

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume IV, 1943

(8th to 19th November, 1943)

NINETEENTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1943



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 19th November, 1943.

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

MEMBER SWORN:

Mr. Zahid Husain, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

DISTRICT BOARD TAX LEVIED ON WAGES OF RAILWAY STAFF.

309. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some railway staff are required to pay the District Board tax levied by such boards on the wages earned by people residing in such boards' limits;

(b) what compensation railway employees are given for payment of such taxes when they are posted to such stations in the interests of Railway service and when the scales of pay for them are fixed on the uniform rates on the entire Railway; if none, why; and

(c) if Government propose to introduce a legislation to exempt their employees from the payment of local taxes; if not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) None, because all employees have to pay taxes to which they may be subject.

(c) For reasons already given on the floor of the House by Sir Andrew Clow on the 13th February, 1941, in opposing the Bill moved by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali, Government are not prepared to introduce the legislation suggested by the Honourable Member.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What is the Honourable Member prepared to do for the sake of his employees? Does he want that their employees should pay two taxes on their wages, one to the District Board and the other to the Finance Department?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think that they do pay two taxes, but they must be prepared to pay the same taxes as other members of the public are liable to pay.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Will the Honourable Member save them from paying two taxes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I do not think it is the case of paying two taxes.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If an employee has got to pay one tax to the Finance Department, has he still got to pay the other tax?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The two taxes are quite distinct. I think the railway employees are precisely in the same state as the other members of the public.

ATTACHMENT OF PROPERTY OF CERTAIN RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AT GHAZIABAD FOR REALISING DISTRICT BOARD TAX.

310. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether he is aware that the property of certain employees residing in the joint Railway colony of the East Indian and North Western Railways at Ghaziabad was attached by the civil police for the recovery of the District Board tax?

(b) Is it a fact that no such tax was leviable in the town of Ghaziabad?

(c) Is it a fact that formerly the Railway colony was included in the limits of the Ghaziabad Municipality? How has it been included in the District Board limits?

(d) What services does the District Board render to the residents of this colony? Is it a fact that water and conservancy arrangements are made and paid for by the Railway Administration?

(e) What relief do Government propose to give to the employees in the matter of payment of the District Board tax at Ghaziabad and other places where such taxes are levied? If none, why?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) A portion of the Railway colony was at the request of the Railway employees included within the limits of the Ghaziabad Municipality in 1928. Subsequently in 1931, finding that this was not in the interests of either the Municipal Board or the Railway Administration it was excluded and brought within the limits of the District Board.

(d) The District Board do not render any special or direct service to the Railway employees residing in the Railway colony. The water and conservancy arrangements are made and paid for by the Railway Administration.

(e) None, because all employees have to pay taxes to which they are subject, but the General Manager has asked the United Provinces Government to use their good offices with the District Board to ensure recovery in instalments.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I know why these people do not get any amenities from the District Board when they pay all their taxes?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They do probably get certain amenities, but the conservancy charges are paid for by the Railway Administration.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I understood the Honourable Member to say in reply to part (e) of the question that these people do not get any help from the District Board. Will the Honourable Member say what help is given by the District Board?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I should prefer to have notice of that question, but I am informed that certain amenities are open to them.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: May I request the Honourable Member that this question as well as the last question are of such an importance that they should be enquired into?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: They have been enquired into. In fact, there was a debate on the same subject in 1941, in which the Honourable Member then in charge of the portfolio made a full statement as to the reasons why the railway servants could not be exempted from paying the dues to which the general public are liable.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Does the Honourable Member think that he is barred from revising the decision because his predecessor has said something?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. The Honourable Member asked that it might be looked into; it has been looked into at great length and I have carefully studied the debates of the time.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Is this colony not in the railway precincts and therefore it is not liable to the Municipal taxes? Is it not a fact that water and light are provided by the railway authorities for this colony? Will the Honourable Member inquire whether besides water and light charges there are any other charges which the Municipality is charging?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: No, Sir. I do not think Government is prepared to support the principle that railway servants should be exempted from taxation to which other members of the public are liable. That would not be equitable.

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

BLOCK ON THE PROMOTION OF STATION CORRESPONDENCE CLERKS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

311. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state the percentage of Grade II posts to Grade I on the North Western Railway for:

(i) Office Clerks in each Divisional, Extra-Divisional and Headquarters Office, separately; and

(ii) Station Correspondence Clerks?

(b) If the percentage of the latter class is considerably lower as compared to the former, what steps are proposed to be taken to increase the same? If none, why?

(c) Is it a fact that Station Correspondence Clerks perform similar and responsible duties like Office Clerks? If so, why is the percentage of higher grade posts meagre for them? If the reply to first portion be in the negative, what is the difference in duties and responsibilities of the two categories of staff?

(d) Is it a fact that great discontent prevails amongst the Station Correspondence Clerks owing to clogged channel of promotion, and that they have submitted a representation on the 15th September last? What action has been taken in the matter? If the Honourable Member is not aware of it, does he propose to make enquiries?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) (i). I have no information in such detail. For the railway as a whole the percentage is over 100.

(ii) 33 per cent. for the railway as a whole.

(b) None, as it is not considered necessary to take any further action in the matter.

(c) The responsibilities of Office and Station Correspondence Clerks of the same grade are approximately the same. The number of posts in the various grades are determined primarily on the requirements of the work to be done. The last part does not arise.

(d) I am aware that some staff consider themselves aggrieved and I have now seen the representation, a copy of which was attached to the question. The representation is addressed to the General Manager who will doubtless deal with it. The reply to the last part is in the negative.

FIXATION OF LOWER PAY FOR GRADE I GUARDS IN KARACHI DIVISION, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY, ON ABOLITION OF THAT GRADE.

312. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that several Grade I Guards in the Karachi Division of the North Western Railway, who are in receipt of wages of about Rs. 60 per mensem have, on abolition of their posts, been fixed on Rs. 36 in stationary appointments? If so, why?

(b) How is it proposed to reconcile this with the former Railway Member's reply to part (e) of my starred question No. 25, asked on the 31st January, 1938, which was laid on the table of the House on the 23rd February, 1938, and published on page 1025 of the Assembly debates for that day, to the effect, that a Guard on appointment in a stationary post is given the credit of his mileage allowance in fixing his pay?

(c) Is it proposed to rectify the anomaly referred to in part (a)? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a), (b) and (c). I have called for information and a reply will be laid on table of the House in due course.

LARGE NUMBER OF FREE PASSES ISSUED TO APPLICANTS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

313. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways please refer to his reply to my question No. 195(b) (iv), given on the 4th August, 1948, and say if he considers the issue of 200 free passes to fill in 35 vacancies reasonable in these days of heavy traffic? If not, does he propose to issue instructions to reduce the number of free passes in such cases?

(b) Is it a fact that the practice on the North Western Railway before the constitution of the Railway Subordinate Service Commission was, that free passes were issued up to the extent of four times the vacancies advertised for each community?

(c) If the reply to (b) above is in the affirmative, does the Honourable Member propose to see that the same practice is followed by the Railway Subordinate Service Commission?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) I do not consider that any appreciable strain is imposed on traffic facilities by the action referred to. The second part does not arise.

(b) It is understood that on the occasions when passes were issued in the past, the numbers were about twice the vacancies filled.

(c) No.

CONTROL ORDERS FOR SALE OF RAW HIDES IN PUNJAB.

314. *Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member please state if Government have issued any control orders for the sale of raw hides in the Punjab, specially in Lahore, during the last six months or before? If so, when? What were the rates fixed? Was it also ordered that hides would only be sold to some particular firms? Will copies of such orders be laid on the table for the information of the House?

(b) Is there any post of Chief Inspector of Hides? What are his duties and powers, and who is the present incumbent?

(c) Is it a fact that the Chief Inspector of Hides went to Lahore sometime back and visited the godowns of some of the firms dealing in hides and skins, and gave them an oral order to clear their stocks at once or they would be liable to be seized by Government, that at their request to give them a written order to that effect, he threatened them with prosecution under the Defence of India Rules and thereupon the firms sold off their stocks to the tanning firms at decreased rates, sustaining thereby heavy losses?

(d) Is it a fact that in October last not less than eight renowned firms of Lahore dealing in hides and skins made a joint representation to the Secretary of the Supply Department regarding this incident and asking for the clarification of the control orders of the Government for their future guidance in their business, but no answer was sent to the signatories?

(e) Was an enquiry made on the said representation? If so, what was the result? If no enquiries were made, do Government propose to institute an enquiry now, and to communicate to the signatories and to myself the real position in regard to the Government control order for the guidance of the hide dealing firms and also the final findings regarding the allegations made against the said Chief Inspector?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) No. orders controlling the sale of raw hides in the Punjab have been issued.

(b) There is no post of Chief Inspector of Hides in the Supply Department.

(c) Two Assistant Industrial Planning Officers visited the Lahore market in September and had discussions with hide merchants in order to persuade them to sell hides to controlled tanneries who were short of supplies. The officers explained to the merchants that under certain circumstances recourse could be had to action under the Defence of India Rules. Government do not consider that sales actually made by hide merchants to controlled tanneries involved the former in loss.

(d) and (e). Yes. A representation has been received and is under consideration.

OVERCROWDING OF TRAINS ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

315 *Sardar Sant Singh: Has the attention of the Honourable the Railway Member been drawn to the overcrowding of trains on all lines over the North Western Railway? If so, what steps are being taken to remove the congestion?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Yes, but the problem is one common to all Railways in India and in other countries at War. In this connection I

would refer the Honourable Member to the proceedings of the recent meeting of the Central Advisory Council for Railways on the 16th November, 1943, at which he was present.

COMPLAINTS AGAINST A TRAIN EXAMINER AT PATHANKOTE, NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

316. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Honourable the Railway Member please state if any complaints were received against one Train Examiner for bribery and harassment of employees of the Loco Traffic and Carriage Department of Pathankote on the North Western Railway? Was any resolution received on this subject passed by the United Union of the North Western Railway Workers? If so, what action has been taken on the same?

(b) Is it a fact that the President of the Union and the members of the Local Area Council were victimised instead?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes, and the complaints are under investigation. As regards the second and third parts, I have no information.

(b). No.

STOPPAGE OF RAILWAY TICKETS FOR STATIONS ROUND NANKANA SAHIB.

317. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable Member for Railways been drawn to an order passed by the Punjab Government under the Defence of India Rules stopping the issue of tickets to stations all round Nankana Sahib between the 7th and the 17th November, 1943? Is it a fact that the annual fair of Guru Nanak's Birthday which is held at Nankana Sahib falls within these dates? If so, have the Railway authorities lodged any protest against this action of the Punjab Government?

(b) Did the Railway Administration consult its law officers as to the legality of the order on the point whether a provincial administration was authorised under the Defence of India Act to pass such an order against a department of the Government of India?

(c) Is it a fact that the Sikh community is highly agitated over this? If so, what steps did the Honourable Member take to get this order cancelled?

(d) What was the income of the Railway Department during the last three years on account of this fair? Who will bear the loss due to this order?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the question of a protest does not arise as the restriction has been imposed at the request of the North Western Railway.

(b) Yes. I shall refer the Honourable Member to sub-clause (a) of Clause 1 of Rule 85B of the Defence of India Rules.

(c) The strong feeling of the Sikh community has been conveyed to the Government of India by the Punjab Government. The matter is, however, one for settlement between the Provincial Government and the Railway Administration concerned. I might add for the information of the Honourable Member that similar restrictions have had to be imposed for all important *melas*.

(d) Information regarding the income on account of the fair in previous years is not available. As regards the question of the loss, this does not arise as in the present conditions of other important and urgent demands on rail transport, Railways are unable to cater for this traffic.

Sardar Sant Singh: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that restrictions were placed on the railways at the request of the Railway Department by the Punjab Government?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: At the request of the North Western Railway.

Sardar Sant Singh: Did the North Western Railway administration request the Provincial Government to issue an order, prohibitory order under the Defence of India Rules, upon themselves that they should not do a certain act?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: I cannot remember the exact details but my recollection is that the North Western Railway administration wrote first to the Railway Board and I think the Railway Board either asked them to get into touch with the Provincial Government or the Board themselves got into touch with the Provincial Government.

Sardar Sant Singh: Is the Honourable Member aware that Rule 85(b) of the Defence of India Rules specifies a person or class of persons that can be prohibited from travelling while here in the notice—I can give the Honourable Member a copy of the notice if he has not got one—the order issued to the Railway Administration was, not to issue tickets from certain stations. How does it fall within the Defence of India Rules that I quoted? Did they consult the Honourable the Law Member about the legality of the notice issued by the Punjab Government.

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The Honourable Member has raised an interesting point and I shall be glad to look into details if the Honourable Member would supply me with them.

***NON-EMPLOYMENT OF URDU-KNOWING CLERKS IN BERAR SUB-POST OFFICES.**

318. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state:

(a) whether he is aware that at a great number of Sub-Post Offices in Berar no Urdu knowing clerks are employed, and that this causes great inconvenience, delay and even loss in accepting and issuing money orders, registered letters and parcels; and

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, whether he proposes to take necessary action in the matter?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) and (b). It is probably the case that at a great number of sub-post offices in Berar no Urdu-knowing clerks are employed. I have, however, to point out that under clause 263 of the Indian Post and Telegraph Guide, money orders are required to be written in the local Indian language, which in the case of Berar is Marathi. It is not possible to provide clerks conversant with all languages and scripts that may be used by any section of the population in any area and the post office provides clerks who are conversant with the local Indian language, that is to say, the language recognised by the Local Governments as the local court language and script.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Is the Honourable Member aware that a large number of people speak and write Urdu in Berar and will he look to the convenience of such people?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I am quite prepared to ask the Postmaster General, Central Circle, to post clerks who know Urdu, if such clerks are available, to certain offices where there may be serious inconvenience to the public.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Is Urdu included in the local languages?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: No, Sir, Urdu is not declared as the local language by the Local Government.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Are Government aware that a large number of Gujrathis inhabit Berar and they also feel inconvenience for lack of Gujrathi-knowing clerks in post offices and will the Honourable Member introduce Gujrathi-knowing clerks also?

(No answer.)

BIAS AGAINST POSTING OF MUSLIMS, ETC., AS SUB-POSTMASTERS IN CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE.

319. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Secretary for Posts and Air be pleased to state whether certain proprietors of rented post office buildings in the Central Circle prevail upon the Postal Superintendents not to post Muslims or Christians or Harijans as Sub-Post Masters, and that this operates against the rights of these communities?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to issue instructions to the authorities not to allow such objections to prevail?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: (a) and (b). I have no information but have called for a report from the Postmaster-General, Central Circle.

APPOINTING OF URDU SCHOOL TEACHERS AS BRANCH POSTMASTERS IN CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLE.

320. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the desirability of issuing instructions that Urdu School teachers in the Central Circle should receive equal treatment with others in the matter of appointments as Branch Post Masters?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: It is presumed that the Honourable Member is referring to Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters. Under the rules school masters are eligible for appointment as Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters provided their character and antecedents are found to be satisfactory. Government have no reason to believe that Urdu school masters are being treated differently from other school masters in the matter of appointment as Extra Departmental Branch Postmasters in the Central Circle. A copy of the question is, however, being sent to the Postmaster-General, Central Circle, for information and such action as he may consider necessary and for report.

DESIRABILITY OF INTRODUCING MAIL MOTOR SERVICE BETWEEN AMRAOTI AND DARYAPUR.

321. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the desirability of introducing a Mail Motor service between Amraoti and Daryapur in place of the present arrangement which causes great inconvenience to the public?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I am sending the suggestion of the Honourable Member to the Postmaster-General, Central Circle, for taking such action as he may consider suitable.

FACILITIES FOR JUMA PRAYERS IN THE CENTRAL POSTAL CIRCLES.

322. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Does the Secretary for Posts and Air propose to consider the issuing of orders to make it possible for Muslim employees of the Central Postal Circle to attend Juma prayers on Fridays?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: General standing orders on the subject of the grant to Muslim Employees of the Posts and Telegraphs Department of an hour's leave on Fridays already exist and they apply to the Central Circle also.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Is he aware that in spite of these orders they are not permitted to offer Juma prayers?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: The grant of such leave of absence is, and must be, in the case of certain offices, subject to the exigencies of public business. In an administrative office, where work can be held up, this is possible, but in post office, telegraph office and telephone exchange, especially where they are small ones, this is not always possible.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Does the Honourable Member know that performance of Friday prayers is obligatory upon every Muslim?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: If the Maulana says so, it must be so.

Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: Will the Honourable Member look into the matter if I bring definite cases to his notice?

Sir Gurnath Bewoor: I shall certainly look into it.

FACILITIES GIVEN TO OUTSIDERS FOR ESTABLISHING DISTILLERY, ETC., IN BALUCHISTAN.

†323. *Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) whether monopoly and other facilities for a certain period have been given to some persons outside Baluchistan to establish a distillery in Baluchistan;

(b) whether similar facilities have been given to outsiders for fruit canning and preparing Ephedrin; and

(c) whether people in Baluchistan were given facilities to take up this work either by advertising in Baluchistan or by other means and by calling for tenders; if not, why not?

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

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

RAISING OF GOVERNMENT INTERMEDIATE COLLEGE, QUETTA, TO DEGREE COLLEGE STANDARD.

†324. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) whether the number of students in the Intermediate College Section of the Government Intermediate College at Quetta has reached 120; and

(b) whether, in view of this evidence of very keen demand for higher education, Government propose to raise it to the standard of a Degree College, especially as it involves no extra expenditure on buildings, and a further expenditure on additional staff is expected to be covered by the extra fee to be collected for the degree classes?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: This question should have been addressed to the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands.

ANNUAL RECOGNITION GRANTED TO DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS IN BALUCHISTAN.

†325. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state whether he is aware of the fact that the year to year recognition granted to Denominational Schools in Baluchistan operates as a bar against the betterment of educational facilities in such schools and whether Government propose to accord permanent recognition to such schools in Baluchistan?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: This question should also have been addressed to the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands.

PAUCITY OF MUSLIM OFFICE SUPERINTENDENTS, ETC., IN CIVIL DEPARTMENTS AT QUETTA.

†326. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that out of the ten Office Superintendents in the various civil departments at Quetta only one is a Mussalman;

(b) whether it is a fact that at a recent selection of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of land customs, the Revenue Commissioner in Baluchistan selected only one Muslim out of the seven selections made by him; and

(c) whether, in view of the fact that 96 per cent. of the population in Baluchistan comprises of Muslims and, in view of the need for encouraging the spread of education among them and the need for absorbing educated young men, he proposes to reserve, as far as possible, all provincial services in Baluchistan for Baluchis only, and to reserve a proportionate number of appointments for Muslims in Baluchistan in accordance with their population?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No. 10 out of 20 such posts are held by Muslims.

(b) No. There was a recent selection of Sub-Inspectors of Customs when 2 out of 5 selected were Muslims.

(c) The Local Administration, in making appointments to all provincial Services, gives special consideration to local candidates but cannot be expected to reserve appointments if suitable candidates are not forthcoming.

ABSENCE OF STATION NAME BOARDS IN URDU ON CENTRAL PROVINCES RAILWAYS.

†327. ***Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait:** Is the Honourable Member for Railways aware of the great inconvenience caused to Urdu knowing public by the absence of Urdu name boards on stations on the Central Provinces Railway? Does he propose to issue an order that name boards in Urdu be put up at these stations?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: My attention has not previously been drawn to the inconvenience referred to by the Honourable Member, and I am

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

forwarding a copy of the question to the General Manager, Great Indian Peninsula Railway, for such action as he may consider necessary.

PROJECTS OF NEW ROADS COMPLETED BY BIHAR GOVERNMENT FROM THE CENTRAL ROAD FUND.

328. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of Road Fund lying unspent with the Government of India to the credit of the different provinces;

(b) how many projects of the new road construction have been completed by the Bihar Government with the Central Road Fund uptil now;

(c) if any amount of the Central Road Fund has been spent by Provincial Governments for the repair of roads under the local bodies;

(d) if Government are aware that the inter-district and inter-provincial roads are being used very heavily for military movements, and that the maintenance of such roads in proper condition is beyond the financial capacity of most of the local bodies; and

(e) if the answer to (c) and (d) be in the affirmative, the amount spent over the roads maintained by the local bodies in Bihar, and, if the answer be in the negative, whether Government propose to authorise the Provincial Governments to spend a sum out of the Central Road Fund for the maintenance of roads under the local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: (a) Rs. 1,18,48,360 at the close of the year 1942-43.

(b) 16.

(c) Certain sums from the Central Road Fund have been spent by a few Provincial Governments for the repair of roads, but the Government of India have no information as to whether any of such roads were under the Local Bodies or not.

(d) Government are aware that the traffic on some roads in certain areas has increased due to the war. They have no information, however, as to whether the maintenance of the roads is beyond the financial capacity of any Local Bodies.

(e) As regards the first part, no amount has been allotted out of the Provincial allocation from the Central Road Fund for the maintenance of roads in the Province of Bihar. As regards the latter part, no sums from the Central Road Fund can be allotted for maintenance in view of the decision taken by the Standing Committee on Roads on a recommendation made by the Transport Advisory Council and ratified by the Provinces that debits of the cost of maintenance to the Road Fund allocations should be discontinued.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Has the Honourable Member obtained any information from the Government of Bihar whether they spent any amount for maintenance of roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: It is not necessary, because, as I said, no allotment has been made to Bihar for maintenance of roads.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Do I understand the Honourable Member to say that no allotment has been made to the Government of Bihar for maintenance of roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: No allotments have been made for maintenance of roads.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: But the Honourable Member said in some part of his answer that a few Provincial Governments have spent certain sums from the Central Road Fund for the repair of roads under local bodies.

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: In some Provinces, yes; but Bihar is not one of them.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: In view of the fact that some Provinces have spent, will the Government of India ask the Bihar Government if they have spent any amount, or if the Government of India is prepared to allow them to spend out of this road fund for the roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: I have already stated that it has been decided by the Standing Committee for Roads that no allotment from the Central Road,

Fund allocations should be spent on the maintenance of roads. The particular instances I mentioned were in the past, but a decision has now been taken that the Central Road Fund is for the construction of new roads and not for the maintenance of roads which is a responsibility of the Provincial Governments.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Do I understand that since Government issued instructions no Provincial Government has spent any amount on roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Not from the Central Road Fund allocation.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Then in view of Government's statement that there has been heavy traffic on account of military movements, do Government propose to allow the Provincial Governments to spend their funds on roads under local bodies?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: That is a matter between the Provincial Governments and the local bodies. Our decision was that the maintenance of roads is the duty of the Provincial Government or of the local bodies who own those particular roads; and even if there is increased use of such roads, maintenance is still the duty of the particular bodies which own them.

EXPORT OF WOOL TO BASRA FOR RUSSIA.

329. ***Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** (a) With reference to the reply to starred question No. 270 asked by Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon on the 12th August, 1948, with regard to export of wool to Basra for Russia, will the Honourable Member for War Transport be pleased to say whether Government have considered the notice and the contract form of Messrs. Cox and Kings Limited, Karachi (Agents)?

(b) Are the terms of these documents substantially or virtually the same as for shipments to the United Kingdom? If not, how do they differ?

(c) Is it a fact that the difference was that the wool was not to go to the United Kingdom?

(d) Is it a fact that shipments according to the above documents were made on the consignment basis and under the same terms of business as for the shipments to the United Kingdom, that these shipments have been accorded the wool control prices of Liverpool, and that the prices have to be appraised by the Wool Control in the United Kingdom on the sample forwarded to them?

(e) Do Government in consideration of these facts propose to revise their opinion, and to get the shippers their due? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: This Question concerns the Honourable Member for Commerce and should have been addressed to him.

FACILITIES FOR MANUFACTURE OF MANURES OR FERTILIZERS.

330. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Supply Member be pleased to state if Government have given any orders, or granted any facility, to any firm or firms in India for the manufacture of manures or fertilizers?

(b) If the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, what are the quantities for which orders have been placed, and what is the nature of facilities thus granted in the case of each firm?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Have Government come to any decision on the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee on this subject which is to be found on page 22 of the report?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Government have not yet come to any decision on the question of how this ammonium sulphate or mechanical fertilisers should be produced, but they have taken steps and have consulted the industry and are consulting certain Provincial Governments.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am not concerned with the general question just now, but have Government considered the specific recommendation made by this particular Committee and have they come to any decision?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The particular recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee, if I remember it aright, is that it is necessary to get or manufacture chemical fertilisers in the country to a certain extent—the figure is mentioned there. I think generally Government agree that it is a desirable thing to do.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I am afraid the Honourable Member has not read that part of the Foodgrains Policy Committee's report to which I referred. They definitely recommended the giving of necessary assistance and facility for the importation of plant required for the manufacture of ammonium sulphate to the extent at least of 3½ lakh tons a year and they further said that earliest action should be taken in this matter.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Sir, I do not think I was so far out in my reading of the recommendation of the Foodgrains Policy Committee. The question of getting plant or recommending import of the plant depends on who is to work the plant, how it is to be worked, where it is to be located, what facilities there are with reference to electric power for the working of the plant and whether the plant can be got on Lease-Lend or on other considerations. The whole question is under examination and that is what I was referring to.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: May I know whether Government are going to give their particular attention to the recommendation that action in this matter should be taken without the least possible delay?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: Action has been taken without the least possible delay. On the 28th September there was a conference convened of the persons who were interested in the manufacture of ammonium sulphate along with certain Provincial Governments. Their views on the question of the possibility of this manufacture have been taken note of. Certain firms have been consulted as to what technical staff they have got to enable them to manufacture this plant; the Electricity Commissioner has been asked to furnish details of the amount of spare electricity that may be available when these plants are set up; and inquiries have been made as to what kinds of plant are available in the United Kingdom or the United States of America. These require some time and when the information is gathered the Government of India will be able to make up their mind as to how to proceed in this matter.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to give even an approximate idea as to the time which they will take over these cogitations?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is free to make any kind of ironical statements. I can only answer as a Member of the Government of India.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: There is no ironical statement here; "cogitation" is a perfectly parliamentary expression. Is it a fact that considerations for certain vested interests stand in the way of the Government of India coming to an early decision in this matter?

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: What does the Honourable Member mean by vested interests?

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member knows perfectly well what I mean; let him not pretend that he does not know.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is, as usual, completely wrong in referring to any vested interests in this connection and in saying that those interests stand in the way of the Government of India coming to a decision.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: The Honourable Member is, as usual, impertinent.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar: The Honourable Member is, as usual, making insinuations.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I repeat that the Honourable Member is, as usual, impertinent.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order; that is unparliamentary.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

PROMOTION OF GUARDS FROM GRADE I TO GRADE II ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

39. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that rules in force on the North Western Railway in 1928-29 for promotion of Guards from Grade I to II, provided for passing of the departmental examination, and that several such persons were promoted to Grade II in the Karachi Division of the North Western Railway in 1929 and 1930?

(b) Is it a fact that a large number of Guards were reverted in 1931 owing to the general economy campaign, and that some of them were reposted to Grade II in 1935, while others were asked to requalify for the departmental examination through the Walton Training School? If so, why?

(c) What is the specific provision in the Railway Board's training rules for subordinates issued in 1929 under which the old departmental examinations are cancelled, and is there any discrimination in the application of rules to individual employees? If so, why?

(d) If the reply to the last portion of part (c) be in the negative, is it proposed to review the case of Guards referred to in part (b) above, and to exempt them from re-examination? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) Yes.

(b) The answer to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the Selection Committee which was held at the time these guards were considered for promotion to grade II decided that while some were fit for promotion others were not fit. In the case of the latter, it was ruled that they should undergo training in the Walton Training School.

(c) Departmental examinations are instituted by railway administrations who are competent to alter or cancel them. Government do not consider that the action taken was discriminatory.

(d) Government are not satisfied that any action is necessary but are prepared to look into the case further.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD FOR RECRUITMENT TO SUBORDINATE SERVICE ON NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

40. Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Railways be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the educational standard for recruitment to certain posts in the subordinate service on the North Western Railway has recently been lowered from second division Matriculation to that even of failure to secure second division by few marks? If so, why?

(b) What is the equivalent standard for candidates referred to in part (a) who reside in provinces where Matriculation Examination results are not declared by divisions?

(c) Is it proposed to extend the same concession to provinces referred to in part (b) above for those candidates who failed to pass the Matriculation Examination by a few marks? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: (a) As stated in the reply to part (e) of Mr. H. M. Abdullah's starred question No. 194, asked on the 4th August, 1943, the North Western Railway have lowered the qualification to Matriculation III Division for some posts.

(b) When the results are not declared by divisions, it is obvious that divisions cannot be prescribed.

(c) No; failure to pass in the II Division by a few marks indicates that the candidate had passed in the III Division, i.e., passed the Matriculation Examination. It is not proposed to lower the minimum qualification laid down by Government.

DELIVERY OF TELEGRAMS AT SHAHDARA, DELHI, THROUGH POST OFFICE.

41. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Secretary of the Posts and Air Department please state if it is a fact that telegrams addressed to persons in Shahdara, Delhi, are delivered through the Shahdara Post Office and not by the Telegraph Office? If so, why?

Sir Gurunath Bewoor: Telegrams addressed to persons in Shahdara, Delhi, are delivered by the staff of the Delhi Head Post Office. The Honourable Member has probably in mind telegrams addressed to Delhi-Shahdara North Western Railway Telegraph Office. Such telegrams are according to Railway Rules delivered by the Railway staff within station limits, but if the addressee is living outside the station limits, they are transferred to the Sub-Postmaster, Shahdara Post Office, who sends them out for delivery by the postman at the next postal delivery. The question of opening a Telegraph Office in the Shahdara Post Office is, however, being examined.

PERSONS DEALT WITH UNDER SECTION 5 OF ACT VI OF 1941 IN DELHI
DIVISION OF NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.

42. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the number of persons dealt with under Section 5 of Act VI of 1941 since the 1st April, 1941, in the Delhi Division of the North Western Railway?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: The total number of passengers dealt with under the Section referred to by the Honourable Member in the Delhi Division of the North Western Railway was 13,904 during the period 1st April, 1941 to 30th September, 1943.

RUNNING ROOM ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEPRESSED CLASSES STAFF ON STATE
RAILWAYS.

43. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state the particulars of arrangements in the Running Rooms for the use of the staff recruited from the Depressed Classes on the State-managed Railways? If no arrangements are made for the comforts of the said staff, what are the reasons therefor?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

EYE TEST FOR TRAVELLING TICKET EXAMINERS ON EAST INDIAN RAILWAY.

44. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Railways please state if it is a fact that the Travelling Ticket Examiners on the East Indian Railway are tested in eye sight in Group "C" of the Regulation? If so, what are the reasons for examining their Inspectors in a higher Group?

The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall: Information has been called for and a reply will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

STATEMENTS LAID ON THE TABLE.

Information promised in reply to a Supplementary Question part (b) of starred question No. 98, asked by Mr. Nabi Baksh Illahi Baksh Bhutto, M.L.A., on the 29th July, 1943.

BAN ON BROADCASTS OF URDU TALKS BY THE ALL-INDIA RADIO.

The language problem of All-India Radio Hindustani news bulletins and other announcements has been examined in great detail keeping in mind the listeners criticism and the principle that All-India Radio news bulletins should be as widely intelligible as possible without splitting them into Hindi or Urdu. The changes effected have been of the following types:

- (1) Where there is an almost insoluble controversy over the two alternatives, one Hindi and the other Urdu, the original in English is retained if it is more intelligible or at least as widely understood as either of the two renderings.
- (2) Where the English original does not possess this advantage, doublets are used.
- (3) In all other cases, the most widely understood word is used.
- (4) Where each of the two alternatives has a sectional application, the selection is restricted to the section for which it is most appropriate.
- (5) Phrases coined by All-India Radio where they are easier to understand than their current equivalents are retained.
- (6) Words which are considered to be offensive by one community or another have been discontinued.

Information promised in reply to parts (a) and (b) of starred question No. 113, asked by Dr. Sir Za Uddin Ahmad on the 29th July, 1943.

WORKING OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL WAR FRONT

(a)

A PLEDGE

Because I am proud to be a citizen of India I solemnly pledge myself to stamp out defeatism and suppress alarmist rumours; to face and defy every peril threatening India's national honour and security, and to work day by day in the sure and certain hope of Victory.

A SUMMARY OF THE WORKING OF THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT UP TO THE END OF ITS FIRST YEAR.

GENERAL.

When the Front was founded on March 11th, 1942, its initial objects were to maintain public morale and to make people realise that the war was India's war. As time went on, however, it was realised that the maintenance of morale could not be divorced from activities connected with the practical needs of the people and in many provinces now the tendency is for the Front to develop more and more its practical activities and to make them the focus round which its propaganda can radiate. In a number of provinces, Village Defence Parties have become an important part of the work of the Front and there are few sights more inspiring than the keenness of the Village Defence Parties in the Madras Presidency. In other provinces the National War Front has been assisting in matters connected with the food shortage and again in other provinces the maintenance of law and order has been considered as one of the most important activities of the Front. Right at the time of the inauguration of the Front, the Punjab gave the lead in this matter and announced its intention of working largely in practical directions; that lead has now been followed in many provinces.

The Provincial and District organisation of the National War Front has now attained impressive proportions and the expenditure on it in British India alone will amount to about Rs. 45 lakhs in the current year. For the first time there exists in India now a powerful and extensive organisation available for non-political propaganda in the national interests. It may be that an organisation of this kind can be of the greatest value after the war in the work of reconstruction and nation-building and it is therefore of the utmost importance that the Front should continue to keep itself aloof from party politics of any kind.

The Front may be said to have passed through three phases during the past twelve months. Up to August 1942 was the period of organisation, then followed a difficult time during which the Front had to stand the strain of the Civil Disobedience Movement, while from the beginning of this year onwards the period has been one of steady growth in both extent and influence and of greater attention to practical activities. There is little room for doubt that in troubled areas it has exercised a steadying influence during the last few months. One hopeful sign is that its critics are on the alert, that a good deal was heard about the Front in recent sittings of the Assembly and that no mistake on the part of the N. W. F. propagandists is allowed to pass unnoticed. The first function of a propaganda organisation is to get its material read and the volume of criticism that comes in from time to time on particular points in our pamphlets, advertisements, etc., leaves no room for doubt that the Front fulfils this function.

THEMES AND CAMPAIGNS.

The objects of the National War Front throughout the year have remained as defined by His Excellency the Viceroy in the following words:

"The object is to do everything possible to help and maintain public morale: that is to say, to strengthen the war resistance of the people, to eradicate all elements to undermine it; and in particular to counteract fifth-column activities of all kinds, including especially all talk, thought, writings and rumours likely to produce a defeatist mentality; to inculcate faith, courage, and endurance; and to consolidate the national will to offer united resistance to Nazism and Fascism in every shape or form, whether within or without the country, until their menace is finally overthrown."

The particular themes presented have, of course, varied from time to time. Chief among them have been the following:

"This is India's War"—"The power of the Axis must be broken"—"Victory lies ahead but we must work for it"—"India's honour must be maintained"—"This is India's industrial opportunity"—"Defend India's ancient culture"—"Suppress rumours for they destroy strength"—"Build India's defence forces to secure victory to-day and to maintain India's freedom hereafter".

Early in the year the principle emphasis was on the theme that an Axis victory would make life intolerable, but of recent months the tendency has been to concentrate on the positive side of the picture and to turn people's minds to the thought of future greatness and prosperity, if the Allies win. This phase of the campaign has been focussed around the slogan "Through Victory to Freedom" and there is evidence that this particular appeal has been to some extent effective. It seems clear that any war propagandist must take the forward view, and deal with the positive advantages to be reaped after victory rather than the evil side of defeat.

In the Punjab a great deal was done by the Front in connection with the Defence Loans Campaign and all over India the National War Front is now giving more attention to a Savings Campaign. It seems obvious that the spiral of rising prices and rising wages must be checked if morale is to be kept up; and so a Savings Campaign is one of the most important functions of the National War Front.

MEETINGS.

Meetings play an ever increasing part in the work of the National War Front. Exact figures as to the number of meetings held are not available but the reports received regarding meetings for the last quarter alone show that they exceed 2,000. The scale on which such meetings are held is illustrated by the following details from certain provincial reports.

Bombay.—300 meetings were held in the month ending 15th January 1943 and it was estimated that the attendance reported for 207 of these meetings was nearly 67,000. In the ensuing months 168 public meetings were held and the estimated attendance reported for 147 of these meetings was about 48,000.

Bihar.—201 meetings were held in the first quarter of 1943 in the rural areas, and in addition to the war, such topics as high prices, shortage of rice, etc., were discussed.

Other provinces report similarly.

Red Cross Week provided an admirable occasion for the holding of meetings in various provinces and in one province 82 meetings were held on "Red Army Day" in conjunction with the Indian Federation of Labour. Melas, fairs and even weddings have all provided opportunities for the holding of meetings.

VILLAGE DEFENCE PARTIES.

These parties in one form or another have been very successfully linked with the National War Front in Bihar, Madras and Assam. A beginning has also been made in the Punjab and on a much smaller scale in Bombay. In some provinces the parties have been used to guard railway lines and elsewhere they are reported to have done good work in preventing dacoities or sabotage.

LITERATURE.

Much literature has been put out; in fact writers are working at high pressure producing all kinds of leaflets, pamphlets, etc. Of all our recent material the item which has aroused public attention most is the pamphlet "Why can't he mind his own business?" which was reproduced very widely in the press and gave rise to a considerable volume of correspondence both in the press and through the post. The theme of this pamphlet was "No one can be a good National War Front worker unless firstly he is a nationalist in the sense of wanting to see India free, secondly he realises that the war is India's war, and thirdly he is prepared to take the forward view which justifies the use of the word Front". The success of this pamphlet suggests useful lines of approach in future.

ADVERTISING.

Throughout the year advertising has played an important part in the activities of the Front. It is true to say that the National War Front advertising campaigns have received more wide-spread attention than any previous propaganda campaign in this country. The volume of criticism on points of detail makes it abundantly clear that these advertisements are very widely read and the nature of the criticism in some cases makes it clear that the advertisements have got under the skin of even those who are opposed to the activities of the Front.

In recent months we have avoided undue emphasis on Japanese atrocities and dwelt more on the destruction of things precious to India which would result from a Japanese victory. This line of action seems to have been appreciated.

On the mechanical side of the work, the location of the Creative Publicity Unit in Simla and the transfer of the principal Copywriter from that Unit to the direct control of the National War Front Central Organisation have brought about big improvement and the present system is working well. During the year as a whole, faulty translation was perhaps the principal defect in our advertisements. There has been improvement in this respect recently.

ANTI-RUMOUR CAMPAIGN.

In some provinces excellent work in this direction has been done—Bihar and Bengal have been particularly active and the experience gained there suggests that this activity should be taken up more widely.

FOOD CAMPAIGN.

During the second half of the year under report, the National War Front took over the running of publicity on behalf of the Food Department of the Central Government. This publicity fell into three categories:

- i. The "Grow More Food" Campaign;
- ii. The "Informative" Campaign;
- iii. The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.

The "Grow More Food" Campaign.—This has on the whole produced very encouraging results. It can of course be argued that rising prices by themselves would have been

sufficient to stimulate increased cultivation, but reports from many quarters lead to the conclusion that the success of the movement was at least partly due to the intensified propaganda carried out. In some provinces the main campaign was run by the provincial governments and the part of the National War Front was confined to backing up their efforts. In other provinces, the campaign was mainly a National War Front concern. Particular attention was also given to a "Grow More Vegetables" Campaign. This proved far from an easy campaign to handle, but the results have not been unsatisfactory.

The "Informative" Campaign.—The main purpose of this campaign was to remove the many misconceptions in the public mind as to the cause of the present trouble. In particular, it was designed to make people understand that India in normal times is very nearly self-sufficient in the matter of food and that the loss of imports from Burma had been more than made up for by increased cultivation. Another aspect of this Campaign was that relating to informing the public when more grain came in from abroad. On the whole, this "Informative" Campaign cannot be considered to have been a success. The Campaign itself seems to have been planned and conducted on right lines, but at any rate in some parts of the country the breakdown in the distribution system made it very nearly impossible to convince people that there was in fact sufficient food in India.

The "Anti-hoarding" Campaign.—The object of this campaign was to make people regard the hoarder as a genuine public enemy and it was hoped that it would be possible to pillory offenders who had received deterrent sentences. Unfortunately, in many cases of food offences, extremely light sentences were passed. To give undue publicity to this fact would merely have defeated our purpose, and so many of the plans which had been prepared in this connection had to remain unfulfilled. Generally speaking, it has to be admitted that in the food campaign—with the exception of the "Grow More Food" division of it—circumstances were too strong for us.

A fresh campaign is now under preparation, but this will be mainly concerned with supporting rationing schemes in those towns where they are introduced—the "Grow More Food" Campaign will of course be continued.

WAR SERVICES EXHIBITIONS.

The National War Front has also been concerned jointly with the Military authorities in the organisation of War Services Exhibitions in various centres. These Exhibitions have proved most successful. The crowds attracted have been far beyond what was expected and there are reports from many impartial sources to show that the effect produced had been very marked. There is indeed general agreement that this is perhaps one of the most effective of all our methods of propaganda.

PROPAGANDA VANS.

A good deal of attention has been given during the year to propaganda in villages by means of propaganda cinema vans. This method has been fully justified by results and a very considerable extension of it has only been prevented by the extreme difficulty of obtaining the necessary equipments now.

SECTION II—THE PROVINCES.

There is no room here for a detailed report from all provinces; a few superficial words and one or two quotations of interest will be as following.

ASSAM—SURMA VALLEY.

The National War Front has made considerable headway in the Valley and one of the main features of the work in this area has been ceremonial meetings on a large scale. These meetings have been held in several places with addresses by the Premier and there is no doubt that they have been very effective. In one of these gatherings alone, it was estimated that over a lakh of people were present.

ASSAM—ASSAM VALLEY.

The Assam Valley has not been as active as the Surma Valley. Interesting features of the work have been posters which were taken to meetings and explained to audiences. The Provincial Organiser, of the Surma Valley has now taken over charge of both the Valleys and there are already signs of improvement.

BENGAL.

The National War Front has taken a considerable step forward in the province. This is due in no small measure to the complete change in the methods of the N. W. F. At one stage the Front was organised on what local authorities described as "subversive lines". This policy has, however, been changed and considerable attention has been given to open and ceremoniously impressive propaganda. Meetings have been held on a considerable scale and in one district 33 public meetings and 147 Group discussions were held in one quarter. Pictorial publicity exhibitions have also been held in various places and attracted much interest. A paid agent has been employed to go round from town to town attending courts and offices singing songs, repeating slogans and distributing pamphlets and leaflets. He is accompanied by sandwich men displaying posters. National War Front workers did a lot of excellent practical help in connection with the organisation of relief to the evacuees who left Calcutta in panic last December.

Special attention was given to rumours at the time of the Japanese air raids, when squads moved about daily listening to rumours obtaining the official reply wherever possible and then contradicting rumours. Valuable work has been done by the District Leader of Birbhum in the matter of kerosene, sugar and rice supplies in his district. A "People's Stores" with four branch shops has already been started in the towns. It was a National War Front worker in Chittagong, Kabir Hossain, who first caught hold of the Japanese pilot whose plane was brought down at Chakfrani and prevented him from burning himself alive or making his way out of Chittagong into Akyab.

Bengal has had a setback due to the acute food situation. Wherever, possible, the help has and is being given, but the Provincial Organisation has felt, it is working against terrific odds, when the food situation has reached a stage where men's minds can attend to nothing else.

MADRAS.

The work in the Madras Presidency has been described in an excellent pamphlet produced by the Provincial Organiser. The Standard of work in the Madras Presidency is very high and from personal visits, it is obvious that the message of the National War Front has got home even to rural people. During a visit to village primary schools, it was interesting to note that the students were able to give intelligent answers to simple questions about the main features of the war.

The appointment of lady lecturers has been one of the interesting features and it is the first time that propaganda has been carried to the hearths and homes of women in the Presidency :

"These women are kept in the dark as to how the present war is thrust on the British Government. In fact they have wrong ideas about it. When they are told of a lady lecturing to them they come in large groups (sometimes in hundreds) to hear of the war and its causes. Groups of ladies are addressed in houses of some leading men in the localities. They are found to be very eager to hear of the atrocities committed by the Japs in China and Burma and they begin to hate them now. Some, in these localities, are under the wrong impression that the Japs (if they occupy India) will distribute about 4 acres of land to each family and thus help the people to live more comfortably when they come, but when these ladies are told of their (Japs') cruel and evil designs on India they seem to change their opinions."

An original idea has been the experiment of making oil lamps which burn vegetable oil or kerosene from salvaged army tins. These lamps which are sold at a very low cost bear the National War Front symbol and initials.

BIHAR.

The Front in Bihar continues to be energetic and it is interesting to note that in the Council of State a few months ago a member from Bihar paid independent tribute to the Front and described the way in which some of its activities were already beginning to change village life.

The introducing of the system of Raksha Dals has proved most successful and useful in guarding railway lines and controlling unruly elements. The two following extracts are of interest :

The district leader for Manbhum reports : "A band of robbers were trying to break through the house of Babu Nanda Rai of Village Nawagarh on the night of 22nd September 1942. But thanks to the Village Leader and Party, they, forthwith hurried to the spot and drove them away".

Again, he says : "The thief was caught red-handed at Tunturi on the 26th December 1942; crimes have really been checked and people are appreciating the activities of the Village Defence Parties".

The counteracting of rumours is an important part of the Front in this province and the following rumours give some ideas of what the Front has to contend with :

- i. The Japanese have attacked Calcutta and are advancing further inland;
- ii. The British aeroplanes cannot fly as high as Japanese ones and then, they only fly when the Japanese planes leave the place;
- iii. Britain has leased out India to America and has therefore ceased to have any interest in the country and American troops and their Ambassador are here to safeguard American interests;
- iv. Another current rumour is that small coins are scarce because Indian mints are making coins for Australia;
- v. Australia has surrendered to Japan, and again that Adra Junction a rather important junction on the B. N. Ry. would be bombed.

The National War Front can claim to have helped considerably in counteracting with success the many rumours that have been current throughout the province.

A. Marathi District.—Work in this area suffered badly at the time of the last Civil Disobedience movement, but when the feeling created by the movement died down, progress began to be made.

Village Defence Parties have been formed by the National War Front Organisers. Leaders of selected villages have been given training for a week or two. The Front in this province has been closely concerned with the work in connection with the food problem. It is encouraging to learn that the Advertising Campaign has proved successful.

B. Hindi Districts.—In the Hindi districts, many meetings have been held mainly in rural areas and in important towns such as Jubbulpore, Bilaspur and Saugor.

The Publicity vans have been used considerably and film propaganda has proved of much interest.

Considering the difficulties during the first year, it is fair to say that this province has justified itself.

UNITED PROVINCES.

At one time the tendency in this province was to concentrate on written or visual propaganda rather than on meetings, but a change of policy became necessary due to paper shortage. Oral propaganda has been considerably intensified and 100 whole-time workers are now employed as lecturers and organisers.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the work in this province is the fact that labour propaganda is being carried on mainly by labour leaders. The success of this propaganda is based chiefly on the establishment of workers' clubs.

PUNJAB.

The Provincial Organiser in the Punjab has developed the system of public meetings to a very high degree. Many districts work out regular monthly programmes covering all tahsils, all arrangements being made in advance. Festivals of all kinds produce a crop of meetings, while others are made to fit in with the touring of the cinema publicity vans. One activity of interest in the Front in the Province of recent months has been in connection with hoarding and the food situation. In one district the N. W. F. collected the necessary cash and grain for the opening of a depot for the sale of cheap flour to the poorest members of the community.

BOMBAY.

Importance has always been attached to meetings in the Bombay Presidency and in one quarter alone over 697 meetings were held. The National War Front made itself responsible for the local arrangements for the Red Cross Week meetings, while in other districts, the district leaders co-operated with the Collectors in this matter. Durbars of village and police officers also provided good scope for National War Front propaganda and even wedding parties were persuaded to interrupt their gaieties to listen to N. W. F. speakers.

A reception was given in honour to the crew of the "H. M. S. Bengal" and members of the crew were encouraged to narrate their remarkable experience of the fight.

The Front has played an important part in the province in dealing with the food situation.

Another feature of interest is the hiring of a stall in an industrial exhibition in Bombay where N. W. F. posters have been exhibited and workers of the Front have given talks on the aims and objects of the Front. A military jamadar was stationed at the stall to give information about the prospects of the fighting services and it is said that a good response has been received.

Another interesting development is the holding of elocution competitions in the districts of Kanara under the auspices of the Front. The subjects for these competitions were in one case "The evil effects of sabotage" and in another case "The dangers of panic". In view of the widespread fondness for oratory in India, this is a method which might perhaps be used effectively in other provinces.

SIND, N. W. F. P., DELHI, AJMER-MERWARA, COORG AND BALUCHISTAN.

In all these provinces the National War Front movement has gone ahead. Meetings, Grow More Food Campaign, Teachers' Training Courses, the editing of a paper or bulletin and cinema vans have all put in work according to the local conditions in each province.

Conditions in Baluchistan are somewhat different from those in other parts of India and the scheme of the National War Front was not found suitable to the province except in urban towns. Work was therefore taken up on the following lines.

"On 15th April the Agent to the Governor General addressed a gathering of selected representatives of important tribes from all parts of Baluchistan including the Kalat, Lasbela and Kharan States at a tea party at the Residency which was also attended by His Highness the Khan of Kalat and senior officials and briefly explained the objects of the National War Front. At this meeting the tribal representatives reaffirmed their whole-hearted association with the cause of the Allied Nations, their unwavering loyalty and

determination to continue loyal and active cooperation and gave assurance to further the objects of the National War Front amongst their tribesmen. In rural areas the tribal leaders who enjoy a considerable measure of autonomy in the administration of their affairs on the basis of well recognised tribal responsibility have acted up to their promises, and done good work in keeping their illiterate tribesmen informed of the progress of events, countering wild rumours and anti-British propaganda and generally exercising a stabilising influence.

"In Urban areas the movement is flourishing."

SECTION III—STATES.

It is quite impossible to give any general picture of work in the States for the stages which have been reached very tremendously from State to State. This variety is due not only to the fact that the States did not start at the same time, but also to the fact that some had and some had not publicity or information departments to begin with. It was recognised that work in States would depend largely on personal contact with those who could provide stimulus and ideas, and for this purpose, in addition to the two officers of the Central Organisation, two Regional Officers have been appointed. A very considerable amount of touring has been done by the four officers thus now available and there is evidence that in a number of States the Front is active. There is, however, a great difference between some States who show themselves willing to spend money on war propaganda, and others which seem to think that propaganda can be done for nothing. Speaking generally, it may be said that so far only the surface has been scratched and it would not be true to say yet that we had succeeded in generating any real positive enthusiasm for the war in areas where it did not exist before.

One of the most useful developments has been the tour in Western India of the Kathiawar War Service Exhibition Coach—a large third class coach converted into an exhibition, equipped with loud speaker, 16 mm. projector, gramophone records and looked after by a staff consisting of lecturers, a bard, three musicians and the necessary technical staff. The programmes have been given in Gujarati and it is estimated that during the course of two months, five lakhs of people saw the exhibition. It is to be noted that while the States Branch made the original suggestion, H. H. the Maharaja of Morvi shouldered the main burden and it was in most respects a purely Kathiawar project. In view of the success of the exhibition we propose to do more of this kind of thing.

SECTION IV—WORK AMONG WOMEN BY THE LADY ORGANISER.

This is on a small scale at present. The success of this activity had depended entirely on the individual work and the personality put out by Begum Shah Nawaz. Proposals are under consideration for enlarging the Women's Organisation, as at present more women helpers are essential to take up some of the work from the Lady Organiser. She has visited most of the provinces of India from Assam to Bombay and Karachi to Madras, making contacts and speeches wherever she went both in British India and the Indian States.

The expenditure incurred on the National War Front is shown in the Annexure.

K. T. BEHANAN,
Central Organiser.

(b)—Statement showing expenditure incurred during 1942-43 on the working of the National War Front Scheme.

	Rs.
1. N. W. F. Organisation in Provinces	17,21,005
2. N. W. F. Propaganda vans	6,94,838
3. N. W. F. Advertising	8,45,142
4. N. W. F. Expenditure in Administration	64,117
5. Board of Advisers	986
Total	33,26,088

NOTE.—Figures for expenditure for the year 1943-44 are not available as yet.

Information promised in reply to starred question No. 282, asked by Mr. Muhammad Nauman, on the 9th August, 1943.

PERSONS RECRUITED IN THE INTERMEDIATE GRADES ON BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY.

- (a) 23 in the E. B. Rly. Zone and 47 in the A. B. Rly. Zone.
 (b) E. B. Zone, 20 Hindus, 2 Muslims, 1 Anglo-Indian; A. B. Zone 32 Hindus, 5 Muslims, 10 Anglo-Indians.
 (c) The posts filled by the 20 Hindus and the 2 Muslims in E. B. Zone were advertised in the following newspapers :
- (1) Statesman.
 - (2) Amrita Bazar Patrika.
 - (3) Star of India
 - (4) Assam Herald.
 - (5) Time of Assam.
 - (6) Assam Government Gazette.
 - (7) Bihar Government Gazette.
 - (8) Azad.
 - (9) Ananda Bazar Patrika.
 - (10) Two upcountry papers.

The other posts were not advertised. One was filled by application to the Bengal National Labour Service Tribunal; the others which were technical posts had to be filled urgently and so could not be advertised.

(d) In the case of the posts which were advertised selection was made by duly constituted Selection Boards.

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 2, asked by Shams-ul-Ulema Kamaluddin Ahmad on the 9th November, 1943.

ALUMINA IMPORTED DUTY FREE.

The total quantity of alumina imported into India, up-to-date, free of customs duty in pursuance of the concession announced in the Government of India, Commerce Department Resolution No. 6-T./Sim./40, dated the 20th July, 1940, is about, 3,280 tons.

Information promised in reply to unstarred question No. 27, asked by Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali on the 12th November, 1943.

CONFISCATION OF RATIONS OF CERTAIN GORAKHPUR WORKSHOP STAFF ENJOYING WEEKLY REST

(a) There is no restriction against the workshop staff of the O. & T. enjoying their weekly day of rest at their villages.

(b) Yes, if the villages are in United Provinces.

(c) Government understand that some staff were accosted by the Police and their grain confiscated but no one was arrested. It is understood that as a result of representations by the Railway, the United Provinces Government have agreed to the men taking small amounts of food grain provided every case is covered by a certificate. No further action is necessary.

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER.

INSUFFICIENCY OF WOOD FUEL AT THE DELHI CREMATION GHAT.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Bands be pleased to say:

(a) if it is a fact that for want of necessary quantity of wood fuel the dead bodies are not properly burnt at the Delhi Burning Ghat;

(b) if it is a fact that the supply of wood fuel for burning dead bodies has been inordinately curtailed so much so that dead bodies are being thrown half burnt and even unburnt;

(c) if Government are aware that apart from the scientific value of burning dead bodies, those who burn dead bodies do so as a religious duty enjoined by their scriptures and non-fulfilment of this duty is a great hurt to their religious feeling;

(d) if it be a fact that dead bodies are thrown half burnt and unburnt, whether Government propose to take steps to ensure against the fouling of water and spreading insanitary condition to the detriment of general health of the people; and

(e) if Government propose to look into the matter and allay the rising feeling of the Hindu public in this matter?

Mr. J. D. Tyson; (a), (b) and (d). Owing to the imposition of a ban on the export of firewood from the Punjab by the Punjab Government the quality of firewood on sale in Delhi was inferior and the price higher than usual and this must have affected the firewood supplies at the Burning *Ghat* also, but so far as Government have been able to ascertain at short notice the position is not so bad as is suggested in the question.

(c) Government are aware of the public feeling in regard to this matter.

(e) At the instance of the Government of India the Punjab Government have, for the time being, permitted the export of firewood to Delhi and it is understood supplies have begun to come in during the past few days. This should improve the position.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Is it a fact that a deputation waited upon the Director of Civil Supplies, Delhi, who arranged for the supply of 400 maunds of *sesum* and *neem* only whereas they require only *dhak* and *keekar* wood for the purpose?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am afraid that question ought to be addressed to the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies. I have no knowledge of this deputation.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: As the matter is pertinent to this question I should like to know if it is within the Honourable Member's knowledge that people require *dhak* and *keekar* wood for the purpose but those are never supplied to them.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I have no knowledge of that. The difficulty about this question is that it only partially relates to my Department and partially we have to rely on the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies for an answer.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Does the Honourable Member propose to obtain information as regards the scarcity of these two kinds of fuel and the necessity of the people regarding them?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I shall certainly pass on the Honourable Member's question to the department concerned.

RESOLUTION *RE* RECRUITMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES TO THE KEY SERVICE OF THE ARMY.

✓ **Mr. Piare Lall Kureel** (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

Sir, the Resolution is a very simple one. It relates to a subject which can safely be regarded as non-controversial. Today, to our greatest disappointment, we find a varied policy followed by the Provincial Governments; whereas one Provincial Government is willing to go far ahead, another Provincial Government is not prepared to move. I can quote the instance of my own province: In many districts of my province recruiting authorities issued printed hand-bills that only particular castes should be recruited as soldiers—I mean to say, as combatants—and that the Scheduled Castes should not be recruited as combatants except as labourers. Many Scheduled Castes of my province applied for emergency commission but they were not called even for interview. It is very easy for the Provincial Governments to reject the Scheduled Caste candidates on one ground or the other. They are rejected on the made-up excuse of incompetence and physical unfitness. There are many other grounds on which their cases receive no consideration by the Provincial Governments. By Provincial Governments I mean the Provincial recruiting authorities.

Sir, the object of my resolution is to know the definite policy of the Government of India in the matter of recruitment of the Scheduled Castes in the Army, in order to remove certain doubts which have arisen, having regard to the answers which have been given by the Provincial and the District recruiting authorities. I want to know the clear and definite policy of the Government in this behalf in order that it may not be possible for the provincial Governments to have their own policy. I admit that there may be no bay for the

Scheduled castes to enter the military services but because there is no definite policy which has been declared by the Government of India, the Provincial Governments have been following their own policy. The other day I received a letter from one Mr. Sri Hari from Madras that there also the difficulties are the same. I shall read out a few lines from his letter dated 10th November, 1948. He says:

"In this connection I furnish below, for your information, that many of our young men are not selected for Commissioned Officers in the Army for the main reason, it is stated, that they have not got, social status. Hence it should be stressed and made clear that no consideration in regard to the social status of our candidates should be made when interviews or selections take place, in view of the fact that our castes are scheduled on account of their being deprived of their social and economic status."

Sir, what a ridiculous question that the Scheduled Castes should have social status. If they had social status there was absolutely no need for their separate representation and for their special consideration. They have been deprived of their social, economic and political status long before and the Government should not ask that they must have social status while recruiting them for the Army.

Sir, the Scheduled Castes have to face the same difficulties in the Punjab. A few days ago, my Honourable friend, Mr. R. R. Bhole, M.L.A., Bombay, who is one of the four persons who have been selected by the Government of India to carry on propaganda abroad, told me that when he visited Ambala, a district in the Punjab, many Depressed Class leaders, and many other Scheduled Caste persons who had grievances, went to him and told him that *Balmikis* and *Chamars* and many other Scheduled Castes were not recruited in the Military. Only if they returned themselves as *Mazhabi* Sikhs they were recruited in the Military, but not as *Balmikis* and *Chamars*.

Sir, if that be so, it becomes the duty of the Government of India to clearly state their policy and should at once issue a statement of what they wish should be the uniform policy of Provincial Governments. It should not be left to the Provinces themselves to have their own policy, but the Government of India should issue mandatory directions to the Provincial Governments that there should not be any bar to the Scheduled Castes to enter military services and that special consideration should be given to their cases. Sir, in the absence of such a policy, there is great danger of Provincial Governments having their own way. If the Government of India really want to improve the status of the Depressed Classes, I would request them respectfully to declare their policy in clear terms.

Now, Sir, I shall let you know very briefly the importance of the military service. Sir, the military Service plays an important role in the regeneration of a people. The military service gives a people an important place in the body politics. Political status brings economic salvation in its wake. Social status follows as a necessary consequence of political and economic status. I may make it clear that military services carry with them not only official and administrative authority but also political influence and social prestige. No greater injustice can be done to a community than if that community is deprived of its due share in the military services.

Sir, the Scheduled Castes are the descendants of the original inhabitants of India. Though designated as "untouchables", their forefathers were the rulers of this land. They lived and thrived in this land before the advent of the Aryans. There were many warriors and kings amongst them. The ancient history will provide ample evidence to show that they were a very brave and courageous people. I shall quote a few lines from two authorities. Though I can quote passages from many eminent scholars of Sanskrit but I shall quote a few lines only from two authorities. The literature of the Aryans themselves bears sufficient testimony to this fact. Sir William Hunter in his book "A Brief History of the Indian People" writes thus about the aborigines:

"We hear of wealthy Dasyus or non-Aryans; and Vedic hymns speak of their 'seven castles' and ninety forts. The Aryans afterwards made alliance with non-Aryan tribes; and some of the most powerful kingdoms of India were ruled by non-Aryan kings."

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

Sir, we are often told that we possess no social status; that we are cowards; that we are not a bold and brave people. It is because we have been reduced to such a position. But we were a very brave and courageous people in our early life. Our ancestors were civilized and cultured people, rather more civilised and cultured than the Aryans. Mr. H. G. Rawlinson, in his book "India—A Short Cultural History", says that the aborigines or the non-Aryans were probably more civilized and that they dwelt in castles and strong cities in considerable luxury. As most of the historians tell us, and many other persons who have studied ancient history will bear me out, that it took a very long period for the Aryans to dominate the aborigines. Sir, the Scheduled Castes are the descendants of those aborigines whom after a long period of struggle the Aryans by treacherous means and secret designs reduced into more or less reluctant submission. Sir, they are, as I have already said, not cowards, but a brave and very courageous people. Theirs is an instance how persistent, ruthless oppression can degenerate a ruling race.

Now, I shall come to the past services of the Scheduled Castes in the Army. Sir, when the Britishers first settled down in India they were treated by the Hindus and other communities as untouchables for a considerable period of time. No community in India liked to associate itself with the Britishers. The Hindus hated them just like anything. My community was the first community to associate itself with the British people. My community was the first community to get itself enlisted in their armies. My community was the first community which fought on the side of Lord Clive in the Battle of Plassey which laid the foundations of the British Empire in India. Sir, my community has rendered important and distinguished services to the benign Government. The army of the East India Company mostly consisted of *Mahars*, *Chamars* and other low castes. The old Bombay Army almost entirely consisted of *Mahars*, *Chamars*, and persons of humble origin who have many deeds of unchallengeable valour and courage to their credit. What I say is not without grounds or basis. I quote a few lines from the History of the Bombay Army by Sir Patrick Cardell. He says:

"They took also the outcaste races of Chambhars or tanners, Far-rashes, and in particular Mahars or Parwaris. The last-named pre-Aryan, perhaps pre-Dravidian, race, now outside the pale of strict Hinduism, but once predominant, and in the opinion of some (though improbably) the donors of their name to the whole of Maharashtra, formed a large element in the Bombay regiments. Their gallantry is shown, to take only one example, by the frequency of their names on the monument at Koregaum, and it is not without significance that Richard Burton, himself an officer in a Bombay regiment, took a Mahar as a typical Bombay sepoy. In spite of their lowly origin many Parwaris became Indian officers by sheer merit and good conduct."

The *Mahars* also rendered valuable services abroad. I want to point it out to you that Hindus never liked to go abroad. It was a part of their religion not to cross seas as it has been made clear by many old scripts and religious books; but the depressed classes never hesitated to go abroad. Their martial qualities can best be judged from the following lines from the History of the Bombay Army by Sir Patrick Cardell. He says:

"The services of the Bombay Army have, however, never been confined to the Peninsula of India. There was much fighting overseas and on the seas at that period, and the Marine Battalion furnished detachments for the cruisers of the Bombay Marine which then constituted the Indian Navy. These Marine sepoys were engaged in many naval conflicts, both with the pirates of the Indian coast and the Persian Gulf, and with the French ships of war. It is impossible not to mention the conduct of a detachment of the battalion which had been captured on the Company's cruiser *Aurora* by two French frigates. It was the custom of the French to try to induce their prisoners to enter their service, and in this they were successful with a large number of the Irish recruits, and even with some of the sailors, as well as with some Bengal and Madras sepoys. When the Bombay sepoys refused to abjure their allegiance, they were shown the captured Bengal and Madras sepoys in French uniforms, enjoying luxuries: whereupon the Bombay Marine soldiers answered by abusing the traitors who had forgotten their military oath, and deserted their colours, and such effect had their noble example upon these men that, overcome with shame, a large body of them threw down their arms and quitted the ranks. After this the Bombay men were very severely treated, and some of them were wounded. It is pleasing to note that a special medal was given to each man of the detachment who returned to Bombay: and it may be observed that of the seventeen men so honoured, twelve belonged to the afterwards

despised Parwari race the remaining five being Mhiammadans of the Bombay Coast."

The *Mahars*, *Dhusia* and other low castes have proved themselves to be very courageous and bold persons. They greatly helped the Britishers in the suppression of the mutiny as the following lines will show:

"As a striking instance of individual loyalty the conduct of a small party of the Marine Battalion serving on the Indus river steamers at *Mulfan* may be mentioned. This party of eight men was acting as a Treasury Guard when the 26th Regiment of Bengal Infantry mutinied. They successfully protected their charge and killed twenty-six of their assailants. These eight men were all Parwaris, the humble race known in civil life as *Mahars*."

Our leader, nay, our prophet, the Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar belongs to the same *Mahar* caste. Besides, one of the most heroic and brilliant achievements in the annals of the Army, as *Tod*, the historian of Rajasthan called it, is the heroism displayed at *Mangalore* in 1783. The Bombay Government has erected a monument at *Koregaum* with the names of the fallen. It is interesting to note the castes of the 49 men of the 2nd/1st Regiment whose names are recorded. Of these 49, 22 appear to have been *Parwaris* or *Mahars*, 16 *Mahrattas*, 8 *Rajputs* and other *Hindus* and 2 *Muhammadans*, one either a *Muhammadan* or an *Indian Jew*. Sir, I can quote many authorities to show that the scheduled castes were recruited in the beginning when British rule was established in India. General Briggs says:—

"They are faithful, truthful and attached to their superiors, ready at all times to lay down their lives for those they serve, and remarkable for their indomitable courage. These qualities have always been displayed in our service. The aborigines of the *Karnatik* were the *sepoys* of *Clive* and *Coota*. A few Companies of the same stock joined the former great Captain from *Bombay* and helped to fight the *Battle of Plassey* in *Bengal*, which laid the foundation of our *Indian Empire*. They have since distinguished themselves in the Corps of *Pioneers* and *Engineers* not only in *India*, but in *Java*, in *Afghanistan*, and in the celebrated defence of *Jalalabad*. An unjust prejudice against them grew up in the native armies of *Madras* and *Bombay*, produced by the feelings of contempt for them existing among the *Hindus* and *Muhammadan troops*. They have no prejudices themselves; they are always ready to serve abroad and embark on board ship; and I believe no instance of mutiny has ever occurred among them."

Colonel *Dixon's* report, published by the Court of Directors of the *East India Company*, portrays the character of the *Mahar* tribes with admirable minuteness:

"He dilates on their fidelity, truth, and honesty, their determined valour, their simple loyalty, and an extreme and most touching devotion when put upon their honour. Strong as is the bond of kindred among the *Mahars*, he vouches for their fidelity in guarding even their own relatives as prisoners when formally entrusted to their care. For centuries they had been known only as exterminators; but beneath considerable handling of one Englishman, who honestly set about understanding them, they became peaceful subjects and well disciplined soldiers."

In the *United Provinces*, the *Pasis* and the *Haburas* are also well known for their courage. They may be turned into good soldiers through reclamation work.

Sir, it is a matter of great regret that the community which was the first to associate itself with the British people; which was the first to come to their rescue, which was the first to get itself enlisted in the British Army; which was the first to fight on the side of *Lord Clive* in the *Battle of Plassey* and to lay the foundation of the *British Empire* in *India*; should now be debarred from military service. It is the height of absurdity, the height of cruelty, the greatest tragedy that the world has ever witnessed, or that any community has ever faced.

Now I wish to say something about the policy of the Government with regard to the recruitment of the depressed classes in the Army. On the establishment of the British rule in *India* the members of the depressed classes were recruited in the army. There was no such bar for the depressed classes in the beginning, but when the British Government was fully established in the country, with its civil administration, they were gradually debarred from the military services. Regarding the Army the policy of the Government has been steadily retrograde. Professor *J. Coatman*, C.I.E., in an article in the *Asiatic Review* in 1938, writes as follows:

"For, from our earliest days in *India* and until very recently indeed untouchables were recruited for military services and it will be long enough before conditions are such as to allow them to enter that service at all freely."

[Mr. Piare Lall Kureel.]

It is indeed a matter of pity that the army in India is built upon the caste system. Only those people who belong to the higher castes are recruited in this service. Mr. J. C. Curry in his recent book "The Indian Police" remarks:

"A firm principle in the social life of Indians, whether Hindu or Muhammadan in India, is the right of the higher castes and classes to rule the lower. To an Indian there is something almost morally wrong in the subordination of a man of high birth and position to a man from a lower rank of society. As has already been mentioned, men of the menial classes have been debarred from enlisting as constables or as combatants in the Indian Army. (There have been battalions of Mahars—one of the depressed classes—but they were disbanded.) The rank and file of the Indian Army or the Police would strongly object to the presence of a washerman or a potter in their ranks. Mahars and other similar castes have been enlisted in certain very rare and special circumstances, but not without difficulties created as a result. It is certain that the enlistment of a sweeper or a shoe-maker would cause a mutiny among either Hindus or Muhammadan troops."

This has been the policy of the Government upto now. Sir, the administrative difficulties arising from the objection of high caste Hindus undoubtedly exist, but it is highly deplorable that a social evil should be allowed to influence the Government in restricting the employment of the scheduled castes in the army.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): You have not been refused: why were you refused?

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: I will say that the Honourable Member himself knows that the scheduled castes have been refused admission into the military service and I do not need to give a more elaborate explanation for it.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: I do not know it at all.

Mr. Piare Lall Kureel: In spite of devising ways and means of counteracting its mischief in public bodies as well as in public services, the Government is perpetuating caste in India by giving larger power to certain communities and by excluding others from that power. The Government has always adopted a policy of non-intervention in social and religious matters and the maintenance of *status quo* in this respect, but the time has come for a revision of that policy. Now, when the war has reached the gates of India and the gates are almost open, it becomes the duty of the Government to see that the scheduled castes are freely recruited in the army. It will not only improve the status of my community but it will also strengthen the defence of the country. Today, I want to make it clear that millions of people of our community are working in mills, factories and other industrial concerns, and are producing war material of every kind for the successful prosecution of the war. It is the duty of the Government to reward them by throwing open the military services to them and by providing special facilities for their recruitment in the army. A number of scheduled caste regiments can be raised from all provinces. It will greatly strengthen the defence of the country.

Sir, the scheduled castes have already suffered a lot at the hands of the caste Hindus; they were enslaved physically and mentally. If the Government is also going to adopt the same policy of repression and indifference, the future generation will never forget the injustice that the British Government will be doing to the scheduled castes. So, it is better that the military service should at once be thrown open to the members of the scheduled castes.

Sir, many of our young men are anxious to get themselves enlisted in the army. There are many able, well-educated, efficient and well built young men in my community who are ready to give up their lives for the cause of the British Empire and the United Nations, provided they are given a chance. In the beginning there may be many shortcomings; there may be many defects in their administration; but after some time they are bound to prove efficient, able and strong soldiers. To day, the Sikh community is considered to be a martial community; but I ask the Government, was it a martial community at the time of Guru Nanak? It was purely a religious community, it was purely a religious sect, and it was Guru Govind Singh and the other Sikh Warriors who turned it into a martial community. If I suppose or even if I admit that scheduled castes do not belong to the martial community, it becomes the duty of the Government to see that it becomes a martial

community. It is not only in their interest, but it is in the interest of the Government themselves to allow them to enter the military services. Sir, I urge the Government to have a beginning. If there is no beginning today there shall never be a beginning tomorrow. Especially now when the war has reached the gates of India and the gates are almost open, the Government should at once declare their clear policy towards the scheduled castes and should issue mandatory directions to the Provincial Governments that the scheduled castes should be freely recruited in the army. With these words, I move the Resolution.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

Mr. Hoeseinbhoy A. Laljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan. Rural): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution that has been placed before the House. It is hard to believe that even in these times there is some discrimination in the appointment of Indians to the Army. No doubt we on this side know that there has been discrimination, but so far as Government is concerned, so far as the policy of the Government is concerned, we have always been told and made to believe that no discrimination of caste or creed in appointment to any posts is permissible or is being done. But we have just now heard the facts which go to prove that there is discrimination; and it is because discriminatory policy has been adopted, although never permitted by the declarations made by the Government, that we, the Indians, have suffered not only in our own country but in the world at large. If, today, we are suffering a great deal in South Africa or in other European countries, it is because in this country our countrymen are treated as inferiors. When I charge the Government, I should certainly say—and my Hindu brethren will forgive me for saying—that we do feel that the Hindu community as such have done injustice to a class of their own. This discrimination that has been going on for many many years, I was told by many Pundits, was not according to religion; but I would not go into that. Far be it from me to claim that I know anything about the Hindu religion; but the time has come when we all must not only preach but practise in our own interests.

It may be said because we have not been treating our brethren of the soil as equal human beings, therefore we are being treated in the world at large as subordinates and inferiors. The root cause may be there, however, we cannot tolerate any sort of inferior position, which unfortunately has been assigned to us because we are Asiatics, it is also advisable that we should put our house in order in this respect at once. When I have said that, it does not lie with the

12 Noon. Government to make any such discrimination. In fact, Government cannot say this because they have invariably said that they cannot make any discrimination. In fact, it is the fault of our Government who have allowed these things in this country and outside. It is because of that that we are suffering at present and I hope we will have today from the Government spokesman a definite declaration that there is no discrimination at present and there will be no discrimination in the future.

Sir, I can also say this that I have also tried to learn something about the Bombay Command of the olden days. I did this in order to find out how far the Indians have contributed towards the making of the British Empire in Africa and Asia particularly. I found from the old records that for a number of years the Government of India had the Bombay Command and that army was stationed at Aden, Mombassa, Natal, Colombo, Singapore, Hongkong and Shanghai. It was the Government of India who paid for them and that Command consisted mostly of the people from the Bombay Presidency, including a large number of *Mahars*. I am proud to say that the old records show, as my friend has pointed out, that they acted as well as anybody else. I may tell my Honourable friends from the Punjab that, were it not for Lord Kitchner who took fancy to the North Western Frontier defence and to the people of the North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab, there would have been no such thing as martial and non-martial classes pleaded before us.

Sardar Sant Singh (West Punjab: Sikh): Why are you afraid of them?

Mr. Hoosejnbhoy A. Lalljee: I am not afraid of you. It has already been proved that whether it is a Bombay Mahratta or a Bombay Mussalman or a Pathan from the Punjab or a Sikh from the Punjab or even a Bengali or a Madrasi, they are all as strong and as brave and as courageous as anybody else. I may go further and tell my friend that they have proved themselves as good as the British Army if not better or any foreign army and while the records of their achievement are often showed that of the poor Indians are seldom or never mentioned. We would certainly like the Government to give more chance in the army to the members of the scheduled classes who have unfortunately been kept back and who have been deprived the facilities for higher education, commercial education and industrial education owing to their poverty. Today, they seek employment in the army for two reasons. One is that they want to join the army as others and the other reason is that they want to show that they are as brave patriotic and courageous for the protection of their country as anybody else. If that is the position, it will create for the Indians a high place in the world at large which they have so far been unfortunately denied. I think it is the bounden duty of the Government not only to accept this Resolution but to declare that there is no discrimination, not only in the key positions but even for the highest position, that could be attained by a soldier. All these posts will be thrown open not only to the Hindus and Musalmans but also to the *Mahars* and *Chamars* or anybody else born in India.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmakh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution. The Government has been charged by the Mover of the Resolution with ungratefulness. He says that he has helped you to build your Empire in this land and he has narrated to you how he has helped you. Then he wants to know what have you done for him for shedding his blood on the battle-field for establishing your Empire. You have shut him out from the army. If we were to consider what the policy of the Government was in 1940, it would be evident that it was not only the untouchables who were shut out but there were many other communities, such as, the Indian Christians, who were not absorbed in the army. When I put questions about them, I was told that they were being absorbed to draw maps. Similar was the treatment of other communities. It is not only the scheduled classes who were treated as untouchables but there were certain Provinces which were treated as untouchables. For instance, excepting Bombay and the Punjab, there was no other province from which any recruitment was made and I brought this fact to the notice of the Government. It was only when the Axis powers started coming nearer and nearer to India that they started recruitment from the other provinces. In spite of the requests of the Governors of Madras and Bengal and even when a Resolution was unanimously passed in the Bengal Assembly, no recruitment was started in those provinces. It is not only the scheduled castes who were treated as untouchables but even the Maharashtra Brahmin community was treated as untouchables till the year 1941. I frequently brought that matter to the notice of the Government; and in my province I started an agitation to admit this community which had no bar in social status. My friend is only referring to the social status as a bar. So far as the Brahmin community was concerned, no question of social bar could have been advanced. They were, already well-advanced in education and socially and economically they were all right. The Government has a policy which it has never disclosed and it is but right on the part of my friend to ask the Government to say what their policy is in respect of the depressed classes.

Now, Sir, let me say that it is no good harping on the point of untouchability. When the army is to be thrown open to all, it is no good to harp on the old ideas and to fix any guilt on the Hindu community. As a matter of fact, I have told you that there were many untouchables and it is merely to side-track the issue, when it is said, that the touchable communities are against the untouchables. It is for the Government to lay down their policy and to

state explicitly what they are going to do.' When the Government is primarily responsible for the army, why should they shut out this particular community from the army? It is not fair; it is not just to blame the Hindu community in general when they are doing their level best to ameliorate the conditions of these classes. As a matter of fact, on a very extensive scale they have tried to do away with the untouchability. You know very well that it is not the Hindus who are primarily responsible for shutting out the members of the scheduled castes from the army but it is the Government who want to make the caste Hindus scapegoats for everything they do. I should, therefore, suggest to my friend to rest his case on justice. I agree with him that every person, never mind to what caste he belongs, if he is medically and physically fit, should be recruited and if he is fit educationally also and has acquired the necessary experience, he should be made an officer. You cannot say that, because a certain person belongs to a particular caste, he should be given preference. No. That I will not say. In the case of every candidate, whether he belongs to the depressed classes or the Anglo-Indian or Christian or Brahmin community or the Sikh community, who wants to be enlisted, it must be proved that he is quite fit to be enrolled. What I complain of is that no community, as a community, should be shut out from the service, whatever community it may be. I have, therefore, great pleasure in supporting this motion.

Let me tell you this, that the depressed classes were not considered untouchables or unfit to enter the army even during the time of the Peshwas. Those who know the history of the Peshwas know that they were Brahmins and though the Brahmins were a fighting class, they were shut out by this Government for political reasons and no other reasons from the army. The Peshwas never shut out this untouchable community from entering the army. As a matter of fact, there were officers who belonged to this particular class. It is therefore just on my friend's part to demand that no community should be shut out from any office and his specific demand is that members of his community should not be shut out from the army and I say that no community should be shut out. As I have said, I have great pleasure in supporting this motion.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): I rise to support this Resolution. The policy followed by the Government of India in recruiting the personnel for the army has been a very wrong one from the very beginning. On this occasion I do not wish to refer to that aspect of the policy, namely, to confine the recruitment to what are known as the martial races. Recently in this war, I am told they have begun to recruit the personnel for the army even from what were known before as the non-martial classes. But, Sir, to deny the right of serving in the army to the depressed class people is not only a wrong policy, it is not only an injustice but it is a discreditable policy on the part of the Government of India. The Government of India is showing only ungratefulness to those very people with whose help they established their empire in this country. When the British people started to raise their army first, they could not get men for their army from what are known as the touchable Hindu classes, because there was the army of the Peshwas. There were the armies of the other Hindu kings. They could not also recruit the Muhammadans because there was the army of the Moghul Empire for the Muhammadans to join. They could get only people from the depressed classes at that time. I am told they first tried to get people from Africa, the Negroes, but somebody suggested to them that the depressed classes of this country are badly treated by the Hindus and if they tried to enlist people from the depressed classes, it is possible they may be able to get men for their army and it is thus that the original army of the Britishers in this country was recruited from the depressed classes. They helped the British people to have an army and also to establish their kingdom here but the British people are well known in Europe as the perfidious Britain. That is the name by which the British people are known in Europe. The depressed classes helped them to establish an empire. The empire was established. Their need was served and then the British people

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

thought that they should expand the army and other people in the Empire began to join the army. The Mahrattas joined, the Muhammadans joined and perhaps the Brahmins also joined in smaller numbers.

An Honourable Member: They joined the Secretariat.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In order to please the Mahrattas and the Brahmins the British people stopped the recruitment of the depressed classes. Those classes who joined the army at this time had wrong notions about social status and they were not willing to mix with *Mahars* and other depressed classes and therefore the British people, in order to please the Mahrattas with whom they had to fight first to establish their empire here, stopped recruitment of the depressed classes. I consider this as not only ingratitude but it is a blot on the British character itself. I, therefore, think that the British people should remove this blot at the earliest possible time and they should make an attempt to restore the depressed classes to their original position. The reasons why the Mahrattas refused to join the army was this. According to the notions of the time, they were considered to have a big social position. The depressed classes had joined the army earlier than the Mahrattas, with the result that the men belonging to the depressed classes had become officers, subedars and so on and when the Mahrattas were recruited, the depressed classes were officers and the Mahrattas did not like it and when they complained, the British people were weak enough or ungrateful enough to listen to that complaint.

Now, Sir, the Government of India cannot complain that the depressed classes are non-martial races. They fought their battles in order to establish the empire of the British people in this country. They could not be said to be non-martial. It is true that if the British people had enlisted the depressed classes, there would have been some complaint but the British people must stand by the people who stood by them in their difficulty and they cannot for the sake of pleasing the touchable Hindus punish the depressed classes. I would like to tell the British people that if they consider that the difficulty of associating together the touchable and untouchable classes can only be got over by keeping the depressed classes out, they are very unfair. They must find some way of recruiting the depressed classes to the army. During the last war, I am told a small attempt was made again to recruit a few battalions for the army and the history of these battalions shows that they fought very bravely. During this war, some small attempts are being made. I am told that in the beginning the depressed classes were offered what are known as the labour corps. The Government of India thought that they wanted some men for this corps and they thought that the depressed classes who had helped them to establish their empire in this country were not good enough for the regular army. So they offered the depressed class people employment in what are known as the labour corps. Naturally the depressed class people who had fought and were a martial race did not like to join the labour corps. I am told in Bombay they are trying to form some regiments and there are about four battalions formed in Bombay. But these four battalions are not enough for the depressed classes who form at least one-fourth of the population of this country. If they form one-fourth of the population, the proportion of the depressed classes in the army should at least be one-fourth. What are four battalions? They are a flea-bite.

I would therefore like the Government of India, first, to tell us what attempts they have made to restore the depressed classes to their original position, how far they have recruited in this war from the depressed classes for the various arms of the army, and what further steps they propose to take to accelerate the pace, and to expedite the complete recruitment of the depressed classes for the army. Then I would like the Government of India to tell us if there are difficulties regarding education and other difficulties, what special steps they are taking to see that the depressed class people are recruited not only to the rank and file of the army but also to the commissioned ranks. I have no doubt that if the scheduled classes are left to compete with the other classes in securing commissions in the ordinary way they will not be able to

get them on account of their educational backwardness. I therefore would ask the Government of India to take special measures to give special facilities to the members of the untouchable classes so that there will be some persons from the depressed classes who have got education. The real solution of the problem in my judgment, as regards the appointment of depressed classes to the officer rank is to give them special facilities, and those special facilities must be very generous. If you give niggardly facilities, they are not enough. I know in my province of Bombay Government gives some kind of small scholarships to the depressed classes boys. But those scholarships are not of much use. For instance, the depressed class people are the working class people and small poor agriculturists. If you give a boy a scholarship of Rs. 2 or 3 to go to a school, his parents are not willing to spare him, because the boy may go to school and get Rs. 2 or 3 scholarship, but those Rs. 2 or 3 are not quite sufficient. The parent finds it more economical and more profitable to engage the child in looking after the cattle or doing some work on the field. Therefore, the scholarships must be of a sufficient amount so that the parents will find it profitable to send the boy or the girl to the school instead of engaging them either on the field or in looking after the cattle or asking them to do some other work. These scholarships to be given must not only enable the child to pay for the fee and books, etc., but the scholarship must be sufficient at least to feed the child and to the extent to which the child helps the family, also to help the family. This is the only method by which you can get a sufficient number of students from the depressed classes to attend educational institutions. I would therefore like the Government of India to give very generous and special facilities to the students belonging to the depressed classes so that they can rise higher. I know several people coming from the depressed classes who join school and when they pass matriculation they are unable to go to the college because the parents expect them to maintain the family. In such a case the student must not only get a scholarship which is enough to feed the student, but the student must be able to help the family. There is no other way of securing proper education for the untouchable classes who are a very poor class of people. I would therefore urge on the Government of India to take all the necessary measures. First, Government should recruit these people for the army and not mind the jealousies or the prejudices of the touchable Hindus. The depressed classes are large enough to recruit your whole army from. If the other classes do not join, it does not matter, your depressed classes will form your whole army as once they did.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has only one minute more.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: In the Punjab the depressed classes are not recruited, but if a depressed class man calls himself a Sikh he is recruited, and Government thus indirectly help the conversion of these depressed classes to Sikhism. The Sikh population is being increased by this method—a depressed class man cannot join the army if he calls himself a depressed class man, but if he declares himself to be a Sikh he can join the army.

An Honourable Member: Or a Muslim.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The Government of India may be interested in increasing the population of Sikhs, but this is a wrong method to do so. Leave it to the Sikhs to spread their religion, but do not help the Sikh religion by this device. I therefore feel that the Government of India should take prompt measures to do justice to the untouchable classes.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution which was moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Piare Lall. I entirely agree with him in the arguments that he advanced in support of the Resolution. Without wasting the time of the House I may immediately go to the question of recruitment of the depressed classes, not merely to the ordinary ranks but to the commissioned ranks as well. So far as soldiers are concerned, I know that the depressed classes are being tempted

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to join the army by the recruiting officers telling them that they will be taken as soldiers. We know also that once they are recruited, they are being sent to the non-combatant lines, and many of them in that respect were deceived when they found that actually they had to work in non-combatant lines like hospital corps, labour corps, etc. I have myself received many complaints from those who have joined, that they have not been treated properly in these hospital corps and these labour corps. So that I would suggest to the War Secretary to see, in the first place, that for the recruitment of the scheduled classes to the army ranks they must have as recruiting officers members of the scheduled classes—that is the most important thing—and secondly, that at the time of recruitment, the scheduled classes are definitely informed that they are being recruited either for the combatant line or for the non-combatant line. It is a fact no doubt that when first the Britisher formed his army in India the scheduled classes joined the army in large numbers, and for very good reasons. Those reasons, I know are perfectly legitimate and natural. They were in the position that they could not help helping the Britisher in the formation of these armies. They were merely driven on to the lap of the Britisher on account of the rigid caste system that was perpetuated by the Hindus, and it is no question of gratitude. I do not think this House can extract gratitude from persons who do not feel like being grateful. But the depressed classes not merely joined the early armies as combatants, but they also helped the army in so many other ways.

In those days, there were Divisions of infantries and cavalries, and in the matter of cavalries they should have so much equipment, so much saddlery and so on. I know that all those people who joined to help the British army to get all that equipment were depressed classes whether they were *Chamars*, *Mahars* or *Adi-Dravidas* or as we call them in our parts, the *Chukklars*. They did all this work. Even today, in Secunderabad we actually find a colony of those people who helped the cavalry, who are called the 'polishers' and these people are even today experts in their line. The British army knows and the army records show that nobody can displace them in that work. Unfortunately, on account of the mechanization adopted, recently all these people were thrown out of work and consequently today they are all unemployed and going through great distress. But I have no doubt that such people are ready and willing to join the army in the combatant line. It is also true that in the early days, they not merely joined as soldiers, but as specialists in this cavalry and saddlery work. Some of us went also as mess contractors behind the armies trying to supply food, particularly to the officers of the army. In those days, I think even today, you cannot expect the caste Hindus to touch beef and ham and bacon and things like these. So, it was necessary that they had to recruit from among the depressed classes who took up the work of catering to these officers. I know some of my ancestors were themselves big mess contractors in Bangalore, Secunderabad and many other cantonment areas. What is more, they not merely went as mess contractors generally but also as private valets to officers in the army. They not merely went to cantonments, but they went far beyond the overseas battlefields and in the fighting line. At any rate, I know of one man whose case will be interesting to hear. He was in Bangalore. He was a very very old man and I think he is dead now. He was a valet to Mr. Churchill when he was a subaltern in the Fourth Hussars at Bangalore. He related to me a very interesting story. That old man accompanied Mr. Churchill to Malakand expedition. Mr. Churchill was taken prisoner for over a month. But this old man was waiting in his tent for more than a month for the return of his master, watching day and night. He was looking anxiously for the return of Mr. Churchill. One day Mr. Churchill returned to the tent when this old valet was, surprised to find his master back. He told me, and I distinctly remember the graphic description which he gave me, that as he pulled out the coat off from Churchill's back

be found that between the skin and the coat, there was a thick layer of dirt with fleas, and insects.

Another work which they undertook was as doctors, sub-assistant surgeons, military surgeons in the army because in those days—even though now-a-days—it is a common thing to have high caste Hindu doctors—in those days high caste Hindus won't touch their own dead bodies. It was left to the scheduled castes to do the dirty job, trying to learn operations, dissecting dead bodies and so on. I know as a matter of fact that some years ago, there were great number of doctors among scheduled castes not merely in the military line but also in the civil line, but today we find that the number of depressed classes is getting gradually decreased on account of the policy adopted by the Government. In these respects, we, the scheduled castes, have been helping the army and so, I want the War Secretary to see that rules are so framed for the recruitment of depressed classes not merely as soldiers, as principal combatants in the army, but to see in all this manner that I have indicated, namely, in the matter of recruitment as soldiers to the combatant line, in the matter of recruitment to the catering line and in the matter of recruitment to the doctor's line, that special attention is paid in those rules for the recruitment of scheduled castes because these were the lines in which they were taken in the original army.

Then, Sir, with regard to the appointment as commissioned officers, I had the good fortune of serving on two or three Central Interview Boards, mostly at Poona. I know they have fixed rules and regulations for recruitment to the ranks of commissioned officers in the Indian army, as they are called the land forces, to the Indian Navy and also to the Indian Air force. No doubt the modern army requires a lot of educational standard, particularly mathematics and so on. We have often been able to send up men with such qualifications as have been prescribed in these rules and regulations. Actually in practice, I found, that most of the candidates were excluded. I can quote one or two instances. There was a European gentleman, I would not mention his name, and this gentleman asked a particular candidate what was his father. The poor boy quite innocently and may I also add quite honestly, said that his father was a petty farmer. Then the next question that was asked was, what was his income. The boy said that his father was earning about Rs. 15 to Rs. 20 a month. The gentleman, said, "All right". I anticipated the mind of that gentleman in asking these questions and I took upon myself the responsibility of asking this boy a counter question, after the gentleman had finished his question. I asked him: "Have you heard of General Timoshenko". The boy said: "Yes, he is a Russian General". I again asked him: "Do you know anything about him"? The boy replied that so far General Timoshenko was the best General who has come out successful among the United Nations. Again I asked the boy if he knew from which family General Timoshenko came. The boy said he did not know but guessed "probably he came from the family of a cultivator". After the boy went away, we considered among ourselves whether the question about the status of father was important. The European colleague of mine said "The boy's father must have some status". I differed from that gentleman and I was no doubt over-ruled by the majority. Then, there was another gentleman on the Interview Board, an Indian. I do not know whether fortunately or unfortunately, he came from the Punjab. He turned round to ask another student some questions and as soon as he was asked to go, this gentleman said, "Look at this boy, he has no military background". I did not know how to tackle this gentleman. I asked him, "what do you mean by military background? Is it merely the size of the man, you want long noses or tallness"? Then, I reminded my colleague of what a certain high placed military officer in India told me, a very high placed officer indeed when I tackled him on this problem of not recruiting people from South India, particularly the depressed classes. He told me that generally south Indian recruits are increasing from day to day.

[Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

for the simple reason that a modern army is getting mechanised and in a mechanised army you want more brains than muscles. I reminded that Punjabi gentleman that so far as modern army is concerned, I think that that particular boy who appeared before me, a scheduled caste boy, had the amount of brains to carry on that work and therefore there was no question of military background.

So, Sir, these are the things that I would like to tell the War Secretary so that in the Central Interview Board, instructions may be given to the Members that they should not ask questions relating to so-called social status of the candidate or as to the fact of his having a military background or otherwise. If it is a question of military background, as my Honourable friend has clearly proved by way of statements that he read before you, I do not think there is any section of the population in India who have got such a military background as the scheduled castes and there can be no doubt about it whatsoever. With these words, I support the motion moved by my Honourable friend.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have great pleasure in supporting this Resolution in as much as it will give a status to millions of people in India. I am also glad that the Honourable the Mover who like myself comes from the United Provinces has moved it because, as every one knows, the United Provinces is the centre of all great movements in this country, and if my Honourable friend is lucky enough to get it passed here it will remain another landmark in the annals of this House and of the country as a step forward in the further progress of this country. In this country, Sir, it was profession which counted in many things. Not only the Pasis and Chamars who did menial work but among the Mussalmans people like weavers who can stand with us together and pray in the same mosque have not been enlisted because they were not considered by this Government as belonging to the martial classes. In like manner Saiyids and Shaikhs were not easily taken into the army. One of the depressed classes in my province is known as the Pasi class—the members of which are always selected by Government for watch and ward duty and for keeping security and peace; yet they are not considered fit for the army. Even now Government does not care for the progress and enlightenment not only of the depressed classes but also of Indians generally.

Every day we hear that all sorts of experts are coming to this country from England although there is no want of experts in India now on all kinds of subjects. At the same time I must say that there are differences among my Hindu friends themselves like castes and classes which have come as a legacy to this Government and they do not take the so-called non-martial races into the army. Even today in the army Indians do not attain to high positions like the Britishers; they are not made commanding officers, a complaint to which every one would subscribe. In fact the British Government should not take into consideration that there are any high castes or low castes or scheduled castes; there should be no such differences in any service. My friend was right in saying that for want of a definite policy the Provincial Governments too have not so far been able to enlist the depressed classes, and even from among the Muslims, people who carry on, as I said, the profession of weavers, etc., are not considered fit to be taken into the army, although we have no depressed classes among us. Therefore the Government of India should now declare that in every service including the army there should be no discrimination of any kind. Necessity, it is well known, is the mother of invention. Now it may be said that they are taking all kinds of people into the army under the stress of war when they are forced by necessity to do so but that should be no defence by Government as regards their general policy; because except for this war they would never have taken them. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, if I intervene at all in this debate I do so from a broader point of view than was expressed by the Mover of the Resolution. The Honourable the Mover based his case on the exclusion of certain classes from military service. I am one of those who believe and have been led to believe from studying the world situation as it is developing from day to day in this war that India will soon have to introduce compulsory military service for all classes. And from that point of view, whether it suits the British administration in India or not, the time has come when caste Hindus or scheduled classes should be included in that scheme of military training for all. We have discovered that Russia's admirable successes against the German onslaught are due to the fact that both girls and boys are given military training from their school days. Today it is a good sight to see that even Russian girls are operating bombers and fighters against those who have invaded their country. In the future world India cannot hold its own position till the same kind of military training is introduced for all classes in all provinces, irrespective of privilege or no privilege. My friend need not have advanced the argument that the Sikhs or the Punjabees hold a privileged position in the Army and they want to keep it to themselves so that it should not be invaded by any other caste people or any other province.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: I never said that.

Sardar Sant Singh: You implied that, and you had the same implication in your mind. So I need not support my Honourable friend in that argument.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: My point was different.

Sardar Sant Singh: I am coming to your point too. My Honourable friend referred to the Sikhs not being martial in the time when Guru Nanak came and preached his divine mission in this country. He is right there in the reading of the history. I do not deny that. But it was no Government that made them martial—he forgets that. It was not Government's patronization that converted the Sikhs into a martial race. It is because of certain qualities in the followers of Guru Nanak that they developed into a martial race not being rigid in their religion but being flexible they changed with the change in the constitution of society as it developed from time to time. Guru Arjun Dev was persecuted in a manner which bears no parallel in the history of any other nation. After that, when Guru Govind Singh, the 6th Guru, came to occupy the *gadi* of his forefathers he, as a boy, expressed a desire at the time of his installation, that he should be provided with two swords. One was the sword of spiritualism—*peeri*—and the other was the sword of politics—*moeri*—and he declared to the congregation assembled there that henceforth Sikhs must defend themselves against the tyranny of the administration of the time. He started a mental revolution. That mental revolution ultimately achieved the objects which Guru had foreseen. It devastated the Empire of the Mughals when they began to persecute and prosecute the Sikhs of the time. So, if the scheduled castes want to take their cue from the Sikh history they should take the cue from their traditions and from their love for the cause and the sacrifices they are always prepared to make for the cause, which has led them to the position which they occupy today. Putting it in the modern technique—I will ask Mr. Joshi to carefully try to understand me and appreciate me.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Carefully!

Sardar Sant Singh: . . . that it is the love of the cause and the preparedness to make sacrifices for the cause that makes a community self-confident and self-conscious. If scheduled castes want to come to their own, it is no good citing Clive and the foreigners that scheduled castes have been good, bad or indifferent in their career in this country. It is the confidence in themselves that will make them what we want them to be—a part of the Indian nation, which will play an important role in the future Indian history.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: How can we play an important role when we are not considered a martial race?

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, it is not right to say that a certain class of the depressed classes in the Punjab are recruited when they are converted into Sikhism, and thus Government is helping to preach conversion. Mr. Joshi is wrong there. If he has eyes to see and ears to hear he should go round in the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa (Interruption.) amongst low class people, and it will be found that they do not know how to keep their own social status in their own areas. Conversion is not merely a change of name; it is what we gave in the baptism—the *amrat* of Sikhs. If you have an experience of that you will see how you are converted into a man. It is very easy to hit upon other people, but you must have that self-confidence which makes a nation or a people realize their own importance and their own position in the social status and in the international affairs.

Having disposed of this, I support this Resolution not from the narrow point of view which has been advocated here, but from a broader point of view, because I believe that the safety of India, the safety of people, living in this country, the safety of the hearths and homes of everybody in this country, lies in the military training. And that military training, together with the scientific inventions that have come into being in this war, should be imparted to everybody. I, therefore, support the Resolution on the grounds other than those given by the Mover of the Resolution.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: The question be now put.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I wish to

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order.

Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: I have been standing every time since the Mover of the Resolution

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Will the Honourable Member resume his seat.

The question is:

“That the question be now put.”

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Trivedi.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi (Secretary, War Department): Sir, my Honourable friend, Mr. Piare Lal Kureel Talib, moved his Resolution in words of great eloquence and earnestness. I cannot aspire to his eloquence but I will make the position of Government as clear as possible in the fewest words. I will say at once that I have very great pleasure in accepting the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend and supported from all sections of the House. The position which my Honourable friend seeks to obtain by his Resolution already exists at present. The army is not the monopoly of a few privileged classes. Military service is open to every class in the country and there are few, if any, of these classes who are not represented in the fighting services. There is not at present, and there will not be any discrimination against the scheduled classes, and I say this categorically. All candidates for the fighting services—whether in the ranks or for Emergency Commission—must, of course, possess the necessary educational and physical qualifications because we must have a first-class army and best officers available.

My Honourable friend, Mr. Talib, while moving the Resolution, stated that certain Provincial Governments had rejected candidates of scheduled classes for Emergency Commissions. I am rather surprised at the statement because Provincial Governments, as such, have nothing to do with the selection of candidates for Emergency Commissions. As my Honourable friend is aware there are Provincial Selection Boards in each province and I am reluctant to believe that any Provincial Board has rejected a depressed class candidate solely because he was a depressed class candidate, but I should be very glad if he will give me instances.

Mr. Piare Lal Kureel: I have got concrete examples to prove that.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I will be glad to go into those cases if my Honourable friend will give me the necessary information. My Honourable friend also referred to a pamphlet issued by a recruiting officer saying that certain depress-

ed classes were not to be recruited to the Army. I shall be very glad if he will bring that pamphlet to my notice, because it is not in accordance with our policy.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): May I suggest in this connection that from the time of the acceptance of this Resolution by Government, the word "Depressed" should no longer be employed with regard to these people.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I am sorry Sir, that I used the phrase 'depressed classes'. Let me give some instances of the recruitment of scheduled castes in the army at present: We are raising Mahar Infantry Battalions from the Central Provinces and Berar. There are certain Chamar Battalions raised from the United Provinces and the Punjab, mainly for Infantry, and there are Chamars in R.I.A.S.C. (A.T.) and Pioneers. Mundas, Hos and Oraons are recruited from Bengal and Bihar for the Bihar Regiment and Pioneers. Meghs are recruited from the Punjab for Infantry and Pioneers. There are Kabirpanthis from the Punjab for Infantry and Pioneers. There are Santhals from Bengal and Bihar mainly for Pioneers. There are Shilpkars from the United Provinces mainly for Engineers and Pioneers, and there are Kolis from the Punjab for Infantry. Among the Madras classes who are being recruited in all units, there are several thousands belonging to the scheduled castes. In addition there are a little over 2,00,000 persons belonging to scheduled castes enrolled as non-combatants from all provinces.

I will now turn to certain points raised by my other Honourable friends in the debate. My Honourable friend, Mr. Hoosinbhoj Lalljee, asked me to state clearly and categorically that there is no, and that there will not be any, discrimination against the scheduled castes. I give that declaration categorically and clearly here.

My Honourable friend, Rao Bahadur Siva Raj, made a number of useful suggestions which I will certainly take into consideration. One of his suggestions was that Government should appoint as Recruiting Officers members of the scheduled castes. I will certainly have that examined. He also made a suggestion that members of the scheduled castes should be informed at the time of recruitment whether they are being recruited for combatant or non-combatant ranks. If this is not being done at present, I will see that it is done. He also referred to his experience at the Central Interview Board, Poona. I do not myself know of the specific cases and I do not claim that the decisions of that Board are perfect. As the House is aware the old system of the Central Interview Board has been changed. There is a new system in operation and I can assure him that in these new Selection Boards, of which there are five in number, the candidate is judged solely on his own personality and on his own qualifications, irrespective of his parentage or his status, and merit is the sole passport.

Sir, I assure the House again that there is no discrimination at present against the scheduled castes and there will be none.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the key service of the Army should be thrown open to the members of all the scheduled castes and that the military service should not be the monopoly of a few privileged classes."

The motion was adopted.

RESOLUTION RE REFORM OF THE CANTONMENT SERVICE.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Deshmukh.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I

move:

"That this Assembly, in the interest of efficiency, economy, sound administration and justice to the Indian element of the Cantonments Department and Executive Officers' Service, recommends to the Governor General in Council—

(a) that without in any way touching the pay and allowances of the King's Commissioned Officers of the Cantonments Department, the existing Military Estates Circles be abolished forthwith, the Executive Officer of every Cantonment to be also the Military Estates Officer thereof;

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

(b) that the British King's Commissioned Officers thus released be appointed *Executive Officers cum Military Estates Officers*, of big Cantonments which without much financial inconvenience can meet half of their salaries;

(c) that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—850, and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules;

(d) that the present officers of the Cantonments Department and the members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service be amalgamated into one service, the service so amalgamated to be Class I Central Service, and the service either to be pensionable or a Contributory Provident Fund on the lines and terms of the Provident Fund established for the benefit of officers of the Indian State Railways to be constituted;

(e) that the new scales of pay for administrative appointments, *viz.*, the Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, the Deputy Directors, the Deputy Assistant Directors, etc., be Rs. 2,000, Rs. 1,600 and Rs. 1,250, respectively, when held by officers other than the King's Commissioned Officers;

(f) that subordinates and superannuated Executive Officers re-employed as Executive Officers be discharged; and

(g) that the future recruitment to the reorganised service should be (i) 60 per cent. of the vacancies by direct recruitment, *viz.*, through a competitive examination to be held by the Federal Public Service Commission separately for this purpose or along with the I.C.S. competitive examination or the Indian Audit Accounts and other allied services competitive examinations;

(ii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by promotion from amongst the specially qualified establishments of the Cantonments Department who should be at least graduates of a recognised University after consultation with the Federal Public Service Commission; and

(iii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by direct appointment of the King's Commissioned and Indian Commissioned Officers on the recommendation of the said Commission and in this case too the officers must be graduates of a recognised Indian or a British University."

I hope I will be able to do justice to this Resolution which it has been my lot to sponsor before you, Sir. This particular Resolution deals with the appointment of Executive Officers and their salary and how the services can be economically and efficiently managed.

Of the Resolution, clauses (a) and (b) make suggestions as to how the services can be run economically. Clause (d) suggests how the services can be amalgamated. The Cantonment Department and the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service can, by amalgamation, be even effectively managed by offering better terms for service, because the terms which are offered just now are not really sufficient to attract better type of men, and there is scope for amalgamation and managing both the services efficiently. Clause (e) contains suggestions to attract a better type of men for your services and for the management of these estates. Clause (f) is in the name of efficiency. There has been a complaint from this House that superannuated officers should not really be employed in the different Departments, for not only are they not able to manage the departments or their jobs efficiently, but they come in the way of men who could manage the same job efficiently and properly.

In part (g) we suggest the methods of recruitment in order to get competent and efficient men. The Resolution deals with the method of the appointment of Executive Officers in the cantonment areas, the salary to be paid to them, and it makes certain suggestions. It will be proper for me to put before this House certain facts. The Cantonment Act of 1924 was amended in the year 1936, and one of the most important amendments was section 12—the appointment of executive officers—which runs as follows: By the amended Act of 1936, the appointment is to be made by the Central Government or by such person as the Central Government may authorise; in other words, there was discretion formerly, before this amendment came into existence, and this amendment was made because this discretion was abused and was not exercised properly and therefore the House suggested this new method of appointment as to who should appoint these executive officers. Then, under section 280, rules were to be framed to give effect to the appointments of the executive officers in respect of salary and other things. This was done not by merely amending a few words, but putting in a distinct

clause which became law. Section 280 empowers the Central Government to make rules. Sub-section 2(vii) which is absolutely new is as follows:

"The constitution of a service of executive officers and appointment, control, supervision, conditions of service, pay and allowances, suspension, removal, dismissal and punishment of the members thereof."

The rules were drawn up but they did not come up for approval before this House. As a matter of fact very extensive power was given by section 281 to the rule-making authority and as regards the effect to be given to the rules. Section 281(1) says:

"A rule under section 280 may be made either generally for all cantonments or for the whole or any part of any one or more cantonments. All rules so made shall be published in the official gazette and in such other manner as the Central Government may direct, and on such publication shall have effect as if enacted in this Act."

Now, the rules automatically, after they were published in this gazette, immediately came into force. Now, the person whom the Central Government has authorised to appoint these executive officers—that person who appoints these men—has not acted properly according to the intention of the legislature. The intention really was to Indianise the services, that was one intention; the second was to provide for better pay and other facilities and the method of getting recruits. I have already referred in my Resolution that the recruitment should be by the Federal Public Service Commission. In order that a better type of men should come into the service and there should be no preference given on the ground of any race or community, we have suggested all these things, that the person to be appointed should be a graduate either of an Indian or a British university. So far as educational qualifications are concerned, we want proper educated men to administer these jobs. Then, in order that there should be no communal or racial preference shown in the matter, I have advised that the recruitment should be made by the Federal Public Service Commission. As I have suggested in my Resolution the amalgamation of the two—the cantonment department and members of the cantonment officers' executive service—it will be found that there was no necessity either to create a separate department; but it was done; and my submission is that it was created by such rules as were drawn up to provide for certain British King's Commissioned officers. That is the grievance of the Indians. As a matter of fact these rules were so framed in spite of the intention of the Legislature because the Director wished to give preference to the persons belonging to his race.

Those are my contentions and this is what I have to submit. I hope this Resolution will be supported by other Members of this House, and will be accepted, in the interests of what I have said—justice and efficiency of this very service.

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

"That this Assembly, in the interests of efficiency, economy, sound administration and justice to the Indian element of the Cantonments Department and Executive Officers' Service, recommends to the Governor General in Council—

(a) that without in any way touching the pay and allowances of the King's Commissioned Officers of the Cantonments Department, the existing Military Estates Circles be abolished forthwith, the Executive Officer of every Cantonment to be also the Military Estates Officer thereof;

(b) that the British King's Commissioned Officers thus released be appointed *Executive Officers cum Military Estates Officers*, of big Cantonments which without much financial inconvenience can meet half of their salaries;

(c) that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—950, and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules;

(d) that the present officers of the Cantonments Department and the members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service be amalgamated into one service, the service so amalgamated to be Class I Central Service, and the service either to be pensionable or a Contributory Provident Fund on the lines and terms of the Provident Fund established for the benefit of officers of the Indian State Railways to be constituted;

(e) that the new scales of pay for administrative appointments, viz., the Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, the Deputy Directors, the Deputy Assistant Directors, etc., be Rs. 2,000, Rs. 1,600 and Rs. 1,250, respectively, when held by officers other than the King's Commissioned Officers;

[Mr. President.]

(f) that subordinates and superannuated Executive Officers re-employed as Executive Officers be discharged; and

(g) that the future recruitment to the reorganised service should be (i) 60 per cent. of the vacancies by direct recruitment, viz., through a competitive examination to be held by the Federal Public Service Commission separately for this purpose or along with the I.C.S. competitive examination or the Indian Audit Accounts and other allied services competitive examinations;

(ii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by promotion from amongst the specially qualified establishments of the Cantonments Department who should be at least graduate of a recognised University after consultation with the Federal Public Service Commission; and

(iii) 20 per cent. of the vacancies by direct appointment of the King's Commissioned and Indian Commissioned Officers on the recommendation of the said Commission and in this case too the officers must be graduates of a recognised Indian or a British University."

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang (East Punjab: Muhammadan): I rise to support the Resolution moved by my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. In fact, I was one of the persons who gave notice of this Resolution to the Secretary, and it does not matter that in the ballot it was assigned to my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. I am practically also in the position of a Mover of the Resolution.

The gist and object of the Resolution appear from the wording of the motion itself and do not require any commentary to explain what is wanted. What I have to bring to the notice of the House on this occasion is that really the demands embodied in the Resolution arise from the circumstances under which the present Cantonment Act came to be placed on the Statute-book. The Cantonments Act of 1924 was amended by the Legislature in 1936, and in connection with the amendments sought to be introduced by the amending Bill certain speeches were made by the accredited representatives of the Central Government. I specially refer to the speech made by Mr. (now Sir Richard) Tottenham as Defence Secretary in moving the motion that the Bill further to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924, for certain purposes, as reported by the Select Committee for the second time, be taken into consideration. In that speech, in explaining the scope and objects of the amending Bill, the mover of that motion on the occasion said, among other things:

"Thirdly, there are provisions in the Bill which will replace the present military executive officers by a service of civilian executive officers who will be recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission and whose salaries, which will be considerably lower than the salaries paid now to the military executive officers, will be found in equal shares by Government and the Cantonment Fund."

That declaration by the Defence Secretary at the time on the floor of this House raised the hope that there was going to be an executive officers service for the cantonments throughout India which will be of a higher stamp because it was going to be recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission, and although the Honourable Member did say "whose salaries will be considerably lower than the salaries paid now to the military executive officers", he did not at the time, convey to the mind of anybody hearing or reading that statement, that it would be so scandalously low, as I shall point out presently in the course of my speech, as to fail to attract the right stamp of men for the service of the cantonments as executive officers. In this connection I may be permitted to draw attention to the scales of pay which used to be at that time paid to the cantonment executive officers. Under the Act of 1924 the authorised strength of the cantonment departments was Director, Military Lands and Cantonments, 1; Inspecting Officers who are now Deputy Directors, 4; Executive Officers holding King's Commission, Class I, 21; Executive Officers holding Viceroy's Commission, Class II, 20—total 46. The rates of pay which were paid to the Executive Officers, Class I, were as follows:

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can continue his speech after lunch.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Three of the Clock, Sir Henry Richardson (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: Sir, before we adjourned for Lunch, I was saying that the grades of salaries of Cantonment Executive Officers under the Cantonment Act of 1924 were as follows: Captain Rs. 895, plus departmental pay of Rs. 125 on appointment and Rs. 150 on confirmation. Then of course, there are other details. Major Rs. 1,305 and Major after 5 years' service as such Rs. 1,435 plus departmental pay which was Rs. 200 after ten years' service in the Cantonment Department and Lieut.-Colonel Rs. 1,650 plus departmental pay according to the length of service in the Cantonment Department. These were salaries of Executive Officers when they happened to be King's Commissioned Officers. I may also indicate what the Executive Officers holding Viceroy's Commission got. A Viceroy's Commissioned Officer started with Rs. 400; with increments of Rs. 20 per year, he rose to Rs. 500 and for purposes of travelling allowance he was at par with King's Commissioned Officers. So, he was Class II officer but for purposes of Travelling Allowance, he was treated as Class I Officer. Now, these were the pays of Executive Officers under the Cantonment Act of 1924. In the amended Act of 1936, which was supposed to bring into existence an Executive Officers' Service recruited through the Public Service Commission the start of the Executive Officer was Rs. 150 and with increments of Rs. 5 a year, he rose to Rs. 250. Then there was an efficiency bar. After crossing that hurdle, he advanced at a comparatively rapid pace to Rs. 300 and of course there are selection grades and if a man continues in the service of a cantonment as Executive Officer for 60 long years which is unthinkable and impossible, he can get to Rs. 700. All this is mere eye-wash. The fact remains that these gentlemen were recruited through the instrumentality of the Public Service Commission. They had to start on the humble pay of Rs. 150 and have to function as Executive Officers and maintain the social status which they acquired thereby. They are left with only two alternatives. Either they must go about dressed in rags and eat whatever they can get, sharing it with their families or they must be corrupt. I think indirectly they are called upon to be corrupt, in order to maintain their position. Now, this state of things has been going on since the Government framed the rules under section 280 (cc) of the Cantonment Act. It is believed that Col. Patterson, the then Director, was responsible for the framing of the rules. He contrived to make it appear that he was giving the cantonments a very economic service and thereby was going to save a lot of money to the taxpayers but as a matter of fact, in other ways, he brought into existence another service, that of Military Estate Officers, which of course existed before but he put it on a broader basis. These Estate Officers were all King's Commissioned Officers, mostly Britishers. Of course they draw big salaries, just as I have shown by enumerating the salaries of Executive Officers. They now draw salaries which rise up to Rs. 2,500 and in the case of several Executive Officers of big cantonments like Secunderabad and others, I have got some details here, they perform duties both of Executive Officers and Estate Officers.

Now, we wish the Government to solve the problem of reorganising the Cantonment service in such a way as really to make the job of a Cantonment Executive Officer worth striving for, and to make it attract the right type of man to carry on the duties. I know that a number of gentlemen now occupying the position of Executive Officers were men who had been through the competitive examination of the Indian Civil Service and not having qualified for that service they were, as second best, given a chance to serve as Executive Officers by being selected for that post by the Federal Public Service Commission but some of them finding it impossible to maintain their position on the scanty pittance which was allowed to them, namely, Rs. 150 per mensem, had to leave that service later on. Therefore, in the Resolution which has been tabled, the whole matter has been put in such a way that nothing unfair will be done to any existing section of the service. Those members of the Canton-

[Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang.]

ment service who are King's Commissioned Officers will not suffer in any way in their status but in future, the recruitment to the service will be on the lines suggested in this Resolution and the office of the Cantonment Executive Officer and the function of the Estate Officer can be usefully combined with economy to the funds and efficiency to the service and justice also to those who enter the service. In clause (c) of the Resolution, the prayer is that the grades of pay of officers recruited heretofore by the Federal Public Service Commission and to be recruited henceforth be fixed at least in the time scale of Rs. 300—25—600—35—950 and the salaries of other members of the Cantonment Executive Officers' Service and of the Cantonments Department be fixed in the scale in accordance with the normal service rules. Now, that is a suggestion which will enable the Government, as my calculations show, to save nearly one lakh of rupees every year and yet the service will be improved both in quality and efficiency. You will have a better type of men for this very important job of Executive Officer and you will have men who can with credit to themselves and benefit to the Service and the interests concerned discharge the duties of Cantonment Executive Officers *cum* Military Estate Officers.

Mr. Chairman (Sir Henry Richardson): The Honourable Member's time is up.

Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang: I am finishing. I hope that this matter will receive serious and earnest consideration at the hands of the Government and the injustice which has so far been done to the Cantonment Executive Officers will be redressed.

Mr. Lajchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I rise to support this Resolution. The Resolution has already been explained by my friend, Mr. Deshmukh, and he has explained to the House each sub-paragraph of the Resolution. It seems to me that the intention of the Act which was amended was to improve the condition of the Cantonments. It cannot be denied that in some of the Municipalities, District Boards and Cantonment Boards there is much of corruption and also there is inefficiency. Perhaps the intention of the Act was to have the recruitment of the Executive Officer through the Public Service Commission. We know that persons who are recruited through the Public Service Commission have to pass a competitive examination and are generally men of better class. The intention of the Act was that there ought to be no racial discrimination. As has been explained by my friend, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, the higher posts in the Cantonments were the monopoly of the military officers and their salaries were very high. The intention of the Act was that there should be no racial distinction and also there should be no discrimination in the salaries. Whether the officers were Europeans or Indians, the salaries should be given on the same basis and they should be recruited through the Public Service Commission. It is now the policy of the Government to Indianise the various services. So, it was also clear from that Act that these Cantonment Boards will also be Indianised. At present the person who is at the head gets only Rs. 150. Now, what status and dignity will he have and what control and power can he possess? Therefore, I feel that the rules that have been made are wrong.

Now, we know from our bitter experience that when any statute is made and power is given to the Government to make rules, the rules generally are such as would not be acceptable to any reasonable man. We have an instance of it here. We know what the executive officer used to get before and what pay has been decided by the rules for him. The pay of Rs. 150 for the executive officer is too little and I think it is very wise on the part of the Mover and the Honourable Member who has supported him to propose that his pay should be increased. Whether they are Europeans or Indians, they should be brought on the same level, though, of course, preference should be given to Indians for Indianising the service. Besides, the Indians will understand the questions which affect the Indians better, such as, the questions that arise about the houses, giving the leases of the houses, removing people who are in the houses, cancelling the leases and so on and so forth. These are very important ques-

tions and the executive officer is responsible for them. Therefore, I submit that it is in the fitness of things that the rules should be revised.

As regards the communal distinction or racial discrimination, that also should go and the purity of the Cantonments Boards should be such that there should be no corruption whatever. This state of affairs you can have only when you give sufficient salary to the executive officers and also to their staff. The staff should also have sufficient salary so that they may not be exposed to the charge of corruption and such other things. I need not take any more time of the House because the object of the Resolution has already been fully explained. I whole-heartedly support the revision of these rules. They should be revised in the manner indicated in the Resolution that is now before the House. Sir, I support the Resolution.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, this Resolution has two objects. One is to reduce the tax-payer's tax and the money which the tax-payer pays towards these Cantonment Boards. The other object is that the Indians and Europeans should be made to draw on the same level. When in the year 1936 an amendment was brought before the Council of State, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief made a speech on the amendment of the Act of 1924. He said:

"The contents of the Bill are, I submit, sufficient evidence of the truth of this statement. We are replacing the old military Executive Officer by a new service of Civilian Executive Officers who will cost the tax-payer less and who will be recruited through the Public Service Commission."

That, I think, is a rule which will be welcomed by this House. As I said before, the object of this Resolution ought to be the same which His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief stated in the Upper House in 1936. If it is looked at from that point of view, the suggestion is that the post of the Estate Officer should not be such that it may be difficult for the tax-payer to pay his salary. Of course Government have got tax-payers' money and they can spend it as they like. We cannot question them. But if the matter is considered equitably and honourably and conscientiously, it will appear that these two services, Estate Officers and Executive Officers services, should be combined into one. You may give sufficient pay to the combined officer. To say that we will have an Estate Officer, a European and an Executive Officer, an Indian sometimes and sometimes a European, this does not stand to reason. In one place you have two conflicting officers. I do not think it advisable in any way to have two officers for one and the same work. In fact they are discharging the same functions in the Cantonment. What is the function of the Estate Officer? If I want to build a house, the Estate Officer is to be referred to; if I want to acquire some land or do something like that, the Estate Officer is to be referred to. On the other hand there is a bazaar in the Cantonment, there are buildings and reconstructions and new buildings come in. This is the function of the Executive Officer to look to. The Estate Officer gets Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 3,000 whereas the Executive Officer gets only Rs. 150. As suggested in the Resolution you must appoint a competent man and mete out justice to everybody. That is my plea from the point of view of tax-payer's money. You ought to consider this point and fix the scale of pay which may be fit and proper for the two combined offices rather than merely Rs. 150. In the speech of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief sanitation and public health also was referred to as the concern of these officers in the Cantonment. If so, why have two different offices. It may be they might differ on certain points. Why have this conflicting authority in the Cantonments in India. For these reasons, I support the Resolution and I hope the Government will accept it.

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely (Government of India: Nominated Official): This Resolution makes a number of proposals for the reform of Cantonment service, which, taken together, amount to a complete reconstruction. Before I deal with the separate suggestions that have been made, I should like to draw attention to one point which seems to make it unwise and dangerous to effect any wholesale reform at the present moment in the Cantonment services. If we were to reform the Cantonment services now and were faced with the necessity of

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effecting further possibly drastic changes in a few years, it would lead to dissatisfaction and probably confusion. Now, Sir, we do not know what the conditions affecting Cantonment service are likely to be after the war. We do not, for example, know what the size and lay out of the post-war army is likely to be. It follows from that that we cannot tell what the size and the number of cantonments which we shall have to serve will be. Another point that we do not know is on what terms Indian Commissioned Officers will be recruited into the army after the war. Therefore, it is difficult to judge at this stage what terms it might be fair to offer them if they were taken into the Cantonment service. There are a number of other factors of that kind which make it extremely difficult at this stage to say what an equitable arrangement after the war would be. For these reasons any thorough-going reform at this stage would seem to be unwise and untimely.

A point of which much has been made by Honourable Members who have supported this Resolution is that the scales of pay fixed after the amending Act of 1936 were too low. My Honourable friend, Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, went so far as to call them scandalously low. He has quoted them in his speech and I need not repeat them. I think it has to be admitted that considering the responsibilities which are placed upon the Cantonment Executive Officers, they are low. That is not denied. At the same time when these reforms were introduced, there was a condition of acute financial stringency and the reorganisation which was carried out, had to be carried out more or less on a no-cost basis. Furthermore, although upon paper these rates might seem low, yet in effect, owing to the war, the pay which has been actually drawn by entrants into the Cantonment service has not compared unfavourably with what they might have drawn had they gone into some other service, say, the Provincial Civil Service. Owing to the war, promotion has been very much quicker than it would have been in normal times. Admittedly before the war, it might have taken a long time, possibly ten years or more, for an entrant into Grade II of the service to rise to Grade I on a higher rate of pay. But since the war, promotion has been very much quicker and the position now is that officers with as little as two years service are in fact officiating in Grade I of the service and drawing pay of Rs. 300 a month. In fact there are only ten officers at the present time drawing between Rs. 205 and Rs. 155 a month, that is the lowest possible scale. These are officers who have not passed their departmental examinations or have been passed over for inefficiency.

Another suggestion which was made, I think, by my Honourable friend Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang, was that these terms were so unattractive that suitable entrants to the service have not been forthcoming. But that is not the case. Once the system of recruitment through the Public Service Commission was introduced, candidates of a very adequate standard were forthcoming. It was only because, as a war measure, Government stopped recruitment in 1941 that candidates are not still coming forward. I think, Sir, that if the service was thrown open again to candidates, then candidates with good qualifications would still be available. Recruitment was stopped as a war measure in order to keep positions vacant after the war for people who have rendered approved war service, and stoppage of recruitment was not in any way due to the fact that suitable candidates for recruitment were not available.

These are considerations which go to show that in fact the conditions of service are not as unfavourable as they have been made out to be. All the same, it has to be recognised that the position as regards pay and prospects of the service is not all that might be desired. The Government are now examining the position with a view to establishing improved prospects for the service and making it an attractive career. I cannot say what the results of that examination will be. I can only assure the House that an examination is being carried out.

Turning to the particular proposals made in the Resolution, clauses (a) and (b) suggest that the Military Estate Officers and Executive Officers services should be amalgamated into one and that the Executive Officers of big Cantonments should do the work of the Military Estate Officers as well. Sir, there is very great difficulty in the way of adopting any such suggestion at the present time, even if it could be contended that it might be a good measure in normal times. Since the war broke out a very great deal of requisitioning of land on behalf of the military services has taken place all over India. This means a considerable increase of work for the Military Estates Officer. In some cases land has been requisitioned several hundred miles away from the nearest cantonment and in view of that fact it would be quite impossible for one officer to run a large cantonment and in addition to look after large areas which have been requisitioned possibly at quite inaccessible distances from his headquarters. I believe that the experiment of combining the duties of the Cantonment Executive Officer and the Military Estates Officer was tried as long ago as 1924 but it was not found satisfactory because the Cantonment Executive Officer tended to disregard the interests of Government when they conflicted, as in some cases they were bound to conflict, with the interests of the Cantonment Board whose servant he was. However, Sir, where it has proved possible to combine the functions of Military Estates Officer and Executive Officer this has been done. It has in fact been carried out in six places,—Kohat, Wellington, Secunderabad, Karachi, Quetta and Dehra Dun. In these cantonments the Executive Officer is looking after the military lands which come within his jurisdiction. But elsewhere the cantonments are often very large and the lands which have to be looked after are a long way off from the cantonment; and in present conditions it is impossible to make one officer perform dual functions.

As regards parts (c), (d), (e) and (g), I have already explained that Government feel that this is not a proper moment for a wholesale reorganisation. They are, however, examining the question, as I said before, of what adjustments or improvements can be made. The only remaining part of the Resolution is part (f), in connection with which I should like to explain the position of these superannuated officers. As I have explained before, recruitment was stopped in 1941 as a war measure; and as a natural result of that and of officers already in the service being drafted into military service or retired or for other reasons there was a shortage of officers to some extent. One of the great difficulties of dealing with the cantonment cadre is that the size of cantonments varies from enormous charges, such as a cantonment with a perimeter of 25 miles like Rawalpindi to very small cantonments in which the work is certainly considerably lighter; and it seemed to Government that as a temporary measure during the war the best way of providing for the administration of these small places was to employ retired officers who were quite capable of doing the not very considerable amount of work involved. That, at any rate, explains why they were taken on, and I do not think that any other plan would have been more efficient or economical. In fact the officers that we have employed like this have, on the whole, according to Government's information, performed their duties quite satisfactorily.

Sir, I hope that I have said enough to explain why Government do not feel able to accept any proposal such as is made in this Resolution for a wholesale reorganisation of the Cantonment Service at the present time. They will, however, as I said before, look into the question of scales of pay and prospects as quickly as possible.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Sir, this Resolution has been opposed on the ground that this is not the time to do anything to improve matters because there will be dissatisfaction in the services, and, if anything, the cost of managing this department would go up and it is not desirable that this should be done in war time. I should like to remind my Honourable friend that this Resolution has been brought forward here as a result of the dissatisfaction in the services. Would you have better work if your services are satisfied or if there is dissatisfaction? It has been said that the matter is under consideration and it may be

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:]

that the present scale may be revised. I suppose this need not wait till the end of the war. About other matters I do not know what the difficulties of Government are but so far as increments of pay are concerned, Government will be doing the right thing to increase them. I do not know that the cost of increasing the pay would be so high that Government would not be able to afford it. It has been said that people are coming forward and even the present pay is a decent pay; but I do not think that this pay is commensurate with the position. Even an ordinary skilled worker like a carpenter or mason can now earn about two or three rupees a day. What influence can the Executive Officer have if he has to deal with such men who are drawing very nearly the same pay? As regards other things I may not be in a position to say that this thing and that thing should or should not be done, but so far as the pay is concerned it should certainly be increased. If I get an assurance that at least this matter of pay will be immediately looked into I am prepared to withdraw my Resolution.

Mr. L. J. D. Wakely: Sir, I am not in a position to give an assurance that the matter will be immediately looked into if by that the Honourable Member means that results would be perceptible in what he would call a very short time, but I can assure him that Government are looking into the matter with such speed as they can.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: In view of that assurance, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Resolution.

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

The Assembly then adjourned *sine die*.