

11th August 1943

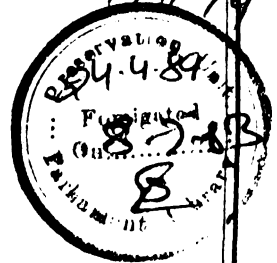
TO
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES

Official Report

Volume III, 1943

(26th July to 25th August, 1943)

EIGHTEENTH SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1943



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

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Deputy President :

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[From 27th July to 19th August, 1943.]

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Mr. K. C. NEOGY, M.L.A.

Mr. HOOSEINBHOY A. LALLJEE, M.L.A.

Sir HENRY RICHARDSON, M.L.A.

[From 20th August, 1943.]

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Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

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

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 11th August, 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. John Philip Sargent, C.I.E., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

COMPENSATION TO DEPENDENTS OF THE LATE PROFESSOR C. B. JOHRI.

299. *Mr. R. R. Gupta: Will the Honourable the Home Member be pleased to state what action Government propose to take to compensate the dependents of the late Professor Chandra Bhal Johri, M.L.A.. Central?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member's attention is invited to my reply to Mr. Kazmi's question No. 324 on the 17th March, 1943. The facts there stated do not reveal any ground on which the dependents of the late Professor Chandra Bhal Johri would have any claim for compensation. The matter is, however, one which concerns the Government of the United Provinces and not the Government of India.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: Was he not arrested under Rule 26?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I believe that was the rule employed but the action was taken by the U.P. Government.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Was the arrest made under the orders of the Central Government?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: No, so far as I am aware.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: If the matter is one primarily for the Provincial Government why did the Honourable Member gratuitously give his opinion as to whether this merited payment of compensation or not? Was not that pure prejudice?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I was referring to the information which I had given to the House in reply to a question at the last Session.

Mr. K. O. Neogy: If the Honourable Member was not in a position to grant any compensation why did he go out of his way to express an opinion as to whether it is desirable to grant it or not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: What I said was that the House could judge from the information given in reply to the question at the last Session that there was no ground made out for compensation.

STATEMENT IN HOUSE OF COMMONS *RE* INDIA'S FINANCIAL HELP TO BRITAIN.

300. *Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Has the attention of the Honourable the Finance Member been drawn to Reuter's telegram, dated the 22nd July, 1943, published in the *Hindustan Times* of the 23rd instant, to the effect that "India's financial help to Britain was mentioned in the Commons today, Sir Stanley Reed (Conservative) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer drew the attention of the House to the easement in British finance effected by the generosity of the Indian Government"? If so, in what different ways was this generosity shown by the Government of India to the British Government?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My attention was drawn to the Reuter's telegram concerned and on reference to London I have been informed that owing to an error in transmission "India" was wrongly substituted for "Canada" in the telegrams as published in this country. The reference in the Commons was actually to a statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the easement in British finance effected by the generosity of Canada. The latter part of the question does not arise.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: As the word "India" occurs twice in the quotation, was the error also made twice?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Ralsman: No, Sir. The position was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken of the generosity of Canada and the Canadian Government. Sir Stanley Reed apparently then asked that on some suitable occasion the Chancellor of the Exchequer should indicate the part played by India. As far as I can find, no reference was made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the part played by India.

NATIONAL WAR FRONT VOLUNTEERS IN PROVINCES.

301. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of National War Front Volunteers in different provinces giving the number of Hindu and Muslim volunteers, separately;

(b) the number of Hindu and Muslim gauleiters (district leaders) appointed in the Surma Valley; and

(c) why a Hindu officer was not appointed as provincial organiser in the Hindu majority province of Assam?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) No figures are available. In most Provinces there is no formal enrolment to membership of the National War Front and no figures can therefore be given.

(b) The information is not available here. District Leaders are appointed by the Provincial Leader and those appointments are not recorded in this office. As the Surma Valley is mainly a Moslem area it is presumed that the leaders are mainly Moslems.

(c) When the National War Front was first organised in Assam, Honorary Lieutenant Abu Lais was placed in charge of the work in the Surma Valley and a Hindu officer was put in charge of the Assam Valley. After some months experience it was considered there was no need to keep the organisations distinct. Mr. Lais had been conspicuously successful in the Surma Valley and was therefore put in charge of the organisation in the Assam Valley also.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether it is not a fact that this word 'Gauleiter' is generally applied to Hitler's systems and whether there is any propriety or special necessity for using a word which shows that the organization is a Nazi one?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have not used it. It is the Honourable Member who has used the word.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Does this organization make use of this word?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I do not know.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Is the Government aware that the officer in question has a peculiarly strong communal bias?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I do not know.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Government enquire about it?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have not seen anything in it to justify any enquiry.

ENFORCING THE DELHI MUSLIM WAKF ACT.

302. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Home Member please state:

(a) the last date by which the Delhi Muslim Wakf Act, 1943 (XIII of 1943), can be enforced; and

(b) what progress, if any, has hitherto been made by the Provincial Government for bringing it into force?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) 9th October, 1943.

(b) Rules under sub-section 2(b) of section 69 are under preparation and will be published shortly.

BEEF SUPPLY TO THE MILITARY AT CALCUTTA AND MUZAFFARPORE.

303 *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the War Secretary be pleased to state:

(a) who is the contractor at Calcutta and at Muzaffarpore (Bihar) for the supply of beef to the Military Department;

(b) the quantity of beef each of the contractors supplies daily or monthly for Military purposes;

(c) the number of cattle required to be killed for such supply at each of the centres per month or per day; and

(d) whether such contract has been given to any Hindu in centres other than Calcutta or Muzaffarpore?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Information to enable me to answer all parts of the question is not readily available. It is being obtained and will be laid on the table in due course.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Might the attention of the Honourable Member be drawn to the newspaper *Dawn*, dated 10th April, 1943, in which the name of the contractor is given.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No, I have not seen it.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: Was it not possible for Government to get information on a small item such as that mentioned, *viz.*, who is the contractor at Calcutta and at Muzaffarpore?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I have that information with me. I can give it. The contractor in Calcutta is Messrs. Associated Livestock Farms Ltd., and the same firm is the contractor at Muzaffarpore.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May I know the names of the partners and shareholders of that firm?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: The names of the partners are not known to Government.

MUSLIM ACCOUNTANTS, ETC., UNDER THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA.

304. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the total number of persons serving as (i) Accountants, (ii) Account clerks, and (iii) clerks under the Reserve Bank of India and the number of those who are Muslims?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Government have no information. The recruitment of the staff of the Reserve Bank of India is entirely a matter for the Central Board of the Bank.

HINDI AND URDU STAFF IN THE INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT.

305. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting be pleased to state with reference to the answer to part (b) of starred question No. 354, asked on the 23rd March, 1943, regarding the staff of his Department, the reason for appointing one gazetted officer for Hindi and four for Urdu and 13 and 38 subordinates, respectively, in the All-India Radio?

(b) On what basis is this recruitment made?

(c) How many Hindus and Mohammadans, separately, are employed on this business?

(d) Is the ratio in accordance with that fixed by the Home Department Resolution or not? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) As has been stated in reply to part (b) of Bhai Parma Nand's starred question No. 354 of the 23rd March, 1943, the staff in All-India Radio is not recruited for Hindi or Urdu programmes as such but for Hindustani programmes. The numbers given are of officers who have passed Matriculation or higher examination in Urdu or Hindi. The staff knowing Hindi are as capable of giving out programmes in Hindustani as those who have qualified in Urdu. The number of Hindi and Urdu knowing people does not represent the number of Hindus or Muslims, many Urdu knowing staff being Hindus.

(b) On merits.

(c) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the statement of communal composition, copies of which are placed in the library of the House.

(d) Yes. The second part of the question does not arise.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If the recruitment is done on the merits, is it done by a committee or by an officer?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am not sure but I think there is a selection committee.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: Then am I to understand that there is no communal ratio or proportion observed in the selection?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: My reply to part (c) answers that question. It is done mainly on merits but there may be occasions when the communal proportion has to be maintained.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: If it is done on the merits why should there be any communal proportion?

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

DESIRABILITY OF RAISING SCALES OF PAY OF THE KEY PUNCH OPERATORS OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE.

306. *Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: (a) Is the Honourable the Finance Member aware:

(i) that the Key Punch Operators of the Supply Department and Medical Directorate, New Delhi, have been fixed on Rs. 50 per mensem in a grade of Rs. 45—2½—95 plus Rs. 5 as machine allowance, *vide* Government of India, Supply Department letter No. R-18 (67), dated the 20th July, 1943, whereas the Key Punch Operators of the Central Board of Revenue who are doing the same kind of work are still in the grade of Rs. 36—3—60—2—70; and

(ii) that the above disparity in the grades of the Key Punch Operators in the Departments of the Government of India in the same city for the same kind of work has created ill-feeling and discontent among the Key Punch Operators of the Central Board of Revenue?

(b) Do Government now propose to take immediate steps to fix the Key Punch Operators of the Central Board of Revenue also on Rs. 50 in a grade of Rs. 45—2½—95 plus Rs. 5 per mensem as machine allowance so as to alleviate their bitterness and discontent?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) (i) Yes.

(ii) This has been represented to me by the Honourable Member.

(b) The question of enhancing the scale of pay applicable to Punch Operators of the Central Board of Revenue is engaging my attention.

HINDUS AND MUSLIMS IN THE CENTRAL BOARD OF REVENUE.

307. *Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fazl-i-Haq Piracha: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please state:

(a) the number of gazetted officers in the Central Board of Revenue, and how many of them are Muslims;

(b) the number of non-gazetted staff in the Central Board of Revenue, and how many of them are Muslims; and

(c) how many appointments in the gazetted and non-gazetted staff of the Central Board of Revenue were made in the last four months, and how many of them were Hindus and Muslims, separately? (Separate figures may please be given in each case and class of services)?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) 22 officers of whom 2 are Muslims;

(b) 135 of whom 34 are Muslims;

(c) *Gazetted staff.*—7 temporary appointments were made in all and out of these 1 post went to a Muslim and 3 to Hindus;

Non-gazetted staff.—Out of a total number of 58 appointments—which were all temporary—14 went to Muslims and 40 to Hindus.

Sardar Sant Singh: Why was no Sikh appointed to any of these posts?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: As that question was not put to me I am afraid I am not in a position to reply.

Sardar Sant Singh: The figures show that no Sikh was appointed and the Honourable Member knows

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Unless the Honourable Member includes Sikhs among the Hindus, there is no question put to that effect.

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, I may point out that the Sikhs are not included among the Hindus.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Then there ought to be a specific question.

Sardar Sant Singh: Sir, on a point of order, Government have recognised Sikhs as a separate class for the services. Why should not the Honourable Member give an answer?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know if there is a general order to that effect.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Salt: From the figures given does the Honourable Member realise that the proportion of Muslims is inadequate and is he doing anything to bring them up to the proper level?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I must point out that most of these appointments are made by deputation or special duty of officers or personnel who may be employed in the Central Departments of Income-tax or Customs or Central Excises. And in regard to such staff the communal proportions do not apply in the Central Board of Revenue, Communal proportions apply in the services from which they are drawn.

Sardar Sant Singh: How is the personnel of the deputation selected?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is done on the basis of suitability for the particular tasks that have to be done.

Sardar Sant Singh: Who makes the selection?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The selection is made by the Members of the Board, as far as I am aware.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: May I know from the Honourable Member whether any direct recruitment was made under (a)?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: As far as I can see, most of the officers are drawn from existing departments.

EXTENSION OF THE PUNJAB ENTERTAINMENT DUTY ACT TO DELHI PROVINCE.

308. *Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable the Finance Member please refer to his answer to a supplementary question to starred question No. 237, asked on the 3rd March, 1943, regarding the extension of the Punjab Entertainment Duty Act to Delhi Province, *viz.*, "I am not sure what action could be taken but I will look into that", and state the result of his enquiry or the description of the action taken?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Delhi Cinematograph Rules, 1943, have been amended in order to check the malpractices in regard to the sale of cinema tickets in Delhi complained of by the Honourable Member. The amendments which were notified in the Delhi Chief Commissioner's Notification, No. F. 8 (83)/42-General, dated the 2nd June, 1943, and published in the *Gazette of India*, dated the 12th June, 1943, are reported to have proved effective.

SCARCITY OF SMALL COINS IN BIHAR.

309. *Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

- (a) whether he is aware of the scarcity of small coins in the Bihar Province;
- (b) the amount of small coins sent to Bihar since the 1st April, 1943; and
- (c) if Government contemplate removing the acute shortage of small coins in Bihar by sending large consignments and making similar arrangements for small coins as is done in Delhi and New Delhi?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) Between the 1st April and 24th July, 1943, small coin to the total value of over Rs. 26 lakhs of rupees were sent to Bihar.

(c) Yes. The process has already started and increasingly large supplies are being and will continue to be sent until the position has been finally restored.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Has the Honourable Member seen the notes issued by private individuals for four annas in order to serve the community in these days of shortage of small coins?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, I know that tokens of that kind have had to be resorted to, but I must point out that the situation, taking the country as a whole, has very greatly improved and is continuing to improve.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Doesn't the issue of these notes indicate that there is a shortage of small coins?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It indicates that there is a shortage in circulation, but it does not indicate that the Government have not put out a sufficient quantity of small coins for the needs of the country.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know if it is not a fact that even now the situation continues to be the same everywhere?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: My information is that in large parts of the country the trouble has very largely disappeared. I admit that there are parts where the situation is still unsatisfactory, but one cannot hope to produce complete improvement in the whole of a country like this in a short time.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: What is the situation in Bengal? Is it not a fact that there is a very great scarcity of coins there?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have not had complaints from Bengal recently.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: So far as I know, even now there is difficulty in getting small coins at Railway stations; in fact, we feel the difficulty at Delhi Station and also at other stations. Is the Government taking any steps in this connection?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Government has looked into the matter of Railways and Post Offices and has taken action to improve the situation. But I must point out that wherever it is the case that small coin is only given out and is not tendered by the public, you will soon reach the position at which you are unable to give further change. These offices start with a certain allotment of small coins at the beginning of the day. This supply is very soon exhausted and they have therefore, to refuse further change.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: Have any copper pice coins been issued recently? If so, to what extent?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Strange as it may seem, many millions of these copper pice coins are issued every month. I must admit that I do not see them myself. The moment they are put out into circulation, they seem to go underground.

Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi: May I know if it is a fact that Post Offices and railway offices are supplied with a certain amount of change every day?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Yes, it is a fact that they start with an initial supply of small change, but, as I have pointed out, in places where it is one way traffic and no small change is tendered by the public, the office soon reaches the position where it is unable to give further change.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Does the Honourable Member know that the utility of the new pice coin as a metal washer has been very much appreciated by the trade, and that the trade finds that type of washer to be very much cheaper than any other type of metal washer?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The Honourable Member is making a very amusing point. What I would like to know from him is precisely what he would like me to do so that we may keep the pice in circulation.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the Honourable Member has considered the desirability of introducing currency notes of 2½ rupees as it was done during the last war?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That has been considered. We have in the past had a 2½ rupee note and our experience was that it was not successful.

MEMORIAL FROM RAWALPINDI PENSIONERS FOR THE GRANT OF DEARNESS ALLOWANCE.

310. *Bhai Parma Nand: Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state:

(a) if it is a fact that Government have received a memorial from Rawalpindi on behalf of the civil and military pensioners drawing the attention of Government to the services rendered by them and requesting for the grant of dearness allowance on account of the hard prevailing conditions; and

(b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, whether Government have given any consideration to the memorial; if so, with what result?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) Yes.

(b) The matter is now under consideration.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MAHATMA GANDHI AND THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

-311. *Mr. R. R. Gupta: (a) Has the Honourable the Home Member seen the press report published in the morning papers of the 30th July, 1943, on Mr. Amery's statement in the House of Commons in reply to questions by Mr. Sorenson regarding the correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and the Home Department of the Government of India?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to make a statement on the nature of the correspondence?

(c) Did Mahatma Gandhi's letters relate to the pamphlet published by Sir Richard Tottenham, the Additional Secretary of the Home Department?

(d) Was the correspondence placed before the Viceroy's Executive Council? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: (a) Yes.

(b) to (d). Government are not prepared to disclose the nature or contents of communications received from Mr. Gandhi so long as he remains subject to the restrictions of which the public are already aware.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: May I know whether the Honourable Member has seen the press reports wherein Sir Muhammad Usman and Sir Sultan Ahmed have denied the existence of any letter from Mahatma Gandhi?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: Is the Honourable Member referring to clause (d) of his question?

Mr. R. R. Gupta: Yes, Sir.

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: The Honourable Member must know that I am not entitled to give him any information regarding the manner in which any business has been transacted in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: May I know whether in a matter of such importance the Honourable the Home Member does not think it necessary to take his colleagues—the Indian Members of the Executive Council—into confidence?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I cannot answer that question, yes or no, as I have explained in my previous answer.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: May I know whether even the Secretary of State has been informed about the nature of the correspondence which has passed between the Government of India and Mahatma Gandhi?

The Honourable Sir Reginald Maxwell: I am unable to disclose the contents of the official correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

DEARNESS ALLOWANCE TO GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

312. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Finance Member be pleased to state the principle upon which is based the payment of Dearness Allowance to employees of Government in different Departments and undertakings? Is it based on the consideration of neutralising the effect of the highly increased cost of living of the employees?

(b) Have Government introduced a uniform rate of Dearness Allowance for all workers in a particular zone under whatever Department or undertaking they may serve? If not, what is the justification for different rates at one and the same place?

(c) Do Government now propose to level up Dearness Allowance scales in each particular part of the country after taking due notice of the actual rise in the cost of living in that part?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the Proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee meetings of the 8th March, 1941, the 19th September, 1942, the 8th February, 1943 and the 31st July, 1943, in which the scope and objects of the dearness allowance scheme as modified from time to time have been duly explained.

(b) No, Sir. In determining the rates it has been necessary to pay due regard to the capacity of the revenues concerned and, as between the Central and Provincial Governments, to the avoidance so far as practicable of mutual embarrassment.

(c) No, Sir. For the latest action taken by Government in this regard the attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee at its meeting of the 31st July, 1943.

DESIRABILITY OF GIVING HIGHER WAGES TO COAL MINERS.

313. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Is the Honourable the Finance Member aware:

(i) that the average income of a coal-miner is Rs. 10 or below, in a large majority of mines in Rannigunje, Jharia and Katras fields, and that in many cases no Dearness Allowance is paid, or, if at all, a very meagre amount is paid; and

(ii) that rice is sold at about Rs. 30 per maund in these parts?

(b) If not, do Government immediately propose to make a statutory provision for higher wages for miners?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The question should have been addressed to the Honourable the Labour Member.

INDIANISATION OF THE W. A. C. (I.).

314. *Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: Will the War Secretary please state:

(a) the extent to which the W. A. C. (I.) has been Indianised; and

(b) the number of officers and other ranks recruited to the W. A. C. (I.) up to the 30th June 1943 showing the communities as under:

	Officers.	Other ranks.
Europeans
Anglo-Indians
Anglo-Burmans
Indians

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) Recruitment to the W. A. C. (I.) is, and always has been, open to all women who are British subjects irrespective of race.

(b) On the 1st of July, 1943, out of a total of 406 officers in the Corps, 307 were Europeans, 65 Anglo-Indians 3 Anglo-Burmans, 27 Indians. Out of a total of 5,614 Auxiliaries, there were 1,543 Europeans, 2,382 Anglo-Indians 156 Anglo-Burmans, 1,175 Indians.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know whether the Honourable Member is aware that there are complaints of the W. A. C. (I.)'s being located in the neighbourhood of troops?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: No, I have not heard of that, Sir.

Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Honourable Member enquire that in Delhi British troops are located in the neighbourhood where the W. A. C. (I.)'s are accommodated?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: I will enquire, Sir.

UNIFORM OF INDIAN WOMEN BELONGING TO THE W. A. C. (I.).

315. *Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: (a) Will the War Secretary please state on whose suggestion the uniform of the Indian women belonging to the W. A. C. (I.) was adopted?

(b) Have any responsible Indian women been consulted as to the type of uniform to be worn by the Indian women of the W. A. C. (I.)? If so, what are their names?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: (a) The uniform of the W. A. C. (I.) is based on that worn by the Auxiliary Territorial Service in the United Kingdom, except that Indian ladies can wear saris instead of skirts.

(b) No, Sir, but modifications in the uniform to be worn by Indian ladies are similar to those decided for Indian ladies commissioned into the Indian Medical Service. I understand that the modifications for the uniform of Indian ladies in the Indian Medical Service were made after consultation with certain Indian ladies.

DESIRABILITY OF APPOINTING AN INDIAN WOMAN AS CHIEF COMMANDER OF THE INDIAN SECTION OF THE W. A. C. (I.).

316. *Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: Will the War Secretary please state if Government have ever considered the question of appointing an outstanding Indian woman who is conversant with the customs and traditions of the Indian women as Chief Commander of the Indian section of the W. A. C. (I.)?

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: There is no Indian section of the W. A. C. (I.) and the question of appointing an Indian lady as Chief Commander of such a section does not therefore arise. There are a number of Indian ladies in important positions in the Corps.

PENALTIES LEVIED IN CALCUTTA ON SALT TRADERS.

317. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: (a) Is the Honourable the Finance Member aware.

(i) that difficulties are being experienced in Calcutta by salt traders, in view of penalties being levied under the Sea Customs Act to the extent of customs duty at double the rate on the shortage below or excess above four *per cent*; and

(ii) that penalty duty on excess outturn or excess shortage which is above or below four *per cent*. of the manifest quantity is demanded by the customs authorities, despite the satisfactory explanation by the Master of an inward coming vessel in Calcutta?

(b) Do Government propose to accept the Masters' explanations in such cases, in view of the present emergency conditions? If not, why not?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: (a) (i) and (ii). Representations to this effect were made recently at a meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, attended by the Customs Member of the Central Board of Revenue and by the Collector of Customs, Calcutta, and the matter was fully discussed.

(b) Each case is dealt with individually on its merits, due regard being paid to present emergency conditions. In at least two recent cases penalties adjudicated by the Calcutta Customs have on appeal been remitted by the Central Board of Revenue.

UNSTARRED QUESTION AND ANSWER.

PROHIBITORY ORDERS AS GRANT OF LEASES UNDER THE CANTONMENT LAND ADMINISTRATION RULES.

58. **Mr. M. Ghiasuddin:** (a) Will the Honourable the Defence Member kindly state if it is a fact that, with a view to regularising sites held under unspecified terms (old grants) in cantonments, leases in the form shown in Schedule VII to the Cantonment Land Administration Rules have been introduced by the Government of India after long deliberations with a deputation of house owners?

(b) Is it a fact that in certain cantonments the Military Estates Officers have refused to grant such a lease under instructions from the Government of India? If so, under what authority has such an embargo been placed prohibiting the grant of a lease sanctioned by Rule 27 of the Cantonment Land Administration Rules?

(c) What are the reasons, if any, that induced Government to issue such prohibitory orders against the grant of lease in the form shown in Schedule VII?

(d) What is the general principle that is followed by the Military Estates Officers with regard to the grant or rejection of applications for such leases?

(e) Is it a fact that Military Estates Officers have refused to grant leases in the form shown in Schedule VII in respect of sites capable of accommodating more than one bungalow? If so, is it not in direct contravention of condition III of the schedule in question?

(f) Do Government propose to withdraw the existing prohibitory orders?

* **The Honourable Malik Sir Firoz Khan Noon:** (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The general principles to be observed by Military Estates Officers in the grant of leases in Schedule VII are:

Leases should be restricted to 'Old Grant' sites of which no written evidence of title and for which no regular lease exist, sites which have been subdivided or which have been used for a purpose other than that for which they were granted, before the promulgation of the Cantonment Land Administration Rules, 1937, and concerning which no written evidence exists of the terms on which the land is held.

The intention apparent from the heading of rule 27, which refers to 'Old Grants', is that the rule should only apply to sites held for building purposes, and it is not the intention that a lease should be granted to enable a holder of a site irregularly held, or held without a lease for other than building purposes, to convert the site into a building site; nor, in view of the provisions of the lease, under which, if Government wish to acquire any building on the site for public purposes, the lessee may require them to acquire all buildings on the site, is it the intention that a lease, which gives unlimited scope to build without restriction, should be granted to enable a house owner who is in possession of a large site to exploit the same, at the expense of the general tax-payer and against all military interests and requirements by the erection of a large number of additional buildings.

(e) Yes. Government understand that in some cases leases have been refused by Military Estates Officers when the application is in conflict with the above principles.

(f) Government do not propose to alter their present policy. They are, however, always ready to consider on its merits any individual case brought to their notice by a house-owner when the Military Estates Officer has refused a lease.

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

Secretary of the Assembly: Sir, the following Message has been received from the Council of State:

"I am directed to inform you that the Council of State at its meeting held on the 10th August, 1943, agreed without any amendment to the Bill to amend the Reciprocity Act 1943, which was passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on Tuesday, the 3rd August, 1943."

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Sir, in view of the function to which a large number of Honourable Members of this House have been invited, may I request you to adjourn at one o'clock.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Will the Honourable Member speak up?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: In view of a function to which a large number of Honourable Members of this House have been invited, I would request you to adjourn at one o'clock and then meet again at 3 o'clock, if necessary. Any work of the House then left incomplete may be taken up after 5 o'clock.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Why? What is the reason?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Because of a function to which a large number of Members of the Assembly have been invited.

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan: You mean an eating function?

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): When people are starving!

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Therefore we should not eat!

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As it would otherwise be inconvenient to a large number of Members of the House, the Assembly will be adjourned at 1 o'clock and will meet again at 3 o'clock. I believe that will meet the desire of the House.

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Very well.

SECRET SESSION.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Before the motion in the name of the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed on the war situation is taken up, all the Galleries excepting those reserved for the Members of the Council of State will be cleared.

[Accordingly all the Galleries, excepting the Gallery reserved for the Members of the Council of State, were cleared.]

The remainder of the Morning sitting was in Secret Session and the Assembly discussed the following motion moved by the Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed:

"That the war situation be taken into consideration."

The two amendments to the above motion on the Order paper, one* by Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh and the other** by Mr. Abdur Rasheed Choudhury, were ruled out of order by the Chair as being beyond the scope of the Motion.]

When the Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Three of the Clock, Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta) who was in the Chair adjourned the Assembly for want of a quorum till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 12th August, 1943.

*"That the following be added at the end of the motion :

'and it be urged by the Government on the United Nations through proper channels that a declaration by them of the policy of racial equality and immediate withdrawal of disqualifications and restrictions put on Indians as regards entry, residence, travel and trade and franchise in their countries or their colonies or self-governing dominions are the surest and quickest measures of bringing the war in the Pacific Ocean to a successful end'."

**"That the following be added at the end of the motion :

'with a view to impress the necessity of granting to India immediately the same political status as is enjoyed by other Allied Nations'."