

17th March 1942

**THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

**Official Report**

**Volume II, 1942**

*(11th March to 2nd April, 1942)*

**FIFTEENTH SESSION  
OF THE  
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,  
1942**



NEW DELHI : PRINTED BY THE MANAGER  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS : 1942

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

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Mr. N. M. JOSHI, M.L.A.

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 17th March, 1942.

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.

## MEMBER SWORN.

Mr. Geoffrey Stephen Bozman, C.I.E., M.L.A., (Overseas Secretary).

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### (a) ORAL ANSWERS.

#### NOTICES BY DELHI IMPROVEMENT TRUST TO LESSEES FOR SPEEDING UP BUILDING.

†193. \*Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands please state if Government are aware that the Delhi Improvement Trust is serving notices on those persons who had taken lands on rent from the said Trust to erect buildings within a short period?

(b) Are Government aware that such persons cannot obtain iron on account of control put by Government on the sale of that commodity?

(c) Are Government aware that owing to scarcity of coal, bricks are not available even at 50 per cent. more than normal price and wood is not available on account of shortage of wagons?

(d) What action have Government taken or propose to take to protect the lessees from the demands of the Delhi Improvement Trust?

**The Honourable Mr. N. E. Sarker:** The information has been called for and a reply will be furnished to the House when it is received.

#### EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE PRINTING BRANCH OF THE OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF PRINTING AND STATIONERY.

194. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: (a) Will the Labour Secretary please state whether it is or it is not a fact that, consequent on the representation from the Clerks' Association of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, Government were pleased to fill up 20 per cent. of the vacancies occurring in the Printing Branch of the Office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery, India, New Delhi, from the subordinate offices?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that it is not necessary for recruits to the Printing Branch to be graduates of a University, and in practice most of the new recruits are not graduates?

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

(c) If the answer to part (b) above be in the affirmative, what is the reason for fixing a higher standard of education for persons who have got experience of ten years' service in the department as against persons recruited directly?

(d) Have Government considered the advisability of removing the condition of being a graduate for persons who are promoted from the subordinate offices?

**Mr. H. C. Prior:** (a) The Government of India issued orders in June 1941 to the effect that 20 per cent. of posts of Assistants and clerks in the office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery (and not in its Printing Branch alone) should be set apart for recruitment from amongst experienced men in the subordinate offices of the Stationery and Printing Department.

(b) It is not necessary for recruits to the III Division of clerks in the Controller's office to be graduates of a University. Most of the recently recruited III Division clerks are under-graduates.

(c) and (d). Orders are being issued removing the condition that persons selected for appointment as clerks in the III Division in the Controller's office from his subordinate offices should be graduates.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** With regard to clause (a) of the question, may I know whether the other appointments which do not come within 20 per cent. had to be made direct? If so, what qualifications were required for them?

**Mr. H. C. Prior:** I have to ask for notice of that question.

#### EXTENSION OF WAR RISKS INSURANCE SCHEME TO INDIAN STATES.

**195. \*Sir F. E. James:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether the War Risks Insurance Scheme relating to commodities or factories, machinery and plant has been or will be extended to the Indian States in view of the fact that some of the States are now in highly vulnerable areas? If not, why not?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The War Risks (Goods) Insurance Scheme has not so far been extended to the Indian States. The question of extending it, as also the proposed scheme relating to factory buildings, plant and machinery when brought into force, to the Indian States is engaging the attention of the Government of India.

**Sir Vithal Narayan Chandavarkar:** May I ask whether any Indian States have opened negotiations with Government in regard to this matter?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I cannot say about the negotiations, but certain Indian States have applied to the Government of India to be brought under the scheme.

## INFERIOR OR ADULTERATED TEA EXPORTED FROM INDIA TO MIDDLE EAST.

196. \*Sir F. E. James: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

- (a) whether he is aware (i) that large quantities of inferior quality tea and tea adulterated with black gram husk and *ayathi avarai*, or *manjanathi* leaves are exported from India to Iraq, Iran and Egypt, where, owing to war conditions, they fetch high prices and give a bad name to Indian tea; and (ii) that the adulterants mentioned are despatched from South India by rail and sea to Bombay for the purposes of adulterating tea for export to these countries; and if so, and
- (b) whether he is prepared to consider the advisability (i) of prohibiting the import by sea into India of the aforesaid adulterants, and (ii) of establishing a prescribed standard or standards for tea exported from India, in consultation with the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board and other Associations interested in the tea industry?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) (i). Government have no information.

(ii) Government have received reports that the adulterants mentioned in the first part of the question are despatched by rail and sea from Madras to Bombay.

(b) (i). Government of India consider that prohibition of importation by sea of the adulterants into any port in India from any other port in India will not meet the situation.

(ii) The matter is one which requires detailed examination and cannot be answered in reply to a question. But I may add that the evil complained of has already been brought to the notice of the Provincial Governments concerned in order that it may be dealt with at the source under the powers of those Governments.

**Sir F. E. James:** With regard to the answer to part (a) of the question, did my Honourable friend consult the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board and the United Planters Association of Southern India as to the extent of the evil which is complained of? Can my Honourable friend consult those two organisations?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I have received representations from the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board, and I am prepared to consult those bodies as regards the extent of the evil complained of.

**Sir F. E. James:** With regard to the answer to part (b) of the question, particularly (i) and (ii), will my Honourable friend be prepared to receive a deputation from the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board and the United Planters Association of Southern India in order that the proposals may be adequately discussed with them?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I am perfectly prepared to receive a deputation of these two bodies if the members of it will come here at their expense.

**Sir F. E. James:** May I ask whether the Honourable Member is aware that the responsibility which is now placed upon the Provincial Governments concerned has not as yet been discharged by them in spite of continuous representations to them? Will he not, therefore, consider the advisability of making representations to those Governments so that this evil might be dealt with at its source?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I am not prepared to say that the responsibility has not been adequately discharged but I see that what has been done has not satisfied the interests concerned. As the Honourable Member has promised a deputation, and after I have heard what the deputation have to say, I shall be prepared to pursue the matter further.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** May I ask whether the Tea Cess Committee drew the attention of the Government of India to this question because they charge a little cess on tea which is exported from India and therefore they ought to have looked into the matter?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** No, Sir, not the Tea Cess Committee but the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board approached the Government of India.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** May I ask what the Tea Cess Committee has been doing when adulterated tea is being exported?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The Honourable Member may address the question to the Tea Cess Committee.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Is it not a fact that the Honourable the Commerce Member is in charge of the Tea Cess Committee?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Not the Tea Cess Committee, Sir.

#### TRANSPORT AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS FOR LAND ROUTE INDIAN EVACUEES FROM BURMA.

**197. \*Nawab Siddique Ali Khan:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas kindly state whether adequate transport arrangements have been made for Indians evacuated from Burma by land routes? If not, is he prepared to consider what action is necessary in this regard?

(b) Will he kindly state whether adequate police arrangements have been made for the protection of life and property of such persons during the road journey?

(c) Will he kindly state whether suitable medical arrangements have been made at different points on the routes? If not, is he prepared to consider this matter at an early date?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** (a) and (c). The Government of India have been devoting their most anxious care to the problem of providing all necessary facilities on the land routes from Burma to India and they are, with the co-operation of the Governments of Burma, Bengal and Assam, doing all that is possible to make arrangements for evacuees along those routes.

(b) The Governments of Bengal and Assam have made all the necessary police arrangements in their respective territories. The Government of India have invited the attention of the Government of Burma to the necessity of making adequate arrangements on the Burman sections of the roads.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** May I know if there is any difference in the accommodation or the facilities that are being given to the British people and the Indians, or are they being given equal facilities and equal conveniences for transport?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** The actual facilities available on the roads must differ according to the different regions through which they pass, but so far as the Government of India are concerned, they have issued instructions that no racial discrimination shall be permitted.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** May I ask whether it is a fact that on the road by which the Europeans had to pass special facilities regarding amenities of life and protection of life were given, and on the road which is assigned for the Indians, no proper arrangements have been made for the safety of their lives and other amenities of life?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** So far as I was able to hear the question, it assumes something that I have not yet admitted.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** May I know if any arrangement by police or by military has been made to accompany these persons in order to see to their safe arrival?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** I have already stated that the Governments of Bengal and Assam made all the necessary arrangements in their respective territories.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** I want to know whether any arrangements have been made on the route itself, or whether the arrangements are confined to towns?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** The routes in Bengal and Assam are in the respective territories of these Provincial Governments.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** That is true, but what I want to know is whether arrangements have been made by these two Governments only in their headquarters and other towns, or whether they have made arrangements on the route also because the difficulty may be felt on the way?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** The arrangements have been made by the Provincial Governments where they think they are required.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** But does the Honourable Member know that they have made some arrangement throughout the route also?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** If the Honourable Member suggests that the whole land route from Burma to India should be lined by police, I am afraid I cannot say that this is so.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Not necessarily lined inch by inch, but has the route been protected at certain distances?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** I am unable to give the precise information as to where the police have been stationed.

**TRANSPORT AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS FOR LAND ROUTE INDIAN EVACUEES FROM BURMA.**

**198. \*Nawab Siddique Ali Khan:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas kindly state whether a very large number of Indians are now on their way from Burma to India by land routes?

(b) If the answer to part (a) above be in the affirmative, does he propose to appoint an Indian Officer to look after transport, police and medical arrangements?

(c) Do Government propose to open an office on the Indo-Burma land frontier to record particulars of evacuees so that there may be no difficulty in their returning to Burma after the war?

(d) Will he kindly state whether Indian evacuees from Burma and other places who have no friends and relations in this country to support them will be looked after by the Central Government in the same manner as Britishers and foreigners from those countries are being looked after?

(e) Are Government prepared to open camps for such persons in different provinces and appoint an Indian officer to provide them with comforts during their sojourn in this country?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** (a) Yes

(b) Mr. B. G. Marathey has been appointed Special Evacuation Officer at Chittagong and two officers from Assam have been sent to Burma for the purpose of assisting evacuees coming to India by the Manipur land route.

(c) No.

(d) Provincial Governments and Local Administrations have already been empowered to grant assistance to indigent evacuees from the War Zones.

(e) The initiative in this matter rests with the Provincial Governments.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** Who pays for them when they arrive at Chittagong in Bengal? When they are sent to other parts of India, who pays for their conveyance?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** Various authorities are concerned. There are voluntary organizations, there is the Provincial Government and there is the Central Government.

**Sir F. E. James:** Is my Honourable friend aware of the statement which has been made and repeated on many occasions in this House and in the Press to the effect that one of these roads, either in whole or in part, has been reserved for European refugees? If that is not the case, will he make a categorical denial and have that widely published?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** I am afraid, I have not seen the statement in the Press. There was, however, one statement made yesterday in this House. I have not yet had time to verify the actual facts to which that statement refers. But perhaps Honourable Members will wait for the statement. I hope to make with regard to the work of this Department later in the day.

#### INDIAN HAJ PILGRIMS.

**199. \*Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas kindly state the number of pilgrims who left India for the performance of the last Haj?

(b) How many pilgrims have since returned from Arabia?

(c) Do Government propose to make shipping arrangements so as to bring back the remaining pilgrims as early as possible? How many pilgrims are now waiting at Jedda for the return journey?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** (a) 10,713.

(b) 8,168.

(c) The necessary shipping arrangements have been made. So far as I am aware no pilgrims are now waiting at Jedda for passage.

#### STAFF EMPLOYED IN ARABIA FOR LOOKING AFTER INDIAN HAJ PILGRIMS.

**200. \*Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas kindly lay on the table of the House a statement showing the officers and staff employed in Arabia to look after Indian pilgrims?

(b) Is that staff adequate for the needs of thousands of pilgrims who stay in Arabia for months? Have Government received any complaints about the inadequate staff? Are Government prepared to strengthen the staff during the pilgrim season so that they may help the pilgrims who now depend on *Muallims*?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** (a) A statement is laid on the table.

(b) In addition to the existing permanent staff adequate temporary staff is engaged to meet the needs of pilgrims during the Haj season. Some suggestions were received in 1940 and 1941 for increasing the staff. It was considered that the staff provided for the Vice Consul's office was adequate and that the medical staff was sufficient for the smaller number of Indian pilgrims who were likely to make the pilgrimage during the war.

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*Statement showing the Officers and Staff normally employed in Arabia who look after Indian Pilgrims.*

*Staff at Jedda.*

*Officers :*

1. Indian Vice-Consul, (now held by a P. C. S. officer).
2. Indian Medical Officer, (usually Assistant Surgeon).

*Clerical :*

1. 1st Pilgrimage clerk.
2. 2nd Pilgrimage clerk.

*Medical Establishment :*

1. Head Dispenser.
2. 2nd Dispenser. ...
3. 3rd Dispenser (temporary).
4. One Dresser.

*Inferior Establishment :*

- Two Messengers.
- Two Launch Boys.
- One Sanitary man.

*Seasonal Staff (employed during Haj).**Jedda :*

- Two servants.

*Mecca Dispensary (functioning during Haj season) :*

- One Doctor (usually Sub-Assistant Surgeon).
- One Dispenser.
- One servant.

(Owing to the decrease in the number of pilgrims in 1939, 1940 and 1941 due to the war, no extra dispenser was engaged for the Mecca Dispensary.)

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** What is the extent of the temporary staff provided for?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** I must ask for notice. I regret I have not the details with me.

### THE SPECIAL HAJ ENQUIRY REPORT.

**201. \*Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas kindly state if the special Haj Enquiry Report by Mr. A. Rahim, I.C.S., has been given wide publicity or not?

(b) To which of the newspapers and Muslim bodies have copies of the Report been supplied for opinion?

(c) When will the Report be placed on the Agenda for consideration of the Legislative Assembly?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** (a) and (b). Copies of the report and its summary have been distributed widely amongst press representatives and news agencies and copies have been sent to 67 newspapers. A statement showing the bodies to which copies of the report have been supplied for an expression of opinion is laid on the table.

(c) It is proposed to place the Report on the Agenda for consideration of the Legislative Assembly as soon as possible after the opinions of the Haj Committees and of the various bodies who are being consulted have been obtained and considered by the Government. As it is not possible to obtain these opinions before the close of the present Session and as the Government propose to call a meeting of the Stand-

ing Haj Committee as soon as convenient after this Session, it is regretted that the consideration by this House cannot be arranged earlier than the next Session.

*Statement showing the Names of bodies to which copies of the Special Haj Inquiry Report have been supplied.*

1. The Port Haj Committee, Bombay.
2. The Port Haj Committee, Karachi.
3. The Port Haj Committee, Calcutta.
4. Provincial Haj Committees in Malabar, United Provinces, Punjab, North-West Frontier Province and the Divisional Haj Committees in Assam.
5. The Central Khademul Hujjaj Society, Calcutta.
6. The All-India Hajeess' Welfare League, Calcutta.
7. The Muslim Welfare Assembly, Madras.
8. The Noakhali Muslim Students' Association, Calcutta.
9. The Anjuman-i-Khuddaman-Nabi, Bombay.
10. The All-India Pilgrims' Protection League, Amritsar.
11. The Haj Pilgrims' Protection League, Delhi.
12. The Anjuman-i-Musalmanan-i-Punjab, Karachi.
13. The Backerganj Muslim Chatra Samiti.
14. The Chittagong Muslim Association.
15. The Faridpur Muslim Association.
16. The Chandpur Muslim Students Association.
17. The Rajshahi Muslim Association.
18. The Assam Arabic Students Association, Calcutta.
19. The Delhi Muslim Association, Calcutta.
20. The Hujjaj Food Supply Co., Bombay.
21. The Khan Bahadur Haji Bachooally Charities.
22. The Anjuman-i-Faiz-i-Panjtani Bombay.
23. The Anjuman-i-Faiz-i-Husaini, Bombay.
24. Fatma Bibi Rogay Charity Fund Trust.
25. Haji Adam Haji Abubakar Nurani Charitable Trust.

**Kunwar Hajee Ismael Ali Khan:** Has this report been translated into Urdu?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** Not so far as I am aware.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Will the Government give an opportunity to this House to discuss the report on the floor of the House?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** I have already stated in reply to part (c) that it is proposed to place the Report on the agenda for consideration of the Legislative Assembly.

**Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha:** When do the Government propose to take action on the recommendations made? Will they be able to take action before the next Haj season?

**Mr. G. S. Bozman:** Government will take action on such proposals in the report as they think fit.

**Mauvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani:** Will this be before the next pilgrim season or after the next pilgrim season?

**Mr. G. S. Bosman:** I am unable to say, Sir.

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad:** Does it mean that no action will be taken till one year and we will have to wait for another Haj season to discuss this report?

**Mr. G. S. Bosman:** Again, I am unable to say, Sir.

#### MUSLIM GRAVEYARD FOR ALIGANJ AREA, DELHI.

**202. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kasmi:** Will the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands please state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that there is no public graveyard for Muslims in the Aliganj area, Delhi District;
- (b) whether Government have received any representation in this connection; if so, the action taken thereon; if none, why not;
- (c) whether it is a fact that the nearest graveyards for that place are at distance of five to six miles, *i.e.*, near Faiz Bazar or Paharganj;
- (d) whether Government are aware of the hardships experienced by the residents of that place in carrying their dead bodies to such places on foot specially in rainy weather; and
- (e) whether Government propose to consider the desirability of providing some land for the purpose stated above in that area at an early date; if not, why not?

**The Honourable Mr. N. B. Sarkar:** The information has been called for and a reply will be furnished to the House when it is received

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#### UNSTARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER.

#### COMMUNAL COMPOSITION OF HIGHER POSTS IN THE OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF PRINTING AND STATIONERY AND ITS SUBORDINATE OFFICES.

**55. Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kasmi:** Will the Labour Secretary be pleased to lay a statement in the following form showing the number of members of each community employed permanently in the higher posts in the office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery, India, and its subordinate offices:

- (a) Office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery:
  - (i) Controller,
  - (ii) Deputy Controller,
  - (iii) Assistant Controller,
  - (iv) Superintendents, and
  - (v) Assistants;

- (b) Office of the Deputy Controller of Stationery and Forms, Calcutta:
- (i) Deputy Controller,
  - (ii) Assistant Deputy Controller,
  - (iii) Superintendents,
  - (iv) Assistants, and
  - (v) Store keepers;
- (c) Government of India Presses:
- (i) Managers,
  - (ii) Assistant Managers,
  - (iii) Overseers,
  - (iv) Foremen,
  - (v) Section Holders,
  - (vi) Head Assistants,
  - (vii) Accountants,
  - (viii) Assistants,
  - (ix) Store keepers, and
  - (x) Cashiers; and
- (d) Central Publication Branch:
- (i) Manager,
  - (ii) Assistant Manager,
  - (iii) Superintendents,
  - (iv) Accountant,
  - (v) Assistants,
  - (vi) Cashier, and
  - (vii) Store keeper?

**Mr. H. O. Prior:** A statement giving the required information, as available up to the end of August, 1941, is laid on the table.

As regards part (b), there is no combined office of the Deputy Controller, Stationery and Forms, Calcutta. Information in regard to the Central Forms Store, Calcutta, has been included separately in the statement.

*Statement showing the Number of Members of each Community employed Permanently in the Higher Posts in the various Offices of the Stationery and Printing Departments.*

Key to the abbreviations—

H. = Hindu.

M. = Muslim.

E. = European.

A.-I. = Anglo-Indian.

I.-C. = Indian Christian.

(a) *Office of the Controller of Printing and Stationery.*

(i) Controller . . . . .	1 H.
(ii) Deputy Controller . . . . .	Not permanently filled. (Officiating incumbent is an A.-I.).
(iii) Assistant Controller . . . . .	1 I.-C.
(iv) Superintendents . . . . .	1 H. and 1 A.-I.
(v) Assistants . . . . .	7 H., 2 M. and 1 A.-I.

## (b) Office of the Deputy Controller of Stationery, Calcutta.

(i) Deputy Controller . . . . .	1 H.
* (ii) Assistant Controller . . . . .	1 H.
(iii) Superintendent . . . . .	1 H.
(iv) Assistants . . . . .	15 H. and 3 M.
(v) Storekeeper . . . . .	1 H.

## (c) Government of India Presses.

	Calcutta.	New Delhi.	Simla.	Forms Press, Aligarh.	Forms Press, Calcutta.
Managers . . . . .	1 E.	1 E.	1 E.	1 H.	1 E.
Assistant Managers . . . . .	1 H.	1 H.	1 H.	..	..
Overseers . . . . .	1 H. & 1 M.	1 M.	..	1 M.	..
Foremen . . . . .	2 M. & 1 A.-I.	1 I.-C. & 2 M.		3 M. & 1 vacant.	1 H. & 1 M.
	1 not permanently filled (Officiating incumbent is H.).				
Section holders . . . . .	7 H. & 1 M.	5 H. & 2 M.	5 M.		
Head Assistants . . . . .	1 H.	1 H.	(Head clerk 1 H.)	(Head Asstt. 1 H., Head Clerk 1 H.)	
Accountants . . . . .	1 H.	1 H.	..	1 H.	1 H.
Assistants . . . . .	5 H.	3 H. & 1 M.	..	..	..
Storekeepers . . . . .	1 H.	1 H.	1 I.-C.	1 H.	1 H.
Cashiers . . . . .	1 H.	1 H.	..	1 H.	..

## (d) Central Publications Branch.

Manager . . . . .					1 A.-I.
Assistant Manager . . . . .					1 H.
Superintendent . . . . .					1 H.
Accountant . . . . .					1 H.
Assistants . . . . .					1 A.-I. & 6 H.
Cashier . . . . .					1 H.
Storekeeper . . . . .					1 H.

## Central Forms Store, Calcutta.

Manager . . . . .	1 E.	(He is also Manager of the Forms Press, Calcutta).
Superintendent . . . . .	1 I.-C.	
Assistants . . . . .	7 H.	
Accountant . . . . .	1 H.	
Cashier . . . . .	1 H.	

\* There is no post of Assistant Deputy Controller in this office but one of Assistant Controller.

NOTE.—Where the posts have not been filled by promotion, communal rules for direct recruitment have been followed.

## SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

### FALL IN THE PRICES OF COTTON.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Is the Honourable the Commerce Member aware of the heavy fall in the prices of all qualities and varieties of cotton during the last week? If he is, will he be pleased to state:

- (a) what steps have been taken by Government to ensure the maintenance of an equitable price, in particular regard to the agriculturists?
- (b) what arrangements Government have made for the purchase of the huge surplus of short-staple cotton and how such purchases are likely to be made?
- (c) what steps, if any, Government have taken so far for the drastic reduction of the acreage on short-staple cotton having regard to the commencement of the sowing season in April?
- (d) what steps Government have taken to encourage the growing of alternative crops on such acreage as became released from the reduction of short-staple cotton?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** (a) Yes. Government have decided to buy raw cotton in upcountry districts through selected agents.

(b) Government have appointed certain selected agents for purchase of specified quantities of short and fair staple cotton in the first instance and necessary authority has been issued to them to operate immediately.

(c) and (d). The matter is being dealt with by Provincial and State Governments according to the best means open to them. The subject will form an important item in the discussions that the Government of India will be having with representatives of Provinces and States on the 6th, 7th and 8th April when conferences on food production and control of prices of commodities will be held.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Part (a) of the question has not been answered?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I believe I have answered that. I am aware of the fall in prices and Government have decided to buy raw cotton in upcountry districts through selected agents.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** "To ensure the maintenance of an equitable price", this part has not been answered?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The idea of the Government in entering into the market and purchasing is to improve the position of the cultivator so far as the price of these commodities is concerned.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Have Government any idea of the actual acreage that will be reduced?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** We had certain reports from the Provincial Governments, but the actual acreage will be reported later when these representatives attend the conference.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Have Government any figure of the number of bales of cotton already purchased?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** We have an idea of the number of bales of cotton which we have asked our agents to purchase as a first instalment.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Is the number known?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Government have given order for the purchase of a certain number of bales.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** What has been purchased so far?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** They have just entered the market.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Will Government issue any communiqué for the purpose of allaying the anxieties of the public mind?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I hope the answers that I have given to the Honourable Member will be sufficient publication and will allay the public mind on the subject to the extent that it can.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** May I know if Government will purchase in cities like Bombay or will they go to district markets where the agriculturists take their cotton?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I have said upcountry districts.

**Sir Vithal Narayan Chandavarkar:** When the Honourable Member says raw cotton, does he mean both ginned and unginned cotton?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Both, Sir.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** So far as reduction of acreage is concerned, have Government taken any steps to see that no acreage under cotton is increased in Indian States?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** We have communicated our views and our strong desire to Indian States as well, and we have had assurances from certain Indian States that so far from increasing the acreage, they will try to curtail.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** May I know when this matter was communicated to the Indian States?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Certainly more than a month ago.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Is the Honourable Member aware that at least in the Central Provinces and Berar the acreage under short-staple cotton is reduced by 50 per cent?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I am not aware of the exact percentage of reduction, but I know that the Central Provinces Government are very anxious to reduce acreage; so are other Provincial Governments.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Is it a fact that there is very little quantity of unginning cotton in the market just now?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** It has been so stated by certain agents with whom Government have been in consultation.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Then how are they able to buy unginning cotton?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** The agents have been asked to buy both unginning and ginned and pressed cotton.

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir:** Then, am I to understand that out of the quantity which the agents have been instructed to buy, they will buy such quantities of ginned cotton as they can obtain, considering the lack of unginning cotton in the market?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** They will buy such quantities of unginning cotton as they can obtain and supplement it by buying bales pressed.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Have Government considered the growing of alternative crops in place of cotton in those places where raw cotton was grown? If so, what are the crops?

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** Every kind of alternative crop and essential food-grains in particular has formed the subject of consideration by the Provincial Governments. Discretion has to be given to the Provincial Governments as to what they consider suitable alternative crops which can take the place of a crop of short-staple cotton and fair-staple cotton. I hope to have complete details of what steps have been taken from the representatives of the Provincial Governments who will be attending this conference. As regards inducements, several inducements have been offered to them and the exact

details of those inducements will be further communicated to them at the conference which is to be held on the 6th April.

**Sir Vithal Narayan Chandavarkar:** Does the Honourable Member not consider it desirable to issue a communiqué explaining in full the policy of Government? My information is that there is a good deal of panic in Bombay and in spite of the action taken by the Government of India the panic has not been allayed and the tendency is for the market to fall further.

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar:** I hope the answers that I have given this morning will get wide publicity, and a communiqué cannot add more facts than I have been obliged or privileged to express this morning.

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**Bhai Parma Nand** (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I wish to say something on a point of personal explanation.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not think any one has said anything about the Honourable Member in the House today, so there can be no question of personal explanation.

**Bhai Parma Nand:** Yesterday afternoon I was not in the House, but I saw in the Press Report that Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang referred to me and said that I wrote a letter to Lala Lajpat Rai 20 years ago and recognized in it the need of a Muslim homeland. The . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That is not before the House now, and it will not be in order. The Honourable Member can write to the press or to the Honourable Member concerned.

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#### ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform the Assembly that up to 12 Noon on Friday, the 18th March, 1942, the time fixed for receiving nominations for the Standing Committee for the Department of Commerce, five nominations were received. Subsequently two members withdrew their candidatures. As the number of remaining candidates is equal to the number of vacancies, I declare Mr. E. L. C. Gwilt, Mr. Umar Aly Shah and Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya to be duly elected.

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#### THE CANTONMENTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924.

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

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924."

The motion was adopted.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: Sir, I introduce the Bill.

THE INDIAN FINANCE BILL—*contd.*

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume consideration of the Indian Finance Bill.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor** (Government of India: Nominated Official): Sir, when the House rose yesterday, I was dealing with the question of the complaints made regarding the behaviour of soldiers as exemplified in certain recent incidents. I explained that Government greatly regretted these incidents and I pointed out the measures taken to prevent a recurrence of such incidents. In that connection, I referred to the creation of a corps of military police with the necessary strength to provide for all places where large numbers of troops happen to be stationed or to be passing through. As a result of the action already taken I quoted what the *Bombay Sentinel* said in connection with the debate in the Bombay Corporation. In that connection perhaps I might also quote what the *Bombay Sentinel* said on the 10th March:

"As far as Bombay city is concerned, the situation has certainly improved. But the public apprehension would be greatly allayed by an authoritative statement that the Government, the police and the military authorities have taken steps to see that such excesses are not repeated."

As I have already said, the matter has been the subject of anxious consultations between the civil, police and the military authorities in Bombay, and various steps have already been taken; and I trust that the assurance I gave yesterday and which I give now will allay all anxiety.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan** (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, may I ask whether there is any truth in the allegation in certain quarters that recently, about ten or twelve days ago, an incident has occurred about a couple of miles from Bolaram in which a number of British troops were concerned?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: Does the Honourable Member refer to any attacks on the general public?

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan**: Yes, Sir.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: I am not aware of any such incident.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan**: Will the Honourable Member make an inquiry into it.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: Only if the Honourable Member will mention what the incident is. I have had no information and I will have to ask whether any incident has occurred. I have not even seen anything in the press.

[Sir Gurunath Bewoor.]

Sir, having thus dealt with Mr. Deshmukh's points I would make an appeal to this House and to the general public to view these incidents in their proper perspective. The Indian Army has expanded to over five times its pre-war size. We have a large number of recruits from all parts of the country, many of whom have never seen a city. They have been trained at high speed in the essentials of fighting. We have, coming into this country or passing through its main ports, thousands of British and Dominion troops. We have, in addition, in our main ports, literally thousands of sailors of different allied and neutral countries who are bringing to us and taking from this country most essential and vital supplies. All these are working under very hard and trying conditions. The sailors are braving the dangers of the seas,—submarines, possible air attacks and mines. Our soldiers have fought and are going to fight under very trying and hard conditions. They travel in ships under conditions which we who have travelled in luxury liners cannot understand. They get a little rest, relaxation and pleasure when they are in ports or in towns or cities. Many of them are complete strangers to the East and to our ideas, feelings, habits and customs, and very few know the local language. They may do somethings most innocently but these might hurt our public. And yet considering the large number of troops and the period since the outbreak of war I am sure every one will admit that the number of any serious incidents has been extremely small. In the vastly expanded army of today it is inevitable that there would be some bad characters but how few and exceptional they are! However strict the discipline and however careful the supervision, it is impossible to prevent the occurrence of some incidents. No one regrets these incidents more than the soldiers themselves.

**Some Honourable Members:** Ah!

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor:** I repeat that no one regrets these incidents more than the soldiers themselves. They see that their name is being spoilt by a few bad characters. I think I cannot do better in this connection than to quote the *Bombay Sentinel* again:

"We have said often enough that the majority of soldiers who come to the city are well behaved, but there is a vicious minority. We should be the last to encourage ill-feeling against the man who is fighting in the war whether British, Australian or others, but there is a marked minority which requires to be curbed and controlled and punished."

And that is being done. I would like to emphasise the fact that a proper perspective and a proper sense of proportion should be maintained in dealing with this matter. Every trivial incident should not be exaggerated. I have taken note of what my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogi, mentioned about the incidents on the Bengal and North Western Railway. I had a letter on the same subject from a member of the Council of State and the matter is now engaging the attention, both of the Railway Department and of the Defence Department. I would appeal, Sir, to the general public and press that incidents should not be exaggerated. There is a good deal of rumour in this matter. You often hear that something has happened somewhere and it goes on being exaggerated and if you ask somebody where it happened you cannot get any information. Our own Indian

soldiers are suffering from similar allegations against them in other countries and I think most of the Members would have read about the fabricated accounts of outrages against Indian soldiers which has appeared yesterday in the *Hindustan Times*. And may I merely read one sentence:

"The Civil Defence Commissioner, Mr. O. E. Goonatilleke, has investigated the stories he has heard and found them absolutely baseless. It may be said with confidence that from all enquiries made from every possible source, there is no truth in the allegations of outrages said to have been committed by the Indian troops."

Sir, the same thing applies to the incidents that occur in India and let me make it clear, and I do not want to be misunderstood, that I am not justifying a single outrage or a single mischief but I am merely asking that the House should keep a proper sense of perspective and proportion in dealing with this matter.

May I in this connection appeal, Sir, for a little more understanding and sympathy for the members of the Defence Services and for assistance and co-operation in entertaining our troops and helping them to understand the people, our customs and usages. This applies equally to Indians, British and Americans. Government is grateful to the many organizations who not only spend money in receiving and entertaining troops but give a good deal of the valuable time of the members of the organizations. In the main ports of India the strain on these organizations has been heavy. I would appeal for more sympathy and more understanding and more help and co-operation. I would appeal for a smiling welcome to these troops, our own and those of our Allies, the soldiers, the sailors and the airmen who are risking their lives and are cheerfully undergoing hardship and who get an occasional and short period in peaceful surroundings. Many an incident is due to sheer ignorance and misunderstanding. A friendly feeling, a warm welcome, a cheerful smile, a sympathetic understanding is all that is required and there would be no incidents. And I make this appeal to the Indian as well as the European element in this country—more to the European element because they are much better qualified to arrange for this sort of entertainment—to extend their welcome to Indian officers and Indian troops as well as to European officers and European troops. The Civil Police and the Military Police will not hesitate to deal with the offenders and the public has no cause for alarm whatsoever. The "vicious minority" will be dealt with severely. And I ask for the assistance of the powerful public press of this country in removing this needless alarm and in promoting, what is now very essential, a friendly feeling and sympathetic help and understanding between the civilians and the troops.

To turn now to another matter, Sir, my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, referred to the wasteful expenditure of money and quoted in that connection the case of a Contractor in Meerut. In the short time that has been available and on the basis of information given. I regret I have not been able to trace the particular case that the Honourable Member may have in his mind. Lorries have been hired for a variety of purposes including those in connection with the training of drivers. The one case I have been able to trace is that of a Meerut Contractor who was refused any contract by the local military authorities because the highest local civil authority reported that "he is so untrustworthy that it is futile to deal with him." In these days, lorries are often required most urgently and in large numbers and rates have often to be fixed mainly with a view to get what is needed as quickly as possible. But every precaution is taken to prevent wastage. As regards alleged corruption, Government is

[Sir Gurunath Bewoor.]

only too anxious to put this down with a strong hand and if the Honourable Member will give me sufficient material, I will not hesitate to have the matter investigated and to bring the offenders to book, whoever they may be.

Sardar Sant Singh referred to racial discrimination, and, in that connection, quoted the case of women employees in the General Headquarters. May I say at once, Sir, that there is no racial discrimination, and that all women employees—Indian, Anglo-Indian, or European—get the same scales of pay according to the nature of work performed. It may be that Sardar Sant Singh had in mind what may be called sexual discrimination. The main object in employing women is to relieve men for doing work elsewhere, work which cannot be performed by women. We do, in fact, welcome women, and we hope to continue to employ them in larger numbers. Government would welcome more and more women, Indians or non-Indians, to come forward. In a recent question which he put, Sardar Sant Singh referred to educated Indian young men who wanted clerical jobs and the inference which he wanted to be drawn was that these women were keeping out educated Indian young men from having jobs. Sir, there are today hundreds of such clerical jobs for which we want men. The Army is crying for clerks, and yet, Sir, these educated young men do not want to take up those jobs. What they want are safe and secure jobs. They want to have jobs which can be performed by women and they do not want to go out in the heat and discomfort of working with Regimental Units. I say, Sir, that such educated young men do not deserve our sympathy. The clerical staff of General Headquarters has expanded enormously. It used to be about a thousand, and it is now 4,000. Of these 400 are women.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir, may I interrupt the Honourable Member. I think a proper advertisement will do and he will get lots of young men coming forward.

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: Sir, there have been lots of advertisements. The Honourable Member does not read, it seems. We have spent thousands of rupees in advertising. But the fact is that as soon as these educated young men are told that they have to accept liability for service anywhere, they immediately say "no". They want to serve in safe and secure jobs, and if a woman is doing that job, they say "I can do it equally well."

**Mr. Husenbhai Abdullabhai Laljee** (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Are all educated young men like that?

**Sir Gurunath Bewoor**: I am merely repeating what Sardar Sant Singh said. I am not condemning all young men. I was talking about certain young men who allege that these women were taking their places. These young women who are employed are not just what many people may have an idea of them—pretty-looking girls who know just how to paint their lips well and to serve tea to their bosses. It is not true. Some of them are experienced women, women who have worked in commercial houses, in England as well as in India, and who are highly educated and intelligent and they all do a full day's work—anything up to eight to ten hours a day.

I now turn with some trepidation to the question of Australians in the Army. I fully appreciate the feeling of some Members of this House and elsewhere on this question. But I would like to point out that there never has been any bar on British subjects, from wherever they come, on joining the Indian Army—Australians and others have in the past come into the civil and military services of India *via* the United Kingdom; and no one has ever raised a question. At present the whole of the British Commonwealth and America are in the war. We are searching the world for equipment and so are we searching the world for personnel; and so we are taking personnel as well as equipment from wherever we can get them. There need be no anxiety whatsoever that the few, the very few, Australians and others who may come into the Army would keep a single Indian out. They are coming purely on a temporary basis on an emergency commission for the period of the war; there is ample scope in the defence forces for as many Indians as volunteer to come forward and no Australian has kept or will keep a single Indian out. We are fighting in a common fight and I would appeal to all Members not to raise at this time anything that might affect even remotely the strength of our common resistance to the implacable enemy. We must all join, every one of us, in all parts of the world, to fight the common enemy, and we must not allow petty jealousies and grievances to affect the common effort.

Mr. Kailash Behari Lal referred to the Bihar Government's letter. He was not present when the question was asked and I answered the question and supplementaries. I regret I have not seen the statement of Mr. Mahmood who used to be the Minister there, and, therefore, I am not in a position to answer anything further.

I now come to the important point which has been raised by a number of speakers and which is the main point, namely, the question of our preparation to meet the enemy. I would first of all like to say that I have never said that any Member of this Honourable House would go out and convey to the Japanese any information that may be given. All that has been emphasised is that information given in this House is widely published in this country and broadcast to the world, and a clever enemy—and our enemies are no doubt clever and in some respects cleverer than we are—would be able to take advantage of that information. Even if they knew it already, that is no reason why we should confirm it. I would like to assure Maulana Zafar Ali Khan that the troops that are being recruited in this country, officers and men, of all ranks and classes and grades are being trained intensively by the best instructors that we can secure; and in this connection, I would like to tell Sir Cewasji Jehangir that recruitment and training is carried on in advance of equipment, and we are using even dummy rifles for giving the preliminary training to recruits before we can get the full equipment. I have no doubt, nor, I am sure, has the House the least doubt, that these troops will give a very good account of themselves as they have already done against the enemy even at tremendous odds and in difficult circumstances.

Regarding military preparation to meet the threat, on which certain pertinent questions were put by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, I do not think I can do better than draw the attention of the House to the interview which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief gave to the press representatives

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the other day. I am quite sure that most Members of the House have read this, but I had perhaps just drawn attention to the essential part of that statement. His Excellency said :

"You naturally will not expect me to give details of the arrangements we have made or are making for the defence of India, by sea, by land and air. I can only tell you that the problem is one of the closest co-operation between the three services and is being treated as such and the building up of a strong air force in north-east India, which will not content itself with defence but will attack the enemy, will be one of our principal means of safeguarding India."

Every effort is being made and the lessons taught us by the failures in Singapore and Rangoon have been taken to heart. Honourable Members have asked what is being done to protect India against sea-borne expeditions. Here I may again quote General Wavell :

"Every preparation is being made to meet the threat of a Japanese sea-borne expedition. On land, it is obviously impossible to construct beach defences along the immense coast line of India, as has been done in England, and it is our intention to meet the possibility of invasion by mobility and attack, not by attempting to hold defensive lines. The defence of India will be based on holding within striking distance of threatened points, of mobile reserves which can move to meet and attack the enemy."

Air defence and air attack is in modern warfare a very vital matter. In that connection I would quote again—but in order not to take up the time of the House—I would merely draw attention to the statement made by Air Marshall Sir Richard Pearse the other day. About Air Defence, again, His Excellency stated :

"In the matter of defences against air attack the position is improving almost daily in respect of air craft, anti-aircraft guns, an adequate warning system and A. R. P. arrangements. There are three principal factors in the defence of a country's towns and cities against air attack. Firstly, guns and aeroplane, secondly, A. R. P. arrangements, and thirdly the spirit and morale of the people. Of the three the last is the most important."

It is on the point of morale that I would like to lay emphasis. Morale is in fact the one deciding factor in all warfare. The term morale may be difficult for many of us to understand. I would like to express it as courage in adversity. A great sanskrit poet speaking about the signs of great men has stated that one of the qualities is 'courage in adversity'. My friend, Sir Vithal Narayan Chandavarkar, in his very eloquent and well balanced speech asked the question : "What can we people do to help in the war?" and gave the answer himself. "Our duty" he said "is to keep up the confidence of the people, to sustain public opinion, to rally it behind the war effort." I entirely agree with that. I would also like to support the magnificent appeal which my friend, Mr. Jammadas Mehta, made. He appealed for oneness of purpose, oneness of mind to win the war. It is now for every one in India, every one whatever his class or creed, whatever his status in the social structure, however humble the work he may be doing, with whatever instrument he may be doing it, with gun or sword, with hands or machine, with pen or voice, to keep up his courage and that of others, to squash rumours and defeatist talk and to work with a singleness of purpose to achieve victory. It is no longer a question of merely depending upon the fighting forces, on the Army, the Navy and the Air Force—they will of course do their part. It is for every one of us to wake up, to rise to the occasion and to prepare himself for resistance and attack. There is one great enemy we have got who must be put against the wall and shot, and that is Dr. Funk. There is too much jitterbug feeling all over the country. It is in the last

resort the spirit that counts. The word 'morale' may not convey to every one what it really means. I would like to give with your permission the Indian word :

*"Is vakht kya chahiye? Himmat chahiye."*

I want people to use the word *Himmat*. What we need is courage and confidence, courage when things may be looking black and confidence in our own powers and spirit. Any one can be brave when everything is in his favour. But real courage is that which shows up when things look black. Let our motto be *Himmat*. The Commander-in-Chief has already told us that our forces, especially our air forces will not be content with defence but will strike at the enemy wherever they can.

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan:** I agree. The Slogan of India, as the Persian poet says, must be :

*"Himmat buland dar ki nizz-e-Khuda o Khalq  
Bashad ba qadr-i-himmat to itibar-e-to"*

**Sir Gurnath Bewoor:** I do not understand what the Honourable Member has said; however, let me get on . . . .

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan:** I thought you understood it.

**Sir Gurnath Bewoor:** The army will take up an attitude of attack. What we, therefore, want is the motto "*Himmat aur Hamla*", courage and attack, and we need fear no one. May I, Sir, in this connection end with the inspiring appeal which His Excellency made the other day :

"The soldiers in India and in many parts of the world have fought and are fighting gloriously for the safety of their motherland, for the preservation of her ancient inheritance and for the bringing to pass of her hopes for the future. Today the battle front is of great depth, and each one of us can be a soldier too. Stand steady, encourage the brave, strengthen the faint-hearted, rebuke the babbler, and root out the hidden traitor. Make good the defence of the country today; go forward to victory tomorrow, for without victory there is no hope for the survival of free institutions, culture or kindness in the world."

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney** (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I hope during this discussion, if my voice is bad, my temperature will remain normal. Sir, I desire to take advantage of this opportunity to talk on certain important matters. I am glad to notice that Honourable Members with their Deputies were present for most of the period of this discussion. May I go a little further and ask the Honourable the Leader of the House, who, I am sorry, is not present here, that our remarks on various matters should be reported to the Departments concerned, and they, in their turn, should give replies, which should be communicated to the Members who have spoken. That is the only means by which you can get, in a practical and effective measure, that much needed co-operation between us who represent our constituencies and you who represent the Treasury Benches. This is really a much needed reform, Sir, in other words, the establishment of a closer human touch between you and us. Sir, in making these remarks, I was very pained, and I speak on behalf of my Party, when I saw the reception that was given by the Treasury Benches to such an esteemed member of my Party as Mr. Husenbhai Laljee, the Deputy Leader. Mr. Husenbhai Laljee tried to

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tell the Government what he felt they did not know. That was in connection with machine tools. His repeated assurances to Government that they were not getting a hundred per cent. war effort was received if not with objection, at least with impatience . . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman** (Finance Member) : Sir, as the Honourable Member responsible for the interruptions during that portion of the speech, may I point out that all I said was that if Mr. Husenbhai Laljee knew that a large quantity of machine tools were available, he ought also to know that Government had for a considerable time been doing their utmost to find out about such tools, and it was his duty to have informed the Government long ago.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney** : Sir, I am glad of the interruption, for it gives me an opportunity of replying. I know it for a fact that Mr. Husenbhai Laljee has interviewed many leading officials in this matter, and I think the Honourable Member in charge of the Supply Department will bear me out in this. Mr. Husenbhai Laljee cannot be accused of not informing the Government. I have not said anything against the Finance Member. It was not he who made the interruptions which I have called "impatience". It was his supporters and some of the commercial magnates who twitted him. Sir, I take serious exception to such treatment. Mr. Husenbhai Laljee is doing his duty. Whether he is right or wrong, it is the Government's duty to listen to what he says patiently. Having made that statement here on behalf of a man who would adorn the Treasury Benches . . . . .

**Sir Cowasji Jehangir** (Bombay City : Non-Muhammadan Urban) : Like yourself?

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney** : I take a second place to you, Sir Cowasji. I say that a man like Mr. Laljee should be listened to with rapt attention, respect, if not with acceptance, Sir. It is this practice of twitting and impatience which prevents us from having that rapprochement and *camaraderie* between us which such important matters demand.

Having said that, let me go on to the important matter of transport. Sir, none in this House will deny that today the chief need of this country and the War is transport, and in this connection I shall confine my remarks more especially to Railways. None will deny that there is a serious inadequacy of transport, with the result that the whole of India is being affected seriously. I realise that the first duty of the Railway Transport Department is the supply of material for defences, but the public life and industries of the country should not be entirely sacrificed. I am prepared to forget that the Railways recently sent to the Mid East 200 locomotives and 12,000 wagons, I am also prepared to forget the studied policy of neglecting major industrialisation in this country by the Government for the last 100 years. Again, I am prepared to forget all these sins of the past, for we are not infallible. My chief concern is of the present. We have a distinct shortage of transport, and I would like to know why? The Railway Board was fortunate to have secured big surplus budgets? But what use did they make of them? Fed the Finance Member who now asks us for extra taxation? The Railway

Board, Sir, I think, is to blame largely, and let me ask: "What does the Railway Board today consist of?" From the Chief Commissioner downwards, they are more or less all railway officials,—Agents—eminent administrators and disciplinarians in their own spheres, men who administer internal working of Railways very excellently, but who are absolutely devoid of commercial, trade, agricultural or transport knowledge, except it be as to the timings of trains and rates and freights. Sir, we want a Railway Board as envisaged in the Federal Railway Authority. According to this, the upper part of the Railway Board is to consist of experienced business public men and the executive or under half of it to consist of administrative officers, *e.g.*, Agents of Railways. But today we see no business man on the Board. From the Honourable Member down to the juniormost member of the Board, there is no one who has been steeped or trained in modern methods of business, men who possess that long vision and who have that elasticity of mind which is so necessary to the administration of big institutions such as our Railways. Not as an Army with matter of discipline or rules but as a highly specialised business concern. What do we see today and what is the result? We see the Railways administered, yes with surplus budgets but administered by a set of Railway Agents, officers steeped in Railway rules and regulations created by their predecessors in office and which they exercise with a rigidity both worthy and reflective of their training as agents of various Railways. But, Sir, not one of them has had any modern business experience or trade-experience. Sir, the time has come when we should completely alter the composition of the Railway Board, and I say this with no disrespect to its present Members. We should have experienced business men on the Railway Board from the top to the bottom and so work our Railways as a business concern and not a well disciplined army. Indeed, I go further and say that the Communications Member should be a business man. In offering this advice I offer as my ideals, my friend the Supply Member and my friend the Commerce Member. What greater men can or do we have in the present Cabinet than the two Ministers? Look at the wonderful work they have done in the short space of time they have been in office? Why? They stand out conspicuous by the success and the magnitude of their labour and for the originality and initiative and push they have so effectively displayed during their brief term of office. I say, therefore, that the Railway Board should have businessmen on it. In other words, as is envisaged in the Federal Railway Authority in the Government of India Act of 1935, we should have that recommendation of the Act put into operation as soon as possible. Now is the time for it. There is another point which I want to raise. I wonder if I am right in asking whether the Railway Department has any connection or whether it works in close association with the Marketing Board? If they did, I do not think we would have had this transport difficulty. Indeed, I go further and say that the Supply Department, Railway Department and Marketing Board should work in very close co-operation and union with each other. I shall not refer to the wheat position, because it is being remedied and measures are today being taken to ensure its better transport from the Punjab. But, Sir, the transport problem is seriously affecting many concerns, local industries or the public. I am myself a complainant in this matter,—I find the greatest difficulty in getting printing paper for some of my communal and public work. I am not the only one. The mills are manufacturing paper but there are no wagons to transport it. We have the Titagur Paper Mills shouting for wagons, but their shouts are in vain and we are the sufferers.

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That is only one out of many such complaints. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta referred to a glass factory which could not get wagons. Let me refer to another industry in this country, namely, the match industry. Honourable Members may not know that the manufacture and sale of matches was started in this country in about 1925, and that even today it is in the hands of a Swedish concern, administered by the Swedish, a country which as you know has compulsorily to aid the Germans today. That Company has the monopoly. It can get 60 to 80 wagons whereas Indian match factories cannot get more than 3 or 4 wagons. That is what I call discriminatory. A Railway Board with businessmen on it would not allow such a thing. I shall not level charges against anyone but this discrimination is clear proof of palm oil, of bribery, of corruption, call it what you like, on the part of those who have the disposal of Railway wagons. Why should there be this discrimination, why should we have these complaints? Are they all imaginary? Surely, this demands immediate action. Every Railway Agent should have it brought home to him that this must stop, and anyone who is found guilty in any way should be summarily and seriously punished. Otherwise, how can our industries live? Then there is another matter in connection with matches, which I desire to call the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member. The Finance Member last year insisted on having boxes of 40, 60 and 80 matches. Mr. Husenbhai Laljee asked that there should be boxes of 50. The Honourable Member did not accept the proposal then but it took him six months before he found that this was necessary.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** It is not so. On the contrary, I promised at the time that we would facilitate the distribution of 50.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** The Honourable Member is quite right, but he was guilty of breach of promise for at least six months. I know it was rectified and a communiqué was issued last October. We then had on the market boxes of 40, 50, 60 and 80 sticks. It was on the 14th of this month that the Government issued a further communiqué putting the price of 50 sticks match box at six pies. For 40 sticks the price was fixed at 4½ pies. The reason that Mr. Laljee urged for his request was that there would be economy in paper, chemicals, wood, etc., and still the Honourable Member would have got his three crores of revenue from this industry. Government issues a communiqué on the 14th March.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I am sorry to interrupt my Honourable friend. What was necessary on my side in order to enable matches to be sold in boxes of 50 was that the duty should be adjusted and that was done within a few days of my statement on this subject.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I am glad to hear that, but does the Honourable Member realise that has opened the floodgates to swindling—that the Swedish firm which has got 40 stick boxes will flood the market by passing them off as 50 sticks and vendors will cheat the public by selling them at 0-0-6, and not at 4½ pies.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I must protest as one who knows a great deal of the details about these things. I will advise my Honourable friend to be more careful about making statements of that kind. The firm in question has done more than any other firm to enable 50 stick boxes being put on the market in this country.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I have not the faintest doubt about it, and there is no need for my Honourable friend to give me a caution.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** You called it a swindle.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I am not prepared to submit to having said anything like that against the firm. What I say is that it would encourage vendors to swindling, *i.e.*, to selling boxes with 40 sticks as boxes with 50 sticks at a higher cost. I do not deny for a moment that this firm is supplying a very much needed want to India. But should not Indian firms have the monopoly? Why should this foreign firm which has no Indian capital have the monopoly? Why do you not encourage Indian industry? That firm has a monopoly of 75 per cent. of the match trade in this country. However, I leave the subject there and I shall take the Honourable Member's advice to be cautious and say no more.

The next point that I wish to discuss is about strikes and the Ordinances. I am one of those who is very much afraid of what strikes have in store for India, and I would advise Government very seriously to watch the position very carefully and not curtail their Ordinances but to make their Ordinances stronger so that no strikes will be tolerated. In America and in England the Governments have taken very careful control of labour and strikes and I would ask the Government of India to take a page off their book. You must have contentment in the staff and the labourer has every right and cause to complain if he is unjustly dealt with. Compare the conditions of labour in this country with those in Australia, America and England. There the labourers are listened to, their salaries are generous. What do the Government of India do here? They have increased the work of their labourers and not increased their pays proportionately. And the only way to do that is—I would ask the attention of the Honourable the Communications Member to call representatives from all unions. There is no use calling only one union and pretending that that union represents all the railwaymen in this country. It does not. The Muhammadan Railwaymen's Association represents thousands of employees. Why take into consultation one union only and say, "I will talk with this and with none else," who are not members of that federated union?

**Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Because they are not vocal.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** The Government of India with one breath fosters, encourages and accepts the communal ratio for employment on railways. In the next breath it throws it to the winds and says no representation at Conferences will be given to railways communal unions. Why? They say they do not wish to encourage communalism? And, yet, they wish to encourage singularism and think that one union represents the whole? But it does not, I make this public statement:

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It is wrong. The way to tackle the question is to get the views of labourers from all unions. And why not? The Honourable the Commerce Member invites the directors of every business to come and represent their views to him when he wishes to deal with commercial problems. I wish the Honourable the Communications Member to discontinue such an attitude and follow the practice of the Commerce Member. Why does he mistrust communal organisations? They exist to protect their communal percentages and rights which you have given some minorities. And why should you prevent them from bringing before you all matters of importance connected with the railways?

The next point I wish to take up is about the Telegraph Department. I am sorry that there is no one here representing the department. I wish to refer to the collapse of the telegraph service. The word collapse may sound rather alarming, but in using it I take as my comparison the Telegraph Department as it once was, i.e., excellent. It is common knowledge that the department is unable today to meet its responsibilities to the public. Delays are enormous, anything from 24 to 72 hours, thousands of telegrams are posted between the larger transmitting offices, and, even when sent by wire, in many cases, arrive after the corresponding confirmatory copies are received by post. Owing to the employment of a large number of unqualified operators, telegrams often arrive mutilated and it is difficult to obtain corrections. What is the use of having maintained this essential service at such great cost for all these years, if the public are to be told now, in time of emergency that the service is unable to fulfil its duties and that they may use the post? Here I should like to digress and make a remark on the exodus that I believe is still to take place to Simla. I understand that 70 per cent. of the essential service staff is going to Simla this summer.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** The Honourable Member is making a serious misstatement. The whole of the Defence and Supply Departments, broadly speaking, are to remain in Delhi, and the only reason why anybody is going away is because there is not any room for him here. The Civil Departments are being squeezed to the utmost and that is the reason why a large percentage—it is not now 70—is being asked to go to Simla. The Honourable Member should not misrepresent the position. The Government have made every effort to house themselves in Delhi.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I accept what the Honourable Member says, but there is no use whipping a dead horse. The point is that there is a shortage of accommodation, I know that. The remedy appears to be to send the staff to Simla. I understand that besides the shortage of accommodation one of the reasons for this is because Government wants to air condition all the accommodation for military authorities . . . . (Some Honourable Members: "No.") I may be wrong. I am prepared to be corrected. Cannot I make a mistake, the same as you have made hundreds before. It is a privilege that I have in common with Government. The point is this. Do Government seriously think that their staff cannot remain in the heat of Delhi? The Military services are to remain here. That is so, I believe and their accommodation is being air conditioned. (Voices: "Yes"). They are not going up to Simla. Why should the military staff be molycoddled? Have they forgotten that

their colleagues in Libya and Syria are today bearing the heat and burden of the war and they cannot stop in Simla unless they get air conditioned quarters. What is going to happen to the Telegraphs when the staff go to Simla. Will it not still further strain an already perilous condition? You are inviting a bigger breakdown and strain on that department. This is really what the Department has come to and the pity of it is that it is due almost entirely to three avoidable causes, the sequel of a parsimonious policy of the Department during the last ten years when the service, particularly the operating branch, was systematically being pared to the bone. These three causes are (1) Inadequate staff; (2) Inadequate Telegraph Circuits, and (3) Inadequate Telegraph Apparatus.

**Inadequate Staff.** This is due to the cutting down of staff to impossible limits. I can recall to my memory my experiences of the Telegraph Committees, such as the Rangachariar Committee, The Varma Committee, the Sams Committee, the Pasricha Committee, each one of which recommended reductions and improvements. The operative and clerical staffs were so cut down that even in pre-war days the least emergency led to disorganisation and serious delays as there was no margin of trained men to cope with sudden rushes of traffic. Even after the war started, no steps were taken to train additional men to meet anticipated demands. We should by this have had sufficient staff to meet our requirements and additional men should be qualifying day by day to help in the formation of large military telegraph units. The Department, instead, chooses to train men by the usual leisurely methods of recruitment and meantime are paying enormous sums on incompetent temporary men. The remedy is this. As a stop gap, the Department can immediately obtain 200 to 300 more operators for the departmental offices. Let me explain what I mean and how this can be done. There are a large number of small stations like Kolhapur, Indore, Bangalore, Coimbatore, etc. where there are two or more Combined Post and Telegraph Offices in addition to the principal telegraph office. One or more of these local offices in each station may be converted into receiving offices, i.e., the telegraph knowing employee should be removed, but the office should continue to accept telegrams and should send them by peon to the Head Office. This, I agree, should not be done in the Presidency Offices, as it will lead to too much delay. By these means, 200 to 300 of the telegraph knowing staff will be available and these should be redistributed among the combined offices and the best men from these should be selected for transfer to the Departmental office on deputation. Meantime some method of emergency training should immediately be put into effect and all this red tape and leisurely methods of training should be ruthlessly set aside.

There is also a shortage of qualified telegraph masters, Baudot Supervisors and Testing Supervisors and large and important sections in Calcutta, Bombay and other offices are supervised by unqualified or inexperienced men. The want of expert attention to apparatus is also responsible for errors, mutilations and serious delays and even damage to apparatus. Unfortunately it is not easy to train men for these posts in a hurry, as years of practical experience is required. The only immediate solution is to recall all Telegraph Masters, Baudot and Testing Supervisors and Baudot Operators who have retired within the last five years.

There is also inadequacy of telegraph circuits. This also is due to the lack of forethought on the part of the Department. Up to about ten years

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ago, there was an adequate number of circuits between the larger distributing offices, but these were gradually cut down to provide for the expansion of the telephone service, in spite of the advice and the protests of the Telegraph Traffic Officers. One of the Directors General of Posts and Telegraphs who was responsible for this is still living.

Let me give you an example. Between Bombay and Madras, there were originally about 8 or 10 telegraph circuits. When the telephone service was being expanded instead of constructing new lines, the best copper telegraph circuits were taken one by one from time to time for pairing for the telephones with the result that, today, there are in addition to the carrier channels only one or two through telegraph circuits between Madras and Bombay and there are no spare circuits on which to open additional outlets between Bombay and Calicut, Bangalore, Madras, Belgaum, etc. in cases of interruptions or sudden rushes of traffic. This is one of the main causes of delays to traffic. Similarly between Bombay and Calcutta, there were five or six or more through telegraph circuits. These were also absorbed one by one in the manner described above till, at present, in addition to the two carrier pairs there are no direct telegraph circuits between Bombay and Calcutta and even in pre-war days when there was a breakdown in the carriers, traffic between Bombay and Calcutta was subject to enormous delays. The same position more or less obtains between the other larger telegraph offices in India.

The case of each of the circuits removed from telegraph service during the last ten or 12 years should be reviewed and arrangements be made either by restoring them or constructing new lines to provide at least two additional telegraph circuits between the larger distributing offices. The Standing Finance Committee recently sanctioned a large sum of money for telephone expansion. What is the use of this in war time when the telegraph service has proved unequal to its responsibilities? This money should be used for immediate and essential telegraph expansion, leaving the telephones to wait till after the war.

There is a great shortage of high speed apparatus due to the non-provision of spares and spare parts. Each office had just sufficient for its requirements and the instruments were worked to death, many of them working 18 to 24 hours daily at high speed for seven days in the week. On the outbreak of the war, no steps were taken to anticipate and provide for the emergency requirements and this omission went down to all telegraph stores, even stationery, forms, gums and ink for high speed instruments, specialised tapes for same, etc. The Department was asleep and looked only for a surplus budget.

All the apparatus which are out of commission should be collected in the storeyard where they should be sorted out and parts exchanged so as to build up as many complete sets as possible. One or two experienced mechanics from each telegraph office should be sent to the storeyard. A few competent mechanics should be obtained from the leading watch-

instrument making or engineering firms and between them these men should be made to make the spare parts which are not obtainable. If more intricate machines and munitions can now be manufactured in India, there is no reason why we cannot make our spare parts and even complete sets in this emergency. Just look at what Dayalbagh is doing. All that is required is that we ruthlessly set aside red tape and the usual leisurely methods of delay and set ourselves seriously to the task. Meantime we should obtain priority for the importation of at least a few complete sets, as telegraph apparatus is just as important as anything else because an efficient telegraph service is very necessary to the satisfactory carrying on of the war. The electric telegraph saved India in 1857. Let it not be said that it failed India in her hour of dire need and danger in 1942. There is still time before it is too late to rectify the unfortunate mistakes of the past and which should now have been allowed to occur. Sir, I bring this collapsed state of the Telegraph Department for which the present D. G., P. and T., is to blame to the serious notice of the Communications and Defence Members, and I ask him if he will be good enough to see that this is at once remedied or attention is given to it.

There is another matter to which I would like to refer and that the proposals of taxation which the Finance Member desires to impose. I am not going to journey into the intricate problems of taxation. I did in my first speech say that the Finance Member had not gone far enough and that the poorer Indian was prepared to share the burden of financial responsibilities in connection with this War. Sir, I have given this matter some thought and I am much enamoured with the Finance Member's compulsory saving scheme for this measure of thrift will be a boon to the middle classes of the country, because, the closest companion of these people especially those in Government service, is the Kabuli moneylender. I admit that the taxes imposed on India are not comparable with those obtaining in England and other Dominions. But India stands on a different footing in that the wages are so small that these people can hardly make both ends meet. This has been the position even in normal times, but one must take into account facts as they exist today. These workmen have today to face a very much increased cost of living and on much reduced salaries. In short, they belong to an overworked understaffed underpaid and underfed class of people among whom tuberculosis and other similar wasting diseases are rampant. Most of them have large families and their children must be educated, the cost of which is yearly increasing. The majority of them are unable to meet these demands on their starvation wages with the result that they resort to borrowing money at exorbitant rates of interest from the Kabuli moneylender and other bazar shylocks. This is the reason why I welcome the compulsory savings scheme which the Honourable Member has introduced in his taxation proposals. I congratulate him particularly on behalf of my community.

Incidentally, I feel I should refer to the practice now obtaining in law courts to allow a rate of interest on loans at 6 per cent. per annum. Now, it is common knowledge that this rate of interest was fixed at a time when the bank rate was 5 per cent. But today the bank rate is 6 per cent. and has been so for some years. Full advantage of this low bank rate is taken by industrial concerns, but the agriculturist and the middle classes of the country have been denied the benefit of this low bank rate, for, even the law courts decree against the debtor at 6 per cent. interest. This prescribed rate which was fixed years ago when the bank rate stood

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at 5 per cent. has never been readjusted to the present day conditions. I do think that in the interests of the poor man who is compelled to resort to borrowing for his ordinary needs, the Government ought to suggest to the judiciary that the rate of interest on loans should be related to the prevailing bank rate, for the bank rate is the basis of all financial dealings. I also feel that the courts which are always anxious to help the debtor will be only too glad to act if such a suggestion were made by the Government. I convey this suggestion to the Finance Member who knows more about these matters than anybody else in the House for his serious consideration.

While on the subject of debtors and decrees obtained by the money-lender, I feel that some special steps are necessary to safeguard the interests of the poorer agriculturists of the country. In Australia, New Zealand and other places soon after the declaration of war, I believe their Governments passed legislative enactments more or less preventing the sale of lands in execution of any decree by moneylenders—a sort of a moratorium. Such an enactment is more necessary in India than in any other country in view of the widespread indebtedness among agriculturists and middle classes owning lands. Their difficulties will increase especially during the period of the war owing to the increased cost of living and I do feel that Government ought to introduce some enactment to prevent such dispossession of lands—mark you—not by enemy action, but from those who act as enemies towards their own people—I refer to the moneylenders.

In reference to the Government's proposal to meet the deficit in the budget by borrowings, I feel I should deprecate the practice of issuing short term loans. It must be realised that this war in which we are engaged is not only for our benefit but for the safety and benefit of future generations. It is, therefore, but just that the burdens of this war should be borne by the future generations as well and for this reason I suggest that the loans should be long term ones—covering a period of from 30 to 50 years. Indeed, after a more careful study of the Finance Member's methods to secure enough revenue with which to prosecute the war, he should resort more to floating long term loans than to augment taxation on incomes, except the very rich and who are today getting richer on the war. I refer mainly to *Banias*. These are the modern Shylocks whose locks we should unlock or delock.

Sir the next point I wish to discuss is regarding the A. R. P. and fifth columnists. We have heard the speech from the Government Member about the A. R. P. In this connection I have more than once suggested the calling in of guns issued under the Arms Act, the purpose of my appeal is to defend those members of the A. R. P. in the execution of their work for after all they must also defend themselves and their homes, not only against a parachutist enemy but against the goondas and others, who, as they did in Burma, looted their homes and ravaged their womenfolk. You may call it what you like, passive defence, civic defence or homeguards and you may say one is under the Civil Defence, another under the Home Defence and another under the Army Defence but these men must be defended and not depend on lathis. If this is not possible, my suggestion is that you will only allow the retention of arms by those of the civil population

who possess them under the Arms Act if they enrol themselves as members for civil defence or as an alternative allow them to select one of their family to substitute them in civil defence. My main object is that these arms which are lying about in India in hundreds of thousands should be put to use until we are able to make more modern weapons to defend ourselves against the parachutist troops.

But, Sir, apart from the deficiency in arms, the gravest danger that is facing India today, are the activities of those whom we today call fifth columnists. Our aim ought to be to do everything in our power to resist aggression unitedly and with oneness of purpose. Let us all realise that a citizen of India, be he a Hindu, a Muslim, an Indian Christian, an Anglo-Indian or a European, will be fighting to save his own home, his family, his friends and his relations. He will be fighting for his freedom. I was distressed to read of the existence of a class of people in Bengal who show tendencies of opposition to war effort, if not open sympathy with the enemy. To them I would say even the enemy cannot have respect for a man who is prepared to sell his freedom and his country for a mess of pottage. A Quisling shall always remain a Quisling. While the enemy may appear grateful for the temporary advantage he gains as a result of the treachery of the traitor, the traitor should realise that even the enemy will not fully trust him, much less respect him, for the enemy also would know that it was his innate treacherous conduct that induced him to aid against his own brethren. Such people shall be considered untrustworthy for generations to come by their own people as well as by the people of the enemy. India with her long, glorious and honourable traditions, I feel sure, will not tolerate such men for they will for ever be a disgrace to the nation. I refuse to accept the suggestion made elsewhere that the people of India, or a section of them, possess a slave mentality and, therefore, might not fight for freedom. Indeed, I consider it most ungracious to say so. At the most it could only be said that the people, having lived free from external aggression for over a century, have been lulled into a sense of security. Surely none can forget that twenty years of peace, despite the growing evidence of rearmament of a neighbouring nation, found England unprepared for war in 1938-39. The tragedy of it and which only one great man, the present Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill, clearly said and often warned the Parliament only to be scorned. We have been accustomed to hearing of the man power and equipment which the enemies have been capable of putting on the fields; of the repeated admission that Malaya and Singapore were lost for want of adequate supplies. If, therefore, there is any evidence of lack of enthusiasm, it is due to the feeling of desperation not altogether quite unjustifiable. I feel the most effective way of removing such despair is to publish, from time to time, the number of aeroplanes, tanks, guns, and ammunition, etc., that have been stored up in India, the number of ships that are commissioned to defend the coasts of India and the numbers that arrive from abroad from time to time. It is not sufficient to assert that we have adequate equipment; that everything has been done to meet the onslaught of the enemy. We heard this in connection with Malaya, Singapore and Java. Now, new tactics are required to inspire confidence. The only way to do this is to publish those figures; the real improvement that has been effected as a result of the lessons learnt from Singapore and Malaya. It is not necessary to say exactly where such equipment is kept. The figures, astounding as they must be, will create a new sense of relief

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and security and will bring about a better spirit among the people whose confidence has been shaken by events of the recent past.

Sir, in this connection we ought to bear in mind the lessons we have learnt from the Nazi and Fascist propaganda. Let us admit that their propaganda has had the most successful effect, however false and treacherous they might be. Apart from the Quislings of European countries, we have recently had the experience nearer home of Burma. Traitors were found from the highest to the lowest in that country. Such men were able to conceal their feelings so well that one of them held the trusted position of Premier of Burma and was entertained by the British Government and the American President till just a few hours before his mask was uncovered. Sir, we seem to lack the ability to obtain information of such traitors. No doubt, we have been too confident. Indeed, when the Indo-Burma agreement was under discussion, I actually hinted in my speech that the Government were perhaps aware of some pro-Axis feeling in Burma and I expressed the belief that that was what forced the Government to rush into the Indo-Burma agreement. In one part of my speech, I said, "but I shall think", "I shall think", and "I shall think", that is, I was suspicious even then of traitors or fifth columnists in Burma. I feel the Government did not take full note of this possibility early enough. If, when this feeling came to notice in June last, steps had been taken to make a thorough enquiry, much that has happened might have been avoided. Let us now, at least, act in no uncertain manner in this regard as far as such traitors and fifth columnists in India are concerned and root out this evil before it is too late.

Sir, as far as A. R. P. and fifth columnists are concerned, I have great fear in my mind as to our internal security in Bengal. Sir, let us not burke facts, let us not close our eyes as to what exists and what is developing to-day in Calcutta. There we have a Government in power which instead of devoting its entire energies to enthuse and to prepare the people of Bengal to taking definite measures to defend the eastern boundary from Japanese attack are to be found wasting their time in squabbles in the Legislative Assembly and elsewhere and scenes of wild disorder accusing each other of being Fifth Columnists . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. I think the Honourable Member ought not to criticise the Government of Bengal or any other Provincial Government.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Need I remind the House of the traitorous part played by certain Burmese when Japan invaded Burma. Have we not suffered enough from this act of treachery, these fifth columnists, these traitors. I, however, hope the condition in Calcutta is not so terrible as the newspapers tell us. But we know that Subash Chandra Bose who played a big part in the formation of the present Bengal Cabinet is, today, a fugitive to justice—a base traitor—residing in Germany, some say in Tokyo; we also know that his Forward Bloc is very much alive today in Bengal and is growing in power, and nothing is being done to stop its nefarious dynamite activities. Indeed, recent events make one feel that they are being encouraged in their activities and really the peace and tranquillity of India is in grave danger. I submit that the Governor General in Council in whose hands lies the maintenance of law

and order should hesitate no longer in taking drastic steps before it is too late, in regard to the present grave internal situation in Bengal. Surely, we do not want Calcutta to suffer and to go the same fate as Rangoon. Sir, I leave it at that. But I issue a note of warning, "Today is yours to act; do not wait for the morrow for we know not what it may bring forth".

Before I close, let me refer briefly to the two appeals that were made in this House. I am a representative of a very small community in this country but one that has played a very large and important part in its development and today plays a very large part in the defence of the country. Sir, as leader of the Independent Party, may I tell my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, how glad I was to hear the feeling appeal he made the other day for a united front among all communities and races in India on the basis of equality and mutual trust. Such a spirit among the peoples of the country is more necessary at the present juncture than at any other period of our history, for not only is the enemy at our borders—an enemy, who does not make any distinction between one community and the other and whose attack is aimed at all the peoples who occupy this land, our home, India. With the recent announcement of His Majesty's Government's decision to depute a member of the War Cabinet to visit India in order to obtain the opinion and assent of all the communities in this country to His Majesty's Government's proposals in regard to India, self-interest and self-preservation, if nothing else, ought to impel us to come together so that we may successfully defend India against the common foe. Conflicting interests cannot be brought together unless there is a spirit of equality among one another. The majority ought to forget that their numbers give them the right to decide the fate of the country by reason only of their numerical strength, and the people of the ruling race ought not to assume that, because they had ruled in the past, they have superior claims. Once this is made apparent to the people of the country, by thought, word and deed, much of the troubles in the way of a solution of the difficult problems facing us would be automatically removed. I join with Mr. Jamnadas Mehta and say, may that millenium come soon and though it is darkest before dawn, my hope is that when the dawn breaks, all communities in India shall, hand in hand, on terms of equality and friendship, enter the sunshine of a future whose golden rays will not only radiate in its fullest measure but will resuscitate India to her prestine glory, power and equity, still as one of the greatest and most radiant jewels in the orb of the British Commonwealth of Nations and that all who come to our land, as they do when they reside in other Dominions, will no longer be ashamed but proud to think of themselves as Indians first and communities next, but with one idea, one goal and one future, the progress, development and future of the united nation of India.

Sir, I now refer to the touching appeal of my Honourable friend, Sir F. E. James, and, in doing so, I speak not so much as Leader of my Party, but mainly as the representative, in this Honourable House, of the Anglo-Indian community, and, as such, I fully endorse the appeal which he made to his community the other day to do away with any evidence of racial and social exclusiveness. Sir, the new order of equality and fraternity which is fast developing in Great Britain, ever since the beginning of this war, whereby the peer and the commoner have been brought together into closer contact, sharing the common joys, sufferings and dangers of life housed, as they often are, in the bowels of the earth

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during air raids which England has bravely stood, is one from which our British co-citizens in India would do well to take a lesson. Surely, with labour as the spearhead of this war and this world today and which points that labour will soon control the world, when class distinctions are being so radically removed in their own country, it is not too much to ask the Britishers in India to dissemble any sense of racial superiority towards the people of a country to which they have come to live and to earn their living. The common suffering and the common dangers which Britishers in England have endured side by side, without distinction of class or creed and the contacts which this suffering and this danger have established among the aristocratic, upper middle, lower middle and the labouring classes of England will assuredly bring about a new order which will have the most beneficial effect on the whole world. Indeed, it is my firm conviction that Sir Stafford Cripps' success in his mission in Russia was largely, if not solely, attributable to this new order in England. It was also the old spirit of class exclusiveness that was responsible for driving Russia, in 1939, into making a treaty with Hitler. If, therefore, Sir Stafford Cripps is to succeed in his mission in India, the Britisher in India owes it to himself, to this country, to his own country and last but not the least, to the cause of freedom and democracy to do away with any idea of race superiority or a feeling of overlordship over India as belonging to the ruling race. To entertain even a semblance of a feeling of overlordship is to place a premium on the policy underlying the campaign of the Axis powers and antithetical to the principles of democracy. I do not wish to make any specific charges but I feel that the Britisher in India ought to go out of his way to convince others in this country that there is, today, no such pretence on his part. It is my firm conviction that this will itself help to solve most of the problems facing us more than anything which the British or the Indian Government can do. Sir, with my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James. I, too, have suffered painful experiences at the hands of some of the autocratic Britishers, and need I add how my community as a whole has been humiliated by them after they replaced us in all the upper spheres of employment which we first held in India. I shall not refer in any detail, but, without any offence, I may add that, while the Britisher is beginning to realise the worth of India's powers and its communities including the Anglo-Indian community, his womenfolk in India elect to stand apart as being superior beings to Indians and Anglo-Indians and let me tell them in crystal clear language that New India will not tolerate under any circumstances this race superiority any longer. It must end. This ostracism of Indians from their social institutions, *i.e.*, certain British clubs, surely has outlived its life and must be stopped. Do this, and you will win the heart and the respect of every Indian, whatever be his political outlook or community for it is by free intercourse that one is able to enter the hearts of each other as equals. Sir, without meaning any offence and with respect I commend this, to the Britishers in India, both man and woman, among whom I have many friends today.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadian Urban): Sir, a few days ago when the General Budget was under discussion, I pointed out that the expenditure estimated for the coming year was very large, but in view of the fact that we are living at a very critical moment

I said that we should not grudge that expenditure. I also approved of the policy of the Finance Member in the matter of meeting the deficit by a combined system of taxation and borrowing. But coming to the details of the measures of taxation proposed by him I said that some of the taxes would fall heavily on the poorer middle class and the poorest sections of the community. My Honourable friend in reply to this observation said that the poorer classes should bear their share of the burden of taxation during a war. I agree with him, but I urge that the share should be a due share and not a disproportionately large share. In this connection, I should like to point out to my Honourable friend, the Finance Member, that this is not the first measure of taxation which has affected the poorer middle class and the poorest sections of the community. This is indeed the fifth or the sixth measure which has affected them. And I should like also to tell him that India is a very poor country and it is not desirable to add to the burden which falls on the shoulders of the poorest people. I observed at that time that there was no necessity for adding to the burdens of the poor, and I suggested a cut in salaries on a graduated scale. My Honourable friend, the Finance Member, waxed eloquent over the woes of the over-paid officers and he asked why these officers should be singled out for punishment. Now I wish to ask that, if a graduated scale of cut in salaries starting from one per cent. on salaries above Rs. 250 and ending with ten per cent. on the highest salaries, is imposed, would the burden be very great on the officers? Would a person drawing a salary of Rs. 800 mind if his salary is cut by Rs. 8, and ought a person who draws a salary of Rs. 2,000 a month grudge the sacrifice if he is asked to pay Rs. 100 or Rs. 150 to the public exchequer? I think my Honourable friend is greatly mistaken when he thinks that this will affect them most unconscionably. In India the salaries are very high, compared with the salaries paid in other countries. The Members of the Executive Council here draw salaries which are larger than those paid to the Ministers in England. If we take the case of Japan which has made such great advancement in the economic as well as the political sphere we find that the salaries paid there are exceedingly small compared to the salaries paid in this country. Remembering these facts, I hope the Honourable Member will now revise his opinion and accept the suggestions which I have made.

At that time I also made suggestions for economy in administration. I asked him to take steps to prevent waste and avoid expenditure which is not intimately connected with the war effort. But the Finance Member did not give any reply to these suggestions, and I bring them to his notice once again hoping that he will consider them favourably. I suggested further that the remainder of the deficit might be met from another source. I observed at the time that the revenue had been under-estimated, as usual in previous years, and that the income-tax receipts would be much greater than had been estimated for; there had been great arrears in the assessments of the Excess Profits Tax, and when all these were brought into account he would have a much larger sum of money at his disposal than he hopes for at the present moment. Further, I pointed out that the railway surplus would be larger than had been anticipated, and this would also add to the funds at the disposal of the Finance Member. Sir, I wish once again to appeal to him to spare the poor people on the present occasion. I do not deny that a war entails burdens on all, but the burdens should fall on those shoulders which are best able to bear them.

[Dr. P. N. Banerjea.]

Sir, I shall now deal with some of the urgent problems of the day. My Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, referred to the large balances held in London. He said that about 70 per cent. of the assets of the Reserve Bank were held in London. The Honourable the Finance Member demurred to that and said that it was a much smaller percentage. If I remember aright, the Honourable the Finance Member said that it was about 59 per cent.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** At the moment that he spoke, the total assets including gold were 59 per cent., so that excluding the gold the percentage was not so large.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** Now, Sir, I hold in my hand a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Reserve Bank of India which points out that the total assets of the Bank on the 5th of March were 380 million pounds and of this . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** That is very seriously out-of-date. An important change has taken place since then, because the payments for the repatriation have been made since that date which brought that percentage down by about 20 per cent.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** After the 5th of March?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** Yes.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** If it be correct that payments for repatriation were made after that date, then things would be different. But for the present I take the situation as it stood on that date, and if we calculate the various figures, we find that on that date coin and bullion amounted to less than 20 per cent. This is an extremely low figure and almost a danger point has been reached. Now, the securities in rupees and sterling amounted to 80 per cent. on that date and the sterling securities amounted to over 70 per cent. This disclosed a very unsatisfactory state of things and if this unsatisfactory state of things has been remedied to some extent, I shall be glad, but before pronouncing my final opinion I should like to know what the situation actually is at present according to the Honourable the Finance Member.

This brings me to the activities of the Reserve Bank of India. This Bank, I am sorry to have to say, is not functioning as a national Bank. It does not help the trade, industry and agriculture of the country to the extent that it ought to. It is entirely under the thumb of the Bank of England and looks more to the interests of Britain than to the interests of India. The constitution and character of this Bank leaves a great deal to be desired, and it is to be hoped that as soon as possible, after the war, the constitution and character of this Bank will be radically altered.

Sir, I come now to the administration of the Income-tax Department. Complaints have again and again been heard about the unfair, harassing, and oppressive methods adopted in this Department. A few days ago, a Resolution was placed before this House and in the course of the discussion many instances of their oppressive methods were cited. Suggestions were also made for improving the situation; most of these suggestions were of a very reasonable character. The fairest suggestion that was made on that

occasion, to which I refer once again, is that the Appellate Section of this Department should be placed under the Law Department of the Government of India or under the Federal Court of India. No exception can be taken to this suggestion, because people must have confidence in the Appellate Authority. If that confidence is not to be secured, then the whole thing is unsatisfactory. The people will remain discontented in the country, and it is time that this discontent should be removed.

These unfair, oppressive and harassing methods reach their climax in the case of the assessment of the Nattukottai Chettiar community. This community had large businesses in Burma, Malaya and in Indo-China, and we all know what the situation is in those countries. All these countries have been over-run by the enemy and the assets are all gone, but the Finance Department and the Central Board of Revenue and their officers are going on with their assessments, thinking, at least telling the people, that nothing was wrong there. Is that right? Is that the correct attitude?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** It is not correct. It would be a shame if it were true. I must say that no good will be done to the cause of this community by making outrageously excessive and inaccurate statements.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** It is all true. I will ask you point by point and you will have to answer every point. Is it not a fact that notices have been served on these people?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** Notices are served on everybody.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** Is it not a fact that they had been told that if the accounts are not submitted and the taxes are not paid within a fortnight, penalties would have to be paid . . . .

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I receive that same notice too. That is printed on the notice.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** But it is absurd that the printed notice should be served on such persons at a time like this.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** That would mean that all income-tax assesseees should be let off at this time. It is the usual routine process.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** It is most disgraceful. The routine process should be suspended for the time.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I wish the Honourable Member would not get excited over this matter. The matter is under consideration at this time. It is under discussion with my officers and with myself and it is quite unnecessary to import any excitement in the matter.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** It is not necessary, I agree, but the intervention of the Honourable the Finance Member made me angry. He ought not to have interfered. The routine process should be suspended in view of the change in the situation. This is what I am asking for.

[Dr. P. N. Banerjee.]

My Honourable friend, Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar, with tears in his eyes, pleaded for sympathy yesterday. His pathetic appeal would have melted stones, but the Finance Department and the Central Board of Revenue are made of material tougher than stone.

Sir, I come now to the defence policy of the Government. This defence policy has been regulated from the beginning of British rule in India not only by lack of imagination and foresight but also by suspicion and distrust, and these characteristics have continued even after the commencement of the present war. In this very House, we adopted a Resolution urging the Government to create a large Air Force and asking them to train a large number of Air Officers and Air Pilots, but very little has been done so far. We pointed out to the Government that the air arm was now the most important arm of the fighting forces; and although we were laymen, it is now proved that we were right and the Government were wrong. But why did the Government not pay any heed to our request? The reason is to be found in the fact that they thought that if Indians were trained for the air force and for the other forces, then the Indians would turn their arms against the British. That fear was based on unreason, on suspicion which had no legs to stand upon. It is true that we want freedom, but if freedom be given to India, India would be the greatest ally of Britain.

This brings me to the question of production of munitions.

I P. M. We have been urging in this House that greater efforts should be made in producing munitions in this country. But the Government have been very late in coming to decisions over this matter, with the result that the production of war materials is very unsatisfactory, even at the present moment. Some factories have been established in the country, it is true, but owing to various handicaps the production of war materials has not gone on as satisfactorily as it otherwise would have. Now, it is a well-known fact that modern warfare depends more on equipment than on men, and this should have been foreseen by the Government of India and the British Government. Wherever Indian soldiers have been well-equipped and given the proper opportunities for fighting, they have extorted the admiration of all by their courage by their dogged perseverance, and by their resourcefulness: But the story is different where they have been sent half-trained and ill-equipped. In Malaya and Singapore we find that 73,000 persons were taken prisoners by the enemy, not because there was any lack of men, but because there was lack of equipment.

With the production of war materials is intimately connected the question of the industrial development of the country. If India had been fully developed in respect of her industries, the production of raw materials would have been very much easier but India was kept in a backward state for a long time in respect of industrialisation. I am glad to find that my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, has done something to change the situation. The other day I pointed out to him some of the deficiencies in the industrial system of the country. He gave a very sympathetic reply. I told him that India possesses great possibilities for the development of the aluminium industry because the raw material is available in this country, and he promised to do his best to see that aluminium was manufactured in this country with the least possible delay. I wish once more to emphasise that we are now travelling from the age

of iron and steel to that of aluminium, and if aluminium can be manufactured on a large scale in this country, then not only can aeroplanes be manufactured without any difficulty in India, but also in various spheres of industry large advances can be made.

I also urged him to take in hand the development of the heavy chemicals. To that also my Honourable friend's reply was very sympathetic; and he told me that investigations were in progress with regard to the development of the heavy chemicals. I shall now ask him to give his special attention to the development of the coal-tar industry and I also ask him to take in hand the manufacture of tools and machinery in this country. He has already done something for ship-building, but let him not rest content with the little that has been done. Let him come forward and see to it that quite a number of ships is built in this country without any further delay and that aeroplane manufacture and motor car manufacture also become successful at no distant date. Lastly, I would ask him to consider the development of the water-power resources of the country to the fullest extent.

So far as regards industrialisation. But agricultural development is no less important than industrialisation. At the present moment we require a balanced system of agricultural development and industrialisation. because on agriculture depends not only the life, but also the health and strength of the people of the country. The other day my friend, Mr. Neogy, pointed out that even in normal times the food supply of the country was insufficient. That is true. Although it is a fact that in normal times there is some export out of the country, this export is made because the people of the country have to stint their necessaries to some extent in order that they may obtain some conventional necessaries. So there is really no exportable surplus from the country. It should also be remembered that the population of the country is increasing fast, and although up to the present moment the food supply has kept a bare proportion to the increase of population, signs are not wanting which suggest that in the near future the population will outrun the food supply of the country. Therefore, this matter will have to be taken into serious consideration and a well-planned policy will have to be laid down for increasing the food production of the country by bringing under cultivation waste land and by improving the methods of cultivation.

Sir, I come now to the danger which at the present moment threatens almost every part of the country. I said that food production was very important, but no less important than food production is the distribution of food. At the present moment there may be some slight shortage in production, but the greater trouble is to be found in the maldistribution of the supply. Sir, two of the Provincial Governments, namely, the Punjab and Madras, have already issued a warning to the people of those provinces that there was likely to be a shortage in the supply. I am afraid, Sir, that the Punjab Government has not perhaps done its duty in this matter. The Punjab is the granary of the wheat supply of the country, and if stocks are kept in this province to an abnormal extent, then the supply for the other provinces is bound to be short. This question requires very careful investigation. My Honourable friend, the Commerce Member, observed the other day that attempts were being made to increase the supply and also to bring rice as a substitute for wheat. Now, it should be pointed out to him that the consequence of this will be that in those provinces where rice is consumed there will be difficulty. So,

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while it may ease the situation in the wheat-consuming provinces, it will add to the difficulty of rice-consuming provinces . . . . .

**The Honourable Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar** (Commerce Member): May I point out that this is a temporary measure, and even with reference to it the rice that has been requisitioned by the Government of India is rice specially imported from Burma, and not rice produced in the country?

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** I do not mind if a temporary measure is adopted in order to adjust the maldistribution for the time being. But you will have to remember the fact that Bengal, Orissa and Madras, in normal times, import large quantities of rice from Burma. That source is now cut off. So when you consider the food supply of the whole of India, you should not forget the difficulties of these provinces . . . . .

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): How long does the Honourable Member propose to continue his speech now?

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** I will take 10 or 15 minutes more, Sir.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then he can resume his speech after Lunch.

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

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

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** Sir, I was discussing the question of production and distribution of food when the House rose for Lunch. I pointed out that the food produced in the country was insufficient and that the difficulty had been greatly enhanced by maldistribution. In this connection I wish to emphasise a fact which is known to everybody, that even in the capital of India it has been impossible to obtain wheat flour for more than a week. I myself made many attempts to get wheat flour, but for full one week I failed to get it. If such a thing can happen in the capital of India, at a time when the war has not yet reached the borders of this country, we can easily imagine what will happen in the interior of the country,—in the most distant parts of the country,—when the war will be on us. I would, therefore, strongly urge upon the attention of the Government the immediate necessity of giving their most serious attention to these matters. Hunger is a source of great danger to the Government, and, of all the fifth columnists none is so mischievous as a hungry man.

Sir, I will say a few words now about the Supply Department. Various complaints have been made against the activities of this Department. One of the complaints is that European officers occupy all the key positions. My Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, pointed out the other day that European Officers are required not only to purchase munitions for the soldiers but to buy such things as rice, wheat, clothes and boots. Is it not possible to obtain the services of Indians for these purposes? I am perfectly convinced that, if suitably selected Indian Officers are

appointed in this Department, not only will the cost of administration be reduced by half but also the efficiency will be doubled.

Another complaint is that European firms are preferred to Indian firms in the matter of contracts. This is a matter which I hope will be fully investigated by the Honourable the Finance Member. Charges of favouritism, jobbery and nepotism have been. . . .

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I suppose, when the Honourable Member said, investigated by the Finance Member, he meant the Supply Member.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** I did not say that the Honourable Member for Supply had any nephews appointed in this Department. but this charge is levelled against the officers of the Department. It is the business, it is the duty of the Supply Member, to look into the question.

My Honourable friend, Sir Henry Richardson, said the other day, and many other speakers have also said the same thing, that palm oil is being freely used in the matter of contracts and services. Now, I do not wish to blame the Supply Member for all the irregularities that may be existing there. He perhaps obtained a bad legacy from his predecessor, but I would implore him to rectify any defects that may be found to exist in this Department.

A word I may say here about the American Mission which is arriving in this country soon. We have been told that the object of this Mission is to speed up the production of munitions. That is a very desirable object, and we ought to co-operate with this Mission for the fulfilling of the object. But I hope and trust that there is no other object in view. I hope and trust that no vested interests will be created by the United States of America in this country with regard to industries, and that in future there will be no unhealthy competition between Indian industries and American industries.

Connected with questions of supply and distribution is the problem of transport. It has been pointed out by several Members that the transport facilities are very inadequate, that jute, cotton and coal cannot be moved without great difficulty and without long delays, with the result that the raw material cannot reach a purchaser at the proper moment and that the consumers suffer very greatly. As regards food supply, transport difficulties stand in the way to a very large extent of a proper distribution throughout the country. The Honourable Member in charge of Communications is not here, but I hope there are subordinate officers of that Department who are taking notes; and I will expect him to give a proper answer when he rises to give his reply.

The transport difficulty has been felt also in the matter of evacuation. I watched at the Howrah Station and the Sealdah Station the extreme difficulty to which the passengers were put not only in the matter of travelling but in the matter of purchasing their tickets. If at any future time evacuation has again to be made, I hope proper arrangements will be made by the Railway authorities to supply the necessary number of trains and carriages in order that the difficulties of the passengers may be reduced to a minimum.

I shall now say a few words about the Defence of India Rules. I am sorry to have to say that my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Gidney, took a very wrong line in this connection. If there are fifth columnists in the country and if there are any traitors in this country, let them be apprehended and let them be punished. But it would be wrong on the

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part of the Government to assume that there exists in the country a very large number of fifth columnists and traitors. That is a wholly wrong view which has been taken by my Honourable friend.

Then, Sir, I should like to say that when any persons are arrested and kept under detention on mere suspicion their papers should be placed before two or three High Court Judges in order that the people may feel that the Government have not taken the step out of sheer mistrust of the entire people or out of any vindictive feelings towards any individuals. The Defence of India Rules should be worked in such a way that the legitimate purposes should be kept in view and should not be utilised for any purposes other than the legitimate. The treatment of the detenus should be humane, and they should be kept as far as possible in physical comfort.

I come now to civil defence. It seems to me that civil defence is a misnomer. It is a dignified name for Air Raid Precaution arrangements. The Air Raid Precaution arrangements are necessary; but these arrangements should be of such a character as not to give room for harassment or panic. Unfortunately however, the arrangements have been far from satisfactory in the past, and I would request the Government to take the necessary steps to make them more satisfactory in future.

But apart from Air Raid Precaution arrangements, real civil defence is necessary. That is to say, serious efforts should be made to prevent chaos and confusion in the country,—to maintain internal security. If the enemy comes within the borders of the country, which I hope will not happen, then it will be absolutely necessary to organise some adequate measure for the protection of the civil population. How are these measures to be organised? They can be organised by creating a volunteer force consisting of the young men of good families in the country and these volunteer corps should be spread over the whole country. They should exist in every city and in every village to offer protection to those who require it, and arms should be given to them. Yesterday, I heard a great deal about arms being distributed indiscriminately. I am not one of those who would ever suggest that indiscriminate distribution of arms would help the country at a crisis like the present. But arms should be placed in the hands of those who are able to use them properly, and for this purpose I suggest the creation of a large volunteer force. Now, as regards the use of arms, I may say that it is the privilege of every free man to use arms. I regard it as a badge of a free country. If India is going to be free let those persons who are able to use these arms properly be supplied with them.

A word about the misbehaviour of the soldiers. My Honourable friend, Sir Gurnath Bewoor, gave an assurance that they would behave well in future. I hope that any departure from the proper path will be visited with exemplary punishment.

I should like to say a few words about the evacuation arrangements. We have heard a great deal about the woes of the evacuees from Malaya and Burma. People have said that not only has there been a great deal of racial discrimination in this matter and that Indians were put to the greatest difficulty in the way of obtaining accommodation but also in the way of obtaining even food and water. Now, if even a tenth part of what has been said be true, every Englishman should hang down his head in shame for the selfish and cowardly behaviour of his countrymen. Is this the

right way to maintain White prestige? If that is so, I feel bound to say that White prestige has now sunk to the lowest possible level. As regards the trouble of these evacuees who have come to India, our hearts go out to them in sympathy with their distress. But we should do something to give relief to them, and I hope the Honourable the Overseas Member, who, unfortunately, is not here now, will take the earliest steps to provide food and shelter for them and educational facilities for their children.

Apart from the evacuees from Burma and Malaya, there is the question of evacuation from one place to another within the country. Now, for this purpose, as I have already said, adequate train arrangements should be made and proper arrangements should be made for the supply of food, drink and comforts. We should also make arrangements for the evacuation of factories and plants from cities and other places which are subject to air raids to the interior of the country. This is very desirable; otherwise, not only will the country suffer economically but war production will be greatly hampered. In this connection, I should like to ask whether it is possible to amend the War Risk Insurance Act in such a manner as to include the risk for goods and for the factory buildings and plants and, if possible, also for house property.

I now come to a matter which has now filled the country with great anxiety, I mean the 'scorched earth policy'. Newspapers give vivid accounts of the burning of Rangoon. How did the flames of the burning city spread miles around and the smoke was visible from a distance of 40 miles? What was the reason for this burning? Scorched policy was the cause. In our school-boy days we used to read that while Rome was burning, Nero was fiddling. It would be interesting to know what the rulers of Burma were doing when Rangoon was burning. Now, there is the apprehension in the minds of Indians that a similar fate awaits the towns and villages in India itself. I do not believe that that is the policy of the Government of India. If that be the policy I do not find words strong enough to condemn it. You must not slavishly copy what happened in Russia. The conditions of India are entirely different from the conditions which prevail in that country. Russia is a communistic State, and very little private property exists there. So, when factories are destroyed there by the State or when crops are burnt by the State, the State takes the responsibility for re-building the factories and for supplying food to the starving population. What are we going to do here? Here the system of private property prevails. The buildings do not belong to the State, and the corn-fields belong to the private individuals and not to the Government. Therefore, to adopt a policy of scorched earth in this country would be bound to lead to the most disastrous consequences. If this policy is adopted, then the Government will not have a single friend left in the country. The well-to-do persons will lose their all; even the poorest of the poor will be deprived of their means of subsistence and of their shelter. That is a situation which is difficult to imagine, and I hope the Government of India will forthwith issue a communiqué stating that it is not the intention of the Government of India to adopt a scorched earth policy in India.

Before concluding, I wish to say a word about the political deadlock. During the last two years and a half the British Government and the Government of India have done very little to meet the wishes of the people. All political parties in this country are convinced that the Government do not wish to part with power. But no heed has been paid to the requests of the different parties. The Congress twice suggested the

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formation of a National Government, but the offer was rejected. Even the Moderates offered proposals which were of a very reasonable and modest character, but no heed was paid to them. The newspapers in Britain have written innumerable articles urging the British Government to bring about a solution of the problem, but nothing has as yet been done. Only the other day, one of the most important newspapers in America, the *New York Times*, wrote :

"Without the whole-hearted co-operation of the vast complex of peoples of India, she will be a precarious place for operations. A settlement of the question will strengthen the hands and hearts of those who believe that this war is fought for a new democratic order."

Even the conservative organ, which is believed to be the organ of the Government in Britain, I mean the *Times of London*,  
 3 P. M. wrote very strong articles on this subject. A conservative Member of Parliament urged in the House of Commons the immediate solution of the Indian problem saying that the "rule of snobbery and sham must be ended immediately". Some of the Labour Members passed a Resolution to the following effect. "That in the opinion of this House the time has arrived for a plain declaration by His Majesty's Government that it recognises the national independence of India". But the reply that was given by Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India was that independence by itself offered "no guarantee of the power of a nation's resistance" and he quoted the instances of Denmark and Siam. Now, Mr. Amery forgets that India contains about 388 millions of people, whereas the population of Denmark is only about 8½ millions, while that of Siam is about 15 millions. His comparison between India and these two small countries is not a good comparison. This comparison reminds me of the proverb that a drowning man catches a straw. If Mr. Amery had no other argument to advance against the grant of independence, I must say that he was in a very bad mess. We are now told that Sir Stafford Cripps is on his way to India to settle the political problem. Sir Stafford Cripps is a very able man and he has already rendered the greatest amount of service to his own country. I offer him a cordial welcome to India on behalf of myself and my Party. But I do not know what he brings with him. We are told that he is bringing with him the unanimous conclusions of the British War Cabinet. What these unanimous conclusions are, I do not know, and therefore I will not prejudge his activities in this country. In the meantime, I feel bound to say that the sands of time are running out very fast.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** Yes, it is now five minutes past three.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** The Honourable Member may continue his speech till half past seven, if he likes.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** We have other work to attend to.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjea:** We are approaching the zero hour. The question I should like to ask is this: Has there been a change in the hearts of the people of Britain? Has there been a change of the angle of vision of the British Government? Is the British Government prepared to meet the legitimate demands and aspirations of the people of this country? On

the answers to these questions will depend not only the fate of India, not only the fate of Britain, but also the fate of the world.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaqat Ali Khan** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Deputy President, from the speeches that have been made by Honourable Members sitting on these Benches, I mean the Muslim League Benches, it must be quite evident to Honourable Members of this House that the Muslim League Party has decided to oppose the motion which is before this Honourable House. Sir, the position of the Muslim League Party has been made abundantly clear from time to time. Had it not been for the fact that human memory is proverbially short, and had it not been for the fact that the desire on the part of some Honourable Members to misrepresent us is great, I would not have taken the time of this Honourable House in reiterating the position of the Muslim League with regard to this matter. Sir, I would remind the Honourable Members of the words of that speech which the Leader, Mr. Jinnah, delivered on the last occasion when, during the last Autumn Session of the Assembly, the Muslim League Party was constrained to withdraw from the deliberations of this House for that Session. In spite of the fact that Mr. Jinnah had made the position of the Muslim League perfectly clear, there was misrepresentation made on the floor of the House by no less a person than my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, of the attitude that we had taken on that occasion. I would read to Honourable Members the following passage from the speech of the Leader of the Muslim League:

"We have reasoned, we have argued and we had long negotiations and we have come to the conclusion in the hope that the protest that we are registering today will open the eye of the blind and the ear of the deaf and that you will with God's help have the wisdom and the statesmanship to revise the scheme of yours which I assure you is not going to help you by a little in the intensification of your war effort. On the contrary you must have realised that it is going to do harm to you and I am interested as much as anybody else to ward off that harm and advise you to think it over."

That action which the Muslim League Party had taken on that occasion was not non-co-operation with war effort. It was an action to lodge its protest in the strongest possible manner against the policy which the Government had been following for the last two years. Sir, I regret to find that in spite of this clear exposition of the attitude of the Muslim League, my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, put an interpretation on that speech which the language did not lend itself to. He interpreted that speech of Mr. Jinnah as non-co-operation in the matter of war effort, and he was pleased to say that no juggling with words could hide that fact. Sir, I am sorry that my Honourable friend should have found the temptation of having a fling at the then empty Benches of the Muslim League too strong to resist. If by co-operation the Honourable Member means co-operation as camp followers and co-operation as slaves, and because the Muslim League has refused to accept that position, therefore it is non-co-operating with the war effort, then I stand here and plead guilty to that charge. No decent party, no decent people could or would co-operate on such terms; and let me tell you, Sir, that co-operation of that kind and co-operation which is not based on equal partnership is not going to win this war. And that has been the position of the Muslim League from the very first when the war was declared in 1939. We have been throughout pressing the Government and putting all arguments before them, that if they want the real and genuine co-operation of the Mussalmans and other parties, they must be prepared to treat them as equal partners in a common danger. I would like to point out to this House that as far back

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as June, 1940, the Muslim League realised,—it did not have to wait for bombs to be thrown at Rangoon,—that the danger to India was real, and that those who were thinking that the war was being fought in Europe only were deceiving themselves in thinking that India was safe. I would like to read out a few sentences from the Resolution of the All-India Muslim League which was passed in June, 1940. I am only trying to show that as far as the Muslim League is concerned, it has done its best to convince Government into adopting an attitude which would secure to them the real co-operation of the Muslims and other peoples of this country. Today we hear appeals being made to the people to unite and organise and do all kinds of things. The Muslim League made this appeal nearly two years ago to the people of India and to Government. My object in quoting from the Resolution is to show to this House that as far as the Muslim League is concerned, as far as the vast number of Mussalmans is concerned, they have been saying throughout in unmistakable terms as to what would secure the real co-operation, and that the danger to India was real and that the country should be prepared to face that danger. That Resolution of June, 1940, stated:

"The grave world situation demands serious effort on the part of every Indian for the defence of his country, and the working committee calls upon the Government of India to prepare the country in an organised manner to meet every eventuality."

This appeal, which is being made in the House today, was made as far back as June, 1940, by the Muslim League; but at that time Government and the others in this land were hoping, thinking and feeling that the distance between India and the real flames of war was so great that there was no necessity for any one to do anything. And now I would like to read a few sentences more from that very Resolution:

"The Committee therefore authorises its President to enter into communication with His Excellency the Viceroy with a view to explore the possibility of devising prompt and effective measures to mobilise the country's resources for the purpose of intensifying war efforts and the defence of India. The Committee is of the view that unless a satisfactory basis for close co-operation is agreed upon on an all-India basis and not province-wise, between the Government and the Muslim League and such other parties as are willing to undertake the responsibility for the defence of the country in the face of imminent danger, the real purpose and objective will not be served and achieved."

From this it must be quite clear that the Muslim League has throughout been pressing that the country should be organised, that the resources of the country should be mobilised and that those parties in the country, who are willing to shoulder the responsibility for the defence of the country, should come forward and take that responsibility. The Muslim League has repeated and reiterated this position from time to time and, as I have said just now, as far as the Muslim League was concerned, it did not have to wait for Japan to take possession of Malaya, or of Singapore or of Rangoon to convince it that the danger to India was real and near. I may say that up to this time the responsibility for nothing having happened in the way of preparing the country to defend itself cannot be placed on the shoulders of the Muslim League. The responsibility is on the shoulders of Government and those other parties who have been demanding declarations and living on slogans.

Sir, my Honourable friend, Rao Sahib Siva Raj, put forward the case of his community. I am sure every one, not only in this House, but outside it, sympathises with the wretched lot of his community. But my Honourable friend was not quite right when he stated that no party in this

country has really paid any attention to the cause of the depressed classes. The Muslim League, let me tell him, has been fighting and raging this battle not only for the Mussalmans, but for all the oppressed, depressed and suppressed people in this country, and my Honourable friend would remember—I could point out to him by quoting chapter and verse—that in a number of our Resolutions and in the speeches of our leaders from time to time the cause of the depressed classes has been pleaded from the Muslim League platform. He said that Muslims want Pakistan, the Hindus want Hindusthan; they all want to rule, what about us. Let me tell my Honourable friend that if he expects that the others are going to fight his battle, well, he is living in false hopes. Every one has to fight his own battle, and as far as his community is concerned, let me tell him that it was the Leader of the Muslim League who, in his Presidential Address at Madras, said that Dravidians must have Dravidisthan. If my Honourable friend does not want to rule in any portion of this country, it is his lookout. Our position is, which has been made clear from time to time, that every nationality in this country must have full scope for development, must have its own home-lands where it can rise to its full stature.

Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, made, if I may say so, a very clever speech. He told us that today it was Mr. Savarkar who commanded and who could claim the allegiance of the Hindu community as nobody else can. I take it that he himself owes allegiance to Mr. Savarkar—if I am mistaken, I hope he will correct me, as he is present on the floor of the House. Therefore, I also take it that he agrees with the policy and the programme of the Hindu Mahasabha and its Leader, Mr. Savarkar, who, according to him, is never wrong. I take it that he also agrees with the declaration of Mr. Savarkar that India is for the Hindus, that he wants to establish Hindudom in this country, and that every other community in this land must be prepared to live as a minority.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta** (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammudan Rural): This is a gross distortion of what Mr. Savarkar has said.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan**: Sir, the only thing that I can say is that if my Honourable friend is ignorant of the utterances of Mr. Savarkar, to whom he owes his allegiance, I can only sympathize with him.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta**: I can pity him. I do not need your sympathy.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan**: Sir, as late as a few days ago—I suppose my Honourable friend will say that this is also wrong—as late as a few days ago, after the Prime Minister Mr. Churchill had made his appeal asking the people in England and in India not to say anything which would in any way prejudice the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps, what was it that Mr. Savarkar said? He said, nothing which is not based on majority rule, nothing where the Hindus don't have 75 per cent. of the lion's share will succeed in this country. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta was pleased to remark that when Nadir Shah came to India and when he gave the order of *bizan*, he did not make any distinction between Hindus and Mussalmans. Perfectly true. But may I ask him, did he give the order that 75 per cent. of the killed must be Hindus and 25 per cent. of the killed must be Mussalmans? Or is it only when the question of sharing the spoils comes that this basis of counting heads is to be applied?

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Sir, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta made an appeal to the politicians that they should stand aside and let Mr. Savarkar, Mr. M. N. Roy, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and one of the ruling Princes—either the Maharaja of Bikaner or the Nawab of Bhopal—and probably he would have no objection if Mr. Fazlul Haq was included in this galaxy of talent and influence, have power to rule. (Interruption). He said let the politicians stand aside. I wonder if he meant by that that Mr. Savarkar and Mr. M. N. Roy were not politicians.

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** They are statesmen, and not politicians.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** Sir, my Honourable friend says that they are statesmen, and not politicians . . . . .

**Maulana Zafar Ali Khan:** There is only one statesman, and he is Mr. Arthur Moore.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** . . . . They will be able to handle the affairs of India better than anybody else. Mr. Savarkar, according to him, is already supporting the war effort; Mr. M. N. Roy is already going round delivering speeches and persuading and asking people to help in the war effort; Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan has been going round asking people to help in the war effort; the Nawab of Bhopal and the Maharaja of Bikaner have been declaring from housetops that they should support in the war effort. Well, I do not say anything about these worthy gentlemen, but have really the war efforts been helped to that extent that we do not require the help of anybody else? If so, I do not understand the object of either Sir Stafford Cripps coming to India or Mr. Jamnadas Mehta's appeal to all the people of India to unite and help. All these gentlemen are already there. They are helping and they are doing their utmost for the successful prosecution of the war according to their utterances. But evidently that has not aroused the enthusiasm of the people of India, that has not created that sense amongst the people of India that this war is theirs. I do not want to say anything—far be it from me to say anything about these gentlemen's influence. Mr. Jamnadas Mehta says that Mr. Savarkar commands the allegiance of a vast majority of Hindus. If he is the one man who commands the following of the vast majority of Hindus, and if that gentleman is doing his utmost to help in this war effort, then naturally it means that the vast majority of Hindus are helping in the war effort. But every one has stated on the floor of this House and in Parliament and in America that the war effort in India is nothing like what it should be, and so the natural conclusion is that it is not only the help of the followers of Mr. Savarkar which is going to win this war and that there is some other help lacking; and unless that is forthcoming, nothing will happen as far as the successful prosecution of the war is concerned. I do not say that—I was only trying to argue on the statement of Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Let me tell you, Sir, that I personally believe that the vast majority of the Hindus, in spite of Mr. Savarkar and Mr. Roy and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, are not helping in this war at all, and that is the reason why efforts are being made today by the British Government and by this Government and by other well-wishers of the country that the various political parties, who really are the parties that command

the allegiance of the people, and not these Honourable gentlemen, unless they come in, real and effective support and help in this war cannot be had.

I have purposely avoided saying anything about the declaration of the Prime Minister of England, which he made on the floor of the House of Commons, wherein he stated that the War Cabinet had arrived at certain conclusions and that the Government had decided to send Sir Stafford Cripps to India to consult and get general support from the people of India—I think the expression used is “essential elements in the Indian World”—for those proposals. But my Honourable friend, Mr. Datta, has referred to this, and I feel that I must say something, not regarding those proposals as such, but the interpretation which has been put on the statement of the Prime Minister of England. My Honourable friend, Mr. Datta, said that he welcomed Sir Stafford Cripps, because he found in the statement that Pakistan was knocked on the head. He welcomed Sir Stafford Cripps, because he found that the power of veto that was given to the minorities under the Declaration of 8th August, 1940, has been taken away. . . . .

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Was it given?

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** This is what Mr. Datta said; if my Honourable friend would only have a little patience, he will not go out of this House with any doubts about what I feel and what I say. I am sorry that the Honourable Mr. Datta should have said anything and should have really put an interpretation on the language of that statement which it really did not lend itself to. As I have stated, I will not say anything about that statement, but let me tell Honourable Members of this House that as far as the Muslim League is concerned, it awaits the arrival of Sir Stafford Cripps with confidence in the justice of its cause, and is not afraid of any honest scrutiny of its proposals on the part of anybody, because our policy has not been framed on the basis that we want to take advantage of the British, because they are to use a vulgar word, in a hole. We have not framed our policy with this intention; we have not framed our policy that because the British are in great difficulty at the moment, so let us at this time squeeze out of them anything that we possibly can. Our policy has been framed and laid down with the definite object of defending our country and keeping India safe from foreign aggression. My Honourable friend, Mr. Datta, welcomed Sir Stafford Cripps, because, according to him, the pledges that were given to the Muslims and other minorities under the Declaration of the 8th of August, 1940, have been broken by the Prime Minister in his statement. In other words, the pledge that was given to the Muslims that they will not be coerced with the help of British bayonets into accepting any Constitution to which they were not agreeable, this sacred pledge has been broken. If the interpretation which the Honourable Mr. Datta has put on the statement of the Prime Minister of England is correct, then I would say that it is, not a matter of welcome, but it would be a matter of shame to welcome the representative of such a Government. . . . .

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta):** I am very sorry I am in the Chair now, and, therefore, I am not in a position to contradict.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaqat Ali Khan:** My Honourable friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, followed the fashion. It has become the fashion nowadays to turn round to everybody and say "Sink your differences. Unite in the name of India, in the name of humanity, in the name of God." But I would like to ask him. . . .

**Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta:** Unite in the name of the devil! But unite.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaqat Ali Khan:** I am sure, Sir Cowasji Jehangir forgot Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. Mr. Deputy President, I was stating that, really speaking, as far as the Muslim League is concerned, no appeal is necessary for the simple reason that as I have stated just now, this has been the position of the Muslim League from June, 1940,—not only June, 1940, but from November, 1939, when His Excellency the Viceroy invited Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah and Babu Rajendra Prasad. This has been the position of the Muslim League, and it is the same today. We are willing; we are prepared, to co-operate and take the responsibility for the defence of India either singly or in co-operation with other parties if we get a real and substantial share in the authority of the Government both at the Centre and in the Provinces. We have stated, and let me read out to the House, Sir, a Resolution which was passed in December, 1941,—we have said quite clearly that we do not want to put forward our differences at this stage. What is the use of my friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, appealing to me when I am already a convert to that point of view? His appeal should lie in other quarters. Now, this Resolution was passed as late as December, 1941, and this has been our position throughout from November, 1939, right up to date. We said :

"The Working Committee once more declared that they are ready and willing, as before, to shoulder the burden of the defence of the country singly or in co-operation with other parties on the basis that a real share is given in the authority of the Government at the centre and the provinces within the framework of the present constitution, but without prejudice to the major political issues involved in the framing of the future constitution."

I would really want my friends, when they appeal to us for co-operation, both inside and outside the House, to say what is it that they want the Muslim League to do? Do they want to say that they want to frame the future Constitution of India today? If they feel that this is an opportune time when the future Constitution of India should be framed, I am quite willing to accept that position. We have taken up this attitude from the very beginning. We have said that we are prepared to co-operate, to give our best, to give our utmost, for the successful prosecution of the war, and for the defence of our country. We are prepared to co-operate with other parties, to work in co-operation with other parties, and we are prepared to leave the major political issues to be decided after the war. What other reasonable position any party could take, I would like my friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, to tell me. The appeal should not really be made to us. The appeal should be made to those who have greater faith in declarations and Slogans, it should be made to those who have greater faith with British bayonets to rule over this country than in friendly relations between the Muslims and Hindus. As I have stated, Mr. Deputy President, we are already converts to this view, but as I said, it is becoming a fashion nowadays. It is a fashion to blame every body whether a person is to be blamed or not. The

reason is, I hope my friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, will forgive me, that some of us have not got the courage to put the blame where it properly should be placed, and unless we really are courageous enough to put the blame on the particular party which is responsible for the present situation in the country, nothing will be done. You blame me when I am not to blame. Sir, as I have stated just now, our position has been made abundantly clear from time to time. We cannot support this Finance Bill, because we have no share or authority in the Government. And let me tell you here that when we ask for a share in the authority and power of the Government, it is not that we want to provide comfortable berths to some of our fellows, it is because we feel that we cannot rouse the enthusiasm of the people, that we cannot appeal to the imagination of the people, unless they are made to feel that in the Government there are people who will see that justice is done to them. Sir, it is for this reason that the Muslim League Party has been constrained to adopt this attitude. We are not responsible for what is done inside the Government. We are not responsible for the deeds or misdeeds of the Government, and we are not prepared under these circumstances to take the responsibility of supplying money to the Government when we have no control over it. That really has been and is the position of the Muslim League. It may be stated,—well, the times have changed. Japan is knocking at the gates of India, and, therefore, we should be asked to submit, we should be asked to give co-operation as slaves. Is that the reason? And as far as the threat to India is concerned, as I said in the beginning, when we framed our policy, we were quite aware of the threat to India, we were quite aware of the danger to India. Sir, the hand of friendship which was extended is still outstretched. We are willing, ready and prepared, as we always have been, to ask our people to give their last drop of blood and last penny for the successful prosecution of the war and the defence of India. But it is for those over there to take that hand of friendship; it is for them to decide whether or not they would be prepared to join hands with those who are willing to help and march forward as comrades to face a common enemy and to win a common victory.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Olow** (Member for Railways and Communications): Sir, I am sorry I cannot follow the last speaker into the higher realms of politics. I shall try to deal more humbly with some of the administrative questions which have been put to me in the course of the debate. Even so, having regard to the hour, I shall have to omit a number of questions that individual Members have raised. I do not think the House will expect me to say something about the pay of second grade clerks in Baluchistan . . . . .

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** The debate can be continued till tomorrow.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Olow:** . . . . . or various other points of that kind that have been raised.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Do that at leisure.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Olow:** A large number of points of minor and major importance have been raised, and I cannot go into them in

[Sir Andrew Clow.]

detail. One Honourable Member raised the question of the allocation on the basis of petrol under the Road Fund, but that allocation was decided by a Resolution of this House, and it will be a waste of time for me to discuss whether the House came to a right or wrong decision on the point. Then, Sir Henry Gidney rather invited me to make a disquisition on the Federal Railway Authority. Well, if I did that, I think there are a good many Members in this House who might have remarks to make and who might rightly resent my airing my views on that subject without giving them an opportunity to reply. I would only say that he seemed to be rather under a misconception as to what the Federal Railway Authority, if it were appointed, would do. It would not replace the Railway Board, it would rather replace the Member for Railways in respect of a number of his functions . . . . .

**Sir F. E. James** (Madras : European): And in the Assembly to some extent.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** It would involve, in fact, that delegation of authority which I suggested earlier was perhaps a desirable step. It would not, I think, meet Sir Henry Gidney's desires: it would not move in the direction he wants, in giving more attention to questions such as he wanted me to consider the other day, whether a particular individual who held the post of Assistant Foreman should be promoted to the rank of a Foreman. These questions would be removed out of the purview both of the House and of the Government. There is obviously a great deal more that can be said on the subject of Federal Railway Authority than is covered by mere administrative convenience, but I must resist the temptation to stray down that path. I will, however, make one thing clear. Sir Henry Gidney suggested that the Member for Communications and the Railway Board should be replaced by businessmen. As regards a businessman standing in my place I am not going to say anything. That is not a matter perhaps . . . . .

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** You are going to a higher position.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** . . . which I am competent to judge, but any attempt to replace the Members of the Railway Board by businessmen would, in my opinion, be disastrous. The work that they discharge requires a lifetime's experience of railways, and no businessman, I think, however competent, however able, would feel that he ought to replace experts in their own line. The higher administration stands in an entirely different footing.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** On a point of personal explanation. Sir, I never did say that. What I did envisage was the Federal Railway Authority, the higher one, being more of an administrative, and advisory formation, and the lower body consisting of Railway Agents being more the executive, and thus these form the two divisions of the Federal Railway Board. That is what I meant. I do not give in to anybody in my admiration of the Railway Agents as administrators and disciplinarians.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** I have not referred at all to the Managers or Railway Agents. And I suggest that the Honourable Member might study his references to the Railway Board and also the Government of India Act on the subject of Federal Railway Authority.

There is one matter of detail with which I shall deal, and I apologise for troubling the House with it, and that is, Sir Henry Gidney dealt at some length with the question of telegraphs. He disarmed me almost completely by saying that he has a perfect right to make mistakes.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Why not?

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** And he exercised it.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** You often do it yourself.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** We are all liable to make mistakes, I do not think any of us is free. I do my best, and my colleagues do their best to ensure that the information we give is accurate, and I feel that a little more trouble on the part of Sir Henry Gidney in verifying his facts might have saved the House just a little time.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** That is your view. That may not be my view.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** For example, my Honourable friend suggested that telegraph circuits had been diminished in number in order to provide for telephones, and that that was a great mistake. I understand from the Chief Engineer that we have more telegraph circuits today than we had, quite apart from the circuits that utilise the telephone lines. There is greater telegraph capacity than we have had before, in addition to telephones which are playing a vital part in the war and in our country. He suggested that we were using unqualified men. The men may not have equal qualifications, but no unqualified men can operate a telegraph system. I am assured that we are actually carrying more telegraph traffic today than we have ever carried before. The reason why Honourable Members find delay, like myself, who got a telegram which took five days to come from Calcutta—the reason why telegrams are seriously delayed is, I am afraid, the hard work done by my Colleagues and those who sit behind them who send telegrams that, unfortunately, have priority over other messages. The amount of traffic going for war purposes and on priority is at the moment very large indeed. And I can only express my regret to the public for the fact that the service on some lines, not on others, is at present very slow. But really Sir Henry Gidney's criticisms boil down to this. 'Why did not those responsible for our telegraph system, five or ten years ago foresee that in 1942 India would be fighting a war on two fronts?' That, I suggest, is a question that answers itself.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** And which you cannot answer.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** The answer obviously is—I can answer it perfectly well,—that neither Sir Henry Gidney nor I, nor wiser people than both of us could, have had any conception that a position would arise in the year 1942, in which we would find ourselves in the position in which we find ourselves today. It is entirely unreasonable to blame those committees which, with the full approval of the House, were endeavouring to secure retrenchment at the time for failing to foresee such an event.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** Retrenchment at the cost of efficiency.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** As the time is really short, I must rather ask that I may be allowed to go on without interruptions.

**Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta):** I hope there will be no interruption.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** They did endeavour to secure the maximum efficiency possible.

**Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Gidney:** I know. Quite so. Secure it.

**The Honourable Sir Andrew Clow:** I propose to devote the rest of the time at my disposal to a question of much greater importance, and one which has rightly engaged the attention of several Members who have spoken. And that is the question of our transportation difficulties at the moment. I think the doubts and difficulties felt by Honourable Members were summed up by Sir Frederick James who put a number of specific questions, to which I hope the rest of my speech will provide an adequate reply.

The position at the moment is that the railways are faced with demands for far more traffic than they can carry. That applies to both passengers and goods. At the same time, other forms of transport, the sea, that is coastal shipping, and the roads, have owing to the war had their capacity limited. The problem, therefore, is twofold. It is, in the first place, a problem of getting the best use out of the railways we can, and, in the second place, of developing to the utmost extent alternative means of transport. The organisation which is still in process of development for dealing with these difficulties is, briefly, as follows. We have started by making a separation between transportation and the other functions included in the Communications Department. We have placed the other subjects, including the important one of Posts and Telegraphs, in the hands of an Additional Secretary, thus relieving Mr. Roy of all that work and enabling him to devote his time entirely to transportation questions. Within the transportation sphere, there are two main branches, the first dealing with roads, and the second dealing with railways . . . . .

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

. . . . and within the railways there comes the special problem, the very important problem, of coal, to which several Members alluded. So far as roads are concerned, I have given the broad outlines already. We are appointing a Central Road Transport Officer in the person of Sir Kenneth Mitchell, who is well-known, as a former Member of this House, and one who has devoted a number of years entirely to the road problems of this country. He will be relieved entirely of his present duties for this purpose. Among the functions which this organisation will supervise are those of petrol rationing and development of other forms of fuel. But, as I have said more than once in this House, that is the smaller part of the problem, because the possibilities there, though not negligible, are limited, and the bigger part of it consists in the use we are going to make of our railway capacity.

If I might deal with one particular aspect of this, that is, coal, we are appointing at once a Controller of Coal Distribution. We have selected for that post a Railway Officer, Khan Bahadur G. Faruque, who has been dealing with kindred questions for some time, and he will now be responsible not merely for the distribution of wagons under the priority list, but also for the supply of wagons for coal on private account. He will be provided with the programmes for the loading of locomotive and naval coal and coal required for Government and military use and he will receive direct from coal merchants and public consumers their requirements for domestic use and for other purposes and will have authority to investigate any requirement of whatever priority.

Before I go on to the general railway question, there is one point: I would like to make clear. I do not think it is clear in the minds of all Members of this House and that is that the problem is not merely one of wagons. In dealing with goods traffic or any traffic there are other factors which may impose limitations on what you can do. I know some Members of the House are very familiar with this and I apologise for repeating it but it is an important point. You may be limited for example by your power, by the locomotives at your disposal, though here I would hasten to reassure Mr. Lalchand Navalrai that our difficulties are not caused in his part of the country by sending locomotives abroad. No broad gauge locomotive has been sent abroad. There is a third factor and that is line capacity. Even if you have an infinite number of wagons and an infinite number of locomotives, it does not follow that you can transport an infinite amount of goods. Your line capacity, particularly on single lines, is very strictly limited. It is limited, of course, even on double lines, although the capacity is larger there. That I think probably affords an explanation of some of the phenomena that may have puzzled Honourable Members. For example, Mr. Neogy referred to wagons lying idle and I think there was a suggestion that if palm oil were applied the wagons might move. But wagons may lie idle because of limitations, either in the direction of power or in the direction of line capacity and, similarly, our traffic is not even in both directions in all lines. It is quite likely that Honourable Members may see wagons moving empty along important lines in one direction.

The problem here is again twofold. One is that of increasing capacity and the other that of distributing capacity. In other words we have to increase our capacity to carry and to distribute the capacity among the various demands. Increasing capacity depends partly on works designed to move the boundaries, as it were, of the limitations on our lines, such as improving the marshalling yards, the provision of double lines where there is a single line, and works of that kind. It also involves increasing the rolling stock. I was asked by Sir Ziauddin Ahmad what we were doing to secure the supply of additional wagons. Well, the programmes have been placed before the Standing Finance Committee for Railways and Honourable Members can refer to them. We are unfortunately, a year behind in our programmes and that is because of the difficulties of obtaining steel. Sir Ziauddin suggested that if I could only put out Rs. 2 in the right direction I should get all the steel I required or at least he said that he had been able to do so. If he will tell me the direction, I will square my conscience with the output of small sums of that kind but I can assure him that I have not been able to get anything like all the steel I require.

[Sir Andrew Clow.]

Now, the question of increasing capacity is one for the Railway Board but when it comes to the distribution of capacity, Government came to the conclusion that what was required was an authority which will be independent of the Railways and yet working closely with them, in other words that it was not fair to impose on the Railways both the task of acting as carriers and the task of deciding, in the bigger matters at any rate, what shall be carried. We have, for example, demands for the movement of troops. We have demands for the movement of military supplies. We have various demands for the shipment of supplies overseas. We have demands for the evacuation of persons from areas which they regard as dangerous. We have demands for the movement of wheat and other food-stuffs. We have demands for the movement of coal, and may I observe in passing that that to a certain extent must have priority over all other demands, because it is not merely a case of our industries depending on coal. Without a supply of coal, the Railways themselves would cease to operate. The big task is that of balancing these demands against each other and that is a task which we are entrusting to this organisation. It will not, I hope, have to deal with demands in detail. These obviously must be left to a large extent to the General Managers of Railways and others on the spot. But it will have its reflections in the provinces and Sir Frederick James asked me how it was going to fit in with the organisations there. We have at present four provincial Boards of Transport at the main headquarters of Railways, Lahore, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta and I think a fifth will be set up in the United Provinces. These in some cases cover of course much more than a province. The one at Calcutta serves at least four provinces and that at Lahore, if you include minor provinces will serve about half a dozen. In Calcutta, particularly, the Board is probably rather too large to deal with the special problems of urgency that arise there. For that reason at Calcutta a smaller committee is being set up which will include representatives of the Defence Department and the Department of the Provincial Government, the Inland Water Transport and the Railways. It will be presided over for the present by Sir Thomas Elderton and will deal, within that zone, with work corresponding to that which is being done on the all-India scale here. I hope that will make for greater expedition in the area, which is at the moment of paramount importance.

I hope I have answered most of the questions put to me. As I admitted in reply to a question yesterday the organisation is still in a somewhat fluid state and is working out its own salvation. But I think I can claim that it is starting on the right lines and with the co-operation of the public and of all interested I hope it will be able to bring the maximum amount of transport to bear both on the prosecution of the war and on the claimant needs of the country.

**Mr. G. S. Bozman** (Overseas Secretary): Sir, before I discuss the affairs of the Department of Indians Overseas, I should like to offer two apologies to the House, the first on behalf of the Honourable Mr. Aney who had intended to make a statement to the House today himself but has unavoidably been called away elsewhere, and secondly, I must apologise on my own behalf in that I have not personally listened to the criticisms made, as I have been engaged in another place or rather in other places. I understand that the main comments with regard to the Department of Indians Overseas have referred to two matters, one the larger one of

evacuation of Indians from Burma and Malaya and the second, the smaller matter, regarding certain restrictions placed upon the entry of Indians into Aden.

I take the evacuation issue first. I suppose what we have been attempting to do in the matter of evacuation of Indians from Burma and Malaya is almost unparalleled. There are 800,000 Indians in Malaya and over a million in Burma and an attempt to move that number of people in a very short space of time under war conditions could, so far as I am aware, only meet with success under a Nazi or Fascist system.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman** (Patna and Chota Nagpur *cum* Orissa: Muhammadan): May I ask a question? Is the Honourable Member aware that discrimination of the worst type was practised there and only Europeans were removed? Indians were not offered any facilities whatsoever.

**Mr. G. S. Bozman**: If I am allowed to go on, I may possibly come to what I had intended to say. I have a short time at my disposal and I can only give a fairly rapid outline of the way the Department works on the question of evacuation.

**Mr. Muhammad Nauman**. That was the complaint we made in our speeches.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member had better not interrupt.

**Mr. G. S. Bozman**: The work falls under three main heads, namely, evacuation proper, that is, the problem of getting people out of the countries where they are; secondly, reception in India and, thirdly, the question of maintenance and employment after they have come back to India. I think it is desirable to remember what the functions of the Government of India are with regard to these three main heads.

In regard to evacuation proper, as I have described it, the function of the Government of India is to give every assistance and facility that they can provide to the Government of the country where the people are in order to get these unhappy people out. With regard to both reception and maintenance and employment after they have returned, it is the function of the Central Government to give every assistance that is in their power to the Provincial Governments who have to take the administrative action.

Now, to deal with the evacuation itself. I think I had better speak separately of Malaya and Burma. In Malaya, there was, it is probably true to say, no organised evacuation on any large scale. The total number of people who came away from Malaya is not known to me but it is very small, including all races. The latest information I have of the number of Indians who came away from Malaya is approximately 5,000. The Malayan Governments, at an early stage, were asked by us whether we should send ships to Singapore to assist in the evacuation. At that stage they said that adequate shipping was available for those people who wished to leave the country. At a later stage they informed us that ships were required. We at once took steps to place at their disposal every ship that could be made available to them in the time which was then left. I think here I must pay a tribute to the readiness with which the Naval and Military authorities assisted us in getting these ships to Malaya, and later on to Burma, to evacuate these people.

[Mr. G. S. Bozman.]

I must refer because it has been the subject of so much public comment, to one particular incident in Malaya, namely, the evacuation of Penang. It has been stated by a number of people that in the evacuation of Penang there was racial discrimination. Now, so far as can be ascertained, virtually all the Europeans in Penang came away and I have not yet heard of any Indian who was able to leave Penang. I should like to say on that subject that the Governor of the Straits Settlements, shortly afterwards, made a public statement in regard to his Government's attitude. He said that the evacuation of Penang took place without his knowledge or orders and without the knowledge or orders of the Colonial Secretary. He supplemented that statement by an assurance that he had issued instructions that should a further withdrawal under similar circumstances take place elsewhere in Malaya, there was to be no distinction of race, colour or creed in the arrangements with regard to evacuation. That the Governor and the Government of the Straits Settlements had the full intention of enforcing non-discriminatory measures for evacuation, I think the House will gather from a telegram which I might read to them which the Governor of Straits Settlements sent to us three days, before Singapore fell. He said:

"I have much pleasure in bringing to the notice of the Government of India the valuable services rendered by Mr. Goho of Singapore in the evacuation of Indian women and children and the fine example of courage and determination which he set to his countrymen and indeed to us all."

I would like to add one more word about Penang and also about certain complaints which have recently appeared in the press with regard to Singapore. The House will readily understand that we have no means now of ascertaining what the true facts of the case were. There is no communication with the Malayan Governments, either by us direct or through any other channel. The fact remains that a large number of people who came away from Malaya have told stories which are remarkably consistent. Our conclusion, therefore, on that point is that there is sufficient evidence to warrant a thorough and impartial inquiry into what exactly the events were when circumstances permit such an inquiry to be undertaken. This view of ours has been forwarded to the proper authorities.

Now, Sir, I should like to turn to Burma because Burma is very much in our hearts at present. There are three methods of evacuation from Burma,—by sea, by air and by land. Again, with regard to sea evacuation from Burma, every ship on which we could lay our hands has been employed for the evacuation of people from Burma. Our present estimate of the total number of people who have left Burma by sea is between 45 and 50 thousand. That, I suggest, is not an unsatisfactory figure considering the short time in which it has taken place. The circumstances of sea evacuation in Rangoon were particularly difficult. The city was subjected to constant air raids and alerts. It was impossible to keep people waiting for ships anywhere near the harbour which was the object of attack by Japanese bombers and, at the same time, it was essential that ships should leave as quickly as possible and get out to sea. Consequently, people who wished to leave Rangoon by sea had in many cases to get on board and sail within a space of a very few hours. The inconvenience and discomforts to which they were subjected can well be imagined. Nevertheless I think it is something that these people have come away in safety and to some extent with a little property.

There is now operating a scheme of evacuation by air. This scheme is organised by the Burma Government, but the Government of India and the Indian National Airways have given every assistance they can in providing machines. I should like here to say a word of thanks both to the Indian National Airways and, in particular, also to the Chinese National Airways Company who have been doing strenuous and splendid work in bringing people out of Burma. On Thursday last, I left Delhi and reached Akyab in Burma on Friday. I landed both on the way out and on the way home at Chittagong which has an aerodrome where the Chinese National Airways bring the evacuees from Burma. They run three, and sometimes four trips a day bringing fifty people roughly at a time and by a stroke of luck on Saturday, on my return trip, I was on the aerodrome when one of these machines landed. I walked up to the machine to see the passengers get out. There were fifty on board and all were Indians. There were, I think, seven or eight men and the rest were all women and children. I have had conversations with the Indian National Airways; I have had correspondence with the Government of Burma. I should like to assure the House that in this evacuation scheme, as in all evacuation schemes, the Government of India have continued to stress the necessity of avoiding any kind of racial discrimination.

Now, I should say a little about the land routes from Burma to India. There are two main routes, one through the west of Burma to Akyab and on to Chittagong—it was that route that I went myself to examine—the other is the route passing over the northern frontiers of Burma through Manipur and Assam. My latest estimate of the number who have come by the two land routes together is about 75,000, but the House will understand that these numbers are extremely difficult to estimate accurately. From Taungup on the Burma coast up to Akyab the journey has to be done by sea. It is possible to get along by land, but it is a most arduous journey. The normal method of transport is by launch or by country craft. I, personally, saw every ship available in Akyab on Friday and I satisfied myself that every launch which can possibly reach Taungup on the Burma coast is being used for the purpose of evacuating the refugees who have arrived there and for no other purpose. Country crafts are being used in large numbers, but they take a great deal longer to reach Akyab and I regret to say that I heard stories of extortionate charges having been imposed by the owners of the boats. However, at that time the numbers still waiting in Taungup had been very greatly reduced. A further flow has recently come over the pass from Prome into Taungup. I am now making every effort that I can to provide the fullest amount of launch and craft accommodation from Taungup to Akyab and ship accommodation from Akyab to Chittagong. The House will forgive me if I do not give details about shipping available as it is obviously undesirable to do so.

With regard to the care of the route from Taungup up to Akyab and then to Chittagong, I can give a few figures of what we have supplied. We sent first of all four doctors whom the Bengal Government kindly placed at our disposal. We sent them to Akyab and the Commissioner at Akyab sent them straight on to Taungup. We then recruited, at very short notice, a strong medical unit from Madras consisting of 18 altogether—five doctors, seven sanitary inspectors and six nursing orderlies. These are also now at Taungup. Large quantities of cholera vaccine, medicines of various kinds, bleaching powder and other medical accessories have been

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sent. Food and water have been sent down to Taungup by the Commissioner from Akyab. But the difficulty still remains at the beginning section of the journey in Burma between Prome and Taungup, a land journey of about 100 miles, some through difficult country. At the Indian end of this route, we have in Chittagong itself a special District Magistrate, 12 sub-deputy collectors, 18 doctors. We have six camps established in Chittagong and the Government of India have appointed their own Special Evacuation Officer who is now working in Chittagong. We have, in addition, five camps on the land routes into Chittagong. Each of these camps has a doctor and is under the control of these officers recruited by the Bengal Government.

Then, Sir, with regard to the northern land route—as it is called—it is in fact a combination of two or three land routes. I should say at once that a particular difficulty exists with regard to this outlet from Burma. The House will understand that we have to pay due regard to military requirements in Burma. Now, Sir, it is a fact that military requirements in the area through which this northern land route passes are of great importance and that these requirements may vary from day to day.

I heard yesterday a complaint made in this House that some kind of discrimination exists with regard to the exit of refugees along this route. I had hoped to be able today to give some authoritative information about that. I regret to say I am not in a position to do so. I can say this, that the Government of India's policy remains what it always has been, that there should be no racial discrimination with regard to evacuation. If immediate military requirements have involved at some places certain restrictions, about which I am not now in a position to inform the House, then it is possible that there may have been some real or apparent temporary discrimination for that purpose alone. That, however, is a matter upon which I am now engaged in making every enquiry, and I am authorised to say that it does not affect the policy which we have laid down and which we are following.

Now, Sir, on this particular land route, there are many miles inside Burma and many miles inside India. Inside India camps have been arranged along the whole route between the Burma border and rail head in India camps are now being arranged along an alternative route inside India to a separate rail head. Inside Burma camps have been arranged by the Burma authorities along the whole routes from the rail or river head up to the border between Assam and Burma. I should not like the House to be under any misapprehension when I speak of camps. The camps are naturally of a primitive nature, but they provide the essentials, shelter, water, food supplies, wherever possible, and medical attendance wherever possible. Two special officers have been sent from Assam into Burma and we hope that we shall shortly have more assistance available. The object of sending these officers in is that the Indian refugees on the road out, while still in Burma, should contact India and meet people who can speak to them in their own languages and should feel that even there India was offering every assistance and comfort.

Now, to turn to the Indian side which really is responsible for the reception of the evacuees, I should like to state publicly that the reception committees composed of non-officials established in Madras, Calcutta and Chittagong have done magnificent work. I have spoken to many refugees

who have arrived in this country. Each one of them has paid the most glowing tributes to the reception at the port or the rail head where they arrive. These reception committees have organised themselves on different lines in different places, but the fact remains that wherever a refugee arrives he is within a space of at most an hour or two provided with a meal, provided if necessary with shelter and possibly even some kind of clothing. He is told how to get to the place he wants to go to, and if he cannot afford a railway ticket he is given a free railway ticket to his destination in India. The gentlemen who have organised these committees are, I think, doing a splendid and selfless work for which India should thank them. I should state also that in all these places the Provincial Governments themselves have taken the most active interest. The Provincial Governments have spent large sums of money on providing free railway accommodation, food if necessary and other amenities; and the Provincial Governments are well aware that if their resources become strained, owing to their large and generous operations the Central Government will not be slow to help them. I should also like to state publicly that I have not heard with regard to reception arrangements in India one single charge of discrimination. All people arriving on boats have been treated alike and equally generously.

Then we come to the third problem, the problem of maintenance and employment once these people have returned. Scales for maintenance of those who are indigent have been laid down and communicated to the Provincial Governments. But maintenance is no solution of the unemployment problem. It is primarily for the Provincial Governments to consider how to find employment for those who are in their areas. But the Government of India are now in communication with the Provincial Governments and are suggesting the establishment by them of organisations by which those requiring employment can register themselves, state their qualifications and be put into touch with employers who are likely to be able to utilise their services. We have also approached all Provincial Governments and the principal educational authorities with regard to provision for children in schools and colleges. I have a list here of replies from nine Provincial and State Governments and from nine Universities; each one of them is prepared to make special arrangements to receive the children of evacuees, to afford them special terms and, if necessary, even to allow either free education or to allow part of the curriculum which has been completed in Burma to count towards completing the curriculum in India. Generally speaking, therefore, with regard to evacuation the impression I should like to leave is this that in the Department we have at once realised that this is a major problem, in fact the major problem, for the Department. We have ourselves taken conceivable step to provide for the comfort of these people when they arrive in India and after having arrived in India. We have gone a bit further; we have made every effort to provide for their comfort before they arrive in India. We, naturally, must work through the agencies of the Provincial Governments and these Provincial Governments concerned have responded nobly. We do not claim that these refugees have arrived in comfort or at ease. They have suffered great hardships; that we know. But the hardships have been imposed upon them not by the Government of India but by Japan.

Now, Sir, I should like to refer to the other point which was raised in criticism, namely, the imposition of restrictions upon immigration into Aden. This was brought to our notice some little while ago and we at once addressed the Aden Government on the subject. The Aden Government replied that the restrictions had been imposed for certain necessary

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war purposes and that they were of general application. This appeared to us a statement which required somewhat further elucidation. We, therefore, approached them again, and we now know that the Aden Government have imposed restrictions upon all British subjects entering Aden, that these restrictions are constantly under review, that they are designed solely to relieve Aden of war problems such as food supply, air raid precautions and so on, due to an addition to their population, and that it is their intention to relax them as much as possible and as war conditions permit. I have also a statement here from the Governor of Aden saying, specifically, that the moment war conditions permit Aden will as before welcome Indians to Aden. I am told, however, that an Honourable Member has stated that Aden is in fact admitting persons of Greek and other origin. I should be very grateful if the Honourable Member would give me the details of his information on that point, and I will undertake at once to make an inquiry on it from the Government of Aden. It had not come to our notice before; otherwise we should already have made inquiries ourselves.

That, Sir, completes the statement I wished to make on the two main points raised in criticism. I wish only to add that, after consultation with the Honourable Mr. Aney last night, I have confined myself to these two points as I have not heard the other criticisms made.

**The Honourable Sir Homi Mody** (Supply Member): Sir, being in a privileged position no longer, I am afraid I must confine myself to the budget and deal only with those issues which have been raised in the course of the debate relating to the working of my Department. I shall first deal with the exciting question of machine tools. My Honourable friend, Mr. Huseinbhai Laljee, dwelt on it at some length and repeatedly emphasised that the Department were not utilising adequately all the vast resources in the way of machine tools which he said lay in industrial establishments in the country. I should like to allay his anxiety which is commendable but which, I think, in this particular instance, happens to be slightly misplaced. In the first place, I should like to tell him that the conditions which obtain today are very different from those which obtained during the last war. At that time there was a great necessity of finding capacity for making shell bodies, and I know for a fact that many textile mills were doing work in this connection in the workshops attached to them. Today we are in a different position. Today we have centralised capacity for the manufacture of shell bodies and for other engineering work in various central workshops in the country, largely with a view to facilitate inspection and to ensure accurate machining. The result is that we could turn out today more shell bodies than are required. In other words, the capacity for making shell bodies has outrun the capacity for making the other components of a shell. Therefore, the plan that was early resolved upon was that machine tools, wherever they were found to be surplus, should be requisitioned and located in a central place. That was done, but I must point out to my Honourable friend that if he thinks that there were a great many machine tools going, he is mistaken. I know something about the workshops of the various industrial plants and they are generally doing more or less jobbing work. There was thus, to start with, a paucity of really good machine tools, and, on the top of that, there was the reluctance of many industrialists to part with what they thought was essential for the conduct of their own establishments. In the happier times in which I lived in those days, I

myself remember having represented to the Government of India the inequity of requisitioning certain machine tools which from the interests which I represented in those days . . . .

**Mr. Huseinbhai Abdullabhai Laljee:** When was it?

**The Honourable Sir Homi Modi:** That was last year. Well, even so with all these difficulties, something like a thousand machine tools have been requisitioned and placed in our Central Workshops. Recently, after careful survey of the existing capacity, the Machine Tools Controller, whom we appointed earlier on, evolved a scheme under which certain reputed firms—something like half a dozen firms which were engaged upon this type of work—were to be supplied with a balancing plant to the tune of something like 15 lakhs of rupees, which would enable them to produce more and better machine tools. That scheme is underway, but I cannot say how long it will take to complete it, because, as every one knows, there is very great difficulty in securing any type of machinery these days. One of the major difficulties in this connection has been the shortage of steel to which I shall refer in answer to certain questions raised by my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy. With all these difficulties my Honourable friend perhaps does not know that a great deal has been done to utilize the small workshops which are distributed throughout the country.

**Mr. Huseinbhai Abdullabhai Laljee:** Are the workshops being utilized?

**The Honourable Sir Homi Modi:** I will give a few instances presently. About a year and a half ago, a shell production unit was organized near Calcutta with machines borrowed from the Indian Jute Mills Association. Later on, groups of small workshops in the coal fields were co-ordinated with this scheme. Recently and this happens to be within my special knowledge and, perhaps, largely owing to my insistence—arrangements have been made with cement factories all over the country to execute orders for the Government in their workshops. Negotiations are also in progress for the utilization of machine tools in the rice factories of Orissa. Small workshops in the Kolar Gold Fields have been organized as a single productive Unit, and the resources of other workshops in the Hyderabad State have also been requisitioned or are in the process of exploitation. Generally speaking, I may say that since the institution of the Machine Control Order in February, 1941, a great deal has been done in the way of securing the right type of machine tools. In addition, a scheme was framed last year to create a reserve of machine tools in this country, obtaining them from abroad, from wherever we could get them, and for that purpose something like 20 lakhs of rupees was set aside by the Department. I am sorry to have to say that only a small portion of this sum could be spent, because machine tools are extremely difficult to obtain.

I have spoken in this connection and in connection with other projects for utilizing the small producer—whether of machine tools or of any other article—about a conference of Provincial representatives which is to be held at Delhi on the 23rd of this month with a view to making a co-ordinated drive for the purpose of utilizing the services of the small producer in this country. A fully docketed statement has been sent out to Provincial Governments so that they can send their representatives with a properly prepared brief, and we have given them a list of something like 88 small engineering articles, which the Director General, Munitions Production, can find use for, and something like 160 non-engineering stores which can be turned out by small producers.

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Finally, in this connection, I would like to refer to the approaching visit of the American Technical Mission. I am sorry to have to say that a great deal of ill-founded suspicion has been created about the intentions and the business of this Mission. Their sole anxiety in coming to this country—and it will have been noticed from the statement of the personnel of the Committee that some of America's best men are coming here—is to stimulate the war effort of this country, to make good such deficiencies as can be made good within a reasonable distance of time, having regard not only to questions of shipping, but also to questions of India's own capacity and her deficiencies in many important things like steel and non-ferrous metals. The Mission is also coming out to see what sort of technical assistance it can render, how it can help in the matter of training of personnel. In other words, America has recognized the important place which India occupies today as an arsenal for democracy, and the object of the Mission is to see that not only India's production is maintained, but that it is increased adequately and to the full extent of her capacity by such assistance as the American administration can render. In that view of the case, Sir, I submit that it was an ill-founded suspicion to ventilate in public, before even the Mission came out to this country, that they were out here to look after vested interests. Surely, it should be obvious to anyone—apart from any questions of the intention of the people who are coming here—it should be obvious to anyone that those in the Government of India who had something to do with the Technical Mission, may be trusted to look after essential Indian interests and at the same time promote the war effort of this country. I hope, Sir, I am not overstating the case when I say that the visit of the Technical Mission may substantially help to remedy some of the glaring deficiencies in our industrial position and to put India, even more largely, on the war map of the world.

Sir, I now come to my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy. He raised certain questions—rather awkward questions, I am afraid,—with regard to the Roger Mission projects. I think the Secretary of my Department, Mr. Jenkins, spoke at some length on this subject at the time when I was feeling indisposed, and, he gave the House to understand that practically all but two projects arising from the visits of both the Roger Mission and the Chatfield Mission were either on the way to completion or had been initiated. There were only two which could not be initiated, because they were not sanctioned by His Majesty's Government. I am afraid I am not in a position to say what exactly these two were, but I think this information should satisfy my Honourable friend that so far as these two important Missions' objectives were concerned, within a very short space of time it has been found possible to complete some of the projects and to get the rest of them going.

My Honourable friend raised a question about steel. It is true as pointed out by Sir Padamji Ginwala in the series of articles which he contributed to the *Statesman* that something like half a million tons of pig iron are still being exported to the United Kingdom; but it is not true to suggest—and I do not think that he suggested it or for that matter my Honourable friend, Mr. Neogy—that this pig iron comes back to this country in the shape of munitions. What comes back to this country is heavy munitions of the type which this country is not in a position to manufacture. That apart, the steel position is that since the outbreak of the war the capacity of the steel producing plants has been increased by something like 30 per cent. and very recently we have put forward proposals for increasing the

capacity by another two to three hundred thousand tons. Whether that project goes through or not, I am not in a position to say at the moment.

My Honourable friend, Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, raised the question of corruption, and he instanced the case of some cotton banding which according to him had been the subject of very suspicious dealings. All I can say is that the Department has that case under investigation. On the general question of corruption I will say what my Honourable friend, Sir Cowasji Jehangir, stated yesterday, that in a large Department handling such enormous sums of money not only every year, but, so to speak, every week, possibilities of corruption do exist; but I also agree with him in saying that it is our business to try and stop all leakages and all avenues of speculation. There have been something like forty cases under consideration or investigation to date, not so much relating to the purchase side as to the inspection. I must in this connection say that the support which one would expect from the general public is not forthcoming for what would be a reform not only of this Department, but of any large Department of Government. It has been my painful duty to blacklist a number of contractors. For that I do not need an investigation except that which I can conduct in my own Department. In not one single case has it happened that I have not been approached by a number of very esteemable people asking me to take a lenient view of such cases. There are some gross cases of prosecution which we have launched in which the parties who have been guilty of offering the bribe have been offered every immunity, and yet have not thought it right to help us. On the other hand, we have met with a certain measure of obstruction, and if you recognise that there are two parties to a bribe, as there are two parties to a marriage, I must say that the task of unravelling questionable transactions and of bringing the offenders to book is not a very easy one. All I can say is that we have set up a special agency for the purpose, that we have not hesitated for one moment, no matter who was involved in a charge of speculation or bribery, in bringing the offender to book, and with that I must leave the matter.

A question was raised about tent contracts by Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad, I think, and it was also raised by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi. All I shall say about that is that the transport system, finding itself in such acute difficulties on account of the war situation, it is our bounden duty, as it is the bounden duty of everybody, to see whether something cannot be done to help out the situation and if you consider that a great deal of the cloth which is required for tent-making is manufactured in the centres of Bombay, Ahmedabad and places round about, then it is obvious that the most rational course to take is to see that tent-making capacity is, as far as possible, transferred to those places where the actual cloth is produced. That scheme is still under consideration, and I am not prepared, I am afraid, to say anything more at this stage.

I forgot to take up the points which were raised earlier on by my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James. He referred to the all important question of a Production Minister, which he and his Group have been so insistent upon. I would not like to repeat what has been said on the subject and to point to the achievements of the Department with a view to showing that even within the framework of our organisation we have been able to produce as much as India is in a position to produce, because if I hate one thing, I hate to indulge in a mood of self-complacency. I say that a great deal is being done, but I am not prepared to say that there is no room for improvement; and it comes to pass that, either now or in the very near future, the machinery of the Supply Department is found to be inade-

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quate for the purpose of that production drive which my Honourable friend and those who think with him are insistent upon having, I will be the first to come forward with proposals for a change.

My Honourable friend referred to the question of import controls and he suggested that it was an unhappy state of affairs that more than one department should be interested in these controls. I would like to say a great deal on the subject, but I am afraid of treading on the corns of my Honourable friend, the Commerce Member. All I can say is that in specially important matters like steel and engineering stores, through the co-operation of the Commerce Department, we have been able to acquire adequate control over imports; I would say there is a great deal of co-operation between the two Departments; and it is possible that in spite of two Departments still having to handle the question of import controls, the controls may not present much difficulty in their working.

There is only one other point which I think was made, and that is with regard to the number of European advisers attached to my Department. The position here is that in matters like wool, jute, and steel, we consulted the industrialists concerned, and it was on their recommendations that the particular Advisers were appointed. We also took into account the fact that we wanted for the purpose of exercising control those people who were most closely and intimately associated with the particular industry. But having said that I refuse to concede that this has resulted in any sacrifice of Indian interests and that business has largely gone into European hands, because there are European Advisers. I do not think that such a thing can be said of the Supply Department; but if there are any instances brought to my notice, I shall be prepared to examine them with the care and attention which they deserve.

That, Sir, finishes more or less all the criticisms that were advanced, and I hope I have given a satisfactory reply to them and, in particular, I hope I have satisfied my Honourable friend, Mr. Huseinbhai Laljee. . .

**Mr. Huseinbhai Abdullabhai Laljee:** No, Sir; I would just ask one question. My only question is, are all workshops in the textile mills, 300 in number, and others working their machine tools for any war supply? You have given only one instance of a rice mill workshop in Orissa. . .

**The Honourable Sir Homi Mody:** I have already told my Honourable friend that whatever may be usefully employed for the purpose of producing engineering stores or shells or any other article is being usefully employed, and I pointed out to him that his idea that a great deal of capacity exists in the textile or any other industry for the purpose of producing machine tools is entirely unfounded.

(The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman rose in his place.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Would the Honourable Member like to begin tomorrow, as it is now 5 o'clock?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** I would like to begin tomorrow, as the hour is so late.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Wednesday, the 18th March, 1942.