central Revenues and the post office is paid for the work; the payment is taken not as an item of revenue but as a deduction from working expenses. In the beginning of the year, an estimate is made of the total number of savings bank transactions that might be made by the public during the year; but in 190-41, the conditions created by the war led to a considerable decrease in the number of savings bank transactions which could not possibly have been foreseen. Then, there is increased expenditure under stamps, postcards, stationery and printing due to the larger consumption of stamps, etc., by the public, which, of course, came in as additional revenue. Then, there is a large rise in traffic and larger freight charges for the conveyance of stores due to the heavier programme of works. This heavier programme of works was due to the increased demands on the department in connection with the war. The whole question was carefully examined by the Public Accounts Committee who in para. 83 of the report agreed to recommend for regularisation of the amount by a vote of the Assembly.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 7,81,660 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Indian Posts and Telegraphs Department'."

The motion was adopted.

RAILWAYS.

DEMAND No. 5.—PAYMENTS TO INDIAN STATES AND COMPANIES.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 12,23,155 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Payments to Indian States and Companies'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 12,23,155 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Payments to Indian States and Companies'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6B.—WORKING EXPENSES—MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY OF LOCOMOTIVE POWER.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 14,39,894 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): Motion moved:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 14,39,894 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the

expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power'."

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I find here that this excess grant is being asked for the maintenance and supply of locomotive power. I would like to know whether any new locomotives were purchased since the grant was made.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: Purchase does not come under this grant. This is a revenue grant.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: You say here "supply of locomotives". That should be explained.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: It is not supply of locomotives. It is supply of locomotive power.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Was it that this supply was not expected before, so that the grant may have been asked just at the time the other grant was asked for? I would like to know that.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: The excess was due to the fact that the rate of surcharge on coal was increased. We expected only an expenditure of 8½ lakhs, and we thought that it would be covered by the provision already made. That expectation was not realised. There were also more receipts on coal, on account of greater traffic, and the total excess was only 14 lakhs, which is very small.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: This grant is required for two purposes—revenue working expenses and maintenance and supply of locomotive power. How much was it for revenue working expenses and how much for the other? I mean the excess.

Mr. T. S. Sankara Aiyar: It was all working expenses. I have explained that the whole of the excess was due to two facts—increase in the rate of surcharge on coal and increase in the total quantity of coal received.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 14,39,894 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Maintenance and Supply of Locomotive Power'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6E.—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF THE TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 95,722 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 95,722, be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the Traffic Department'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 6F.—WORKING EXPENSES—EXPENSES OF THE GENERAL DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 8,031, be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the General Department'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 8,031 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Expenses of the General Department'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 8.—INTEREST CHARGES.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 64 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Interest Charges'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 64 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Interest Charges'."

The motion was adopted.

DEMAND No. 10.—APPROPRIATION TO RESERVE.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,67,13,506 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Appropriation to Reserve'."

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The question is:

"That an excess grant of Rs. 1,67,13,506 be voted by the Assembly to regularise the expenditure chargeable to Railway revenue actually incurred in excess of the voted grant in the year 1940-41, in respect of 'Appropriation to Reserve'."

The motion was adopted.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Sir, . . .

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member is too late.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: No, Sir; I have been on my legs all along.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): But the Honourable Member never said anything.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: But I have been on my legs till now.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member never said anything; I am sorry.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I was on my legs.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member did not speak.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: But I was on my legs; unless the Chair called me to speak, how could I speak?

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Members are expected to catch the eye of the Chair and not its ear.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): I waited, but no one spoke anything.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I was standing all along.

THE SPECIAL HAJ INQUIRY REPORT.

Mr. A. V. Pai (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, I move:

"That the Report of the Special Haj Inquiry be taken into consideration."

This Report was placed on the table of the House on the 16th February, 1942. The Honourable Members have thus had ample time to study it. I hope they appreciate that the Special Officer who wrote it—Mr. J. A. Rahim—has dealt exhaustively with all aspects of the question, over the whole range of the inquiry and that the Report may be taken as the last word on the subject. Copies of the Report were sent for opinion to Provincial Governments and administrations and to various Muslim bodies and individuals interested in the pilgrim traffic. As soon as the opinions were received, they were placed before the Standing Committee on Pilgrimage to the Hejaz for their consideration and advice. The House will remember that when replying to a short notice question on the 23rd September, 1942, Mr. M. S. Aney the then Member in charge of the Department of Indians Overseas, gave an undertaking that after the Standing Committee had considered the Report, an opportunity would be given as early as convenient to this House to consider the matter. The Standing Committee completed their examination of the Report on the 9th of this month and this is the earliest convenient occasion on which I could move this motion. In accordance with the undertaking given by Mr. Aney, therefore, I now move that this Report be taken into consideration. Sir, I move.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): Motion moved:

"That the Report of the Special Haj Inquiry be taken into consideration."

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, the Special Haj Inquiry Report, now before the House for consideration, is the outcome of a Resolution that was moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. H. M. Abdullah on the 6th of November, 1940. The Resolution demanded 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 the pilgrimage to the holy places in the Hedjaz, Iraq and Iran, and all matters connected with the pilgrims. The Resolution had the unanimous support of the House and many of our colleagues, including Mr.

ney, who afterwards became the Honourable Member in charge of the same department, took part in the debate. The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, the Member for the Education, Health and Lands Department, and my friend, Mr. Tyson, the Secretary in charge of the department, spoke on behalf of the Government. Both the Honourable Members took a sympathetic view of the innocent and reasonable demand of the Muslims and made a statement that they would appoint a special officer to make inquiries into the Hedjaz affairs and to make a report thereon. Thereupon the Resolution was withdrawn by the Mover. I think it will be of interest to the Honourable Members if I just make a reference to the speeches made by the said Government Members and read out a portion of their statements: Mr. Tyson was pleased to say:

"I am afraid therefore that I cannot commit Government to accepting the Resolution which has been moved. At the same time we are not out to turn a deaf ear entirely to the Honourable Member's plea and I should like to tell the house that we have already gone some way,—I venture to think a considerable way—to meet his demand during the current Session. Though we cannot agree that there is a case for a permanent pilgrim officer, we do appreciate the advantage of having a periodical overhaul of pilgrim arrangements by an officer who can spare the time to visit the ports at times when the ships are sailing."

He further said:

"We have placed a Muslim officer, I may say, an experienced Muslim officer of the I.C.S., on special duty for the current Haj season."

The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai was pleased to state:

"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 needs of the pilgrims is concerned."

Then he was pleased to remark:

"This is essentially an experimental arrangements 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."

He continued to say:

"Ten years have elapsed since the Haj Inquiry 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 inquiry that he would make would be sufficient really to adjust matters for the future."

The House is perfectly aware that the performance of the Haj, being one of the most essential duties enjoined by the Holy Koran, every Muslim has a keen desire to visit at least once in his life the holy places of Mecca and Medina and, therefore, matters connected with the Haj pilgrimage have always been of great importance to the Muslim Members of the Assembly, and they have been the subject of discussion ever since this House came into existence. In the year 1928, my most reverend friend, the late Sir Haji Abdoola Haroon, moved a Resolution in pursuance of which the Haj Inquiry Committee consisting of members of this House and of the Council of State was appointed with an I.C.S. officer, the Honourable Mr. Clayton, as its chairman. My Honourable friends and colleagues, Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur and Haji Chaudhuri Muhammad Ismail were members of that committee.

Sir, this Committee took great pains and toured over the whole of India and published their report comprising 213 pages which contained 219 recommendations to be given effect to in order to better the most wretched condition of the pilgrims. It is extremely regrettable to note that in spite of incurring so much expenditure out of the public money in getting the report of the Haj Enquiry Committee, the Government did very little to provide even ordinary amenities of daily life to the pilgrims during their religious voyage to Mecca. So much so that even to this day most of the pilgrims cannot get a sufficient and suitable space on the pilgrim ships to conveniently pass a few days of their voyage.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member can resume his speech after lunch.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Three of the Clock.

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

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: I was going to say that this Government of ours is reputed for appointing enquiry committees for postponing matters in which they do not want to do anything. I have been a Member of the Standing Haj Committee of this House since its inception and, therefore, having personal experience and direct knowledge of the activities of the Haj Committee, I can with a certain amount of authority say, that the Government have always been very reluctant and slow in doing anything for providing facilities to the Hajees to make their journey a comfortable one. Sir, Mr. Tyson himself admitted the slow progress of his department in matters dealing with the Haj; when on the 6th November, 1940, he said,—

“I think generally speaking we may claim that there has been at any rate since the time when the Haj pilgrimage committee of 1929, reported, a steady, if slow, improvement in the conditions under which pilgrims have performed this necessary religious duty.”

Sir, it will be an interesting fact to note that the terms of reference for inquiry by the special Haj officer were actually the same as were for the old Haj enquiry committee 15 years back, excepting an additional term with regard to the appointment of a permanent pilgrim officer in the Secretariat as demanded in the Resolution of our friend the Honourable Member, Mr. H. M. Abdullah. Again, if we carefully go through the recommendations of both the reports old and the present one, it will be found that substantially they are the same. Some new ones, however, have been added in the report under consideration. Besides the concrete matters that I will shortly mention, the above two facts alone go a long way to prove that the Government did nothing to improve the wretched condition of the Hajees who are treated as chattels on the pilgrim ships and are never afforded the benefit of the recommendations made by the members of the committee of this House. If the Government had cared to carry out the recommendations of the Haj Enquiry Committee, I think there would have been neither the necessity of appointing a permanent pilgrim officer in the Secretariat nor a special officer to make further enquiries in Haj matters for making his recommendations thereon, once again. So far as I have been able to understand the Government deliberately postponed, for so long a time, taking action on all such recommendations as involved a certain amount of expenditure, and carried out only those where the Government had either to spend nothing or expected to save a portion of the amount they were bound to spend every year.

For instance, in passing the legislation for establishing the Port Haj Committees, the Government have saved a lot of expenditure, which they had to incur every year for the establishment of the old pilgrim departments at Karachi, Bombay and Calcutta. A reference to page 129 of the report under consideration will show that Government used to spend Rs. 36,000 to Rs. 38,000 annually on these departments between the year 1929 to 1934 which was reduced to Rs. 6,000 only in the year 1939-40, as a contribution to the Port Haj Committees. By passing legislation for compulsory return tickets with food that is supplied by the shipping companies, the Government have reduced the number of the destitute pilgrims they had to repatriate every year with a high cost of expenditure. A reference to page 74 of the report under consideration will show that the number of destitute pilgrims, repatriated at Government cost was 560 in the year 1934, and it has gradually decreased to 177 only in the year 1938. Although there was a slight rise in the number in the two subsequent years, yet so far as my information goes the number was much less after 1940. The compulsory supply of cooked food has proved inconvenient and more expensive to the pilgrims, as owing to the bad quality of the food supplied either the pilgrims have to spend extra money to get food to their liking and

taste or they get ill and have to spend a lot for their medical treatment. I can without any fear of contradiction say that the reforms, if any, introduced by the Government in pilgrim traffic were more in the interest of the Government themselves than in that of the pilgrims. Sir, recommendations were made in the old Haj Enquiry Committee's report to approach the Railway authorities to organise the despatch of pilgrims by special trains and to provide other facilities also to grant them concessional return tickets, but the Government did nothing at all in the matter in spite of the fact that the Railways have so many concessions in vogue for religious *melas* and gatherings throughout India. This question of concessional return tickets was several times raised in the Assembly in the form of questions, cut motions and speeches on the Railway Budget, but we always got a flat refusal, apparently because the Government would have had to part with a certain amount of money which they think would never be lost even if the concession was not introduced. The same principle could apply to the Haj traffic as is applied in the case of Hardwar and other *melas* of the kind in the issue of return tickets. But probably, Sir, the Government are against the policy of popularising railway traffic in connection with the Haj pilgrimage though they make such efforts in the case of other religious *melas* in India. Although strong recommendations were made to build a musafirkhana for the use of the Hajeas at the Calcutta port, where there is none at present, no move has been made by the Government in this direction at all. Similar is the case with the recommendation regarding the construction of pilgrim camps at Bombay and Karachi. So much so that even when two years back an amount was provided in the Budget and sanctioned by the Assembly for constructing a pilgrim camp at Karachi, the amount was not spent and subsequently withdrawn on the pretence of break of war; though the Government did not curtail the huge expenditure of the Ecclesiastical Department which fact exposes the much advertised religious impartiality of the Government. It was recommended that as the keeping of the Kamran quarantine station will not be required at all, expenditure on that should be drastically curtailed. But nothing was done and the poor pilgrims are still burdened for nothing with the maintenance cost of the quarantine and the administration of the island which is met from the Kamran quarantine station fund, which is a charge upon each pilgrim in the shape of a fee, for which they do not get any service and benefit except the trouble the pilgrims are put to on account of the pilgrim ships having required to call at the island without any necessity. If the Kamran quarantine is abolished either the Government of India or the Government of His Majesty shall have to bear this expenditure, which is being avoided. The result is that Hajeas are burdened with this expenditure without any justification whatsoever.

Sir, the steamers plied for pilgrim traffic, unlike anywhere else in the world, are cargo ships with unsheathed hard steel surface with hundreds of thousands of overlapping edges, rivet heads and other unevennesses where the deck pilgrims have to lie down most uncomfortably in the congested and extremely hot in-between decks without any comfortable arrangements for taking bath or even of comfortably easing themselves at the call of nature. There is no seating arrangement and the pilgrims are huddled together like cattle. Sir, under such circumstances recommendations were made to the different shipping companies to provide elementary necessities to the Hajeas and to carry out certain structural improvements in their steamers so as to make them worthy of human traffic. For instance, marking the accommodation for each pilgrim and introducing the system of reservation, providing good and spacious latrines in increased numbers, sheathing the hard steel surface of the ship with wooden planks for the comfort of the pilgrims, providing wooden planks for sleeping, providing electric fans, keeping qualified nurses and *dais* for the treatment of female patient pilgrims and such-like many other things were recommended but either no serious action was taken by the Government or the shipping companies turned a deaf ear to these requests. I understand that the shipping

[Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha.]

companies put forth their claim for increasing the fares in case they are compelled to carry out the required structural improvements. Sir, all this callous carelessness on the part of the companies is due to the fact that the pilgrim traffic business has become the monopoly of only one shipping company—the Turner Morrison Shipping Company—which, in their own interest, cannot tolerate the coming in of any other shipping concern into the field for this business. Whenever any company tried to come in, to a great benefit of the pilgrims, that was kicked out by cut-throat competition, by the Turner and Morrison Company's temporarily lowering the fares which they can afford to do for a long period as they have amassed huge profits in this business by charging exorbitant rates of fare, being alone in the field. Sir, the general rate of fare charged from a deck passenger from Karachi to Jeddah is Rs. 195 and, I know that several times in competition with other shipping companies, Turner Morrison carried pilgrims for Rs. 25 for the return ticket including food expenses. I would read out a passage from the Haj Inquiry Report in support of what I have said:

"In the past fares have been on occasions as low as Rs. 25, for each journey, and though it must be admitted that conditions have altered, we are satisfied on such data as are available to us that it should be possible even under present day conditions for the steamship companies to undertake the traffic of a fixed fare of approximately Rs. 60, for each journey. . . ."

In the same report on page 71, in para. 122, it is stated as follows:

"For example, from Bombay to Basra, 1,603 miles, the return fare is Rs. 76, as compared with the return fare from Bombay to Jeddah, 2,362, miles, of Rs. 170 plus Rs. 25 Jeddah and Kamran dues."

It means that from Bombay to Jeddah Rs. 3.26 are charged more for each hundred miles distance, although the cargo steamers used as pilgrim ships have no comparison whatsoever with the most comfortable passenger ships plied between Karachi and Basra. Sir, in the report under consideration a very good table for comparison of fares is given; it is on page 69. A perusal of that will show that the cost of deck traffic from Bombay to Jeddah including food charges for 100 miles on the most uncomfortable cargo steamers in 1937 was Rs. 3.1, while that from Bombay to Rangoon, Shanghai, Singapore, Hong Kong, on comfortable passenger ships was from Rs. 1.2 to 1.8 only. The different Indian Railways charged from III class passengers for the same distance of 100 miles before March, 1940, from Rs. 1.3 to 2.1. This will show that the rate charged from the Haj pilgrims is far more than it is charged for a similar distance from Bombay to some other ports by sea or from Bombay to other distant places by rail. Sir, it was on this account that the Haj Inquiry Committee definitely recommended that the fare question should be investigated, to render possible the fixation of a uniform fare on all pilgrim ships to avoid unhealthy competition between the shipping companies and also to bring the fares to a reasonably low level. In their opinion, the steamer fare should in no case be more than Rs. 165 for a pilgrim to Jeddah. Sir, it was the foremost duty of the Government to have got this matter investigated long ago in order to break this monopoly by one company, but this was not done evidently to avoid the coming in of any other company besides Turner Morrison and to allow it to get the best of benefits out of the pockets of Hajees.

Sir, it is astonishing to note that even though a special officer was appointed he was not asked to investigate into this matter and make his recommendations thereon. I would ask the Government to take up this matter according to the recommendations of the Haj Inquiry Committee, as, I am sure, unless the monopoly of one company is broken, the desired improvements will never be carried out. And if the Government is really serious to get the proposed improvements made in the pilgrim ships, they shall have to adopt means to attract other shipping companies to take up pilgrim traffic business which is in every way a profitable one.

Sir, with this attitude of the Government for so long a time towards a most essential religious duty of the Mussalmans, which unfortunately happens to be

controlled and managed by the Secretariat here, it was reasonably hoped that the troubles and difficulties could be removed if there were a Muslim Officer in the Main Secretariat in charge of the pilgrim work and other allied matters, so that it could be possible for the Government to pay better attention towards this subject. It was on that account, Sir, that a Resolution moved by my friend, Mr. H. M. Abdullah, got through. It had a unanimous support of this House, and consequently the Government appointed a distinguished Muslim I.C.S. in the person of Mr. J. A. Rahim. Sir, it is gratifying to note that Mr. Rahim took great pains in going deep into the details of every affair connected with the Haj and in writing a comprehensive report, in which he has made 82 recommendations. He has supported these recommendations not only with arguments and reasons, but with facts and figures. Sir, I have thoroughly studied the Report and have found it to be a very useful and valuable work for the benefit of the pilgrims as well as to serve as a guide to the Government to better their condition, provided they be really anxious to do so. Mr. Rahim amply deserves our thanks and congratulations for the keen interest he has taken in performing the most important work that was entrusted to him. But, Sir, the value of this report depends only on the attitude the Government takes in giving effect to the various recommendations made therein.

Sir, the Report, though a little less in volume than the old Haj Inquiry Report, contains almost all the matters that could come in within the limits of the terms of reference. A major portion of the recommendations were placed before the Standing Haj Committee and were approved by it with the exception of a very few recommendations in regard to which the Standing Haj Committee did not fully agree with Mr. Rahim. For instance, the Committee was not in favour of taking photographs for passport purposes, as this is forbidden in Islam. The Committee also did not agree to get some more legal powers to control the activities of Muallims, or Pilgrim Guides, by issuing some sort of licences to them in India. Personally, I am entirely opposed to imposing any such restrictions upon the people who work as guides on a religious duty. The Indian Penal Code has vast powers to deal with cheats or dishonest persons. Sir, a measure of the kind was brought forward in this House to control the activities of Muallims in the time of the late Honourable Sir Fazl-i-Husain, Member for Education, Health and Lands, but it was unanimously opposed by the Muslim Members and was finally dropped. Sir, excepting these two measures, so far as I can judge, there is no such recommendation which does not command the whole-hearted support of the entire Muslim Community.

Sir, out of the various recommendations made, the one that relates to providing berthed accommodation to the deck passengers is very important and a useful one. If it is carried out it would remove at least 25 per cent. of the troubles of the Hajees, and would make their journey a comfortable one. Mr. Rahim, has discussed this question at length and has proved the utility of this scheme not only for the pilgrims, but for the shipping companies also. Sir, in para. 46 of his report Mr. Rahim has given his observations as to the deck surface of the pilgrim ships, which I would like to read out for the information of the House and to leave it to the Honourable Members to decide how important is the recommendation for berthed seats:

"The deck passengers have therefore to sleep upon steel plates, which are rendered still more uncomfortable than they would otherwise be through the presence of overlapping edges, rivet heads, and other unevennesses. A few pilgrims bring with them camp-beds or charpais, but the majority are without even mattresses. An average camp-bed measures six feet in length and is two and a half feet across, covering, thus, very nearly the space allowance of 16 sq. feet."

Sir, none of the recommendations is such as can be overlooked or delayed. I have mentioned one to quote it as an example. Sir, it will take a lot of time if I go on repeating the entire lot of the recommendations before the House. It would suffice me to say that we are in absolute favour of the recommendations and would request the Government not to treat this report, which has been written by an official of their own, like the old report of the recommendations of the Haj Enquiry Committee by the Members of this House. I do not think that the Government can have any reason to go against the decision reached by their own employee.

[Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha.]

Sir, I would like to make a reference to the main question which was the real cause of the appointment of the Special Officer to make this report, i.e., the appointment of a permanent Pilgrim Officer in the Secretariat. I think, instead of giving my own arguments in support of this demand of the Muslim Members, I would request the Honourable Members to refer to pages 134 and 135 of the report, where the arrangements at the Centre have been fully discussed by Mr. Rahim. For the convenience of the Honourable Members, I would read out the concluding para. regarding the appointment of a Pilgrim Officer in the Secretariat.

"Many of the recommendations made in this report if accepted would require supervision when being translated into practice, while some like the introduction of the Qafila system and improved methods of publicity necessitate much additional labour. The employment of an officer who could devote his attention entirely to work concerning the pilgrimage appears necessary. As the pilgrim officer would have a considerable amount of touring to do besides other work his time should be fully occupied. I believe, moreover, that too much stress has been laid in the past on the seasonal character of the pilgrimage and all that follows from it; actually there are at present only three slack months in the year, which could be filled out by a better distribution of work like publicity, examination of reports, and assimilation of material collected during the peak of the season. Where so much interest is shown by the public the issue of an annual report by Government appears desirable, a work that could be undertaken by the pilgrim officer, who would be in the position of an Under Secretary as far as the Secretariat part of his duties were concerned. I recommend the appointment of a pilgrim officer in the Secretariat or attached to it. As the work is connected with an aspect of Muslim religious life and the contacts with the public are chiefly with Muslims and Muslim organizations, it is desirable that the officer should be a Muslim."

Sir, after this recommendation made by Mr. Rahim, I think there can be no option for the Government but to appoint the required officer as soon as possible. I would in this connection like to suggest that the officer should in no way be of a less position and status than suggested in the report, although in my opinion he should not necessarily be an I.C.S. Such persons should be considered for this post as are well versed in the Haj affairs and the problems connected therewith. He must, of course, be a man of religious aptitude and very well conversant with the religious principles. I hope before making the appointment, the Standing Haj Committee will also be consulted.

Sir, as many of the recommendations affect the pilgrim ship companies, some such recommendations were deferred for consideration by the Standing Haj Committee in presence of the representatives of the shipping companies, and, therefore, I had suggested that a meeting of the Standing Haj Committee be held at one of the pilgrim ports to give the members of the Haj Committee an opportunity to consider the recommendations on the spot and in the presence of the representatives of the shipping companies to avoid any more delay. I hope the authorities will have no objection in agreeing to this proposal of mine in order to expedite the matter.

Sir, before ending my speech I think it necessary to point out certain matters that are not included in the report and in the terms of reference for enquiry. They are as follows:

(1) Examination and fixation of steamer fares at reasonable normal rates and advice to Government to employ more than one company for pilgrim traffic. I have already spoken much on this point and I need say nothing more in this respect;

(2) The abolishing of the Kamran quarantine station and exemption of the pilgrims of Kamran fee that is charged from them without reason. Sir, this point has already been dealt with by me just now and has also been stressed several times in this House; and

(3) Arrangements for the pilgrims in the Hedjaz.

Sir, the pilgrims' second instalment of troubles begins when they land at Jeddah, where there is nobody to look after them and their interests, unlike the nationals of other Governments. This part of the Haj question was ignored even by the late Haj Enquiry Committee, apparently

because this was not included in the terms of reference. Any reforms, if at all, made in the Haj Traffic matters will be left incomplete if enquiries are not made to remove the troubles and difficulties of the Hajeess in Hedjaz. I would, therefore, most forcibly stress on the Government the necessity to fill up this gap and get enquiries made on the three above points very soon.

Sir, as termed in the Resolution moved by my friend, Mr. H. M. Abdullah, the Honourable Mr. Tyson was pleased to say in this House that the officer who had been placed on special duty would also be charged with the task of examining the conditions of pilgrimage to holy places other than the Hedjaz—a subject which was dealt with not of course in his Department but in the Department of External Affairs. From this he meant the holy places of Iran and Iraq.

Sir, after giving an undertaking the Government ought to have included in the terms of reference for the report the arrangements for pilgrims proceeding to the holy places in Iraq and Iran. But that was not done. I do not know why? I hope Government will be pleased to say something to clear their position in this respect and would also arrange to fulfil the undertaking given by Mr. Tyson.

Sir, that is all that I have to say in respect to the report. But in the end I must quote the undertaking given by the Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai for making permanent and adequate arrangements with regard to Haj on the 15th of November, 1940, when speaking on Mr. Abdullah's Resolution. The Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai was pleased to say:

"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."

I hope the Government will keep the dignity of the undertaking given by the Honourable Member and would do everything in the matter.

I would be failing in my duty if I do not express my deep sense of gratitude to the very favourable and sympathetic attitude of my friend, Mr. Bozman, Secretary in charge of the Department, towards the recommendations in the meeting of the Standing Haj Committee. I hope and trust that he will do everything to carry out the recommendations and thereby win the hearts of the entire Muslim community. But I must say that even if Mr. Bozman is anxious to do anything, unless the Honourable the Finance Member and the other gods of the Finance Department are also likewise sympathetic, nothing would possibly be done. I hope that the Honourable the Finance Member will not grudge a few lakhs of rupees to spend for the benefit of the Haj pilgrims who perform a most pious religious duty, the responsibility for the arrangements for which fortunately or unfortunately lies with the Government. I would, however, assure him that the amount required to be spent in this connection will only be a fraction of the huge amount of 36 lakhs of rupees that are annually spent on the Ecclesiastical Department which in my opinion is no more important than the performance of the Haj by the Muslims.

I would like to say a few words about one more point, and I have finished. In the rules for elections of the Port Haj Committees, the Government officials are also allowed to seek election. It is contrary to the rule of the land in respect of other elected bodies. This point was brought to the notice in a meeting of the Standing Haj Committee and was unanimously passed that the rules should be amended, so as not to allow officials to seek elections in the Port Haj Committees. They can, however, be easily nominated by the Government. I hope that Secretary in charge might have given his directions in this respect.

I will take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Government that they should make arrangements for Haj pilgrims in the coming season as the people have been extremely annoyed and disappointed that the Government did not do any arrangements for the Haj in the last season. With these words, I resume my seat.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Deputy President, before I proceed to make a few observations on the Report of this Special Haj Inquiry, I must offer my warm tribute to Mr. J. A. Rahim for the excellent report he has made and which report we are discussing today

Babu Baijnath Bajoria (Marwari Association: Indian Commerce): We have not received a copy of the Report.

Mr. G. S. Bozman (Secretary, Indians Overseas Department): It was laid on the table of the House; copies are in the Library of the House.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Will it not be circulated among us separately also? I would like to know this from the Government.

Mr. G. S. Bozman: I do not think that is really necessary. There are sufficient copies in the Library of the House for those Members who are interested to avail themselves of it.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: It is an outstanding Report on the difficulties which the pilgrims suffer during the voyage to the Hedjaz, and his recommendations have been so useful that this report will be treated as a historical document so far as this particular subject is concerned. Mr. Rahim has studied the subjects so well and gone into the matter so thoroughly that he has left nothing untouched. Both in my personal capacity and as Chairman of the Port Haj Committee of Calcutta, I have had extensive correspondence with Mr. Rahim and I must say that he was always found to be sympathetic and responsive to suggestions made for the removal of the difficulties of pilgrims. He has devoted all his time and consulted all the Port Haj Committees, to gain first-hand knowledge for the report that he was to prepare. The report contains 82 recommendations, and, as my Honourable friend, Khan Bahadur Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, has just said, excepting one or two of the recommendations made, the Muslim community is grateful for them and they accept those recommendations.

I will now proceed to give a little history as to why it is incumbent upon every Muslim to perform the Haj. The Honourable Non-Muslim Members of this House may not be aware that Islam provides five institutions, called the "Five pillars of Islam". The first of them is to imitate the divine morals and is contained in the very formula of the faith—

"La Ilaha Illallah Muhammad ur Rasul Allah."

(There is no other deity or object for adoration but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet.)

The second pillar is the prayer. The third is the alms-giving or Zakat. The fourth is fasting. The fifth is Haj or pilgrimage. The injunction of the Holy Quran in respect of pilgrimage is that every Muslim shall perform Haj which is obligatory and is part and parcel of the Muslim religion. It is of course not obligatory for indigent persons

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Did you say that the first pillar is morality?

Major Nawab Sir Ahmad Nawaz Khan (Nominated Non-Official): Belief in the unity of God and prophethood.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: In 1913, my late brother, Nawab Bahadur Sir Abdel Kerim Ghuznavi, who was then a Member of the Viceroy's Imperial Legislative Council, under the instructions of the Government of India, went to Haj as a pilgrim in order to find out first-hand information about the difficulties of the pilgrims who go to the Hedjaz. He issued an official pamphlet—that was in 1913—giving full details, which was found by the first Haj Inquiry Committee to provide a most interesting description of the condition of things immediately before the first war, as far as pilgrim traffic was concerned. It was in 1913 that he had suggested various valuable suggestions for remedying many of the deficiencies which he had proved were then existing.

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

About the same year, that is 1913, another prominent Muslim Member, the late Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, brought in a resolution in the Council of the Governor General, suggesting that the ports of Calcutta and Chittagong should

be thrown open for the embarkation of pilgrims. In his speech he said that he had also moved a similar resolution in the Bombay Legislative Council. He gave a most lucid exposition of the difficulties in Bombay in securing passage to Jeddah, increased rates of passage money and the need of musafir-khanas in Bombay. He pointed out another difficulty. The Government of Bombay had, in 1913, put forward a proposal for the grant of a monopoly of pilgrim traffic for a fixed period of years to one steamship company, which, if carried out by Government, would have been highly detrimental in the interests of the pilgrims, as that monopolistic concern would have made the poor pilgrims pay a terribly high fare. In 1924, Sir Ibrahim Haroon Jaffer tabled a resolution for the appointment of a Haj Inquiry Committee, but he failed as the Honourable Member. Sir Narasimha Sarma, the then Member in charge, assured him that the grievances of the pilgrims would be fully investigated by him. At last, in September, 1928, the late Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon moved a Resolution in the Legislative Assembly on the lines of that tabled by Sir Ibrahim Haroon Jaffer in 1924 for the appointment of a committee by Government. This is the history of the first Haj Inquiry Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. H. B. Clayton, C.I.E., I.C.S. The Committee submitted an elaborate report in 1931 containing many and varied suggestions for the removal of the various difficulties experienced by the pilgrims. Most of the suggestions remained unimplemented. Some of the Members who served on that Committee—I find that my Honourable friend, Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur will bear me out that the most valuable report the Committee had made was shelved and nothing was done, and that the troubles that the Hajees experienced continued from year's end to year's end.

My Honourable friend, Khan Bahadur Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, said that Mr. Rahim's report was made by him as an official and, therefore, he said, being a Government official's report it should not have been shelved. May I point out to him that the other report also was a report by a committee whose chairman was a Government official, and the recommendations that were made in the report of that Committee had the approval of the chairman of that Committee, but still they shelved it. What is the guarantee that this report will not receive the same fate as the other one? In the first report they recommended that the port of Calcutta should be kept open. What happened to that recommendation? The only monopolistic shipping company which then existed, that is, Messrs. Turner Morrison and Co. resisted that with all the power they possessed; they did not like us to open the port of Calcutta. When my brother came back as a Member of the Government of Bengal, he opened the port of Calcutta. That monopolistic company tried, and is trying their level best to close the port of Calcutta, and I will give you the reasons why they want to do that. They have got their own set of brokers, whom they send out to collect these pilgrims, and they find it detrimental to their interests if they allow the port of Calcutta to remain open, because, if that port remains open, we who are the members of the Calcutta Port Haj Committee will see to it that the trick which they want to play to get pilgrims and extort as much money as they can, cannot be allowed. Even this time the Government of India, although they provided one other boat from Karachi and Bombay,—Messrs. Turner Morrison and Co. was able to prevail upon them not to provide a boat for Calcutta. And the boat for Calcutta was not provided. They further recommended—I am speaking of the old Report—that Government should construct musafir-khanas in Bombay, Calcutta and Karachi. The Bombay Muslims are rich and wealthy. They have one or two musafir-khanas. I have visited them, they are kept fairly well. I have not visited Karachi, so I am not in a position to say about it; still the Government has spent a certain amount of money for the Karachi musafir-khana. But up to date they have not raised their little finger to have a musafir-khana in Calcutta. They did nothing in spite of the recommendation of the first report. (Interruption by Major Nawab Sir Ahmad Nawaz Khan.) Don't you interrupt me. It is not a question of to-day: it is a question of a few years before. What did they do before 1930, 1934, 1935, 1936? Why do you

shake your head now? We know that they cannot do it to-day, but why did they not do it before? That recommendation was made long ago, about 15 years ago, and they did nothing. Before this war was declared, as Chairman of the Port Haj Committee of Calcutta, I sent in a report praying the Government of India through the Government of Bengal—we told them that we have taken pains to find a plot of land in Sooterkin Lane, Calcutta which is close to the central mosque, the Juma Masjid, and that we have got Messrs. Ballardie, Thompson and Matthews, to go into the matter of the musafirkhana, and they have submitted a scheme or plan with necessary figures of the amount required for construction and the plan which they submitted was sent on to the Government of India through the Government of Bengal. And the Government of India shelved it. (*An Honourable Member*: “Are there no private musafirkhanas?”) There are, but they are not for pilgrims. At one time, four to five thousand pilgrims arrive and the existing musafirkhanas are not sufficient and they are not intended for the pilgrims also. Sir, before I proceed I insist that the Honourable Member in charge should make a statement here and now. Are they prepared to proceed in the matter and secure that plot of land belonging to the Calcutta Improvement Trust? After waiting for three long years, the Improvement Trust has sold that land to a private person. I want an answer from the Government here and now—whether they are prepared to state that they will acquire that land from that person and proceed with the construction of the building after the war.

Then came the report which we are discussing. I opened my speech complimenting Mr. Rahim on the historic report which he has made. As my friend who preceded me pointed out, most of the recommendations that were made by Mr. Rahim were also contained in the previous report which was not implemented. Therefore, he had to repeat them in his report. This Report which Mr. Rahim submitted was considered by the Central Haj Committee in their meetings of the 16th and 17th November for the first time and the Honourable Mr. Aney presided. The Muslim community is indeed grateful to Mr. Aney. He was very sympathetic and I must say that he showed his willingness to do all he could to implement this report. Since then a second meeting was held on the 9th March, 1943, which was presided over by Mr. Bozman, as Mr. Aney was no longer in Government as a Member. Mr. Bozman showed an understanding and consideration equal to that of Mr. Aney. In both the meetings of the Central Haj Committee, they accepted the recommendations, except one or two, with which we could not agree. I would like Mr. Bozman to tell us here and now whether he is prepared to see that the recommendations that have been accepted by the Committee will be implemented as soon as possible and not shelved, as was the case with the first report as I have already said.

I will now come to one or two points which I want the Government of India to note and they are these. Port Haj Committees are constituted under Act XX of 1932, which was passed as a result of the recommendation of the Haj Inquiry Committee and they came into being in the first half of 1934. With the coming into force of Part III of the Government of India Act of 1935, that is, provincial autonomy, all the statutory functions relating to the Port Haj Committee which were to be exercised by the Government of India were delegated for administrative reasons to the Provincial Governments concerned under Notification dated the 30th March, 1938. I hope I have made the point clear. The administrative part of the machinery should be in the hands of the Government of India which is a correct thing to do, as the Haj is an all-India question but with the introduction of reforms in 1935, they transferred these to the provinces. I submit that this is a thing which the Government should not do. This being an all-India question, the Port Haj Committees of the three ports of India, namely, Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi, should be directly under the Central Government, and the rule-making powers should also be vested with the Government of India, for the simple reason which my friend has pointed out. One province may make

one set of rules, another province may make another set of rules and a third province may make a third set of rules. If the rules are not uniform and if different provinces make different rules, this is not beneficial to the pilgrims. The rules in the different provinces should be identical, except in particular cases where a particular set of rules is required to suit the conditions of that particular province. Otherwise, the rules of all the Port Haj Committees should be identical and they should be directly under the Government of India.

Now, about the membership of these committees. I am speaking about the Calcutta Port Haj Committee. It is known to the Muslim Members of the House that there are three classes of members. First come the nominated members, then the elected members, and then there is a third kind, which is co-opted by the elected members. Now, I object to the officials, the Government servants, standing for election, as is being done in Calcutta. I am not aware as to what is being done in Karachi or Bombay, but in Calcutta

there are two or three Government servants who stand for election, which is very improper. They are the members of the Port Haj Committee. Naturally, an official in a high position can get votes and I would not mention names. It is impossible to defeat them for reasons which I need not mention; they are known to all of us.

Kuwar Hajee Ismaiel Alikhan (Nominated Non-Official): What are those reasons?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: They are all Muslims but they are Government officials. Government officials are not allowed to stand for election to the Legislative Assemblies or any other public bodies, so why should they be eligible for election to the Port Haj Committee?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): What is the electorate which elects them?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: There are different sorts of electorates. The Members of the Assemblies elect them, Municipalities elect them and there are other electoral bodies.

Major Nawab Sir Ahmad Nawaz Khan: You object to Muslim officials also?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Yes, I object to them. If necessary, they can co-opt officials. Government can nominate officials. There is a nomination of five members. The Health Officer, one of the Shipping officers, the Commissioner of Police and some other officials are nominated to the Port Haj Committee. We have no objection to the nomination, but the elected part must be confined to non-officials and the officials should not be eligible for election. They should be debarred from election. These are the two points that I wanted to bring to the notice of Mr. Bozman. First of all, the rule-making power must be a central subject and, secondly, no official should be eligible for election but they are certainly welcome by nomination or by co-option if the Committee wants to co-opt them.

Now, Sir, I conclude my speech by tendering our grateful thanks—thanks on behalf of myself and on behalf of the Calcutta Port Haj Committee—to Mr. J. A. Rahim, Mr. Anev, Mr. Bozman and Mr. Pai. All of them have assisted us; all of them have been very sympathetic and they have done all that we wanted them to do. But, of course, they are not the Government. The Government is somebody else and, therefore, I appeal to them that they will do their best to implement the report that we are considering today. I am sorry, Sir, I forgot to mention the name of Mr. Tyson amongst them to whom we are grateful. I do so now.

Maulvi Syed Murtuza Sahib Bahadur (South Madras: Muhammadan): Mr. President, Sir, as one of the members of the Haj Inquiry Committee and also as one of the members of the Standing Haj Committee, I have to perform the very pleasant duty of congratulating and thanking the author of this report, who has taken much pains and who has proved himself, the worthy son of the illustrious father. Sir, though an official, he has gone deep into each and every question and has made 82 recommendations out of which about 46 have been disposed of and it is hoped that the Secretary of the Overseas Department, who is already sympathetic, will show his sympathy throughout and the other re-

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commendations also will be acted upon. In this connection, I have to bring to the notice of the House, particularly the Honourable the Finance Member, whose absence is keenly felt by me, that this is one of the five cardinal principles of Islam, which, according to the Quranic teaching, is incumbent on every well-to-do and healthy Muslim. Those who can afford physically to undertake the journey to Mecca and those who are able to meet the expenses thereof should necessarily visit Mecca, the birth place of Islam and also the birth place of our Holy Prophet, once in their life-time. Such a momentous question as this has been ignored by the Government of India as was pointed out by the previous speakers. So far as I can see, I am the only member of the Haj Inquiry Committee which was constituted in the year 1929 in pursuance of the Resolution which was passed in 1928. We made about 219 recommendations out of which very few have been taken note of. As has been pointed out, the majority of the recommendations were shelved. That is why our Honourable friend, Hafiz Abdullah Sahib, tabled a resolution as a result of which this Special Officer was appointed. He has made, as I said, 82 recommendations many of which are very valuable indeed. In this connection, I have to inform my previous speakers and the other Members of the House that it is not Mr. Bozman who can carry out our recommendations. He must have the co-operation and sympathy of the Finance Member, otherwise he won't be able to do anything. That is why I said that the absence of the Finance Member is keenly felt by us.

I want to bring to the notice of this House that so far as the Ecclesiastical Department of the Government of India is concerned, they spend about 34 lakhs of rupees every year, which is a recurring expenditure. Approximately, every month about 3 lakhs is being spent. For what purpose do they spend this money? A congregation of those who belong to the Church of England is to be held by certain Chaplains once a week and for this purpose 3 lakhs of rupees is being spent every month. But in the case of Muslims for whom it is incumbent to perform Haj they hesitate to spend even a few lakhs of rupees in the shape of non-recurring expenditure.

I have visited all the three ports, Calcutta, Karachi and Bombay. So far as Bombay is concerned, as the House is aware, it consists of rich people, Maimans, Khojas and others and they have provided a musafirkhana specially intended for Hajees. So far as the other two places, namely, Karachi and Calcutta are concerned, unfortunately for us they have no such musafirkhana and I hope my Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, will bear me out. There are no musafirkhanas in Karachi for Hajees and, I think, if something like ten lakhs of rupees as a non-recurring expenditure is sanctioned, we will have a very commodious musafirkhana there. As regards Calcutta, the Chairman of the Port Haj Committee has advocated its cause beautifully well and as one who is fully alive to the necessity of that musafirkhana, I strongly support it. I think a sum of five lakhs of rupees will be sufficient in order not only to purchase a site for that musafirkhana but also to complete the constructional work of the building. A site has been selected by the Port Haj Committee and is just near the Zakaria mosque which is the Juma Masjid in Calcutta.

There is another point which I wish to bring to the notice of the House and it is that a special Muslim officer should necessarily be appointed in the Secretariat of the Government of India, so that he may attend not only to the secretariat duties but also tour other places.

Sir, so far as the terms of reference of our Haj Enquiry Committee, which Committee came into being in 1929, and the terms of reference of the present officer are concerned, it has had many limitations and we have to work under certain limitations and the same difficulty must have been experienced by the author of this Report. Sir, we are not allowed to go to Jeddah or Aden or Kamran, places about which there is much controversy. Kamran, as you are aware, was imposing many hardships on Muslim pilgrims. But after the Haj Enquiry Report was out, that was minimised to a certain extent but even now the Kamran has its own difficulties. Last year, as the House is aware, there

was no pilgrim traffic, and so far as this year is concerned we are not sure that the Government will see their way to permit the intending Hajees to proceed to Mecca. Such being the case, they should see their way to be more liberal as regards sanctioning money for these two musafir-khanas in Calcutta as also for Karachi.

As regards the other question, that is to say, officials seeking elections for membership or office-bearership of the Port Haj Committees, it should be discouraged. I have come to know that so far as Karachi and Bombay are concerned there is no such thing, but as regards Calcutta there it is that officials seek elections to these Port Haj Committees. I hope the Government and particularly the sympathetic Secretary will see their way to put a stop to this thing, so that only desirable candidates may come in and do the duties properly entrusted to them.

Sir, with these few remarks I have to associate myself in thanking the Education Department which was formerly in charge of this as also the Overseas Department which is now in charge of the Haj Pilgrim and my Honourable friend, who is absent, I mean the Honourable the Finance Member, will give us an opportunity of thanking him—although I think him in anticipation—for sanctioning the required money as has been pointed out by my Honourable friend. I hope the other Government Members who are present today will carry this message to the Honourable the Finance Member so that he may attend to these things and by doing so give us an occasion for tendering our hearty congratulations and thanks to him.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, of course, as a Muslim, I have been quite naturally interested in matters relating to Haj all my life, and every Muslim knowing anything about his faith and imbued with even an ordinary degree of piety is always keenly interested in those matters. My connection with the problems arising from the arrangements relating to the Haj traffic began in the year 1928 when as General Secretary of an All India religious organisation, I wrote to the Government of India and submitted a memorandum which had been very carefully and intelligently prepared by another Secretary of the same organisation on the basis of his own observations and experiences as he had proceeded to Holy Hedjaz for pilgrimage that year. I published this memorandum in the papers as well. Next year I myself had the good fortune and the privilege to undertake this sacred journey. I sailed from Bombay and when our steamer touched at Karachi, some Karachi friends saw me on the steamer, and informed me that Government had appointed a Haj Enquiry Committee, which would no doubt go into the complaints and grievances of the pilgrims and enquire into all relevant matters, and that the memorandum which I had submitted to the Government and published in the papers was likely to receive attention, but my friends urged that now that I was myself proceeding to Holy Hedjaz, I should note down all my experiences and report them to Government on my return so that the Haj Enquiry Committee may get some more authentic matter and more food for thought. I told my friends that I would bear the matter in mind. In the course of our voyage, I saw at Kamran a good deal which was a source of unnecessary worry and annoyance to the pilgrims, and myself had a quarrel with a very black Indian doctor bearing a Muslim name who looked and behaved more as a butcher than a doctor. About him I wrote to the Government of India from Holy Mecca without waiting for my return to India. On my return to India, I found from the papers that the Haj Enquiry Committee was at work and later on I was summoned to give evidence before the Committee at Lahore which I did. I found that Mr. Clayton the Chairman of the Committee was forewarned about me and forearmed for cross examining me about Kamran and the tax of Rs. 25 which the pilgrims, even the poorest of them, had been artfully made to pay, for nobody knows how long, without knowing or in the least suspecting that a tax had been imposed on a sacred and imperative religious duty. The imposition and collection of this tax had remained a secret because the amount had always been collected by the shipping company along with and as part of the steamer fare. When question-

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ing me about Kamran, Mr. Clayton, took out his secret weapon, an International Sanitary Convention to which as many as 59 civilised countries were said to be parties and signatories. Of course, like all other Indians I had heard that there were some civilised countries in the world, but I was not prepared for such a plethora of civilisation as to be told that there were as many as 59 civilised countries in this savage world. I felt dumbfounded because I had never seen that convention and was not prepared to answer any questions about it. I pleaded ignorance and asked for time to study it. Mr. Clayton, could not spare his own copy which was the only one he had and which as he very good-humouredly said he had stolen from a Government office. But my late lamented friend, Sir Ibrahim Haroon Jaffar, who was on the Committee came to my rescue and lent me his copy which I promised to return after a few days. Mr. Clayton gave me time to send him my note on the Kamran question after studying the convention. This I did. Well, Sir, this Haj Enquiry Committee pursued its enquiries and submitted a voluminous report. I was not a Member of this Honourable House in those days and cannot say how this House and the Council of State dealt with that report but this much I know for a fact that the Muslim public was dissatisfied with many of its recommendations and complaints and grievances not only continued but multiplied. Nor am I in a position to know and state what action Government took on that report. I take it, it was, with all due ceremony pigeon-holed and kept there as a historical document to be referred to at some remote future time. I hope the Honourable Secretary for the Overseas Department will be able to throw some light on that point. Now, another special enquiry has been made and a most valuable report has been presented. I do hope that Government is quite in earnest and really intends to implement the recommendations contained in this report, because, unless practical steps are taken to carry such recommendations into effect, the time, thought, labour and money spent in securing them are simply wasted. Merely to appoint an Enquiry Committee or an officer on special duty to enquire and report when complaints become loud and persistent may serve as a palliative and the hope that something is going to be done may temporarily lull the complaining public into sleep. But this is like a doctor giving a soporific dose to a patient to allay acute pain and send the patient to sleep. This gives only temporary relief but when the effect of the dose ceases, and the patient is roused from torpor, he starts writhing, groaning and crying again. We do not want temporary relief, we want a cure and a permanent cure, not merely curing the symptoms but eradicating the causes of the disease. To allow such reports to be merely recorded and thereafter shelved deepens the discontent and the sense of suffering. The impression of the public that officials are really callous is intensified. Resentment and indignation follow.

The report of Mr. J. A. Rahim, is a document of great and permanent value. This officer has not only bestowed labour and thought on the work entrusted to him but has brought remarkable intelligence and insight to bear upon his task. He has dealt with every problem connected with Haj in a masterly way and has single handed achieved results which a whole Committee working with assiduity, sympathy and devotion to duty might have achieved. The proper way to appreciate his recommendations is not merely to pay him glowing tributes in words, but to give practical effect to his recommendations. These recommendations have already been circulated to the Provincial Governments, the Provincial Haj Committees, the Shipping companies and many other interested and competent quarters and have met with an unparalleled consensus of approval and agreement. The only dissentient has been that great pilgrim traffic monopolist company, Messrs. Turner Morrison and Co., who have objected to the more important recommendations which tend to throw some financial responsibility on them. But we have known the ways of these money grabbers for much too long to attach much importance to their attitude. They have been carrying so much human cargo so to say in their cargo boats and

have been enabled to charge exorbitant fares. Other shipping companies which entered into competition with them were either killed or throttled but it is hoped that their monopoly is not going to last much longer.

Well, Sir, Mr. Rahim's report contains as many as 82 recommendations. Most of them came up before the Standing Haj Committee which were considered and mostly adopted. The Committee approved of most of the recommendations. I will not refer to all of them but only to some. Some of these recommendations were to be considered in the presence of representatives of the shipping companies and it was decided that this would be done at one of the ports, preferably Bombay. I call special attention to this and hope Government will call a meeting of the Standing Haj Committee for this purpose at Bombay at as early a date as possible. The points to which I call special attention are the following:

The first thing is the Kamran quarantine. This institution at Kamran is now, for all practical purposes, an absolute superfluity. Time there was when the steamers on their outward voyage used to touch at Kamran and some sort of Health Officer used to board the ship and find out for himself whether there had been any cases of smallpox, cholera, plague or any other such contagious disease and in case he was told that there had been some cases, he used to detain the entire body of pilgrims sailing in that steamer and keep them there under quarantine, their clothes were disinfected and all that was necessary in the way of medical aid and precautions was done. But now, Sir, things have changed. Before the pilgrims start from any of the Ports, they are vaccinated and inoculated against cholera and this double process of vaccination and inoculation is expected to make them immune from contagious diseases of the kind which used to occur before. So that in practice it now very seldom happens that any steamer is detained in Kamran. They merely touch there, a very cursory inspection is held and the steamer is allowed to sail away. This being all the work that is now left to Kamran, it is absolutely unjust to continue to tax the pilgrims for the maintenance of the institution at Kamran and to carry on that institution at all. Looking more deeply into the matter, it appears that this excuse of an International Sanitary Convention and this pretence of detaining the steamers there on sanitary and hygienic grounds is not the reason for the occupation of Kamran or for the maintenance of that Station there. The occupation of Kamran is a matter of political importance to the Government of India or to His Majesty's Government, or to both, and, if so, why tax the Hajees, the pilgrims, for the maintenance of that institution, why charge from them a very big amount every year and spend it on maintaining the Kamran Station? Therefore, I submit, Sir, that, as far as Haj traffic is concerned, time is now ripe for cancelling the rules regarding calling of these steamers at Kamran and their detention there or the examination of pilgrims and their detention, and so on.

The second point, Sir, to which I would only briefly invite attention, because it has been dealt with in great detail and with very cogent reasons by my Honourable friend, Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, is the revision of steamer fares. The matter should be taken up by the Government of India with the Shipping Companies and the fares must be cut down. They are unconscionably high, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Piracha, has shown—and it has also been shown in the Report of Mr. J. A. Rahim—that really they are very exorbitant and compare very unfavourably with fares for similar distances to other stations in the Indian ocean.

Then, Sir, I come to return railway tickets for pilgrims, and special trains for them. That requires special attention. The matter has been dealt with by my friend, Mr. Piracha, and I agree with every argument advanced by him and emphasise every one of the points which he has brought forward.

About the Calcutta musafirkhana I need not now say much beyond saying that I agree with every word said by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi. There is absolutely no reason why this matter has been hanging fire for such a long time and why that valuable piece of land should not have been acquired. The

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construction of the musafirkhana can perhaps stand over till the end of the war, but that valuable piece of land will perhaps pass into other hands who may not be willing to part with it and land acquisition proceedings and other proceedings may have to be resorted to, or the price of that land may rise. Therefore, I urge that no time should be lost in acquiring that piece of land.

Finally, I refer to the question of appointing a special Haj Officer. That matter has been very clearly explained by my Honourable friend, Mr. Piracha, and has been fully dealt with in the report of Mr. J. A. Rahim on pages 134 to 136. I emphasise, Sir, the necessity of having such an officer permanently at work over Haj matters and Haj problems in the Government of India Secretariat. We know, Sir, that in spite of the fact that a big Haj Inquiry Committee was appointed and a lot of expense was incurred by Government in getting the matter examined, the Report remained a dead letter. Now another Report—a most valuable Report—is before the Government, and who knows this may become a dead letter too. There ought to be somebody with special responsibility to deal with these matters in the Secretariat of the Government of India and since the state of things which has so far existed shows that the efforts of Government to do anything for the amelioration of the lot of pilgrims have been only sporadic and everything has been done by fits and starts, and they have not systematically dealt with the problems, I say that the Government should appoint a Special Haj Officer who, according to my view, should have the rank of a Deputy Secretary in the Government of India because an officer of a lower rank will not suffice as he will have to deal with very important matters, especially in dealing with shipping companies. He should be permanently at work on these problems, as has been pointed out by Mr. J. A. Rahim, also. There will be only one or two months in the course of the year when he will have slightly less work, but throughout the remaining period he will be fully occupied. Therefore, I say, Sir, that that point should be particularly attended to by Government at the earliest possible moment. Of course, it is useless to say anything to the Finance Department because the Honourable the Finance Member is conveniently absent at the moment, but a hope can be entertained and expressed that the Finance Department will also be sympathetic in the matter. There is no reason why this matter, which is a source of constant and persistent complaint, should not be dealt with in such an effective way as to stop the inflow of these complaints in the future. I join the other speakers, Sir, in expressing my gratitude to those gentlemen who have all along dealt very sympathetically with matters relating to the Haj—I mean Mr. Tyson, Mr. Bozman, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai and Mr. Aney. I know from personal experience that they have been very reasonable and sympathetic and I trust that they will continue the same attitude towards these problems as they have shown in the past.

Mr. H. M. Abdullah (West Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, the House will remember that during the Autumn Session 1940 I had the privilege of moving the Resolution in this House regarding the appointment of a permanent pilgrim officer in charge of the work connected with pilgrims proceeding to the Hedjaz, Iraq and Iran. That Resolution evoked a lively debate. The Government were in the first instance opposed to the appointment of a permanent officer for this work, but subsequently the Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, then Member in charge of the Department of Education, Health and Lands, made an announcement on the floor of the House that Government had appointed a Special Officer to enquire into problems affecting pilgrims and the arrangements made for them, and that he would be asked to report whether a pilgrim officer was required permanently or for the pilgrim season only. As a result of this announcement I withdrew the resolution.

Mr. J. A. Rahim, I.C.S., was appointed for this job. Mr. Rahim's report was placed on the table of this House in February, 1942. On a perusal of the report, it will be apparent that Mr. Rahim has thoroughly examined the problem in all its aspects and made a number of useful recommendations concerning the shipping companies as well as others requiring action on the part

of the Government. I will only deal with the latter class of recommendations, and in this connection I must say that Government do not seem to have taken much notice of this report, which is really deplorable. The report, as I said before, was circulated to Members in the Budget Session, 1942, and since then, over a year has passed, but the Government did not think of even bringing a motion for consideration of the report before the House till I tabled a question to this effect. I cannot, therefore, congratulate the Government on this belated action of now tabling a motion for the purpose. As regards the report, I must at the outset express my disappointment over the fact that although my Resolution calls for an officer to deal with pilgrim traffic not only to Arabia, but to Iraq and Iran as well, the officer appointed has dealt with the pilgrim traffic in connection with the Haj. I am sure that the Government will soon appoint another officer to make a similar report on the pilgrim's traffic to Iraq and Iran.

I may now take up some of the more important recommendations made by Mr. J. A. Rahim, which are given on pages 134, 135 and 136. They are as follows:—

“1. Criticisms directed against the administration have been aimed chiefly at the two points—adequate provision of funds and lack of interest.

2. Some difficulties arise out of the arrangement of placing Haj Committees under Provincial Governments which might have led to the belief in the minds of the public that the subject had not been receiving the attention it deserved.

3. The employment of an officer who could devote his attention entirely to work concerning the pilgrims. As the pilgrim officer would have a considerable amount of touring to do, besides, other work, his time should be fully occupied.”

Sir, it will be seen from the passages just quoted that the main objection of inadequate work for the pilgrim officer, which Government spokesman put forward in 1940, falls to the ground. Here is the opinion of an officer who has gone into the matter thoroughly:

“The report clearly indicates that the existing arrangements have been revised on sound lines. I still hold the view that it is necessary for a pilgrim officer to be appointed exclusively for the work and for bringing about the required reform, provided Government are prepared to accept the recommendations and provide adequate funds.”

As I accepted the assurance given by the Honourable Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai in November, 1940, I would now like the Government spokesman to give us an assurance that the pilgrim officer would be appointed immediately. In fact, his appointment should have been created soon after Government received the report. I would ask for a further assurance that the Government would provide the requisite funds for giving effect to the recommendations with which they are directly concerned. If the Member representing the Overseas Department is unable to do so, we would request the Honourable the Finance Member to give such an assurance, because no improvements can be effected without money. I stated in this House on the 6th November, 1940, that an experienced Muslim should be appointed as Pilgrim Officer. Recommendation No. 46, regarding the construction of a Musafirkhana in Calcutta, recommendation No. 47 regarding the reconstruction of a pilgrimage camp in Karachi, recommendations No. 69 to 74 and 76 to 80 should also be accepted and enforced before the next pilgrim season opens.

The Government should not grudge the expenditure. They should realise what sort of help in men and money Muslims are giving to the Government for the successful prosecution of the war. In all fairness they can reasonably demand that the recommendations of their own officer are not neglected for lack of funds even in time of war.

Before resuming my seat I must acquaint Government with the feeling of indignation and disappointment among the Muslims for the failure of the Government to make ships available for the Haj traffic last year, I understand that the Japanese Government was able to send two ships of Java Muslims to Arabia with the consent of the Allies. I am sure that our benign Government will not repeat this mistake this year, but will make every effort to provide two or three ships for pilgrim traffic and thus earn the gratitude of the Muslim community.

Mr. G. S. Boxman: Sir, it is, I think, unfortunate that owing to pressure of other business this motion, in which we know that our Muslim friends are so closely interested, has come up at the end of the Session. That, I fear, we could not avoid. Honourable Members are tired at the end of a long and

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exhausting Session, and I propose to be brief in my reply, and I trust that if I omit any small points which Honourable Members might have raised, they will excuse me on that account and not charge me with any discourtesy to them.

Sir, we were glad to hear the tributes paid by all Members to the work done by Mr. Rahim. The report which he prepared is, I think, remarkably concise and detailed and has gone into practically every aspect of the Haj problem in India that could very well be discussed in a report of this kind. It seems to me that his recommendations fall naturally into three groups.

There are first of all what I should call the structural recommendations—I mean the recommendations which would involve modification in existing ships or additions to existing ships in their frame work. As has already been mentioned by one Honourable Member, certainly the most important of this group of recommendations is that concerning berthed accommodation for pilgrims. To the best of my recollection, this recommendation, I think, was not objected to, at any rate in principle, by any association or company or individual to whom the report was referred and I can certainly say at once that it is a recommendation which we regard with full sympathy. I think I should be failing in my duty however if I did not point out certain practical difficulties with regard to it, which have got to be overcome. There is, of course, in the first place, no possibility of its being given effect to during the period of the war. It would be quite unthinkable that ships should be laid up at the present time of shortage for so long a period as would be required to effect all these internal alterations. Secondly, it is very doubtful, even if we did lay the ships up, whether the material would be available. New ships, of course, have to be constructed at great speed and pay attention only to war requirements and no others. Then, I should remind Members that the provision of berthed accommodation is going to alter the whole of the feeding arrangements in the ships. At present pilgrims receive their food at their places on the deck. When they are provided with berths, some separate feeding accommodation will have to be arranged for them. Next, the difficulty—and a very real difficulty it is—of purdah arrangements will have to be considered; and finally we do not know yet what effect berthed accommodation may have either upon the passenger carrying capacity of ships or upon that very hotly discussed matter, the fares—economic fares. There are other recommendations in this group referring to sanitary arrangements on the ships, to ventilation arrangements, to the provision of a prayer deck, to facilities for a permanent isolation hospital and so on. I certainly am not competent to say—and I venture to doubt whether any Member of this House is competent to say—how many holes you can knock in a ship without sinking it, and how much you can put on top of a ship without interfering with the hatchways and approaches to the hatchways and the operation of winches. Questions of that sort can only be determined by technical experts, and it was for that reason that the Standing Committee on the Pilgrimage to Hejaz, to which incidentally I should like to pay a tribute, now, for their great assiduity and determination in going through the many recommendations of this report—they made what I consider to be a very practical suggestion, namely, that all these matters should be discussed by them with shipping companies and with the Port Haj committees and with technical experts from the Government of India. That is a suggestion which I am now pursuing, and I hope that I shall be able to call such a meeting in Bombay, probably some time in May. As that group of recommendations—I think there are 17 of them to be discussed at the meeting—is to be examined on the technical aspect, I think the House will probably not expect me to go into any detail on the rest of them.

The next group is the group of administrative recommendations. They refer to the constitution and responsibility of Provincial Haj committees and Port Haj committees and also to the staff employed by the Government of India itself. Now, when these recommendations were considered by the Standing Haj Committee, it became quite clear to me that Members on that committee were keenly aware of the need for keeping down cost and husbanding our

resources at the present time. But they were also impressed by the peculiar difficulties which attach to the organisation of a movement, including a considerable journey by sea, of large numbers of poor and frequently illiterate pilgrims, all of them under the influence of an impelling religious fervour. Control of this movement is a highly complicated and delicate matter and it requires not merely planning on paper by somebody sitting in an office in Delhi or Simla but it requires unremitting hard work at, first of all, the place where the pilgrims start their journey, and secondly at the ports from which they sail. In addition to that, there is the question of publicity upon which Mr. Rahim very rightly commented. Publicity for the arrangements that are made is not an easy matter when we consider the wide areas of India in which it has to be given effect and the difficulty of bringing it home to people, many of whom cannot read or write. But I entirely agree with Mr. Rahim that publicity of this kind is essential if we are to enable pilgrims to take advantage of all the arrangements made and also to protect them against certain ill-intentioned persons who are apt to take advantage of their illiteracy. That is to say, that we can plan at the centre here, but there must be people at the ports and in the provinces who are prepared to effect the necessary contacts. That I understand at any rate is the object which Mr. Rahim had in view in making his recommendations, and I do not imagine that any Member of this House will quarrel with that object.

But it will be observed that Mr. Rahim's observations go into very great detail, both with regard to the constitution of the Provincial and

5 P.M. Port Haj Committees, in regard to salaries to be paid, staff to be employed and the division of financial responsibilities. Now, those recommendations have all to be taken together and fitted into one particular plan. I should like to suggest to Honourable Members that, since the Standing Haj Committee last met on the 9th March, there has been sufficient to occupy our attention to prevent us from reaching a final picture of the whole organisation required. I can give an undertaking now that I am anxious to get a final decision upon the whole of this organisation question as early as I can and I shall spare no pains to push the matter forward. But if money is going to be spent, whether from the pockets of the Central Government or the pockets of the provinces or the pockets of the pilgrims, we need to be assured that it is going to be well spent and will at least help towards achieving the object that we have got in view. Therefore, I suggest that the whole plan should be carefully examined and worked out before we make final decisions on it. In this connection I should like to refer to a point which has been raised by many Members, and that is the proposal made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Abdullah, that there should be a permanent pilgrim officer in the department concerned with the Haj. We, of course, at the moment are at a particularly inappropriate time for examining this suggestion. The department concerned, that is, the Department of Indians Overseas, has doubled in size owing to its other activities, and it is almost impossible at the present moment to say with any real precision whether there is work for a wholtime officer or not. What I am determined on, however, at present is that where Haj matters are concerned there should be no question of their taking a second or third priority, nor have they, so far as I am aware, ever done so in the past.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Permit me to observe, with regard to the proposal of Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi to call upon the Improvement Trust to acquire a piece of land

Mr. G. S. Bozman: Perhaps the Honourable Member would allow me to go on. I shall come to that later in the course of my remarks. I was speaking just now of the question of a permanent officer. We have come to no decision about it, but, as I stated in reply to a question the other day, we are making preliminary arrangements for a Haj this year in the hope that circumstances will permit us to send ships from India to the Hejaz. I cannot give any undertaking whether that will or will not be practicable. That depends not upon me, but upon Japan and similar countries. But in order that these arrangements should be put through and that every arrangement that we can

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possibly make for the benefit of the Hajees India may be fully safeguarded, we are going to appoint an officer to take charge of that work for the Haj season.

Now, there is the third group of Mr. Rahim's recommendations which I shall call the miscellaneous group. They cover all kinds of miscellaneous requirements by the pilgrims, such as, food, washing arrangements, baggage arrangements,—they cover almost every aspect of travelling. I think it will be quite safe for me to say now that the great majority of these recommendations appear to us to be desirable. Once again, I must point out that I have not had time since the 9th March, to go through the whole lot of these in detail, but I can straightaway say that of this group there are 23 which I expect to accept as they stand, and a further nine which I expect to accept in a slightly modified form which was accepted by the Standing Haj Committee.

I should refer, I think, when I am making remarks on these recommendations, to certain speakers' references to the original Haj Enquiry Committee Report. I confess I came to the House this afternoon expecting to discuss Mr. Rahim's report. I find that a great deal of emphasis has been laid on the previous report. I do not wish to go through that report in detail, there is a great deal too much of it to do so in the time available, but I should like to point out that there seems to be some misapprehension as to the Government's attitude towards that report. As has been stated, there were 219 recommendations in that report. Of these 219 recommendations, 120 were accepted by Government without any modification at all, 38 were accepted in a slightly modified form as advised by the Standing Haj Committee, and only 18 were, in fact, rejected. I do not think, therefore, that it is fair to say that Government is responsible for nothing having happened on the original Haj Enquiry Committee report.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: May I ask if mere acceptance was sufficient without any action?

Mr. G. S. Bozman: My Honourable friend, of course, is quite aware that a large number of these recommendations were not for action by Government.

I should like to turn now to some of the individual points that were raised by Members during their speeches. I have already spoken on the question of the permanent officer in the Secretariat. I was asked by two speakers, I think, to consider the question of fares. We have in Mr. Rahim's Report a very interesting comparison between fares as charged on the Haj and fares on a number of other shipping runs. The table that he gave is a very useful table as a general guide, but I should like to give one word of warning about it, and that is, that the ships now employed by either of the companies engaged in the traffic in carrying pilgrims are what we should call in veterinary circles dual purpose ships, that is to say, they are only passenger ships for part of the time, and for the rest of the year they are cargo ships. That inevitably leads, I think, both to discomfort and possibly to some lack of economy. However, with regard to the question of fares, I think Members of this House will remember that this has been discussed a number of times, and there is no power in the Government of India to fix fares, as has sometimes been suggested. It is true, of course, as has been said by a number of speakers, that if you wish to arrive at a true economic fare, you should allow at least a certain amount of competition. Well now, I have nothing to say for or against either of the shipping companies which have taken part in this traffic. All I can say is this, that so far as the Government are concerned, they favour neither company, nor do they oppose either company. If the two companies are prepared to come in, Government have no objection. If one company wishes to go out, Government will have no objection. I must qualify that only by saying that in the period of the war Government must take rather more control over the release of shipping and the arrangements of sailing dates than in normal circumstances. But leaving war aside, Government takes no side with one company or the other.

Now, I was asked also to comment on the quarantine station at Kamran. This is another matter which has been discussed in this House more than once. My friend, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, queried the validity of the International Sanitary Convention. Now, I should hesitate to repudiate a convention of that sort to which we are signatories without very careful consideration but I should go a little further than that and say that in a matter of this sort I should be guided primarily by what my own public health experts have to say. There seems to be some apprehension that the Government of India are desperately clinging to Kamran for some purpose of their own and making the pilgrims pay for it. So far as making the pilgrims pay is concerned, I think Members will recognise that we have brought down the charge for pilgrims at Kamran from what was originally something like Rs. 25 to Rs. 4 and of that Rs. 4 Government pay one, so that the pilgrim now has to pay only 3. But Government will be only too glad not to have the burden of the Kamran station. It is purely a matter of whether sanitary and public health requirements should or should not insist upon the call at Kamran. It is a matter which I have already taken up and shall pursue. Should I get advice, first, that the call at Kamran is unnecessary, secondly, that in respect of the International Convention we can escape the liability, I need not say that we should be only too glad to rid the pilgrims at once of that particular inconvenience.

Now, Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir A. H. Ghuznavi, has raised two points on which he feels strongly as Chairman of the Calcutta Port Haj Committee. I will take first the point about the election of officials to that committee. This was raised by him before—I think it was in 1940—when he addressed the Government of India, and a reply was sent to him that if a suggestion came from the Calcutta Port Haj Committee that this practice was undesirable, the Government of India would take the matter up with the Bengal Government and other Port Haj Committees. The Calcutta Port Haj Committee did not as a matter of fact approach us after that but the position now is somewhat different. Not only have we the statement of Members who are interested in that matter in the House in front of us but we have also the recommendation of the Standing Haj Committee itself—that this matter should now be further examined. An undertaking was given then by Mr. Aney that the department would make a reference to the Government of Bengal on this subject. That undertaking I should like to reaffirm that we shall examine this matter and see whether the rules need modification or possibly some direction should be given.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The Bengal Government have been sleeping over the matter for the last six months.

Mr. G. S. Bozman: I think the Honourable Member is referring to the other point that he raised but he did suggest that the rules should be framed by the Central Government. I was just coming to that point. He went on to argue that the rule-making powers should be with the Central Government and that the Provincial Governments should not be at liberty to frame different rules for different Haj Committees. This, of course, follows from the recommendation made by Mr. Rahim that Port Haj Committees should be under the direct control of the Central Government. That recommendation is not included in the 23 recommendations which I said that the Government of India would see no difficulty in accepting, but I have no hesitation in saying here that co-ordination in this kind of control seems to me entirely desirable and this is a proposal which I should regard with considerable sympathy and possibly even a little more than sympathy.

Then the other point which my Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, raised was with regard to the Calcutta musafirkhana. I think it is possibly on that point that he has his complaint that the Provincial Government's help has not been forthcoming. I would like to say about that that this is a matter on which the Central Government would not care to take direct action without at least getting the views of the Bengal Government. I do not think we can be justly blamed for having asked the Government of

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Bengal to express their views. If we have failed to extract those views from the Government of Bengal so far, you may blame either us or the Government of Bengal.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: What are you going to do now? You have waited so long.

Mr. G. S. Bozman: If my Honourable friend was listening to me carefully, he would have understood that I do not think that the Government of India should take direct action in this matter without ascertaining the views of the Government of Bengal.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Three years are over already!

Mr. G. S. Bozman: Then reference was made to the fact that Mr. Rahim did not in his report make any reference to the pilgrimage to the holy places in Iraq and Iran. I think possibly there has been some misunderstanding over this but the fact is that this department is not concerned with the pilgrimage to the holy places in Iraq and Iran. This is a matter which is dealt with by the External Affairs Department. But when we examined this in the early stages—and this would be borne out by Mr. Rahim himself—he did not receive any complaints with regard to that particular matter and it was, therefore, not considered necessary to pursue it in connection with this report.

Finally, Sir, I have the somewhat remarkable statement made to me that the Japanese sent two ships of Javanese pilgrims to the Hejaz last year. I should be extremely grateful if the Honourable Member who made that statement would furnish me with the source of his information, which has not previously been at my disposal. I should be very glad to know where the ships came from, where they went to and how we can lay our hands on them.

An Honourable Member: It came from the radio.

Mr. G. S. Bozman: Now, Sir, I think I have covered the main points that were made in the discussion and I have given a resume of our attitude towards Mr. Rahim's report. Very briefly, I can summarise it in this way. It is not our intention that Mr. Rahim's report should remain in any sense a dead letter and we have, I think, abandoned the hypothetical process of pigeon-holing reports. At any rate, there are no dovecotes in my office and I should find no place in which to pigeon-hole it. We regard this as a matter which is of the closest concern to the Muslim community in India, a matter in which they can justly call on us to give them every assistance that we can. I think in that respect there can be no difference between the Government and the Muslim community. In practice, we may appear slow, but, Sir, it is not for lack of goodwill that we may be slow but simply because everything that is recommended may not always be immediately practicable.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I now adjourn the Assembly *sine die*.

The Assembly then adjourned *sine die*.