

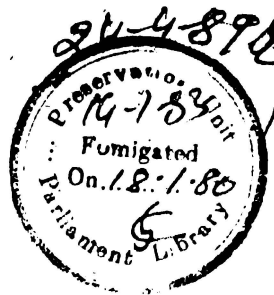
1st March 1944

THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES  
Official Report

Volume II, 1944

*(29th February to 27th March, 1944)*

TWENTIETH SESSION  
OF THE  
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
1944



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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

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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 1st March, 1944.

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. Bhagwan Sahay, M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official):

## STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### MEASURES FOR INCREASING COAL OUTPUT.

273. \*Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state the measures adopted to increase the output of coal to meet the bare necessities like train service and maintenance of indigenous industries?

(b) Is it a fact that service in the mines (coal) is highly injurious to health of the miners?

(c) Is it a fact that no special amenities are offered to coal miners to attract efficient and skilled workers to the service?

(d) Is it a fact that miners and their families are housed in insufficient and insanitary surroundings?

(e) Is it a fact that no medical aid and facilities for education of children are available in the coal mining areas?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** (a) I would refer the Honourable Member to my reply to Sir F. E. James' starred question No. 82 on 10th February, which gives the principal measures which Government have adopted to increase the output of coal.

(b) No. Mining is a dangerous occupation but not necessarily injurious to health.

(c) No. Coalminers have been offered food at concession rates and Government are taking steps to increase the supply of consumer goods in the coalfields. It is proposed to increase the amenities offered to coalminers by measures taken under the new Coalmines Labour Welfare Fund Ordinance.

(d) In the Jharia and Raniganj coalfields housing consists of pucca buildings built in accordance with specifications laid down by the Jharia and Asansol Mines Boards of Health. In other coalfields the housing is arranged at the miners' discretion for the resident labour which is usually very small. Government are, however, not satisfied with the present arrangements for housing and sanitation in coalfields and schemes to improve these are being prepared under the Coalmines Labour Welfare Fund Ordinance.

(e) Medical aid and educational facilities which at present exist are not very satisfactory. Schemes to improve these facilities are being prepared under the Coalmines Labour Welfare Fund Ordinance.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** Will the Government of India make some report to the Legislature on the conditions in coal mines with regard to housing and other conditions and also the improvements made by Government, and place that report before the House?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** There is nothing to report upon, so far as I can see. We have just begun the work and if after some time this Ordinance has been in operation my Honourable friend wants to have a report I shall be quite prepared to consider the matter.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** The House is greatly interested in this matter and would like to have information about the conditions there and the improvements made. Will they, therefore, make a report to the House?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** I have answered that already.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi:** The answer is unsatisfactory.

## MEASURES FOR INCREASING COAL OUTPUT.

**274. \*Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state if it is a fact that there is dissatisfaction and discontent amongst coal miners for want of proper wages to meet the abnormal rise of prices in food-stuffs and other necessities of life?

(b) Is there any proposal to increase the output by resort to the continental or American methods of extraction?

(c) Is there any proposal to approach the Government of the United States of America to come to the aid of India by importing the necessary machinery and experts to modernise the methods of raising coal?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** (a) Working conditions in mines have not been very satisfactory. Dissatisfaction and discontent under such conditions are quite natural.

(b) and (c). Every effort is being made to obtain mining machinery from abroad whether from the United Kingdom or United States of America or elsewhere. Excavating machinery of relatively small size of American pattern is already being used in Railway collieries and the question of importing really heavy excavating machinery is under consideration. If such heavy excavating machinery is finally obtained, it may be found necessary to import also the operating staff as it might not be found possible to train Indians in time.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** With regard to part (a), have wages been increased to suit present conditions or are they getting the old wages?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** They have been increased. I refer to the answer that I gave to the question asked by Sir. F. E. James.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai:** May I know if the same wages are paid to males and females?

**The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:** Yes, that was also answered.

## FAMINE CONDITIONS IN ORISSA.

**275. \*Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member please state if it is not a fact that famine conditions still prevail in Orissa?

(b) Does he see the necessity of free kitchens in the distressed areas of the province?

(c) What are the measures proposed to be taken by the Provincial or the Central Governments to re-absorb the suffering people into rural economy?

(d) What is the number of destitute orphans found in Orissa due to the extreme poverty-stricken conditions prevailing throughout the province?

(e) How many orphanages are maintained by (i) the State, and (ii) by private and philanthropic agencies?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque:** My information is that general improvement has been maintained except in some of the coastal villages of Ganjam. I have, however, made further enquiries of the Orissa Government, whose reply is awaited, and the information will be laid on the table of the House in due course.

## MUSLIMS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SECRETARY, CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.

**†276. \*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazri:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state how many officers there are in the Department of the Secretary, Calcutta Port Trust, and how many of them are Muslims?

(b) What is the percentage of Muslims in the Secretary's Department of Calcutta Port Trust?

(c) Have any Muslim clerks or officers been engaged in the said Department during the last ten years? If so, how many?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azisul Huque:** With your permission, Sir, I will take up questions Nos. 276 to 280 together.

These questions should have been addressed to the Honourable Member for War Transport Department.

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

**MUSLIMS IN THE ESTATE DEPARTMENT OF CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.**

†277. **\*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state how many officers there are in the Estates Department of the Calcutta Port Trust, and how many of them are Muslims?

(b) What is the percentage of Muslim clerks in that Department?

(c) Have any Muslim officers or clerks been appointed in the said Department during the last ten years? If so, how many?

**MUSLIM EXECUTIVE ENGINEERS, ETC., IN THE CIVIL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT OF CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.**

†278. **\*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state how many Muslim Executive Engineers, Engineering Assistants and Overseers there are in the Civil Engineering Department of the Calcutta Port Trust?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that an overage Executive Engineer has been given four extensions? If so, is it in accordance with rules?

(c) Has this officer any recognised qualifications? If so, what?

**MUSLIM DOCTORS, ETC., EMPLOYED IN THE A. R. P. DEPARTMENT OF CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.**

†279. **\*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state when the special A.R.P. Department was created in the Calcutta Port Trust?

(b) Who is the head of this Department?

(c) How many Muslim doctors, clerks and first aiders are employed in this branch?

**PAUCITY OF MUSLIM OFFICERS, ETC., IN CALCUTTA PORT TRUST.**

†280. **\*Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state the reasons for so low a percentage of Muslim officers or clerks in these Departments of the Calcutta Port Trust?

(b) Is it or is it not a fact that in the Calcutta Port Trust only such menial posts are given to Muslims for which Hindus are not readily available? If not, what are the real facts?

**JAPAN'S PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE.**

281. **\*Mr. K. S. Gupta:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas please state whether the Government of India have taken note of the following:

"Lord Wavell knows what we shall be up against in the reconquest of occupied Asia unless we can offer the people a programme more attractive than that of the Japanese. He knows how much depends on the invading armies receiving the active co-operation of the inhabitants. He has warned that the natives of South-East Asia will oppose a return to the old colonial system"—written by H. G. Quaritch Wales in *the Nation* of New York?

(b) Is it a fact that the same writer has said "we bemoan the supposed inability of India to unite. Why continue to divide those who wish to come together"?

(c) Are the Government of India aware of Japan's offering Independence to each one of her conquered territories, Burma and the Phillippines and *the Times* has recognised that it met with a considerable success and it has to be combated?

(d) Are there any measures in contemplation to combat the success of Japan's psychological warfare?

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** The question should have been addressed to the Honourable Member for Information and Broadcasting.

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Salt:** Sir, I want to raise a point of order on this. This kind of answer referring the questioner to some other department has often been given here. It is very inconvenient for a Member to be told

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

10 or 12 days after he has put the question that it should have been addressed to some other Department. The Honourable Member who receives the question wrongly addressed to him may inform the questioner in time or inform the Assembly Department. That would save time. During the last Session a question of mine was answered on the last day by the Leader of the House in the same terms, and there was no time to put the question again. So cannot something be done to remedy this state of things?

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I do not know if Government has anything to say on this point?

**The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed** (Leader of the House): We shall see about that; there will be no difficulty.

#### WAR TIME MALPRACTICES IN COAL TRADE.

†282. **\*Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall:** (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Commerce Member been drawn to the war-time malpractice in coal trade viz., mixing of dust or water or both with coal (steam coal, soft coke, charcoal)?

(b) Is he aware of the public complaint that they get lot of dust, sometimes as much as 50 per cent. or still more, with the coal?

(c) Is he aware that one maund of charcoal can absorb about 13 seers of water?

(d) Were any enquiries at any time made as to how much of the dust is mixed by the dealer, how much of it is formed while in transit in the wagons, and how much of it is mixed by the dishonest consignor?

(e) Is he aware of the general impression that 90 per cent. of the dust is mixed by the dishonest consignor?

(f) If so, does he realise that this dust mixed coal involves a huge waste and misuse of the precious wagon space which would otherwise be available for carriage of more coal, and that such dust-mixed coal means more consumption and greater expense on the part of the consumer?

(g) Is the Honourable Member prepared to look into the matter personally to devise ways and means to put a stop to this malpractice in the coal trade which has reached a serious stage?

(h) Is he prepared, in addition to other steps, to consider the advisability of conferment of special powers upon Railways to enable them to refuse to carry unsifted coal or coal deliberately soaked in water?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** The question should have been addressed to the Honourable Member for War Transport Department.

#### EXTENSION OF MEDICAL RELIEF SERVICES IN BENGAL.

283. **\*Sir F. E. James:** Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

(a) what arrangements have been made for the strengthening and extension of medical relief services in Bengal and the supply of drugs;

(b) if there is a serious shortage of medical officers for emergency relief work in Bengal, excluding Calcutta;

(c) the total number of registered medical practitioners in Bengal; and

(d) of these how many:

(i) are serving in the Indian Medical Corps and the medical and public health departments of the Government of Bengal;

(ii) have offered themselves for emergency service as a result of the Bengal Government's recent appeal; and

(iii) have been appointed?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** (a) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

(b) It is a fact that the number of doctors who have come forward for emergency medical relief outside Calcutta is not sufficient to meet requirements.

(c) 11,784.

(d) (i) 885 doctors are employed in the Medical and Public Health Departments of the Government of Bengal in a permanent capacity. This figure

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

does not include those in the service of local authorities. The number of medical practitioners recruited in Bengal for military service is 1,075.

(ii) and (iii). According to the latest figures available 160 doctors have been appointed for emergency medical relief work and the applications of 17 more are under consideration. As far as is known no applications for service in the *mofussil* have been rejected.

*Statement of the arrangements made for the strengthening and extension of the medical relief services in Bengal and the supply of drugs.*

I. Emergency medical relief provided by the military authorities.

(1) 16 hospitals (varying from 100 to 300 beds) have been opened at various centres in seven districts.

(2) 48 mobile treatment centres have been organised to carry medical relief to the villages.

(3) 13 motor ambulances have been provided for work in connection with military hospitals.

II. Emergency medical relief provided by the Bengal Government.

(1) 1,100 emergency beds have been provided in the Calcutta area.

(2) The following emergency hospitals have been opened in the *mofussil* :

100 bedded	...	...	...	...	...	...	43
60 bedded	...	...	...	...	...	...	65
20 bedded	...	...	...	...	...	...	369

(3) 1,400 treatment centres have been, or are being, opened in connection with existing dispensaries the centres being attended by the dispensary doctor every alternate day.

(4) 250 civil mobile medical units have been sanctioned. A few of these are staffed by doctors and the remainder by senior medical students.

III. The Bengal Government obtain through local agencies the drugs (other than anti-malaria drugs) required for emergency hospitals, with the exception of certain special products. e.g., halibut liver oil, shark liver oil, vitamin B tablets and sulphaguanidine which have been obtained on their behalf by the Central Government. The following anti-malaria drugs have been allotted to Bengal by the Central Government in 1943-44 :

Quinine	...	...	...	...	...	89,000 lbs.
Cinchonin febrifuge	...	...	...	...	...	24,000 lbs.
Atabrine	...	...	...	...	...	7 million tablets.

Drugs supplies have been distributed to the *mofussil* by the army transport organisation.

**Sir F. E. James:** May I know how many medical practitioners in Bengal are actually in service under local bodies?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** I think I can give an approximate figure; about 180 graduates and about 1,200 licentiates.

**Sir F. E. James:** Will my Honourable friend be able to state what are the terms offered for this emergency service and whether these terms compare favourably with the terms for military and other service?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** The terms offered for Emergency Hospital service in the *mofussil* are:

For Graduates—pay Rs. 140, Hospital allowance Rs. 60, Total Rs. 200.

For Licentiates—pay Rs. 100, Hospital allowance Rs. 25, Total Rs. 125.

And for both categories there is a dearness allowance of Rs. 14 and a charge allowance, for those who are in charge of Hospitals, of Rs. 25. So the total is Rs. 239 for a Graduate if he is in charge of a Hospital, and Rs. 164 for a Licentiate if he is in charge of a Hospital.

I think the Honourable Member also asked me how that compared with what is being offered by the War Department. In the Indian Army Medical Corps, Graduates start at Rs. 450 and Licentiates start at Rs. 400, and for Civilian Medical Officers (there is a category called Civil Medical Officers who serve the military forces in a civilian capacity) if they undertake service in any part of their own military district they start at Rs. 350, and if they undertake to serve only in their own town they start at Rs. 250.

**Mr. Hoeseinbhoy A. Lalljee:** Will these appointments be temporary?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** Yes, Sir.

**Mr. Hoeseinbhoy A. Lalljee:** Will they be working in the contagious districts?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** Yes, Sir. They work in any district in Bengal in which the Bengal Government consider that emergency medical relief is necessary.

**Sir F. E. James:** What is the term of service offered?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question. .

### POST-WAR FINANCIAL HELP TO INDIAN SHIPPING.

**284. \*Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom introduced in 1939 the British Shipping (Assistance) Bill in the House of Commons, under which large financial help was proposed to be given to ships on the United Kingdom Register?

(b) Is it also a fact that progress of this legislation was interrupted by the outbreak of war, but that His Majesty's Government have given an assurance to British shipping that His Majesty's Government will do all they can to help, and will consider the advisability of giving financial assistance to British shipping, if necessary, after the war, for maintaining the British Mercantile Marine "in adequate strength and in a position of full competitive efficiency"?

(c) If the answer to (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, is it the policy of the Government of India to do all they can to ensure the position and development of Indian shipping "in adequate strength and in a position of full competitive efficiency" after the war, and is it the policy of the Government of India to give financial assistance, if necessary, to Indian shipping for that purpose?

(d) Have the Government of India received any instructions either from His Majesty's Government, or the Secretary of State for India, that the Government of India should not give any assurance to Indian shipping that they would help that shipping by financial assistance after the war?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta's question No. 239 on the 3rd March, 1941.

(d) No.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Has there been any communication between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India on this subject?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** I am not prepared to answer that question without notice.

### COMMANDEERING OF SHIPS ON THE INDIAN REGISTER.

**285. \*Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ships on the Indian Register were commandeered for the purpose of local naval defence from the 3rd September, 1939, onwards;

(b) whether it is a fact that ships on the Indian Register were requisitioned for the carriage of men, materials and munitions from July, 1940, onwards;

(c) if the answers to (a) and (b) be in the affirmative, whether the terms of hire and compensation, etc., for the above ships have been settled; and, if not, why not; and

(d) if these terms of hire and compensation are not settled even now, when it is expected that these terms will be duly settled, and what has caused a delay of nearly four years in their settlement?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** (a) and (b). The position as stated is substantially correct.

(c) The terms of hire and compensation have not yet been settled but advances on account of hire of requisitioned ships and compensation for lost tonnage are, from time to time, being paid to the Shipping Companies in accordance with the rates prescribed by His Majesty's Government for similar ships on the British Register and the advice received from the Ministry of War Transport in London. On account of the peculiar position of the Indian Shipping Companies, Government propose to grant them more liberal terms than are admissible to the ships on the British Register, and the delay in settling the terms of hire, etc., is due to the necessity of determining in consultation with the shipping interests, the extent to which and the manner in which the proposed concessions should be granted.

(d) It is hoped that with the appointment of an Officer on Special Duty, the terms of hire, etc., will be settled in the near future. As regards the latter part of the question, attention is invited to the reply to part (c).

**Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** In his answer to part (c) of the question, the Honourable Member has referred to more liberal terms proposed to be granted to ships on the Indian Register. May I ask the Honourable Member whether that more liberality can be equated in terms of percentage to the relief that is being given now?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** It is not possible. I think if my Honourable friend gives notice, I will try to calculate in mathematical terms.

#### COMPLAINTS RE. THE QUALITY OF FOODGRAINS SUPPLIED TO BENGAL.

**286. \*Mr. K. O. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to refer to his replies to supplementary questions in connection with part (b) of starred question No. 11 of the 7th February last regarding complaints about the quality of foodgrains received by him during his visit to Dacca, and state whether he has received a telegram, dated Dacca, the 12th February, 1944, on the joint signatures of the Secretary of the Dacca People's Association, President of the Dacca District Congress Committee and Secretary of the Dacca Bar Association to the following effect:

"Your answer to Neogy regarding Dacca rice incorrect. Four samples of rice including one red rice others rotten cakes unfit for fodder shown you and taken by Justice Braund. You promised trace source and stop such supply. Regret such rice still coming."

(b) If the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, does the telegram above-quoted represent a correct state of things?

(c) What action has been taken either by him or by Justice Braund for the purpose of tracing the source of the supply of such rotten rice, and to stop similar supplies in future?

(d) Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to any other complaints regarding the quality of foodgrains supplied to Bengal? If so, to what effect, and what enquiries have been made into these complaints, and with what results?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** (a) Yes.

(b) I have nothing to add to what my colleague, the Honourable the Food Member, has already stated in this House.

(c) and (d). Inspection of foodstuffs at the point of despatch was the responsibility of the Bengal Government itself. As complaints were not made to the Government of India at the time the supply was received, it is not possible now to trace the source of supply. For the future the following measures have been taken:

(i) Supplying Provincial Governments have been asked to mark bags in a particular way so that the source of supply can be easily traced.

(ii) They have been asked to ensure, as far as possible, that grain of only fair average quality is despatched.

(iii) The Bengal Government have been asked to examine the rice immediately on arrival so that any complaints regarding quality might be taken up forthwith.

(iv) The possibility of arranging inspection at destination instead of at the point of despatch is also under examination in consultation with the supplying Governments.

**Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Do I take it that the answer to part (a) of the question is that the statement made in the telegram quoted by me is incorrect?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** That is a question of inference.

**Mr. Hooseinbhooy A. Lalljee:** May I ask whether these rules will apply to other provinces who will be importing as well?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** I want notice of that question.

**Mr. K. O. Neogy:** In part (d) of my question I wanted to know whether any other complaints regarding the quality of foodgrains had been received. I do not think I have got an answer to that part of my question.

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** Not that I know of. But if my Honourable friend gives me notice of that, I shall try to find it out.



## UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

### NEWSPRINT, ETC., IMPORTED FROM ABROAD AND MANUFACTURED IN INDIA.

**87. Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Does the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies propose to lay on the table a statement showing, separately, for the years 1939-40, 1940-41, 1941-42, and April, 1943 to December, 1943:

(a) the quantity of newsprint imported from abroad and manufactured in India, separately; and

(b) the quantity of printing and writing paper imported from abroad and manufactured in India, separately; indicating how much of these quantities have been allotted:

(i) to Government for purposes of official propaganda, against the Congress or otherwise;

(ii) to the British, American and Chinese armed forces, separately, for war purposes;

(iii) for use in connection with the National War Front propaganda;

(iv) to foreign firms of publishers operating in India, for the printing of books and periodicals, separately;

(v) to Indian publishers; and

(vi) to Indian newspapers and periodicals, separately?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** A statement showing the imports and manufacture in India of newsprint and of other printing and writing paper is laid on the table.

With regard to allotments for different purposes:

(i) to (iii). The information desired under these heads is not readily available and in any case it would not be in the public interest to disclose.

(iv) to (vi). Paper other than newsprint is not rationed by the Central Government. Consumption and purchase of newsprint was not rationed till April 1943. Since then negligible quantities have been allotted to publishers. To newspapers and periodicals, about 7,800 tons were allotted during the period April to December 1943. Separate figures of allotment to newspapers and to periodicals have not been maintained.

### *Statement.*

	NEWSPRINT.				OTHER PRINTING AND WRITING PAPER.			
	1939-40 Tons.	1940-41 Tons.	1941-42 Tons.	April-Decr. 1943. Tons.	1939-40 Tons.	1940-41 Tons.	1941-42 Tons.	April-Decr. 1943. Tons.
Quantity imported from abroad		36,714	30,731	28,304	8,244	16,725	8,538	4,640
Quantity manufactured in India		Nil	Nil	Nil	59,574	65,598	63,623	48,465

### BICYCLES IMPORTED INTO INDIA.

**88. Mr. K. C. Neogy:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) the number of bicycles that have been imported into the country since June, 1943;

(b) the f.o.b. cost of bicycles in England, and at what price they are actually sold in England; and

(c) whether the Government of India have examined if any element of dumping is involved in this importation of bicycles into India, and whether Government have considered the question of protecting the local bicycle manufacturing industry against any form of unfair competition?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque:** (a) I regret that it would not be in the public interest to give recent figures of imports into this country.

(b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the table as soon as it is available.

(c) The matter is under investigation.

## MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT.

### EXTENSION FOR FINAL DISPOSAL OF CLOTH AND YARN TEX-MARKED AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have received notice of an adjournment motion from Mr. Essak Sait. This was actually received day before yesterday, but another motion was taken up on that day. Yesterday was presentation of the budget day and it could not be taken up again. The Honourable Member has given notice of his intention to move that the business of the Assembly be adjourned to discuss a matter of urgent public importance of recent occurrence, namely, the Order of the Textile Commissioner (published in the *Times of India* dated the 26th February) granting extension till 30th June, 1944, for the final disposal of cloth and yarn tex-marked August or September.

Is there any objection to that?

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque** (Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies): Sir I have objection to it on the ground that it is not a matter of urgent public importance. My reasons are these: The holding of these August and September tex-marks under the Regulations and Ordinances and Rules will be illegal after the 1st of March so far as August production is concerned and 1st of April so far as September production is concerned. In other words, any production of August, if it is held over after the 1st of March will be illegal, and Government will have to see what machinery will have to be devised for the release of the quantity which has not been sold within that period. In the meantime, as it is well known, there were immense transport difficulties with the result that August deliveries could not be received by the people, who wanted them, long after August was over and it was not fair by any means that when deliveries could not be immediately arranged—in some cases for two or three months—that they should be penalised under the normal provision. Therefore, it was owing to the transport difficulties and owing to the fact that cloth was not received by the people at the proper time but was received long after, that Government, in exercise of the powers they had, considered the position and decided that time should be given. There is nothing of urgent public importance in this, nor is there anything affecting the public for the simple reason that since August production the price of tex-marked cloth has been gradually reduced, with the result that any time extended to the people to sell it would be to sell it at a price fixed in August, but after which the price has been reduced so far as the other production has been concerned. Under the circumstances it is not a matter of urgent public importance to obstruct the meeting of the House.

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait** (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): My friend was arguing on merits. But what he has said as to the merits of the question

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): He says it is not urgent.

**The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque**: I do not see where is the urgency for the reason that we have extended the time, but at any time all subsequent production will have to be sold at a lower price. How is the public prejudiced?

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait**: This affects all the consumers of cloth in this country.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What about the transport difficulties?

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait**: That is a matter which will have to be discussed when the motion is taken up.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): On the facts given by the Honourable the Commerce Member, I do not think it can be said to be a matter of such urgency as to justify adjourning the business of the Assembly. I, therefore, rule that the adjournment motion is not in order.

### TAKING OVER OF PORTIONS OF THE BENGAL AND ASSAM RAILWAY BY THE UNITED STATES' ARMY RAILWAY UNITS.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is another adjournment motion, also in the name of Mr. Essak Sait. He wishes to discuss a

[Mr. President.]

matter of urgent public importance of recent occurrence, namely, the taking over by the United States Army Railway Units of certain portions of the Bengal and Assam Railway reported in today's *Dawn*.

Has the Honourable the War Transport Member any objection to this motion?

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall** (Member for Railways and War Transport): Sir, a question was asked on the floor of the House on the 24th on this subject and I answered the question fully and answered supplementary questions. I understand, Sir, that it is the established custom of the House that such questions should be raised at the earliest possible opportunity. There have been opportunities for raising it on the 25th and 26th and 28th, and nothing has happened in between to make it necessary for the subject to be discussed.

**Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait** (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): May I know whether the answers referred to this particular portion . . .

**The Honourable Sir Edward Benthall**: Precisely.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Having regard to the facts stated by the Honourable the War Transport Member, I rule that this motion is not urgent within the meaning of the Rules.

#### STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

**The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed** (Leader of the House): Sir, we have received requests for the allotment of an additional day for the general discussion of the General Budget and of an additional day for the voting of Demands for Grants. Under existing arrangements, Monday next the 6th March, has been allotted for the general discussion and Tuesday, the 7th March, is an ordinary Official day. If there is to be a second day for the general discussion it should clearly be on Tuesday.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the 8th, 9th and 10th March, are holidays. Saturday, the 11th March, is not a holiday, but no meeting has been fixed for that day. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, the 13th, 14th and 15th March, have been allotted for the voting of Demands. We cannot afford to defer the commencement of the discussion of the motion to consider the Finance Bill beyond Thursday, the 16th March. If, therefore, an additional day is to be allotted for the voting of Demands, it would have to be Saturday, the 11th March.

The allotment of Tuesday, the 7th March, as an additional day for the general discussion and of Saturday, the 11th March, as an additional day for the voting of Demands would involve one difficulty. The Honourable the Finance Member proposes to move for the reference of the Bill further to amend the Indian Income-tax Act to a Select Committee with instructions to report in time to admit of the passing of the Bill before the termination of the Session. We had proposed to put this motion down for Tuesday, the 7th March, and if that day is allotted for the general discussion of the General Budget the only sufficiently early day available for the motion to refer the Income-tax Bill to a Select Committee will be Friday in this week. As copies of the Bill did not become available to Members till a late hour yesterday it would be open to any Honourable Member under the proviso to sub-order (1) of Standing Order 38 to take objection to the moving of the motion for reference to a Select Committee on Friday, when copies of the Bill will have been available for some hours short of the three days referred to in the proviso. While, therefore, we are prepared to move His Excellency the Governor General to make an additional allotment of Tuesday, the 7th March, for the general discussion and of Saturday, the 11th March, for the voting of Demands, we must make this arrangement subject to an understanding that objection will not be taken to the moving on Friday of the motion for reference of the Income-tax Bill to a Select Committee.

**Mr. Abdul Qaiyum** (North-West Frontier Province: General): As far as we are concerned, we will not object to the Income-tax Bill being taken up on Friday this week, but we make a suggestion to the Honourable the Leader

of the House that if we are to sit on the 11th, would it not be much better if some other official business is taken up on the 11th and the voting on the demands for grants from the 13th onwards. That would put off the Finance Bill for one day, which I hope is not an insurmountable difficulty, some of our Members are going away in view of these holidays. This is a suggestion, and if it is accepted, we would be grateful.

**Sir Henry Richardson** (Nominated Non-Official): We have no objection to the suggestion made provided the Finance Member will give me an assurance that he won't call the Select Committee the next day, that is to say, we must have time before he calls the Select Committee in which to consult our constituents on this very important Bill.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): As far as we are concerned, we are quite agreeable to taking up the Bill on Friday and we will not have any objection to that. I support the suggestion that has been made by my Honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Qaiyum, that if the Government can possibly arrange their business in such a way that the demands be discussed on the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th, instead of from the 11th, I think it would suit the convenience of the Members better, because we had no idea that the House was going to sit on the 11th and a number of Members on account of the holidays that are to be in that week have made arrangements to go away from Delhi and transact certain business, and as this is a very long Session I think the Members do deserve little consideration on the part of the Government. I hope putting off the consideration of the Finance Bill by one day will not inconvenience the Government to such an extent that they cannot accept the suggestion which has been made.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): I agree with my Honourable friend, Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan, that the Saturday meeting should be dispensed with and that we should sit later for the discussion of the details of the Budget. As regards the question of referring the Income-Tax Bill to a Select Committee, I do not object to that procedure but I agree with my Honourable friend, the Leader of the European Group, that adequate time should be given for meetings of this Select Committee.

**Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee** (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): I agree with the remarks that have fallen from my Honourable friend, Sir Henry Richardson, for the Select Committee and so far as the Select Committee on Friday is concerned, I should like that it should be a little later. We will not take any objection which is feared by the Honourable the Leader of the House. As regards Saturday, I make the same appeal as my friend on the opposite side.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman** (Finance Member): We on this side are very anxious to meet Honourable Members and consider their convenience provided that they will also extend to us a similar consideration in enabling us to get through this important business within the time within which it should be disposed of.

**Dr. P. N. Banerjee:** Before the 31st March?

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman:** It has to be through the Council of State before the 31st March. That must be borne in mind. I can endeavour to meet Honourable Members in this way: the motion for reference to Select Committee can take place on Friday this week, to which I understand all Leaders agree. The actual meeting of the Select Committee is the difficulty. If Saturday, the 11th, is not utilised for an ordinary sitting of the House, then I would ask that the business of the Select Committee be put on that day, and that it be disposed of on that day. That will give them a full week between the motion for Select Committee and the actual meeting of the Select Committee; and it will enable us to utilise Saturday for the purpose of the Select Committee. It means, of course, that the Members who are nominated to the Select Committee must be prepared to work on that Saturday but their friends will be able to go and enjoy the holiday which the Leaders want . . . . .

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** Not to enjoy, but to transact business.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What will be the final result?

**The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed**: We will move the Governor General accordingly.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): And make an announcement afterwards? I think, in a matter like this, there ought to be arrangement beforehand between Leaders of Parties and the Leader of the House, so that the time of the House may be saved.

### 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 29th February, 1944, agreed without any amendment to the following Bills, which were passed by the Legislative Assembly at its meeting held on the 23rd February, 1944, namely:

1. A Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Safety (Stowing) Act, 1939;
2. A Bill further to amend the Indian Companies Act, 1913;
3. A Bill further to amend the Indian Aircraft Act, 1934;
4. A Bill further to amend the Transfer of Property Act, 1882; and
5. A Bill further to amend the Insurance Act, 1938."

### RESOLUTION RE FLOATATION OF LOAN FOR SUBSIDISING THE AGRICULTURISTS.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as an anti-inflationary measure, a loan of ten crores of rupees, earmarked for purposes of subsidising agriculturists to grow more food and increase milk products be now floated."

I will, to begin with, refer to the serious situation created in this country by the food shortage and then comment upon the several measures suggested by certain persons and corporations as well as the measures adopted up till now by the Government and proposed in the Honourable the Finance Member's speech yesterday. This country was, it is well known, deficit even in normal times. It is well known that the masses lived on one meal a day, and were very often on the verge of starvation. This was the condition in normal times. Now, we have here an army—one has got no idea exactly as to what the army is; of course, one knows that the Americans are here, the Canadians are here, the Britishers are here, the coloured races are here; but when in normal times the country was not in a position to supply food and meet the needs of the people, it is no wonder that in these days the country is terribly short of food. We have seen manifestations of this food shortage in the evil consequences that followed in Bengal; the mortality is well known and the serious consequences which followed in Bengal on account of starvation and the consequences of starvation such as illnesses and other maladies. The remedies proposed are different. One may have come across the plan suggested for the economic development of India by Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Mr. Birla and others; but I do not wish to consider that plan now, though that plan is a very ambitious plan, because it does not meet the immediate needs of the country. It is a long-range plan and depends on this, that there must be a national government which can borrow hundreds of crores for the rehabilitation of agriculture and put the agriculturist on a proper basis so that his standard of living will be raised and should not be so low as it is today.

Then there is another suggestion which is certainly worth considering, and I should like the Honourable the Finance Member to consider it because he is, I suppose, interested in seeing that food is grown as much as possibly can be grown and as quickly as it can be grown. I refer to certain suggestions made for making funds available without any taxation to the people for increasing the food. That suggestion is contained in a memorandum by Sir Nanavatty, President of the Agricultural Economic Conference, on allocation of the Reserve Bank's profits to agricultural reconstruction. This was handed over to me by

my friend, Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari, only two or three days ago. The suggestion is really very good. It says in para. 5 :

"The problem of finding funds for agricultural development is one of the most stupendous which the country shall have to face in the post-war period. New sources of taxation will have to be found. Reconstruction loans will have to be floated. Rural finance agencies will have to be strengthened and systematised.....we shall also have to consider the possibilities of devoting at least a part of the newly accumulated sterling resources for the provision of the equipment necessary for modernising agriculture.....Funds must be found for all these, and it would obviously be desirable if they could be found outside the annual budget, so that they are available without interference as is the case with the many research bodies mentioned above."

Again in para. 6 it says :

"In this connection, we suggest that half the profits of the Reserve Bank of India should be set apart for financing the setting up of an organisation for the development of rural life, preferably under the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, whose functions should be expanded to make plans, promote research and sanction grants for agricultural reconstruction. The Reserve Bank, it is admitted by all, is a Public Utility, and it is not worked for the profit of the shareholders . . . . .

Under the present arrangement, whatever surplus there remains after the allocation to dividends goes to the Central Government, and this contribution is then amalgamated with the general revenues of the country. It is easy to see that if half the profits of the Reserve Bank are constituted into a special fund for creating the necessary organisation at the Centre for the development of agriculture, it would have little adverse effect on general resources which are amply met, while it would be an excellent source of funds so badly needed for the initial very necessary organization."

I hope, Sir, that the Honourable the Finance Member will take this matter into consideration, particularly as I wish to show later on that his help to agriculture to grow more food has been very meagre, and really it is not such, of which one could very well be proud. All that we have done is this. We proceed on the assumption—by we I mean the Government—proceed on the assumption that the country has produced sufficient food but what has happened is this, because prices have gone up and the growers or the traders have started hoarding, therefore food is not available. I submit that that is a very wrong assumption to make that there has been such a colossal hoarding that it has resulted in food shortage which brought about those consequences which happened in Bengal, or as has been admitted on the floor of the House to-day, are likely to happen in Orissa, because the reply to questions on the floor of the House to-day was that famine conditions prevail in Orissa. So, it is not only in Bengal but in Orissa, Travancore and other parts of the country where the food famine is likely to raise its head. So, other measures have got to be found. Those countries which did not grow any food or which grew not as much food before the war as they are growing now—what did they do? They did not start merely with price control and anti-hoarding measures. They started with the idea of growing more food. We have also started a propaganda as well and have adopted certain measures to grow more food. About two years ago a subsidy of Rs. 2 per acre was given to those who would bring land, on which short staple was growing, under cultivation for food crops. I hope the Honourable the Finance Member will be able to tell me what the total amount was. May I know what the amount was—what amount spent was given as subsidy by this Government to short staple cotton growers if they were to bring that land, which was under short staple, under food crops? I remember Rs. 2 per acre was suggested, but how much was given I do not know.

**Mr. J. D. Tyson** (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): I think I can tell the Honourable Member a little later. It was a C. P. scheme.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** Then, after that we saw very little of any subsidy of bringing more land under cultivation. There is no stimulus to people to bring the land under food crops. Then, for some time we find—I heard yesterday, the Government of India coming forward and referring to certain measures which they have adopted, namely, the passage will be found at page 8 of the

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Budget Speech—I am referring to certain amounts spent on sales of seeds, manures at concession rates and irrigation. The passage reads thus:

"In co-operation with the provinces and States the Government of India have intensified their efforts in the prosecution of the war to grow more food campaign, and they have assisted schemes either by loan or grant to an extent of well over Rs. 2 crores. Such schemes include distribution at concessional rates (not granted free) of improved seeds and manures, irrigation projects promising quick returns and provision of additional agricultural staff."

I have tried to look up if any details were given about these in the Explanatory Memorandum of the Budget, and I find that there are no details given of the amount that is intended to be spent on this. Page 8, paragraph 25 I have read. Then Explanatory Memorandum page 8, item No. 47, Demands for Grants. There are no details—I have looked up the whole thing, Demand No. 47, Agriculture in Demand Grants for this Budget. In the absence of any information as regards how much amount has been specified for any particular purpose or if the whole amount goes into the pockets of some officers appointed or establishments, I am not in a position to say to what extent Government has helped agriculture. I hope some details would be given in the course of the reply to-day. These are not the only things that matter. You cannot grow more food by bringing more land under cultivation or helping people with such meagre assistance.

What is really necessary besides these is labour. Constructions of aerodromes and other military works round about these villages—these have created shortage of labour. Some measures should be adopted which have not been so far adopted in this country to set matters right, though I know a reference has been made that an organisation will be set up to shift labour from one place where there is a surplus, to another place where it is wanted so that there may not be any unfair competition between those persons or those bodies which wish to engage labour. But in other countries measures have been taken to see that farm labour does not go to this work which is meant for army purposes. In some of the colonies measures have been adopted to see that labour is registered and they are given good wages so that wages given at other places may not be an inducement for the farm labour which works on the farms, to leave the farms and go to urban areas.

Besides labour you also need bullocks. In India at least you cannot do without bullock power. No measures have been taken to stop the slaughter of bullocks. I have in the last Session and this Session urged upon Government to stop the slaughter of cows and bullocks. I do not know whether it has come to the notice of the Secretary of the Department of Education, Health and Lands that in the Bengal Legislative Assembly it was admitted by the Government that there was a shortage of plough cattle. Though it may not be the business of my Honourable friend, when he is doing the work, to take notice of what appears in the papers as he said the other day, I wish to bring this matter pointedly to his notice that the shortage of plough cattle has been recognised not only in Bengal but there is the same shortage everywhere. Another point which I wish to refer to is the slaughter of cows as well. I have referred to increasing of milk products in my Resolution, and as I am dealing with all the animals, I wish to refer to the slaughter of cows also. There has been no All-India legislation, as I had suggested, to stop the slaughter of cows which are prime and serviceable in the sense that they can yield milk.

All these factors are necessary—land, capital, labour, bullocks—for cultivation; and Government must subsidise some of these items to see that the agriculturist gets sufficient help to increase the quantity of food. I wish to suggest that in other countries which I shall mention, measures have been taken of the character which I am suggesting. Let us see what happened in England. If my friend will refer to the Home Front Hand Book for England he will see this:

"Substantial financial aids to convert grass land into arable land have been given, such as a grant of £2 per acre (We have given Rs. 2 an acre) for grass land ploughed up; a subsidy of £3 an acre if wheat or rye were sown a payment of £20 per acre for land previously devoted to flower-growing if converted to food crops; assistance up to 50 per cent.

of the expenditure required for draining and ditching; and a subsidy, also of 50 per cent. on cost of agricultural land."

How does your help compare with this? Look at what has been done in Australia. It has an area of 2,974,581 square miles and a population of 7 millions. That country has spent 2 million pounds for the dairy industry alone. This is a subsidy. Then take Canada. It has also subsidised hogs, there is a subvention for fertilizers and encouragement of sheep raising. Take Ulster. It has subsidised to the extent of £136,000 and what is the population and the area. Ulster is 1,979,728 acres and the population is 280,269. It is a small country—strictly a part of a country—Ireland—with a small population and yet a substantial amount has been spent on subsidy. Here in this country, India, with a big population and a big cultural area, you are spending such a meagre amount as Rs. 2 per acre to bring more land under cultivation, for subsidising the sale of seeds and sundry other things. Take Ontario. It spent 664,045 dollars. It is a small country. Then take New Zealand. It spent £65,060. Nova Scotia has also subsidised. Small countries with small populations are spending huge sums and here in this country, with a big population, we are spending a very meagre amount. Why cannot we have a subsidy here? I have shown that the system of subsidy is followed in every other country. It should be no argument that the subsidy will go into the hands of the growers and it will increase inflation. As a matter of fact, up till now, no country has ever taken the view that this subsidy is likely to increase inflation. I wish now to refer to a bigger authority and a piece of legislation. There was an Anti-Subsidy Bill in America and the attack was that it was an inflation measure. It was not passed and the President exercised his veto. The extract I wish to read is this :

"The House of Representatives has sustained President Roosevelt's veto on the Anti-Subsidy Bill. The vote upholding President Roosevelt's decision was 226 to 151. In his message to Congress vetoing the Bill, President Roosevelt said that it was 'an inflation measure, a high cost of living measure and a foodshortage measure' which has his 'most emphatic and vigorous disapproval'."

The message stated :

"By its restrictive provisions the Bill would compel an increase in the cost of food to the people of the U. S. A. . . . I urgently recommended Congress to take action as soon as possible to extend without hampering and restriction, the life of the Commodity Credit Corporation. Farmers could thereby make plans for planting crops and know the prices on which they can rely. ' President Roosevelt added that he estimated the Bill would increase food prices by not less than seven per cent.

"We cannot hold the wage line if Congress deprives us of the means necessary to hold down the cost of living line' the President's message concluded. 'The weight of the increased burden will fall mostly on unorganised workers and others with a fixed income, among whom are most of the dependents of our fighting men. The Bill would destroy the stabilisation programme. I cannot accept the responsibility for its disastrous consequences'."

So, this Anti-Subsidy Bill was vetoed. There is a volume of opinion in favour of subsidy, and not only opinion but action has been taken. Several countries have adopted this policy of subsidising the agriculturist to grow more food and here Government thinks that it is doing a lot for the agriculturist when it is doing almost nothing. I have said that the subsidy does not in any way increase inflation. I have shown that. Other countries do it. As my Honourable friend is floating loans, I suggest that method. He must have some money. I do not want that the money should be raised by taxation because we have reached the taxable limit. Now, it is very easy for him to float a loan. He was very fortunate in securing loans and the loans have been subscribed within a fortnight or a month. It should not be very difficult for him to have a loan. He may be floating loans again and I want that he should again float a loan and that money should be earmarked for the purpose of subsidising the agriculturist to grow more food and milk products. I need not mention that it is not only the foodgrain that is necessary for the people but the milk products are very necessary to maintain the people in a fit condition. In a country which is populated mainly by vegetarians, it is an essential thing. (*An Honourable Member*: "Question"). Anyhow, if it is not mainly vegetarian, milk and milk



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products form an important element in their food. It is a main item of diet. Even ment is cooked in *ghee* according to the old method and *ghee* is a vital necessity. Milk or butter is a vital necessity and money should be given liberally for increasing both the products—the foodgrains as well as the milk products. Sir, I move.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as an anti-inflationary measure, a loan of ten crores of rupees, earmarked for purposes of subsidising agriculturists to grow more food and increase milk products be now floated."

**Mr. C. P. Lawson** (Bengal: European): Mr. President, Sir, we on this side are grateful to Mr. Deshmukh for moving this Resolution because we felt that

12 Noon. it would raise a very interesting discussion. It is something of a disappointment to us that there has not been a greater attendance to listen to what he has to put forward. The object of the Resolution, as put down, is presumably, first of all, anti-inflationary in that he wishes to raise a loan as an anti-inflationary measure. From what we heard from the Finance Member yesterday we can, I think, presume that he is not letting any grass grow under his feet in the matter of the raising of loans. If that is accepted, then the promoting of an additional loan hardly really affects the position very much. The question boils down, in fact, to the amount of money that from his resources he is prepared to spend on the betterment of agriculture in the country. We had some slight indication of what that amount was, when Sir Jogendra Singh spoke last August in another place, indicating a grant of Rs. 50 lakhs to produce foodgrains and also indicating Rs. 99 lakhs of loans to Provinces. He referred also to the "grow more food" campaign and the expenditure on that. Today also on the Radio we have news that rice production is showing an increase of 20 per cent. on the previous year, which, of course, is an incredibly large increase after one year. But I do agree with the Mover of the Resolution that another statement is due and we should be very interested to hear what has happened in the *interim*.

The question that I would like to ask the Education, Health and Lands Department is: Are financial resources limiting the extent to which the present situation can be bettered? Mr. Deshmukh in moving this Resolution, I think, made it clear that his intention was more for the helping of the present than for the future, although he did refer to certain projects which would be of more permanent benefit. Now, if the intention is to deal with the immediate present, it is clear to me that such expenditure as is carried out must be directed towards specific objects. Just to apply 10 crores of rupees to the whole of the agricultural field would lead us nowhere. It would amount merely to four or five annas per head of the population or about Rs. 150 for every village. So, presumably Mr. Deshmukh wishes that whatever expenditure may be made should be made in certain specific directions, and there I would agree with him. The subsidising of agriculture is normally necessary when production is unprofitable and the only other reason would presumably be to increase or to bolster up immediate production. So, clearly you must spend your money in the way that will produce that result, otherwise, of course, the increase in the crop yields, which are clearly visible, and the enormous increase in the values of these crops must be producing profits which would beggar the 10 crores which Mr. Deshmukh is asking for. We, therefore, hope that this Resolution will draw from Government a statement as to the help that is being given to provinces for food production and the direction that that help is taking.

Now, if the Mover has in his mind some more permanent benefit, I suggest that it is necessary to outline your plan before you start providing the finance for that plan. We certainly do not want to subsidise agriculture, so that the subsidies go into production and then disappear into thin air. We have just seen a situation in which taking two main crops, wheat and rice,—something like 87 million tons are consumed in this country every year—and in the past year

those 37 million tons have been yielding Rs. 200 or Rs. 800 more per ton than they yielded normally. That would be a moderate estimate. That profit must have gone somewhere. There appears to be some doubt as to where it has gone. I am told from one side that the labourer has not profited and from another side that the landlord has not been able to increase his rents. It would be interesting, in fact, to know where all that enormous amount of money has gone. Clearly, it has gone somewhere and certainly we would not want this 10 crores to go the same way. Anything that is provided for the permanent benefit of agriculture must, to my mind, be productive. The whole of my intention would be somehow or other to start the ball rolling and keep it rolling. So, if any money is to be spent, I want it to be productive of more money and I want that money to be spent again on agriculture. If you produce a certain sum like 10 crores and devote it to agriculture like this, it is rather like polishing the surface of the ball without setting the ball rolling. We want to set the ball rolling and to keep it rolling. And when thinking of that, I cannot help thinking also of items like cotton, tea, coffee and even coconuts, which are receiving special attention. And if we are planning for permanency, I am inclined to apply the same principle to other agricultural products. I know that the idea of putting anything on to food prices is immediately repellent. The whole idea, for instance, of collecting a cess from any agricultural product, if it is a food product, is looked down upon even though by that deed the ball may be set rolling and things may turn out to be so much better. We have had, whether we like it or not, to face during the past two years increases in food prices that went from 200 to 400 per cent. over pre-war levels. But the mere suggestion of even one per cent. taxation increase seems to frighten us all; and I would point out that market fluctuations in fact are very frequently higher than that. I have no doubt that in the course of time we shall be hearing from the Government Benches regarding reconstruction plans and I hope that even this debate may produce information regarding what has been done even in the last six months.

But the principal point that I should like to make is that there is no use sinking money in a project until organisation is ready to meet it. You can with ten crores of rupees get improved seed; you might be able to increase irrigation facilities; you might buy fertilisers; but at least let it be known what you are going to do with the money before you raise the money. And it is in this that I find my Honourable friend's speech rather unsatisfying. He has not said what he is going to do with the money if he gets it; and that I consider to be essential. I am more than frightened of pushing money out into the fields and seeing it disappear, like all this enormous profit on millions of tons of food has disappeared in the past two years. Once we can get tabs on that profit and tap it I think we can start this movement and make it grow. But the one thing I would impress upon the Government Benches is this, that the time to do this is *now*. I think myself that we have passed the peak of agricultural prices, and I think they are going to go down; I do not think we are ever going to see again the prices which we saw last year. But while these prices remain high there is a chance to use this enormous amount of money for the betterment of agriculture. When prices go down it will not be nearly as easy. So, quite apart from the *bania*, it is from that seed that they can grow. It is very difficult to get money on agriculture, I maintain that permanent results could also be obtained if Government got busy now and got their plans into operation even before the post-war period. I realise of course that that is very difficult because of other work connected with the war which Government have to undertake; but it must be remembered that while it may be difficult, for lack of machinery and so on, to produce industrial reconstruction and a number of other things, in agriculture at least there is scope for immediate action. Something can be done while the prices are as high as they are at present, and the cost of that something also would not be noticed anything like as much as it would be noticed in later times, when the prices are possibly down to the pre-war levels.

**Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam** (Surma Valley *cum* Shillong: Non-Muhammadan):

Sir, I support this Resolution because it seeks to ameliorate the condition of the agriculturists. But I must tell my Honourable friend, the Mover, that he has taken poor consolation by asking Government to float a loan of 10 crores of rupees, which is nothing even with regard to the agricultural improvement of one province. There are roughly 900 crores of note circulation in this country and this loan of 10 crores will have no effect on the inflationary character of our finances. Sir, poverty is the only problem of India socially, politically and economically. This vast country is full of agriculturists but it is so poor that a large proportion of its people do not get enough to eat, and a still larger proportion do not get the right kind of food. It is absolutely necessary that the agriculturists of India should be helped and subsidised to increase our agricultural wealth and add to our national prosperity. We must see what other Governments have done for the improvement of the agriculturists. The policy of the British Ministry of Food is, firstly, to provide basic food available for the nation; secondly, to ensure that the food given keeps the nation fit; and thirdly, to maintain such a level of prices as to keep food within the purchasing capacity of the people. But it should be said to the discredit of our Governments, provincial and Central, that they have not done anything of that kind. Not only that; the Government of India have said that the vast population of our country lives on a meagre standard of nutrition, and cannot sustain themselves fully through the crop year. Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, has termed them as "subsistence cultivators". I cannot describe their condition better than by his own words:

"The vast majority of the population of India have always been and still are subsistence cultivators. They wring a meagre and precarious existence from their small holdings and only the need for finding a little ready money for rent, for payment of debts, for purchase of the very minimum of necessities and petty luxuries leads them to sell a narrow margin of their surplus food."

That is the deplorable condition of the poor agriculturists of India. Our Government has initiated a "Grow More Food" campaign, but we all know, and Government also know, that very little result has so far followed. We are told by Dr. Akroyd, the Director of Nutrition Research Laboratory, that a good deal of energy of the nation has been wasted in this campaign. Sir, other countries have done much to give their people nutritive articles of food and other facilities of life. Japan has tackled her food problem with vigour and energy. She has increased her production of wheat, sugar and meat and doubled the production of eggs. She has made a remarkable development in fish industry. England which produces only 30 per cent. of her food has given to her labourers a diet better than the diet which the middle classes in India can have. In war-time Germany the dietary was determined by what the German agriculturists could produce and the country has attained 85 per cent. self-sufficiency—even during war time. Our Government are now making plans for post-war reconstruction but I shall invite them to a mid-war reconstruction which is proposed in this Resolution. Improvement of labour power is the main concern of a country and agriculture improvement is the primary condition for guaranteeing the efficiency of labour. In an agricultural country like India industrial expansion also depends on agricultural development. The export of agricultural commodities, foodstuffs, as well as commercial crops, will be the principal means for financing industrial expansion. Machinery and considerable amount of manufactured goods will have to be imported against the export of these agricultural commodities. The population of Soviet Union is much smaller than the population of this country and yet under their first Five-Year Plan the Soviet Union had expanded agricultural production much more than the present production of our country. The object of the Soviet Government in producing large exportable surplus of agricultural commodities was to enable the country to pay for the import of the manufactured goods and machinery from outside. Our Government could do the same if they were prepared to take a bold and courageous step. The country is very poor and, therefore, the amount of subsidy needed for the people

will be very large. It is for this reason that I must request the Government to float a loan of one hundred or more crores of rupees for giving subsidy to agriculturists.

Sir, another reason for which the Resolution of my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, should be acceptable to the Government is that it is an anti-inflationary measure. The Government had not, for a long time, clearly recognized the inflationary tendencies in this country but now they have definitely said that there is inflation in the country and measures should be adopted to counteract it. As an anti-inflationary measure, my Honourable friend's Resolution is entitled to the best consideration of the Government. The inflationary tendency must be arrested by the production of agricultural and industrial commodities and by heavy investment in industries and also by taking away additional purchasing power from the hands of the people. This last thing can be done in two ways: By taxation and by floating a loan. Taxation is out of question in this country. It is already over-taxed and the new steps taken by the Honourable the Finance Member have gone too far, and have added to the burden of the poor. The only alternative which is open to us is to float a loan and in this respect I am glad to say that my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, has done a yeoman service to this country by drawing the attention of the Government to this loan project. I do not see any reason why ten or even hundred crores of rupees loan cannot be raised in order to subsidise the agriculturists. In India, agriculture is the basic industry and every other industry which is to be established has to be based on agriculture. Sir, I do not wish to dilate, at great length, on what measures other countries have taken to promote agriculture. Suffice it to say that in Britain £100 millions are spent on subsidies for food and that similar measures are in operation in the United States of America. It is, therefore, urgently necessary that steps which have been suggested by the Members in this House should be taken in order to bring about improvements in agriculture.

On another occasion, I requested the Government on the floor of this House to help the starting of agricultural banks and make the Reserve Bank help these institutions with sterling balances lying idle in England to our credit. I do not know whether Government has taken any step in that direction but it is urgently necessary that alongside this subsidy to be given to the cultivators, agricultural banks should be started throughout the length and breadth of this country so that the agriculturist may have financial backing to follow his agricultural pursuits. Big commercial banks in towns do not help the agriculturist; these banks give money to the big contractors and industrialists who can give them good interest and easy return. But these agricultural banks should be based on a long-term policy so that the agriculturist is helped to the utmost, which indirectly means helping India as a whole. With these few words I support the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh.

**Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali** (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I do not wish to take much time of the House on this Resolution of my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. It is a very salutary motion no doubt. There are two objects: First, that anti-inflationary measures should be adopted; and the other that more money should be provided for the production of more food in the country. Sir, nobody can dispute those objects and I think Government will not say anything against this motion inasmuch as it is bound to help the agriculturist and is a measure to counteract inflation.

But the point arises, how is this money to be used? There are schemes being floated on all sides. We have got a 15-year scheme by big people in India at present going about in the country. Then there is a Government committee to be sent abroad to study some sort of measures to be adopted for anti-inflation. But the point is how is this money to be spent and how is the cultivator going to be benefitted. The present condition is this. My Honourable friends think that the cultivator should be helped so that he may grow more and more. On the other hand, the Government thinks that the cultivator has made a lot of money due to the rise in prices and there is absolutely no need for any kind of help to be given to him. At present every tenant

[Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali.]

is made to pay money towards war loans, postal certificates and many other kinds of subscriptions for help in the war effort. At the same time the Government wants the cultivator to grow more food. But how is he going to do that when you are depriving him of whatever money he has somehow made due to rise in prices. There are all sorts of schemes in the country, but how can he adopt those. So, as I have said, on the one hand you ask him to grow more food and on the other hand you take away whatever money he has in his pocket. You do not give him any facilities for the storage of his produce. Does any one in this country think that these poor cultivators—who are not like your farmers in England and Europe—have no means to store their produce, and that some steps should be taken to help them in this direction. They have no soils. These are the things to be considered first. To say that money should be found—ten or twenty or hundred crores—for helping the cultivator, is all right.

Our European friends, last time, I find also gave a resolution of the kind and there was some intention that the cultivators should be helped in some way in India. But, Sir, how can you help the cultivator when you deprive him of what little profit he has made during this war. It is impossible for you to allow the cultivator to do anything possible to grow food. Whatever they have, and whatever they get either from the Agricultural Department or from the *bania*, it is from that seed that they can grow. It is very difficult to get these things even through co-operative banks at present. The Government tried its best that there should be co-operative banks in all the provinces. If these banks also take up this question of growing more food sincerely and honestly, I tell you that it is not so very difficult and these banks can find money for the 'grow more food' campaign. But on the one hand the cultivator is being robbed and on the other schemes are floating about, which absolutely do not help the cultivators at all. I find that now there will be in every village and town Patwaris, Tehsildars and Sub-divisional Officers, through whom these cultivators will have to buy some sort of certificate and pay for the war loan. How is it possible for that very cultivator, who has to pay his rent to the landlord and at the same time to subscribe to your loan, to grow more food? If it were by means of *tagavi* loans, then let me say that the experience of the cultivator in this respect has been very sad. They have had to pay more interest than they would have paid to the *bania*. This is the experience which we, who have a little land in this country, have had. It is very nice and all right for the Government to sit here in the Centre and say that so and so has to be done. But how is the cultivator to be benefitted? His present condition is that they have not capital enough. The bullocks have been sold for very high prices and they cannot rebuy them for cultivation purposes. Their poverty is such that you cannot imagine their condition. You cannot even get meat in the villages. How can you expect the cultivator to grow more food unless you can import more machinery from outside? He has not even bullocks to till his land. He has not even the machinery for this purpose. The present Government did not consider these things before the war. Now it is too late. You may try to do whatever you like but it will not help the cultivator at all. It will simply go into the pockets of those whom the cultivator has to pay his debts.

**Sir Henry Richardson** (Nominated Non-Official): My colleague, Mr. Lawson, tried to stress the importance of our having before us some indication of Government's plan in regard to Agriculture to enable us more easily to consider this resolution which is before us. I would like to go over some of the past history of what Government's attitude has been, so that we can examine what they have said they had in mind and endeavour to draw from them in this debate some information which we feel is lacking at the moment.

Following on the Finance Member's comment in his Budget speech last year regarding the reduction in the burden of agricultural indebtedness affected by the rise in agricultural prices, this Group on the 10th March last in a cut motion, to which my friend, Mr. Azhar Ali, has referred, called Government's

attention to the opportunity of endeavouring to establish permanent improvement and benefits by framing a comprehensive policy of co-ordination of the many agricultural problems. The great need for Central control was stressed although it was recognised that agricultural policy must in the main be carried out by provincial units. We asked if a fixed minimum price for crops could not be established in all Provinces, and Central arrangements made for dealing with surpluses and deficits. We suggested careful planning of crop production, improved methods of agriculture and irrigation, subsidising backward areas, cheap medical facilities for cultivators, assistance in better housing and sanitation: all towards the first step in any scheme for the rehabilitation of agriculture, namely, the improvement of the standard of life of the cultivator.

In his reply on the 10th March, 1943, the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh agreed that the Government of India must remain for a long time a vitalising centre and a co-ordinating centre. He held that the solution of agricultural debt depended on cheap short and long term credit, and he said he was hoping to examine the problem in all these aspects. He admitted that even in normal years our production was not sufficient to give all the people a balanced diet but stated we could not increase production without guaranteeing an adequate return to the growers in money value. He felt that only by careful planning of production, creation of agricultural credits, supported by a financial policy which had no other aim but to make a better life for all the people of India, could the seed be planted for the permanent benefit of the agriculturist. He reminded us that we already had a great corpus of knowledge and experience on the technical side readily available for application once funds were provided and a policy laid down. He said—and these are his own words: "What is wanted is a policy to inspire and money to give birth to the dry bones of knowledge and research and make the dry bones live". He hoped to start rapid soil sampling and testing of sub-soil water supply in areas that have remained untilled to find out whether it was possible to reclaim some cultivable lands for the production of crops and for afforestation. He had under examination the question whether leaf mould from our forests could be composted and its nitrogen content improved, and another question under active consideration was how to make larger use of our town refuse as manure. He mentioned the great scope for the development of other sources of food, such as milk, fish and eggs, and that he hoped to do something permanent for animal husbandry by spreading modern knowledge of methods of feeding and breeding. So far as I know, Sir, we have not been told the results of all these hopes.

Coming to the debate on the food situation on the 15th of November last, the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh said that the need of the moment was to take a warning from the present, to plan for increasing production for the future, providing for paying employment for surplus village population and to raise generally the living standards of the agricultural producer as well as urban labour. He told us, however, that agriculture, education and health were primarily the concern of the provinces and that it was the constitutional position that beyond offering occasional advice, the Centre had no direct responsibility. He confessed that he was not satisfied with that and said that if India was to resolve the economic deadlock, it must have centralised direction, centralised finance and centralised activities. He concluded with an assurance that Government was resolved now to fight poverty and to raise the standard of living both in the villages and towns.

Then on the 17th January last we were given the benefit of the Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava's views when he, as Deputy President, opened the first meeting of the General Policy Committee of the Reconstruction Committee of Council. He stated that comprehensive reports were now available on various subjects which included agriculture, forestry, fisheries and education, and that the opinion of the appropriate policy committees would be obtained on important questions of policy arising out of these reports. He told us of the recent decision to appoint experts called Development Officers who would tour provinces and States and assist in the development of pro-



[Sir Henry Richardson.]

vincial plans. He reiterated that one of the first objects of the committee's policy should be the improvement of the conditions of agriculture and of life in the rural areas, combined with the extension of irrigation schemes of all kinds. Referring to the probability that the end of the war would mark for the first time in the history of India the extinction of or at least a very large reduction in agricultural debt, he said that every effort must be made to consolidate the ground gained and to place agriculture on a permanent prosperous footing.

Coming to still more recent times, on the 24th February last, in another place, the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh stated it was necessary to stabilise the prices of agricultural products, which would pay a fair wage to the agriculturist, so that these people could purchase more manufactured goods. He also stated that for any programme of raising the standard of living at least 30 per cent. of the rural population would have to be taken off the land and given work in other industries. He again reiterated that government are now engaged in examining this problem in all its aspects and planning for after the war.

Now, Sir, that is the history. What is being done? We are very much in the dark as to when the Government's plans are going to be developed. Are we limited by funds? If so, what portion or particular aspect of this important problem is to receive attention? I do hope that Government will take the opportunity afforded them in this debate of throwing some light on all these many problems. I have reiterated all these hopes that have been given us by various Government members since last year; and we have not had, so far as I can tell, any information regarding them except these statements that they are under active consideration. May we hope that something more than active consideration will be given us today?

**Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal** (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadian): Sir, I support the Resolution. I think no more useful resolution could have been tabled in this House for the sake of agriculture in this country than this Resolution. But I confess I fail to see what anti-inflationary effect it may have. This much I understand that the Government is very much in earnest to have anti-inflationary measures to draw out some money from the people; and only the other day we saw that the Government was anxious to draw out money from the pockets of the people by raising the railway fares. I think perhaps this suggestion in the Resolution is a better proposition for the Government to draw out money from the people by way of loan in order to return them some good in a tangible form; and from that point of view, I think that there will be no objection on the part of the Government to accept this resolution.

Now, so far as the 'grow more food' campaign is concerned, I think that campaign for infants should attract more of our attention than the 'grow more food' campaign for adults, and I would lay more stress upon that campaign for infants, that is, in the form of milk. We have seen how it has been brought to the notice of the Government in this very House that milch cows are practically disappearing, and how dear the milk is selling in the market, so much so that it has now gone beyond the reach of ordinary people. It can very well be imagined what will be the fate of the children or the growing man. So, if the Government is earnest in making provision for people in the form of nutrition, they should pay more attention to the supply of milk; and for that purpose this proposal before the Government is one which deserves serious attention. Now, I want to make a suggestion in connection with 'grow more food' campaign. Up till now whatever effort the Government has made has not been successful so far, although we may see here and there in demonstration farms some school children growing some vegetables in their school compounds or some Government servant growing some food in his compound in order to please his superior officer: some high-placed Government officials may do this to show that they

are alive to the demands of the time. But these things cannot help. If at all Government is going to be serious in its effort to help the agriculturist, I may inform the House that whatever money is granted to provinces, or by the province to the districts or by the districts to the sub-divisions to be spent through the local advisory committee is not known to the vast mass of the people. Even the local advisory committees are not known to the people; not to speak of the composition of these committees, most of the people do not know that such committees exist at all in the districts; and it is through such local advisory committees that arrangement is being made for the distribution and expenditure of the fund for the 'grow more food' campaign. My Honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Ghani, here tells me that even the amounts which are given to the local advisory committees or other bodies have lapsed. And then what can be said of 'grow more food' campaign can well be understood. If we want to make the 'grow more food' campaign successful the Government should take people into confidence, and such persons should be on the advisory committees or any other machinery that may be set up for helping agriculture as can really be useful. My Honourable friend, Mr. Abdul Ghani, says that even the amount that is now given lapses, and with what face can we ask that there should be more funds?

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani** (Tirhut Division; Muhammadan): That is the fault of the Government.

**Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal:** Though the amounts may lapse now, I say that if you take up the matter seriously, more money will be required, if you manage things in a proper way. When I was in the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, every year the budget used to come with some provision for irrigation department, but they were all to be spent for establishments of the irrigation department. And there were no schemes for helping irrigation. If that be the way in which the Government of India proposes to help the 'grow more food' campaign, then no real object will be served. Let me tell you that if you want to spend the money in the best way, then take people into confidence and provide them with more facilities for irrigation, because the difficulty at present is you do not know how the money has been spent. You have only to show paper accounts to the world that you have spent so much money over such and such a project, whereas people do not derive any benefit out of it. At present you require zemindars and cultivators to maintain irrigation facilities and other things at their own cost. But if you are really sincere in the 'grow more food' campaign, you should provide free irrigation facilities to the cultivators. That is one way of spending your money more fruitfully. If you adopt the policy of making irrigation free to the cultivators, whatever be the cost to you, then automatically you will get more food grown. But by mere slogans or having more committees and more establishments and more engineers you cannot help the 'grow more food' campaign. You may have a large amount of money at your disposal or you may have big establishments. You may spend money on them but you cannot have more food though you may have the satisfaction of seeing the compounds of schools of children and big officials with more food plants. That may be pleasing to you, but if you really want to help the 'grow more food' campaign, make it a principle for you to give irrigation facilities free to the cultivator. That is the best way of helping him.

One word more. As far as my experience goes, there is lack of agricultural implements in the provinces. So far as I know, there are not even a few good tractors in order in Bihar. If a cultivator wants to bring under cultivation a large tract of land and wants some tractor, the Bihar Government is unable to give one. Cannot you make provision for such implements of agriculture, so that you may really help the 'grow more food' campaign? There is a good deal of scope for helping agriculture and the 'grow more food' campaign if you float such a loan and you will see the results in a very reasonable period of time, and you will have helped the agriculturist in a really tangible manner. With these words I support the Resolution.



**Dr. P. N. Banerjee** (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Agriculture is the most important industry of the people of India. Nearly 70 per cent. of the population is directly dependent upon it and about 90 per cent. is directly or indirectly connected with agriculture. Therefore, on the prosperous condition of agriculture depends the prosperity of the country. But what is the present position with regard to agriculture in India? It is in a very depressed condition. The yield of crops from cultivation in India is very small compared to the yield in other countries, and the reason is that the cultivator here is poor. He cannot afford to leave his land fallow, he cannot procure good seeds, he cannot procure proper sort of manure, he does not possess the implements which are necessary for carrying on agriculture in the proper manner. For this purpose, therefore, some assistance should be given to the agriculturist.

The question now is: Where to get the funds? It has always been stated on behalf of the Government that, although it is their intention to improve agriculture, funds are lacking. Now, my Honourable friend in this Resolution has pointed out a source from which the funds may come. He has suggested that Rs. 10 crores may be borrowed by Government for the purpose of agricultural improvement. The Honourable the Finance Member told us yesterday that the credit of the country is very good and that the loan operations of last year were a magnificent success. Therefore, it is desirable that, for the present, immediately—a loan of Rs. 10 crores should be raised in order to finance the most important industry of the country. Agriculture is important in normal times, but in these abnormal times the importance of agriculture is all the greater. We had a most disastrous famine in Bengal a few months ago and scarcities in various other parts of the country. The result of these

**1 P.M.** famines and scarcities has been a debilitation of the health and energy of the people and a general reduction in their working power. In order that we may avoid such a calamity in the future, the immediate need of the hour is to take steps to improve agriculture. Agriculture can be improved by various means, by bringing land which is at the present moment uncultivated into cultivation by the use of tractors and by the use of improved implements. Then again, the spending of larger sums of money will improve the quantity of food that is grown on the fields which are now under cultivation.

There is another aspect of the question to which this Resolution refers. The borrowing of ten crores of rupees will have an anti-inflationary effect, and that should be welcome to my Honourable friend, the Finance Member. Borrowing is a legitimate weapon for this purpose, because borrowing will not lead to any hardship on any party in the country at the present moment, but taxation will. We have been overtaxed during the last four or five years and to put a further burden of taxation on the people, even for the purpose of improving agriculture, would be laying an intolerable burden on them. Therefore, borrowing is a much better way of financing agriculture than further taxation.

Now, Sir, as regards anti-inflationary effect, I should like to point out that not only directly but also indirectly it will produce that effect. Directly, of course, it will take away a large sum of money from the people but indirectly it will help the production of goods for the consumption of the civilian population and that, in itself, will be a great check to the anti-inflationary movement. Therefore, looking at the question from all points of view, we should not have any doubt in our mind regarding support being given to this Resolution. I am glad to find that my friends of the European Group have already given their support to this Resolution and I do not think there is anybody in this House who will fail to lend his support to a Resolution which will have a very beneficial effect not only on the agricultural population but also on the entire population of this country.

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** Sir, in the Resolution before the House, the raising of a loan of 10 crores of rupees to be earmarked for purposes of subsidising agriculturists is put forward as an anti-inflationary measure and I take that to be the

principal object of the Resolution. (*An Honourable Member*: "That is one of the objects.") The House will not wish to hear me on the question of anti-inflationary measures. That aspect of the Resolution I shall leave entirely to the Honourable the Finance Member and I shall try to meet the points that have been raised about "Grow More Food" and "Agriculture". Perhaps I had better take the points in order, so as to cover the grounds, as far as I can, in the time at my disposal.

There are, of course, certain definite limits to what can be done in the short term for "Grow More Food" but I am ready to maintain that the Central Government, who cannot themselves grow more food but can only assist Provinces and States to grow more food, have done and are doing what they can. I would say straightaway that every promising method of producing more food for which assistance has been asked for has been accepted for help and financed by the Central Government in one way or another. I do not say that we have financed the whole of each scheme but we have sometimes financed the whole, sometimes financed part of the scheme on a 50-50 basis or 25-75 basis. Mr. Deshmukh asked for information about our scheme for financing the diversion of lands under short staple cotton to foodgrains and mentioned that we had given a subsidy of Rs. 2 an acre for land so diverted. That is perfectly correct. In the first year of the 'Grow More Food' campaign, we offered a subsidy of Rs. 2 an acre for land so diverted. I have not got the actual figures of the amount of money spent. (*An Honourable Member*: "What is the total amount?") We did spend from the cotton fund Rs. 28 lakhs that year, most of which must have gone for diverting short staple cotton land to food growing. In Mr. Deshmukh's own province of the Central Provinces, I find that nearly 6 lakh acres which had been under short staple cotton were diverted to foodgrains and I think it may be taken, though I have not got the detailed figures, that 12 lakhs of money went to the C. P. for that purpose: and I can assure my Honourable friend that we and the Government of the C. P. took every care that the Rs. 2 per acre should go to the actual cultivator.

Then, the Honourable the Mover of the Resolution asked what was meant by concessional rates for seeds and manures. That, Sir, is very simple to answer. We know that to give the cultivator manures like oil-cakes, is one of the best ways, provided the monsoon is favourable, of increasing the crop on any given piece of ground. The cultivator may not be able to pay more than a certain sum for these fertilisers.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh**: What amount was spent? My point is about the amount. I have been asking for information as regards money.

**Mr. J. D. Tyson**: Help has been given to various provinces in this way and I am afraid I could not give the total amount involved. I was saying that the way it works is that the Provincial Governments buy the oil-cake, or whatever it may be, at a certain price and they sell it to the cultivator at the price which they believe the cultivator will pay and the difference between the two is met from Government funds, and generally we share that difference with the province. I am sorry I did not understand the Honourable the Mover to ask for the total figure and I am afraid I could not get that out of the figures before me at short notice for we have helped a number of Provinces in that way.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh**: That may be, but I had specifically asked with regard to the payment.

**Mr. J. D. Tyson**: I did not understand the Honourable Member and I am afraid I cannot give way because I have very little time.

Then, he referred to a possible shortage of labour for growing more food. Now, Sir, it happens that a few months ago we took up this matter with Provincial Governments and we wrote and asked them—we had particularly in view the effects of recruitment to the army—we asked them in a general way and with particular reference to recruitment to the armed forces and for labour on military works, how far any shortage of labour for agricultural purposes had resulted? The answer that we got from the provinces was that except in very few small areas where recruitment had been particularly heavy or where large military works were being carried on, there had not been such a drain on

[Mr. J. D. Tyson.]

labour as to affect the "Grow More Food" campaign. It is difficult to avoid in certain areas the movement of agricultural labour, which is paid, everyone knows, a very small wage, to military works like aerodromes where the wages offered are very much greater.

Then, a reference was made to a shortage of bullocks for ploughing. We have kept in touch with the provinces over this and we have got no evidence that there is an actual fact any shortage of bullocks except, again, perhaps, in certain small and definite areas. A reference was made to the Resolution passed in the Bengal Assembly the other day which was in somewhat general terms. I saw it in the newspapers; we have not received a copy yet. But since then I find that the Honourable the Minister for Agriculture in the Bengal Assembly, in answer to a question, has said that the Government of Bengal were aware of the fact that in certain areas there had been a loss of plough cattle from disease, starvation and military requirements for meat and also that the price of cattle had increased by five or six times. He did not, however, admit that many cultivators had stopped their cultivation for want of cattle or due to their inability to purchase cattle. I can assure the House that the available figures of slaughter of cattle do not show that there can, for India, as a whole, be any shortage of cattle for cultivation purposes. From the marketing report on Hides and Skins we know that the annual slaughter, for ordinary civil purposes, is about 5½ million cattle, and I think that has to be put against the death roll from natural causes which is, I am speaking from memory, about 14 millions and against a cattle population of over 170 millions. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in another place in August last gave the slaughter for military purposes as under 300,000. I think there may be a certain pressure on cattle because there has undoubtedly, in spite of what some Honourable Members believe, been an increase in acreage under cultivation and therefore there is some pressure on the supply of ploughing cattle. And that is one of the reasons why the price of plough cattle has gone up . . . . .

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

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

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

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**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** Sir, I started off by saying that there are limits to what can be done in the way of growing more food in the short term and with war-time difficulties; but I wish to emphasise once again that finance has not been one of our difficulties. During the current year, 1943-44, we accepted liabilities to Provinces and States in aid of "Grow More Food" to the extent of about 88 lakhs in grants, that is, in subsidies, and double that amount in loans,—that is one crore and 65 lakhs. It may be that some of these schemes will not be completed during the current year before the 31st March, but there will be no difficulty in regranting next year anything that is required to complete a scheme approved for assistance this year. For the next budget year, the year which has not yet begun, we have already accepted commitments to the extent of 65 lakhs for grants and 75 lakhs for loans; and I should like to underline the fact that this represents the element of help from the Central revenues only. Many of these schemes are on a fifty-fifty basis or 25 per cent. from the centre and 75 per cent. from the province. So, these figures which I have given and which are considerable figures actually represent a very much larger help from the State to the cultivator than the mere figures themselves would indicate. And over and above that, the provinces themselves have schemes of their own which we are not financing. Sir, I have no time to say in detail what the result of all this has been: but as the Honourable the Mover is interested in short-staple cotton I should like to say that the normal area under short-staple cotton in India is 18·8 million acres, and the area during the current year is

8.6 million acres. We have more than halved it, and the balance has gone to foodgrains. Again, to take a staple crop like rice, I do not claim for Government any credit for the bountifulness of the harvest except in places where we have been able to give fertilisers. I do claim, however, that an extra acreage of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million acres is very largely due to the "Grow More Food" campaign.

Now, Sir, I should have liked to have had a little more time to deal with the very interesting and important points that have fallen from my Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, and his Party. But I must say that, in agreement with the Honourable the Mover himself, I took the Resolution before the House to deal with short term matters. The Mover himself said, for example, that he would not deal with Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas's scheme because that was a long-term scheme. In this view I came prepared to talk about "Grow More Food" and not about long-term reconstruction schemes. But I would like to say this,—that whereas in the first year when we asked the provinces to "Grow More Food", the provinces naturally put up any schemes which they could quickly put up and we accepted them and financed them piece-meal and without requiring any definite programme, this year we have quite definitely tried to canalise the schemes that are coming up from the provinces into certain channels, maintaining their short-term value but giving them a long-term aspect. Still more is this so as regards the schemes for next year. I might illustrate that by some instances. Take water. Water is the thing that we most need for growing more food and for ensuring that crops which are grown come to fruition. We have two big schemes connected with the name of Sir William Stampe,—Schemes in Bihar and in U. P.,—which, I hope, will be producing water for the next *rabi*. We have given ten lakhs for 50 lakh scheme for digging tanks in Bombay; we have financed a scheme of wells in Madras; we have financed, to the extent of a  $8\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs grant, a dam in the C. P. for damming up water in a valley and we have given that Province a loan of 25 lakhs for wells. That is about water. Take seed. We have given assistance and are giving assistance to provinces for improved seed multiplication schemes and for the distribution of improved seed. This serves a definite long-term purpose. Again, take fertilisers. Sir Henry Richardson referred to our town refuse fertiliser scheme. That, I am glad to say, was introduced last year, has met with ready response from provinces and is going ahead very well. Its effects will proceed in a geometrical progression now that it has started. Then with regard to village composting, we have been doing our best to encourage it. We have asked the provinces to put up schemes and we have a scheme from one province already. With regard to statistics, we are financing schemes for improvement of statistics, in two provinces at first, rather on an experimental basis; and we are also financing schemes for clearing more lands. All these things have a very definite long-term aspect and in these ways we are trying to get our assistance to the "Grow More Food" campaign to carry a long-term aspect as well as dealing with the short-term problem.

Sir, I have perhaps exceeded my time, but I would say again that we have all the funds we require to do all we can for the "Grow More Food" campaign.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria** (Marwari Association: Indian Commerce): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution and I hope my support will be remembered by the Honourable the Mover and he will support me day after tomorrow when the Hindu Marriage Bill come up! My Honourable friend, Mr. Tyson, has made a very good speech which is sympathetic towards this Resolution, and I must thank him for it. But he has dealt with only one part of the Resolution, namely, the improvement of agriculture. He has not dealt with the other question in the Resolution which also I consider to be very important, namely, increasing the milk production. For the improvement of agriculture, it is absolutely necessary, in my opinion, that we must improve the cattle wealth of this country, and this cannot be done if indiscriminate slaughter of cattle is allowed to go on. The number of cattle slaughtered every day is very large and I think the annual figures run into millions. I would request Government to stop this slaughter of cattle, by which I mean cows and buffaloes principally. By stopping this slaughter they will improve both agriculture and milk supply.

[Babu Baijnath Bajoria.]

Some idea of the number of cattle which are being slaughtered in this country can be gathered from the figures which, with your permission, I would like to place before this House. The number of cattle slaughtered in five slaughter-houses in Calcutta in 1941-42 was:

Bullocks and cows . . . . .	53,174
Buffaloes . . . . .	22,814
Calves—even calves are being slaughtered, most of them female calves . . . . .	2,270

The total comes to roughly 80,000. This figure relates to only one city and you can easily imagine the total number of cattle which are being slaughtered throughout this great country. This must be stopped. If the Government says that it is a provincial matter, I will say, "No, Sir, it is not". These cattle are being slaughtered for military purposes, to feed the Indian and the foreign army in India. If beef is such an essential part of diet of American and British troops in India, they can import it from Australia, but they should save the cattle wealth of this country. Sir, I have given a comprehensive Resolution on this subject and if ballot favours me, it will probably come up for discussion sometime during this Session. The Honourable the Leader of the House is nodding his head, so probably I may not have a chance again. I would, therefore, like to speak at some length here.

The slaughter of calves cannot be justified under any circumstances and steps should be taken immediately to stop any further slaughter of calves. I am speaking only on economic grounds; for the time being I have left religion at my house. As regards bullocks, they are the main source of ploughing in this country; without bullocks there can be no agriculture and so an age limit must be fixed so far as bullocks are concerned. I would suggest that at least 15 years should be the minimum age limit for the slaughter of bullocks, and after that . .

**Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra** (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadian Rural): Super-annuated!

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria**: . . . . if the bullock is not fit for ploughing, I would not support its slaughter, but still I will leave it to the option of the Government to do what they like. As regards cows, it pains us—not only Hindus, but Muslims also because she gives milk not only for the consumption of Hindus but for everybody, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis alike—it pains us to see that she is being slaughtered also. Sir, I would suggest that cows in milk should not be slaughtered at all. But what do we find today? Even pregnant cows are being slaughtered.

**Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani**: May I draw your attention to what is happening in Bengal? Mr. Ganguli is slaughtering cows for supply of beef to Military department.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria**: The Honourable Member has come late; if he had come earlier he would have listened to what I have said about slaughter of cows in Calcutta.

Sir, as regards cows, no pregnant cows or cows in milk should be slaughtered at all. It is a purely economic question and I think Government must pay serious heed to this. I understand, Sir, some notification has been issued by the Central Government that milch cows should not be slaughtered at military slaughter-houses, but unfortunately that order has been misinterpreted by the officers in charge. When the cows become dry after their lactation period, they think that those cows have gone dry, although as a matter of fact they may be in calf and they may be capable of giving milk after a few months. This point should be clarified and cows which are capable of giving milk after lactation period and those which are in calf should not be slaughtered at all. If the Government say that it is impossible, under the present conditions, to accept the total abolition of slaughter of cows, I would, against my own conscience, go to the length of saying . . . . .

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh**: And against your own religion, which you have left at home.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** Yes. I have already said so. I would go to the length of saying that those cows which are not capable of giving milk and which are no longer an economic unit, may be treated in any manner in which Government likes. (Interruption.) I am agreeing to that conditionally. My conditions are that calves should not be slaughtered at all, that bullocks under the age of 15 should not be slaughtered, cows in calf and in milk should not be slaughtered. If they accept these conditions, I think it will go a long way in preserving our cattle wealth to some extent. I think there should be a very strong campaign throughout the country against the way in which cattle are being slaughtered at present. I am glad that even the Muslim League Ministry of Bengal have taken up this matter and have started this campaign in the province of Bengal. Sir, I will read a report which appeared in the press:

"One-day closing in the week of slaughter houses throughout the province is one of the proposals now under consideration of the Government of Bengal in connection with their 'Save Cattle Campaign', it is learnt. Another proposal which Government desire to advocate in this connection among the meat consumers—civil and military—is to have one meatless day in a week. The closing of the slaughter houses for one day in the week when enforced, is expected to save in Calcutta alone about 8,000 heads of cattle, including more than 200 plough cattle.

Besides these measures, Government have also decided to take steps to replenish the stock of plough cattle of the province by bringing them from outside, and are now in correspondence with the Government of Bihar on the matter."

But the whole point is this: Coming as you do from Bengal, you know, Sir, what a terrible famine has occurred in that province. Bengal is not yet out of the wood; capable experts think that there may be—God forbid—another famine this year. Under these conditions, Bengal Government is a famished Government of a famished people.

**Sardar Sant Singh** (West Punjab: Sikh): Like you—an outstanding example!

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** So it is absolutely essential that the Central Government must place ample funds at the disposal of the Bengal Government and should earmark it specially for this purpose, namely, for rehabilitation and for the improvement of agriculture in the province of Bengal and for improving the cattle wealth of that province. If this is not done, God forbid, agriculture in Bengal will suffer very considerably. Sir, I must thank Mr. Tyson for reading the portion of the cutting which I wanted to read myself, but he conveniently did not read the latter portion of it, which I will do for the information of the House. Sir, the Bengal Minister has admitted that "there has been great loss of plough cattle and to enable cultivators to purchase cattle, agricultural loans have been distributed in some districts. All necessary steps have been and continue to be taken to combat the cattle epidemic." The cattle question in Bengal is a very serious one. Even in ordinary circumstances the cattle of Bengal are not noted for being strong. The bullocks are not as strong as those of the Punjab; neither are the cows as healthy as those of the Punjab. The cow there hardly gives one seer of milk under normal circumstances.

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-Official): You do not feed them well!

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** How can the poor agriculturists feed them when they cannot feed themselves or their families? I quite agree that poverty is the root cause of this evil and until poverty of the masses is not removed, substantial benefits will not accrue. But still it is our duty . . .

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): You have one minute more.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** That will be sufficient. Still it is our duty to take all possible steps to improve the cattle wealth of this country because on it will depend the milk products and so far as vegetarians like myself are concerned, milk products are the only nourishing food that they can get, and this will improve the agriculture of the country. I hope Government will take steps to implement the suggestions which I have made.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Baisman** (Finance Member): By giving a financial or monetary colouring to his Resolution the Honourable Member has made it necessary for me to reply, although it appeared in the course of the debate that most of the subjects on which he wished information and wished to ascertain the

[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

(Government's attitude were subjects for my Honourable friend, the Secretary of the Education, Health and Lands Department to deal with. I personally have very little to say and the half hour which would normally be available for me is far more than I would require, whereas Mr. Tyson could no doubt have spoken at greater length. However, Sir, the Resolution asks that a loan of Rs. 10 crores be raised. That in the light of what I said yesterday, the House will have no difficulty in appreciating, raises no difficulty whatever because our policy is, in pursuit of our determination to counter inflation, to increase borrowing to the maximum extent in order to reduce the abundance of free purchasing power. It is undoubtedly the case that to raise money in this way has a salutary and anti-inflationary effect. So I have no difficulty whatever in accepting that part of the Resolution.

Now, again, it will be clear from what Mr. Tyson said that the Government view with fullest sympathy all efforts to grow more food, and indeed to increase milk products in the country and they have been pursuing this matter with the Provincial Governments. Mr. Tyson made it clear that finance has not been the obstacle and I confirm that. If only from the point of view of countering inflation it is necessary to increase production, agricultural as well as industrial whenever that is possible. The production of more food and more commodities of any kind helps to improve the economic position. The Government are fully aware of that and they are anxious to assist in every way they can to mitigate the scarcity of the goods which the people require. In particular, in regard to food, which is an absolute necessity of life, the Government are extremely anxious to increase production. They have therefore, as has been explained, addressed the Provincial Governments. They have been in close touch with them, and I do not think any Provincial Government has had any difficulty on the score of finance in pursuing any project which was capable of contributing to the end which we all have in view, namely, the increased production of food.

As regards the beginning and end of this Resolution, therefore, the Government are entirely at one with my Honourable friend the Mover of the Resolution. If any difficulty arises it arises from the phrase "earmarked for purposes of subsidising agriculturists to grow more food". My Honourable friend, Mr. Lawson, pointed out the difficulty about the word "earmarked". It is the usual salutary practice of Government finance that money which is received on the one hand goes into the common purse and money again is devoted from that common purse to various objects which Government approves and which are considered desirable. It is not our practice to create as it were separate channels of receipts running direct to expenditure, and it is clear that if that practice were multiplied it would upset the whole basis of ordinary Government finance. Moreover, the amount that you can borrow at a particular time is not necessarily a proper indication of the amount that you may wish to spend on any particular purpose. So that I do not like the word "ear marked" and again the use of the word "subsidising" involves difficulties. The Honourable Member has given his Resolution an anti-inflationary title so to speak. Well, subsidies may, in certain circumstances, fail to be anti-inflationary. In fact, they can even be seriously inflationary. To take an example: supposing that a small quantity of additional production could be secured by an entirely disproportionate amount of additional finance. Supposing, say, that by investing 10 crores you produce half

3 P.M. a crore's worth of food; then that would have an inflationary effect;

you will pay out 10 crores and the additional goods or additional food that came into existence would be so disproportionate, so inadequate that the resultant effect would be definitely inflationary.

My Honourable friend talked about subsidies in other countries and I think he confused subsidies of the type which he is advocating with subsidies of another kind. I am not familiar with the position in America, but I know what the position is in England. In England it has been decided, as an anti-inflationary measure, to subsidise the prices of essential articles of food. It was considered that if the Government kept the prices of

wheat down to a certain figure by paying a difference to the producers, the effect on the general price structure would be such that in the long run the Government would be benefited by it, and the economy of the country would be benefited by it. In the conditions of England that is undoubtedly a justifiable and sound policy. It has even been suggested that that kind of subsidy should be resorted to in India; and indeed there have been certain transactions of the Government at times which have amounted to nothing less than the subsidisation of food. Although we have been charged in this House with attempting to make profits out of food, the fact of the matter is that we have never intended to do that, and if ever on any particular transaction a temporary surplus has emerged it has always been reimbursed to the area or the classes which contributed to that surplus. But the other kind of situation has arisen too. It has happened that we have acquired food at a price which we did not think it wise to charge to the consumer because of the effect it would have on local prices, and we have suffered losses by selling food at less than it cost us. That, in the conditions of India, could be a very expensive matter indeed; and whilst in principle I should be quite prepared to see food subsidies adopted if it were practical finance, I do not believe that it is practicable.

However, that is all by the way, because that is not the type of subsidy which my Honourable friend had in mind, and I think incidentally that the American subsidies which he was talking of, are also subsidies of the same kind as the subsidies in Britain; in other words, what the American administration had in mind was to reduce the cost of certain elements in the price level of food by direct subsidy from the treasury; and that was resisted, curiously enough, by the farm bloc, which objected to any action which would keep down the prices of the products in which they were interested. The subsidies my Honourable friend has in mind are subsidies for the production of food. I am quite free to admit that there may be circumstances in which it is desirable to have resort to subsidies of that kind, and in fact we do so and we are doing so; but my difficulty arises from the fact that the Honourable member's Resolution, as worded, would bind us to proceed entirely by the method of subsidy. He would say that all the money you raise must (a) be earmarked and (b) be expended by the method of subsidy. Our experience—and we have a certain amount of experience now in the grow-more-food campaign—shows that that is not necessarily the best way to use the money. After all, it must be remembered that prices at the present time are very high, and they in themselves provide a powerful economic incentive. It is true that there is scope for Government assistance; there may be works, irrigation works, of a kind to be carried out which the agriculturist himself without assistance might not be able to carry out; there is the question of obtaining manures and so on, facilitating supplies of certain requirements which the agriculturist needs in order to increase his production; so that there is scope for Government assistance; but it does not follow that there is always justification for a Government grant; or, where there is justification for a grant, it does not necessarily follow that that grant should cover the whole of the outlay required in order to finance the additional production.

So, I feel difficulty in committing myself either entirely to the method of subsidy or to full subsidisation in cases where the method of subsidy is justifiable. As one of the speakers pointed out, I think it was Mr. Lawson, if you did raise a certain amount of money for financing this object, it might well be that you could best use it as a revolving fund; you might get additional production started in certain areas which would be able to repay at any rate part of the finance applied, and you might then be able to use the money again for other purposes. I am not sure whether my Honourable friend the Mover of this Resolution is wedded to the full implications of all the words which he has used. As far as I am concerned, as far as the Government are concerned, they would, provided that what I have said is clearly understood, have no difficulty in broadly accepting a resolution of this kind. It is quite clear on the one hand that we will do and are doing everything possible to step up our borrowing, and on the other hand, we are doing and we are prepared to do everything that is possible and useful in order to grow more food; and for that matter increase milk products,



[Sir Jeremy Raisman.]

as a part of the additional food production campaign. The only thing as I say that we cannot precisely commit ourselves to is the implication of the phrase "earmarked for the purpose of subsidising". If the phrase used were "for the purpose of assisting", then I should see no difficulty at all in Government accepting this Resolution as it stands; but in any case I feel that Government's object and Government's present policy are sufficiently in line with the objects of the Mover of this Resolution, not to make it worth while for us formally to register any difference of opinion.

**Mr. E. L. O. Gwilt** (Bombay: European): Sir, Mr. Lawson has already stated the attitude of this Group towards the Resolution as a whole; there is therefore no need for me to deal with it in its general terms, except to reiterate that we are generally in sympathy with the motives implicit in it. I would like to confine my remarks to the emphasis that has been laid upon a possible milk shortage in this country. I think it is not merely a possible shortage, but that there is a very great danger of there being a milk famine in this country. There is, Sir, a world shortage of milk. When humanity goes to the assistance of those who have suffered disaster, the first food that is brought to the scene of the disaster is milk. So when the countries which are now in occupation in Europe are liberated, milk will assuredly be the food which will be in greatest demand. I happen to know that even now it is extremely difficult to get milk products from outside India despite the fact that a very large amount of milk has been sent from abroad to the famine areas of Bengal. I understand my Honourable friend, Mr. Tyson, said that the provinces were very conscious of a possible milk famine within India and were doing everything they can to meet this. To that extent I feel. . .

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** My Honourable friend will pardon me if I interrupt him. I do not think I referred to a milk famine at all. I was referring to bullocks for ploughing.

**Mr. E. L. O. Gwilt:** He was referring to cattle?

**Mr. J. D. Tyson:** Yes, cattle—bullocks for ploughing.

**Mr. E. L. O. Gwilt:** I am sorry, Sir, I was not here when he spoke, but that was what I understood the Honourable Member had said. This is a point I am most anxious about, and I would suggest that the Honourable the Finance Member in consultation with the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands, might consider subsidising the breeding of cattle, particularly with a view to meeting this milk shortage, possibly even the artificial insemination of cows and the rest of the proposals which I feel sure can be put forward by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research.

There is one other point. At the risk of repetition I would refer again to the suggestions I made, when speaking on the food debate during the last Session. I wonder whether Government have taken the opportunity of studying the system whereby South Africa and, I believe, also the Argentine have of ensuring that the cultivator receives a fair price for his grain. If some such system could be evolved, as a short term plan and as a long term plan, whereby the cultivator will be assured of getting a fair share for his grain, a very great deal will have been achieved towards the success of the "Grow more food" campaign and in meeting the increasing shortage of food.

**Some Honourable Members:** Let the question be now put.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** To start with, I will refer to the question of cattle. My Honourable friend, Mr. Bajoria, has already pointed out the terrible number of cattle that are slaughtered in Calcutta alone. Well, there are so many other places where the army is situated, and it would not be unreasonable to suggest that cattle on the same scale are being slaughtered in those places also. A remark fell, when I referred to the Bengal Legislative Council resolution, from my Honourable friend, Mr. Tyson, to the effect that if there is a shortage of plough bullocks, it may be, and according to him, it is, because the land under cultivation has increased. If the land under cultivation has increased it is your business to see that the land is cultivated; other-

wise, what is the use of having increased land? If you want to have the area extended you must certainly see that there are bullocks to plough. I am glad that Mr. Gwilt has emphasised that the dairy produce, milk products must be subsidised. He has used the word "subsidised". It will, therefore, be seen that what we are after, I am particularly after, is subsidy. It was said that I am not for the long range programme, I am for the immediate programme. True. It is a fact that Government's long range programmes have been able to achieve nothing. We have heard from the Leader of the European Group a very big catalogue of things which were promised to improve the condition of Agriculture and Agriculturists. And what are the achievements? Nil, or very small, insignificant. It seems to me then that if any Member is not making any statement for himself but for the Government, if he has given assurances not personally but on behalf of the Government, then the Government stands condemned for having made promises and not fulfilled them. The indictment made by the Leader of the European Group is a strong one and there has been no defence on the part of the Government. I am for immediate programme. Why? Because, if you do not grow more food quickly, people are dying and will die in numbers shortly. I say there should be an immediate programme, immediate relief. If there had been an immediate programme in 1941, so many people would not have died in Bengal. It is because you are merely contemplating things, doing nothing, forming reconstruction committees, rehabilitation committees, only to talk and not to do, that we have had this sad experience. You have sunk three crores of rupees in Bengal now and you will sink still more if you do not hurry up matters. Not only that. It is not only in one province, but as was admitted on the floor of the House, Orissa is likely to meet with a similar difficulty. If you go on with a slow, long range programme, what will you find? Another famine, another heavy toll which death will ask of the population in Orissa. Is that desirable? Will you follow that up with another three crores of rupees? Will you follow a similar procedure there? Why don't you follow the procedure I recommend? Hurry up. If you sink ten crores, it may be that within a year you will be saving, eventually, may be 300 crores, which you will have to sink if you follow the pace of a snail in carrying out your programme. I want Government to hurry up matters.

Certain references were made that machinery should be imported, and explanation was given that war is on. I am not very keen on having power machinery. Having regard to the nature of the holdings, having regard to the nature of the soil in many parts of the country, power machinery would not be necessary. As a matter of fact, we cannot carry on with, for instance, a tractor all the agricultural operations that are carried on in America. It may be all right on a flat land, as in the Punjab or in Sind, but if you go and try tractors as I have done on my farms where there are boulders, you cannot do much, you cannot do any other thing except ploughing. So, it is advisable to keep this attempt aside. I do not want you to spend any money on importing machinery today but what I want you to do is to spend money now on manures, on seeds and to help the agriculturist in several other ways. As a matter of fact, if you save the cattle, the agriculturist will be helped in the matter of manure and though artificial manures have their own advantages, it is really the farmyard manure which is the general tendency to recommend. Even for that purpose, you will be doing a great deal if you save the cattle.

Then, it was suggested that a stimulus should be given by this Government by putting a cess on certain food products like the coconut. Cotton is not food but mention was made of this. I think it would be a very bad policy to suggest that the growers of *jowar* and other food products should contribute to the development of the farms to produce food by paying a cess. It has never been done in any country. I have read a lot and I have not seen that done. As regards the nature of the relief I am asking for, it is in the form of a subsidy. It has been said that it may have an inflationary tendency. The argument is there but I submit it is a very halting defence by the Government. The argument may

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

be there but the facts are on my side—that there is no inflation. All the Governments, big and small, have been doing it and they have been copying the example set by the United Kingdom. I think Great Britain was the first to start this before America. America used to give subsidy before the war for export but after the war they started subsidising produce they needed for maintaining the civil population and army in their own country. Subsidy has been very well recognised as having the effect of inducing the cultivator to grow the sort of food for which you are paying a subsidy. It has been given in different countries for different purposes. For instance, in some countries, it has been given for fattening sheep, for rearing sheep. In other countries, for growing wheat and so on. They select an important item of food and concentrate on it and ask the farmer to grow it and he receives the subsidy. I am not prepared to accept any argument to the contrary, when I see the example that has been followed by other countries. I am not prepared to accept the argument which has been advanced on behalf of the Government in this House by the Honourable the Finance Member.

It has been said that the economic prices are stimulating and that no subsidy is needed. Now, Sir, subsidy has a double effect. It stimulates the grower. It also brings the price level down. You want price control. You want to bring down the prices. I am suggesting to you a method of maintaining an economic price, a price which will give a fair return to the agriculturists. I am telling you to follow this method which has been followed by other countries. You will not follow that. On top of this, you will control the prices and bring them down to the level which you want. I am afraid the Government policy will not in the long run be such as to encourage the farmers to grow more food. Is there any guarantee that the prices of food-stuffs will not go down? You must see that the growers of food are stimulated to grow the sort of food or foods that you want.

I have been told that they have done something in the nature of giving some concessional rates and the difference has been paid but I have never been told how much concession has been given, for instance, in regard to seeds and other things.

War time difficulties have been mentioned as one of the reasons in the way of the development of agriculture. I should have thought that if there are any difficulties this is the opportunity to remove them. I cannot understand how this can be put forward as a plea on behalf of the Government.

What is the difficulty in the way of the Government in accepting this Resolution. I have my own difficulty in eliminating the word 'subsidy'. I am an agriculturist. I am the President of the C. P. and Berar Agriculturists Association. I have presided over several conferences and after going through C. P. and Berar, the one thing that I have found will really be to the benefit of the agriculturist is a programme of subsidy. I may or may not succeed in getting this Resolution accepted as it is but if the agriculturists were to organise themselves in the way they did in America, they would have their things in their own way.

**The Honourable Sir Jeremy Baisman:** They have objected to subsidies in America.

**Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh:** I said they can have their own way. They were first of all for the subsidy. They got the subsidy. Afterwards when they wanted prices to go higher up still after this subsidy was given, then they said 'No'. I say the agriculturists can have their own way only if they have agricultural associations. If they can organise themselves in the way that the Railway and Textile workers have done, then certainly a day will come when the Government will have to listen to them. I have seen what the attitude of the Government is. I suppose the Government will go in the same way it has been doing as it says it has got at heart the desire to help the agriculturist. Even if I were not to accept the elimination of certain words

and phrases, it would make no difference and they will all the same help the agriculturist though not as much and in the way I want. So far as I am concerned, I am not prepared to accept the amendment suggested. Sir, I have finished.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The question is:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that, as an anti-inflationary measure, a loan of ten crores of rupees, earmarked for purposes of subsidising agriculturists to grow more food and increase milk products be now floated."

The motion was adopted.

## RESOLUTION RE DEBARRING OF GOVERNMENT SERVANTS' ELECTION TO PORT HAJ COMMITTEES.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi** (Dacca cum Mymensingh: Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Deputy President, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that the constitution of the Calcutta Port Haj Committee should be revised so as to require its elected members to co-opt a member who belongs to Assam, but is resident in Calcutta for the time being."

**An Honourable Member**: You are moving the second Resolution in your name.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare** (Member for Indian Overseas): You cannot do that.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: I can. I can move any one of them I like.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): As the first Resolution is not barred, the Honourable Member must move it.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: Very well, Sir. I move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that Government servants should be debarred by law from standing as candidates for elected seats on the Port Haj Committees."

The constitution which prevails in the Calcutta Port Haj Committee gives the number of members to be 19. Of these 19 members, 6 are elected by the members of the Bengal Legislative Assembly and the Bengal Council, 2 are elected by the Muslim members of the Calcutta Corporation and 4 are co-opted and 7 are nominated by Government. What this Resolution seeks to do is that in regard to the 8 elected members, Government officials should be debarred by law from standing for election. If the Member for Indians Overseas cannot see his way to debar them by law, I would request him to constitute rules in such a way that the Government officials do not stand for the membership of this Committee. It is only in Calcutta that the Government officials are allowed to stand for this election, thereby reducing the power of the elected members of the Committee. These Government officials in Calcutta take side either with one or the other of the Shipping Companies. Propaganda is made by the Shipping Companies through these Government officials who are the members of the Port Haj Committee. It becomes impossible for the elected members of the Committee to function as against the wishes of the nominated members plus two Government officials who have come in as elected members.

**Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad** (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): But these two members have got only two votes.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: My Honourable friend was not in the House in the beginning. There are 7 nominated members and these two elected Government officials also go with them. This makes the number of official members 9. Now, there are only 10 members left. Sometimes one of these members is absent. The 9 remaining members are the residents of Calcutta; others come from the Mufassil.

Now, the position of the Port Haj Committee is that it has to fight for the grievances of the Hajis against the Government, against the Shipping Companies and against the Provincial Government as well in regard to the provincial laws that prevail there. Now, is it possible for the two officials who have come in as elected members to fight the Government? On the other hand, what they do is that they take up the propaganda in favour of Government and the

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Steamer Companies. That is what is going on.

Sir, I do not wish to take much time of the House, but I would like to give one or two references in this connection. In the Rahim Committee Report, my Honourable friend, the Member for Indians Overseas, strongly deprecated the officials who stand for election.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria** (Marwari Association: Indian Commerce): How do they get elected?

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: By official influence. They exercise official influence which others cannot do. The *Star of India* in its leader dated the 12th December, 1943, referred to the ensuing election which is going to take place in Calcutta. I will refer to one or two sentences only. It said:

"Those candidates who are known to be ardent advocates of the causes of the Haj pilgrims and are not handicapped by being Government servants to effectively criticise and successfully fight the Government to secure the redress of the manifold grievances of the Haj pilgrims may be returned. Only those non-official persons who have the first-hand knowledge of the pilgrim affairs and who are able to fight out any issue with the Government or the authorities and who have the energy to carry on the multifarious duties connected with the Haj should be chosen to constitute the Haj Committee."

Similarly, the *Star of India* dated the 7th of December pointed out in its leader:

"No member of the Committee who happens to be a Government servant can be expected to do justice to his position as such in matters of vital importance for the Haj pilgrimage in general and their existence in the Committee, therefore, becomes absolutely fruitless and futile."

As election was then arranged to take place in January the *Star of India* again referred to the same subject and said:

"In a public body official influence should be reduced to the minimum and non-official representatives of the people should have all the powers and responsibilities vested in the Board or Committee they constitute. The Port Haj Committee of Calcutta is a public institution but unfortunately the officials and the Government nominees have in it a far stronger hold than they deserve."

Then it gives the number of the Committee and says that practically there is an official majority as against non-official members. In the circumstances I submit to the House that the Resolution should be carried and Government should see that by law officials are prevented from standing for election. We have no objection to their being nominated but the nomination should be restricted to one-fifth and not more. The number of nominees is at present too many and should be curtailed. Officials should come by nomination and should not be allowed to stand for election. Sir, I move.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that Government servants should be debarred by law from standing as candidates for elected seats on the Port Haj Committees."

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai** (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, no one need be surprised that I have got up to speak on this Resolution.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare**: I am not surprised at all.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai**: I am glad. I support one part of this Resolution which demands that Government servants should not be allowed to stand for election to this Port Haj Committee. But I want another thing that this should not be a communal committee. It relates no doubt to Haj but members of other communities should not be debarred from it.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi**: They do come by nomination.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai**: Yes, but the Standing Haj Committee that is elected by this House does not contain any Hindu Member or even one of any other community. I was wondering if there is any rule or convention debarring them but I did not find any, and therefore a Hindu or any one belonging to any other religion should not be debarred from becoming a member of the Standing Haj Committee. On the contrary they will get much help from these members of other communities in looking after and joining hands in the interests of those who go for the Haj. We find that in committees dealing with matters pertaining to Hindus only our Muslim friends are elected or nominated. Therefore,

there should be no difference made in forming committees relating to Muslim affairs, and Muslims should not have a monopoly of membership in them.

**Mr. Deputy President** (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The Honourable Member is going beyond the scope of the Resolution and his remarks are not relevant.

**Mr. Lalchand Navalrai**: That is my suggestion and if they do not agree to it I will not support them in this Resolution. They should not make such committees exclusive or communal ones.

**Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang** (East Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, the Resolution is very simple and there is nothing communal in it as was scented by Mr. Lalchand Navalrai. The simple question is that the Port Haj Committee of Calcutta is expected to deal with matters which concern the facilities and welfare of pilgrims undertaking a sacred voyage to the Holy land of Hedjaz. Naturally there are several parties interested in putting their points of view with regard to these arrangements. The shipping companies are one party, the general public of the pilgrims are another party, the officials from the Government side who are interested in the arrangements are another party. As at present constituted, the Port Haj Committee of Calcutta, as my Honourable friend, Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, has told us, is so composed that on account of the presence of members nominated by Government and of Government servants who have got in through the door of election, the majority of memberships go to them, and the preponderance of such members really puts the representation of the public at a discount. That is the complaint. If Government officials are to be in a majority and are to come by two entrances, nomination by Government and election by a certain electorate, it is obvious that the popular point of view cannot be urged and the grievances which are felt by the travelling public cannot be redressed to the desired extent and the non-official elected members cannot have an effective voice in the deliberations, decisions and recommendations of the Port Haj Committee as they would have if the official element consisting of nominated and elected members were not so preponderant as it is today. I would submit that the request made by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi is a very reasonable one and I do not see how Government can afford to oppose a Resolution of that kind seeing that in Bombay and in Karachi the Port Haj Committees are so constituted that the elected popular element is in a majority. Here also the elected popular element—the non-official element—should be in a majority and the officials of course who are nominated by Government are there to advise and assist in solving the several problems that come before the Port Haj Committee in a way that they may not be decided in ignorance of facts and data and information which officials only can supply. For these reasons, Sir, very briefly stated, I support the Resolution moved by Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria**: I rise to support this Resolution. I have stood up for the reason, Sir, that my Honourable friend, Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, has said that he would like to have members of the Hindu community also on this committee, and, similarly, on committees on matters in which Hindus alone are interested he wants members of the Muslim community to serve. Sir, I do not agree with his proposal at all. In my opinion there is a very salutary convention in this House—and I think it is the right one—that matters which relate only to one community must be guided and controlled by members of that community alone. As Haj Committee has got nothing to do with Hindus, I do not think Hindus should have any place on such committees, and it must be only manned by Muslims, and among the Muslims also only those who have got reverence for performing Haj—I mean, not the reformed Muslims. Fortunately, there are not many reformed Mussalmans.

**An Honourable Member**: Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria**: He is a *Sanatani* Mussalman!

**An Honourable Member**: A new definition of Muslims.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria**: I will say that this committee should be manned only by Muslims having religious views so that they can provide the maximum amount of facilities for Hajis.

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in the same way, Sir, I would also plead and request the Muslim Members of this House that they should not take active part and go into committees in which Hindus alone are interested. I am very sorry to remark that this salutary convention was not observed in the case of Hindu Codification Intestate Bill, but I hope that when the Hindu Marriage Bill comes up before this House, members of the Muslim League Party will not take active part in that and I will appeal to Muslim Members that they should not have any concern with it. It concerns Hindus only—it does not concern Muslims in any way—and I would humbly appeal to the Leader of the Muslim League Party that they should wash their hands clean off that Bill and should not serve on the Select Committee of that Bill. If they would do so, the Bill will naturally be moulded by the opinions of Hindu Members alone.

Then, Sir, while I am very glad that facilities are being given for Haj to members of the Muslim community, I very much regret that facilities are not given to members of the Hindu community.

**An Honourable Member:** There is no committee for Hindu pilgrims.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): The only facility given is that Haj has been stopped.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** Government is not providing facilities for Hindu pilgrims in the same way as they are doing for the Muslim community.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** They are not giving any facilities.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** I am referring now to a particular instance where people have to embark at Calcutta and go to Ganga Sagar. It is not overseas, but about 50,000 people go from Calcutta to Ganga Sagar and still very little, or absolutely nothing, is being done for the comfort of these passengers either at the port of embarkation or at Ganga Sagar itself. I have been there myself and I was thoroughly displeased with the provisions that were made. While Government is giving every facility for the performance of Haj, they, unfortunately, stopped the pilgrims from going to Ganga Sagar last year and the year before last.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Not the Government of India; it is the Provincial Government.

**Babu Baijnath Bajoria:** After all, Provincial Government gets directions from the Central Government. I think, Government would do well to assist members of both the communities in performing their religious pilgrimages and afford them every facility so that they may have to face the least inconvenience.

**Syed Ghulam Bhek Nairang:** The question may now be put.

**Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal** (Bhagalpur, Purnea and the Sonthal Parganas: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I support the Resolution. I will only say a few words from the nationalist point of view. I agree with the Mover of the Resolution that there should be no more seats for the Government servants on the Port Haj Committees. I support this, and I may tell the Government that if they accept this, they would be doing real service to the national cause, but, unfortunately, they have up till now forgotten the principle of how to help the nation in the right way. Generally, it is said that Government servants are neutral in the matter of religion, but I think it would be better in the interest of their own institution if Government servants were kept aloof from thinking communally or religiously. Government may not be conscious—or Government may be doing it consciously—that even in this way, in the name of religious neutrality, some persons are let loose to think in their own way, and sometimes they do harm to the nation. I may say that although they may not be conscious about that, but all the same they are doing harm and they would appreciate this if it were only possible for them to realize that there was a time in the history of England when Queen Elizabeth of England did not even think of marrying because in case she married a consort of one community she would be taken to belong to that particular religious community and that feeling she did not like to see amongst her nationals and it was for that reason that she

remained unmarried all along. Here it is not possible for a Government servant to keep even aloof from any religious institution, and from such bodies. We may have another example in Emperor Akbar, who, in order to create the impression in his subjects that he had not got any predilection for any religion, followed *Din-i-Elahi*. That is to say, he was following neither the religion of the Hindus nor of the Muslims.

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

These are the examples set by good administrators of the past, and it can be argued here for the best guidance of this Government that they should also adopt such policies and they should not allow their servants to identify themselves with any religious or communal bodies. That will surely be in the interests of the administration itself and in the interest of the nation. We know that we are suffering too much from such things even at present. It is often a matter of complaint before the Government that Government servants do take sides in the communal matters. And it must be fresh in your memory that a constable shot dead a boy belonging to a community other than his own in the communally surcharged atmosphere of Cawnpur during the communal riot. Perhaps the constable might or might not have been tried. But when those who are still higher placed indulge in communalism or help in surcharging the atmosphere, do not realise their responsibility, how much less the sense of responsibility must be that of a constable. You can then understand how much more you are responsible for keeping up a trend of thinking that may gain ground in the country; and consciously or unconsciously it is on account of such attitude of the Government in allowing their servants to identify themselves with these religious bodies that the atmosphere of the country is surcharged with the virus of communalism, and it is from this point of view that I beg to support this Resolution and I wish that the Government might adopt it in the best interests of the nation.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** Sir, the proposal made in this resolution wants that officials as a class should be statutorily debarred from serving on a public body like the Port Haj Committee. I understand in Bombay and in Karachi there are no officials elected on these Committees, but they are elected on the Committee in Calcutta alone. So this Resolution really affects only one place, Calcutta.

On principle it is difficult to justify the exclusion by law of such election. Haj Committees are not political bodies. Consequently, Government servants who represent an enlightened section of the Haj-going public should not, I believe, be deprived of this opportunity of rendering public service to their community.

**Syed Ghulam Bhik Nairang:** Even when the community does not want it!

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** Government servants can be elected to those bodies by the permission of the Local Governments. So Government servants stand for election to those bodies with the approval of their Government. That is the position.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Approval or permission? Do they take permission of Government before they stand for election?

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** That is how I understand it. I am open to correction.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** In this case they do not take the permission of the Government.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** I said I am open to correction. Muslims when they are elected there, they are not elected as Government servants but as devoted Muslims.

**Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan** (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): That does not change the position. They are still Government servants.



**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** I take it that they represent the Haj pilgrims as Muslims. They say Muslims are Muslims first and everything else afterwards. And it is clear that it is difficult to make such a law for one city of Calcutta.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** It is not a question of Calcutta. I said by convention, there is no official in Karachi or Bombay. The law would be for all India and not for Calcutta.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** Well, hard cases make bad law. Then to implement this proposal, there is another door open. It can be done by amending the rules, but under existing arrangements, rule-making powers under the Port Haj Committees have been vested in the Provincial Governments.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** The Rahim Committee definitely decided . . .

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

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** All right, I will give in.

(After a slight pause.)

I grant that the Rahim Report was against the practice of officials standing for election to these Committees. But I do not think Government has accepted all those proposals nor is it bound to accept them.

(Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi stood up in his seat.)

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. The Honourable Member cannot go on like that.

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** Although I am not in favour of this proposal I shall forward to the Provincial Governments concerned a copy of this debate and I will leave it to them to take such action as they deem fit in the light of local conditions in Bombay, Calcutta or Karachi. With this assurance I hope the Honourable Member will withdraw the Resolution.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** How can they take any action for Karachi or Bombay?

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** I said all the three. Then, Sir, a friend has raised the point of Hindu nomination to this Committee or *vice versa*. I won't go into this controversial matter but I will make a statement that there is a provision in the rules governing the Standing Haj Committees made by the Department that five Muslim Members should be elected from the Assembly and two Muslim Members from the Council of State. So that is that.

Then there are certain non-Muslims on the Haj Committees. The position is that these non-Muslims are official members on the Port Haj Committees who have been nominated by the Governments of Bombay, Bengal and Sind in their official capacity.

A reference has been made about difference of treatment given to the Hindu pilgrims and the Muslim pilgrims. It is absolutely an illusion. It is a misunderstanding because the Haj pilgrimage stands quite apart from all the other pilgrimages. It is a pilgrimage in which pilgrims go overseas and it is a central subject, while Hindu pilgrims do not go overseas, and it is a provincial subject; so my friend, Mr. Bajoria, should take his grievances to the Bengal Government, if he has any.

I might make it quite clear that I will forward the debates in this House to the Bengal Government and I hope that with this assurance the Honourable Member will see his way to withdraw his Resolution.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** Sir, the Honourable Member for Indians Overseas will do well to get his Secretary posted with all that has been said in the Rahim Committee report . . .

**The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed** (Leader of the House): There is no Rahim Committee; there is a Rahim Report.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** I have read the report very carefully and one of the recommendations is that all rule-making powers should be taken over by the Government of India. . .

**The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare:** I have already said that I know the Report—I have read it; Government have gone through the report and Government have definitely said that they are not bound to accept all the recommendations.

**Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi:** I am not questioning that; but may I point out the facts? The Rahim Report stated, first, that the Government of India should take over all the powers of the Provincial Governments and bring the powers into the hands of the Government of India, because it is a central subject. Then also he proceeds that this rule-making power given to various provinces, under which they make different rules, should be taken away, and the Central Government should make uniform rules for all the provinces. That report was considered in the Central Haj Committee and that recommendation was accepted by the Secretary who was then presiding; and later on when we met at Bombay in last May, this very thing came up before the meeting—Mr. Aney could not preside, but Mr. Bozman presided, and he accepted that, that the Government accepts the principle that all the rule-making powers should be now vested in the Government of India. I want the Honourable Member to implement that; let them make the rules for the three provinces uniformly. That will settle the matter once for all.

Then, as regards the rule-making power, preventing an official from standing, I would say this. Out of the 19 members—when the Deputy President was in the Chair I gave him the constitution of these committees—7 members are nominated by the Government, 6 are elected by the Bengal Legislative Assembly and Bengal Council, 2 by the Corporation, 4 are co-opted. But by nominating 7 members straightaway you bring the elected number down to 12; and of the 12, four are co-opted and who knows whether Government officials may not be co-opted? If at least two of these are elected, it would be some good; unless the elected members can get two at least out of this 4, they can do practically nothing at all. The policy is that the Government officials should be there to protect their vested interests and they always oppose anything which goes against Government; that is their function on these committees and that is what I want to prevent. It was not the intention of the Legislature; also it was not the intention when Sir Fazl-i-Hussain brought in these Haj committees, that the Government officials should predominate there. In this case they are predominating in Bengal. Some rule or some method has to be found that they may not stand and swell their numbers out of the 19; and thus defeat the object for which this committee was formed. I hope that the House will carry this Resolution.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that Government servants should be debarred by law from standing as candidates for elected seats on the Port Haj Committees."

The Assembly divided:

AYES—22.

Abdul Ghani, Maulvi Muhammad.  
Abdullah, Mr. H. M.  
Azhar Ali, Mr. Muhammad.  
Bajoria, Babu Baijnath.  
Chatteropadhyaya, Mr. Amarendra Nath.  
Choudhury, Mr. Abdur Rasheed.  
Choudhury, Mr. Muhammad Hussain.  
Dam, Mr. Ananga Mohan.  
Datta, Mr. Akhil Chandra.  
Deshmukh, Mr. Govind V.  
Essak Sait, Mr. H. A. Sathar H.

Fazl-i-Haq Piracha, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.  
Ghuznavi, Sir Abdul Halim.  
Kaifash Bihari Lall, Mr.  
Lalchand Navalrai, Mr.  
Liaquat Ali Khan, Nawabzada Muhammad.  
Murtuza Sahib Bahadur, Maulvi Syed.  
Nairang, Syed Ghulam Bhik.  
Sant Singh, Sardar.  
Siddique Ali Khan, Nawab.  
Yamin Khan, Sir Muhammad.  
Zia Uddin Ahmad, Dr. Sir.

## NOES—30.

Ahmad Nawaz Khan, Major Nawab Sir.  
 Ambedkar, The Honourable Dr. B. R.  
 Azizul Huque, The Honourable Sir M.  
 Benthall, The Honourable Sir Edward.  
 Bhagwan Sahay, Mr.  
 Caroe, Sir Olaf.  
 Daga, Seth Sunder Lall.  
 Dalal, Dr. Sir Ratanji Dinshaw.  
 Dalpat Singh, Sardar Bahadur Captain.  
 Habibur-Rahman, Khan Bahadur Sheikh.  
 Haider, Khan Bahadur Shamsuddin.  
 Imam, Mr. Saiyid Haider.  
 Ismaiel Alikhan, Kunwer Hajee.  
 Jawahar Singh, Sardar Bahadur Sardar Sir.  
 Khare, The Honourable Dr. N. B.  
 The motion was negatived.

Krishnamoorthy, Mr. E. S. A.  
 Kushal Pal Singh, Raja Bahadur.  
 Maxwell, The Honourable Sir Reginald.  
 Mudaliar, The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami.  
 Ogilvie, Sir Charles.  
 Piere Lall Kureel, Mr.  
 Raisman, The Honourable Sir Jeremy.  
 Roy, The Honourable Sir Asoka.  
 Shahban, Khan Bahadur Mian Ghulam Kadir Muhammad.  
 Spence, Sir George.  
 Sultan Ahmed, The Honourable Sir.  
 Thakur Singh, Capt.  
 Tyson, Mr. J. D.  
 Zahid Hussain, Mr.  
 Zaman, Mr. S. R.

## RESOLUTION RE REFORMS COMMITTEE FOR BALUCHISTAN.

**Mr. President** (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The next Resolution is in the name of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. He is absent.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan** (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): I have been authorised by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan to move that Resolution, Sir.

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

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan**: Sir, I beg to move:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint immediately a committee, with a majority of elected Members of the Central Legislature on it, to recommend as to what steps should be taken to associate constitutionally the people of Baluchistan with the administration of the province on similar lines as in other provinces of British India."

This is not the first time, Mr. President, that Baluchistan and the plight of the people of that unfortunate province have come up for consideration before this Honourable House. In 1939 a resolution was moved recommending to the Government to give Baluchistan provincial autonomy, or, in other words, a constitution similar to that which is being enjoyed by all the other provinces of British India. Then again in 1941 a cut motion was moved during the budget Session asking for the introduction of provincial autonomy. On both these occasions the spokesman of the Government put forward certain pleas against the immediate introduction of reforms like the ones that are being enjoyed by the rest of India. I shall deal with those objections in the latter part of my speech. This time the Resolution has been drafted in a form which might be acceptable to the Government. It asks the Government to appoint a committee to enquire into the whole administration of Baluchistan and find out the conditions under which the people of that province are living, and to suggest what measures can be taken which would associate the people with the administration of that province.

Sir, Baluchistan has got an area of 1, 34,638 square miles; the total population of Baluchistan, including that of the States, is 8,68,617. The area of what is called British Baluchistan and the Agency area is 54,228 square miles, and the population of this area, is 5,84,781. Last time when we discussed this matter the Honourable the Secretary for External Affairs stated that British Baluchistan had a population of only about 2 lakhs, and he excluded what is called the Agency area from the British Baluchistan proper. To my mind there does not seem to be any justification for making this distinction, and I would refer this Honourable House to the Census Report of 1931, Parts I and II, Volume IV, page 3. If my Honourable friend, the Secretary, would look at the remarks that have been made in this report, he will find that the report does not make any distinction between what he chooses to call proper British Baluchistan and the Agency Area. The report says:

"The distinction between British Baluchistan and Agency territories is, however, only nominal. For practical purposes they are one and the same."

Therefore, these two that are one and the same do deserve serious consideration on the part of this Honourable House. I hope the Honourable the Secretary will not come forward with this argument that proper British Baluchistan has got a population of only two lakhs, because from the Government document itself I have shown that the Government themselves do not think that there is any such distinction that both these areas could not be treated as one.

Sir, Baluchistan came under British rule about 60 or 70 years ago and I think I am not exaggerating when I say that the conditions that prevail in that province are mediaeval. The system of Government which is being practised is feudal and the people are not treated as human beings but as so many chattels. The people of Baluchistan, Mr. President, have no civic rights. They have no elected municipalities or district boards. An Act was passed in 1896 giving Quetta a sort of a municipality. In 1896 it was laid down that there will be certain nominated persons on the municipality of Quetta. It is nearly 50 years now and still the municipality of Quetta is being run by nominated personnel. It shows callousness on the part of the authorities not to associate the people with the administration of even their own city. The sanitary conditions in the town are deplorable. The roads in the city of Quetta have not been touched for the last 10 or 12 years and the reason is obvious. Those Honourable Members who adorn the benches of the municipality of Quetta have been sitting there as nominated members in some cases for the last 36 years. They have no electorate to face. They have no one before whom they have to answer for the inconveniences which the people suffer. To my mind, Sir, it is a very serious blot on the British administration of Baluchistan that after 60 or 70 years they have not even introduced the primary local self-government in that province. There are no district boards. One has never heard of such a thing as district boards in Baluchistan. Now, Quetta is a big town. It has a population, if you include the population of the cantonment also, of over 60,000. The population of the Quetta town itself is about 35,000 and yet it has not got even an elected municipality. People in Baluchistan have no civic rights of any kind whatsoever. So much for the civic rights of the people.

Now, let me tell you the terrible laws under which the people of Baluchistan are being governed. There are no proper courts. They are being governed by Frontier Crimes Regulation and customs and I would just like to point out to this Honourable House as to what are the provisions of law and what are these customs under which the people of Baluchistan are governed. My Honourable friend, Mr. Kazmi, put certain questions to the Government on the 8th November 1943. He asked:

"Is it or is it not a fact that decrees for the price of the person of a Baluchi widow in favour of the relatives of her former husband are passed against her second husband under the Frontier Crimes Regulation?"

Is it or is it not a fact that a divorced Baluchi woman after divorce is sold against her consent to any other man by her former husband, and that if the woman does not marry the purchaser and marries another person, then money decrees for her price are passed by the Courts against the husband of her own choice in favour of the unsuccessful purchaser under the said Regulation?

Is it or is it not a fact that if a Baluchi girl after the appearance of signs of puberty gets her infant age Nikah cancelled under the law through a civil court by the exercise of her option of puberty and that the husband gets decrees for the price of her person in his favour passed by Political Courts against her second husband as well as guardian and also gets a decree for damages for the breach of custom, and that orders for expulsion (Jila Watani) from the city of the girl and her husband are passed?

Is it or is it not a fact that even before the birth of a Baluchi girl, which is termed as *Lafi Bazu* by Baluchis, many agreements of her sale and purchase take place, and that the Political Courts legalising such sale and purchase agreements pass decrees of the price of their persons."

**Mr. N. M. Joshi** (Nominated Non-Official): That is slavery!

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** The reply of the Government was: "It is a fact that the practices akin to those mentioned do exist".

**An Honourable Member:** Shame.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** Now, I ask you whether any Government that lays any claim to civilisation should allow things like that to

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happen in any part which is under its rule or under its domination. This, to my mind, is the darkest blot on the British administration in this part of the country. These are the kinds of laws under which the people of Baluchistan are being governed.

Sir, since 1935, civil judicial courts have been established in Quetta and there again a distinction has been created that any crimes that are committed in what is called the 'A' area are tried by these judicial civil courts and the crimes committed in the rest of the Baluchistan province are tried by jirga. In a moment, I shall deal with the kind of justice that is meted out by these jirgas.

As far as the trial in these judicial courts is concerned, my information is that the officials who dispense justice on behalf of His Majesty King George VI, Emperor of India, are those who have no knowledge of law.

**Sir Olaf Caroe** (Secretary, External Affairs Department): I was one of them.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** Out of 12, there are 4 who know something of law and since my friend has interrupted me, I am forced to say something which I didn't want to say. The Judge of that province is a gentleman in whose academic qualifications column is written "not known". He is the person who is in the position of next to the High Court in any other province. I did not want to mention this fact because I thought that by 'general remarks' it would be sufficient to prove as to what are the conditions under which law is administered in that province, but I have been provoked by my Honourable friend, the Secretary for External Affairs. I personally never like to mention any persons individually. Now, Sir, this is the condition as far as the judicial courts are concerned.

Let us now examine as to the type of justice that is being dispensed by these Jirgas under the British Government in this country. Sir a 'Jirga' means a body of elders. At one time these Jirgas comprised of heads of the various tribes. But later on a change came over the system and the Divisional Officer for the 'useful' services rendered by individuals in that locality nominated them as members of the Jirga. Many of these gentlemen are persons of no position or status. Many of them are those who cannot even sign their names and yet people under this system of Jirga are sentenced to death and those who send them to death put their thumb impression on the decrees that are passed against these unfortunate people.

**Sir Olaf Caroe:** I think my Honourable friend said that these Jirgas pass sentences of death. That is not the case. The maximum sentence that can be passed on a Jirga finding is 14 years.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** I think it would have been better if those unfortunate people were sentenced to death than to be confined in those terrible prisons for 14 years. As a matter of fact, I was giving the Government more credit than they deserve. In these cases, release by means of death is better than living under the terrible conditions in which these unfortunate people have to live in jails. Anyhow, my Honourable friend only objected to the nature of the sentence and has not objected to the type of the judges who pass these sentences or to the kind of laws under which the people are governed.

**Sardar Sant Singh** (West Punjab: Sikh): Or the kind of justice that is administered.

**Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan:** Now, Sir, let me tell you what is happening actually. As a matter of fact, there are several cases but I have got one case here and I have very little time at my disposal. Here is one typical case of the type of justice that is meted out by these Jirgas. A minor girl was given in marriage by her father. When the girl became of age, she refused to go to her husband's home. The father was asked to persuade her, but he refused to coerce her. Now, what happened? What was the offence of the father? He is now rotting in the Pishin jail for the last six months. His guilt was that he refused to coerce his daughter to go with a man with whom she did not want to go. This is the type of justice that is being meted out.

Then, I heard of another case. A woman was raped by a man. It happened in what is called the 'B' area, which means that the trial was to take place before the Jirga. These wonderful gentlemen with great legal knowledge and decent feelings found that the woman was raped, but instead of punishing the man they punished the woman. They said why did she allow such a thing to be done. Now, Sir, I ask you: can this Government really feel proud when things like this happen under the Union Jack, of which they are always very proud.

Last time it was stated by my Honourable friend that people there are very happy. The Sardars do not want any reforms; they are perfectly satisfied with the type of Government under which they are living. And therefore the Government would not be justified in introducing any change as long as the people were satisfied. In other words, the Honourable the Secretary's contention was that it was not the concern of the Government whether the laws were really severe; whether they were just or whether they were not just as long as the people did not raise their voice against them. How can you expect the people, down-trodden as they are under these severe laws, to be able to raise their voice against it? How can you justify the continuation of this kind of administration in any part of India? Did the people of India want to give up Satti? Did you not force them to give it up because it was a cruel custom? If you had left everybody to do as he liked, then I daresay things in India would have been quite different to what they are now.

Now, Sir, let me tell you that inspite of all this a great awakening has come over the people of Baluchistan. The Government always come forward with the argument that the Sardars and the Chiefs who hold great influence in that province will oppose the introduction of any kind of reform in that area and therefore the Government do not feel justified in doing something which might annoy these mighty Sardars. But, Sir, let me draw the attention of the Honourable the Secretary to an address which was presented to Lord Linlithgow when he visited Baluchistan as the Viceroy and Governor General of India. The address was presented by these very Sardars and Chiefs, and what did they say in that address?

They said:

"We feel that our steadfast loyalty entitles us to a position equivalent to the other Governor's provinces of India instead of that of a minor administration. A beginning may kindly be made by granting representation at the Centre. We therefore pray that due notice may kindly be taken of our desires and aspirations in this respect."

This is what the sardars and chiefs themselves represented to the then Viceroy and Governor General of India, and my submission is that even if the sardars and chiefs objected to it, as long as that portion is in British India it is not the sardars whose voice must prevail but the voice of the people that should prevail, and it is the people of that area that we should consider,—lakhs and lakhs of them and not a few individuals.

Now let us examine what Government have done for the educational advancement of the people of that province. Last time when we had a discussion on this the Honourable the Secretary tried to take credit for the actions of Government. The position in that province, as was made clear in the debate of 1941, with regard to the number of school going children is 1·6 per cent. only of the population, whereas in other provinces the lowest is 4·1 and even in a place like Coorg, it is 7·5. The House will be interested to know that after the earthquake for about 5 or 6 years there was not even a Government high school in Baluchistan; there were some private schools started by private individuals and private committees. Today there is no degree college in that province. One college has been started but it will teach students only up to the Intermediate, and that I suppose the Honourable the Secretary would like to take credit for,—that after 70 years' rule they have succeeded in starting a college which will teach up to the Intermediate classes. There was no girls' high school run by Government in that province. I am told that last year Government sanctioned a certain sum of money for putting up a building for a Government girls' school, but they were not able to put up a building because Government said

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that material was not available. Of course material is always available for houses for officials and such other objects. The money lapsed because it could not be spent in that year. Government now refuse to give that money again, because they were not able to put up a building that year. That is the state of affairs as regards education. There is no such thing as primary schools or secondary schools worth the name and yet they have a full-fledged supervising staff to go over the whole of the province.

My Honourable friend stated last time that the revenue of Baluchistan was about 20 lakhs; my information is that it is between 20 and 30 lakhs. The Government of India give an annual subvention of about 60 lakhs. That means that altogether, according to the Honourable the Secretary himself, about one crore is spent on the Baluchistan administration. And let me tell you that very little of this one crore is spent for the advancement, either educational or economical, of the people of that unfortunate province. Most of this money is spent for secret purposes for which no account is available. It might interest this House to know that the Honourable the Secretary himself described Baluchistan as an agricultural province but the magnificent amount that is spent in that province for the advancement of agriculture is about 70,000 rupees. These really are the conditions that have been prevailing for the last so many years, and I think the time has come when a full survey should be made of the situation in Baluchistan and the conditions prevailing there. These six lakhs of people are entitled to receive human treatment; they are entitled to receive the same type of education as we have been demanding for other parts of India; they are entitled to receive the same kind of justice as is being practised in other parts of India; they are entitled to demand economic uplift on the same lines as for the people in the rest of India. Sir, I submit that we in this House have a great responsibility in this matter. Practically every province of India is represented in this House; Baluchistan and its people are the only unfortunate people who have no representative sitting in this House. And therefore I submit that our duty to these people who are not represented in this House is greater, and I hope that every Honourable Member of this House will support this demand which is for sheer and mere justice, which is for securing rights that every human being is entitled to demand and which is for creating a better Baluchistan,—a Baluchistan where people will feel free, a Baluchistan where people will feel that they are human beings and not so many chattels, a Baluchistan where people will be made to feel that they are in no way inferior to the people in other parts of India. I will appeal to the Government that the proposition which we have placed before them this time is such as they should have no difficulty in accepting. You claim that you are fighting this war for the freedom of the world; but first for God's sake practise that at home. These people whom God has placed under your care are deserving of greater consideration, greater sympathy than those who were no concern of yours in the past. I appeal to you that if you really mean all that you have been saying in connection with fighting this war, then do justice to these six lakhs of people who have during the last seventy years not been treated as human beings. Their claim is greater than the claim of any other people and I hope that the Government this time will come out with greater sympathy and with greater consideration and do justice to these people whose case I have had the honour of placing before this Honourable House.

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

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to appoint immediately a committee, with a majority of elected Members of the Central Legislature on it, to recommend as to what steps should be taken to associate constitutionally the people of Baluchistan with the administration of the province on similar lines as in other provinces of British India."

As it is now five of the clock, I adjourn the House to eleven of the clock tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 2nd March, 1944.