

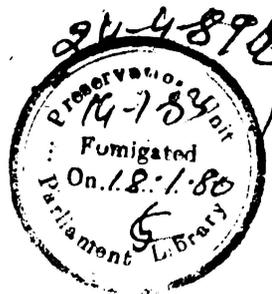
22nd March 1944

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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Deputy President :

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

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 22nd 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. Vishnu Sahay, I.C.S., M.L.A. (Government of India: Nominated Official).

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

(a) ORAL ANSWERS.

OUTBREAK OF EPIDEMICS IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

569. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware of the exceeding severity of plague, small-pox and cholera in the most populous and rich districts of the Madras Province?

(b) What are the weekly mortality statistics and the statistics relating to the above epidemics?

(c) Is it not a fact that the above epidemics are prevalent for months together without any signs of abatement?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a), (b) and (c). Plague has been prevalent in epidemic form mainly in the Coimbatore district which recorded in 1943 a mortality of 3,924 out of a provincial total of 4,475. Small-pox has been prevalent in all districts and the recorded mortality in 1943 was 6,536 as compared with an average of 3,119 in the previous five years. Cholera has been prevalent in severe epidemic form, the reported deaths in 1943 being 1,06,045 as compared with an average of 15,025 in the previous five years.

A statement giving figures of reported deaths from all causes and from plague, small-pox and cholera, separately, from January 1943 to January 1944 is laid on the table. Plague continues to be present in epidemic form only in the Coimbatore district. Smallpox continues at about the same level. Cholera incidence fluctuates but is lower at present than in the corresponding period in 1943.

Statement showing deaths month by month in the Madras Presidency in the year 1943 and January 1944.

Diseases.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.
1. All causes	121,191	93,849	84,567	73,997	78,634	83,094	111,191
2. Small-pox	516	380	608	701	663	499	577
3. Plague	330	151	112	25	6	78	224
4. Cholera	23,538	10,966	5,150	2,642	2,659	4,045	18,529
5. Total of small-pox, plague and cholera.	24,384	11,497	5,870	3,368	3,328	4,622	19,330

Diseases.	August.	September.	October.	Novr.	Deor.	Total.	January 1944.
1. All causes	100,836	81,729	84,804	102,909	*
2. Small-pox	525	456	409	646	556	6,536	1,176
3. Plague	444	510	649	971	975	4,475	973
4. Cholera	11,814	2,695	3,550	9,116	11,341	106,045	7,845
5. Total of small-pox, plague and cholera.	12,783	3,661	4,608	10,733	12,872	117,066	9,994

*Figures not available.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What are the causes of these epidemics, and what steps have the Government taken to remove the basic causes?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: So far as the steps taken are concerned, I think I am answering a question later. It is very difficult to say what are the causes of an epidemic. They may vary with different diseases. Mal-nutrition might be a contributory cause in the case of cholera, certainly.

OUTBREAK OF EPIDEMICS IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY

570. † Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state whether the plague prevalent in Coimbatore, Salem, Malabar and the Nilgiris is out of control?

(b) Is the Government of Madras practically helpless in the matter of fighting it? If so, what are the measures adopted by the Central Government to stem it? If none, why?

(c) Is it a fact that up-to-date methods of fighting it are not available?

(d) Is it not a fact that the existence of clusters of slums in the urban areas of the districts affected is the real cause of prevalence of the epidemic? If so, are there any attempts being made to clear such slums in the best interests of public health and national welfare?

(e) Are the Government of India contemplating to put through a comprehensive Housing Act on the lines of which every civilised country has done—Britain, Australia, France, Denmark, Belgium and so on? If not, why not?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) There is no reason to suppose that plague is out of control in the districts mentioned.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part and third part the Central Government are assisting the Madras Government in the procurement of supplies of cyanogas.

(c) Information has recently been received that stocks of cyanogas are exhausted. Other methods of fighting plague are available.

(d) Plague is caused by infected rat fleas and slum conditions favour the spread of the disease. Slum clearance is a matter for which Provincial Governments are primarily responsible.

(e) No. Housing legislation is a matter for Provincial Governments.

OUTBREAK OF EPIDEMICS IN MADRAS PRESIDENCY

571. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state if it is not a fact that cholera is working havoc in many districts of the Madras Province for the last one year or more?

(b) Is it not a fact that cases of small-pox are reported in the month of January from week to week in almost all the districts of the Province except Ramnad and Trichinopoly?

(c) Have the Government of India taken sufficient care and precautionary measures to stem the tide of persistent and exceedingly severe epidemics of cholera and small-pox?

(d) Are timely inoculation and treatment being provided for all the people?

(e) Have they procured an adequate supply of the required quantity of Sera?

(f) How many persons are there who are competent to inoculate the people of the affected areas?

(g) What additions have been made to the materials and machinery necessary to tackle with the epidemic of cholera now afflicting the whole province?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Cholera has been widely prevalent in Madras during the past year.

(b) Cases of small-pox have been reported from all districts.

(c) Precautionary measures to prevent the spread of epidemics are primarily a matter for the Provincial Government.

(d) to (g). The Government of India understand that timely inoculation and treatment have been provided. Approximately 10 million persons were inoculated against cholera and about 4 millions were vaccinated in 1948, 1,800 members of the public health staff and 200 additional hands have been employed on inoculation and vaccination work, in addition to medical personnel in institutions and subsidised medical practitioners. It is understood that there has been no shortage of materials or equipment required for dealing with the cholera epidemic.

DESIRABILITY OF CHECKING DETERIORATION OF THE HEALTH AND STAMINA OF THE MASSES

572. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state whether the Government of India realise that cholera and small-pox have a tendency to become endemic due to the growing deterioration in the physical stamina of the nation?

(b) Is not the growing deterioration due to dangerous under-nourishment?

(c) Is not the under-nourishment due to uncooked and undercooked food which is due to shortage of fuel?

(d) Do the Government of India realise the urgency of the problems of food and shelter essential for national health and welfare? If so, what are the measures proposed to be adopted?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The factors which govern endemicity are not yet fully understood but deterioration in physical condition renders a person more liable to certain diseases, including cholera.

(b) In certain parts of India there has been a deterioration in the physical stamina of the people due to under-nourishment.

(c) Certain staple foods of the country, e.g., rice and millets lose some of their nutritive value if they are not properly cooked; but the extent to which the shortage of fuel is a contributory factor towards under-nourishment is not known.

(d) The reply to the first portion of this part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second portion I would refer the Honourable Member to the White Paper on the Food Position in India circulated to Members of the House during the last Session. The provision of shelter is a matter for Provincial Governments.

FIFTEEN-YEAR PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

573. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Is the Honourable the Food Member aware of a fifteen-year plan of economic development proposed by leading industrialists to revolutionize living conditions in India?

(b) Is it a fact that a memorandum outlining the plan has been sent to the Government of India over the signature of Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas, Mr. J. R. D. Tata, Mr. G. D. Birla and other industrialists and economists?

(c) Does it not contain three five-year plans viewed from the angle of national needs in the sphere of (i) food, (ii) clothing, (iii) housing, (iv) education, and (v) medical relief?

(d) Are the Government of India prepared to co-operate with the authors of such a plan, who are determined to raise the standard of life in India? If not, why not?

(e) Is not the establishment of a National Government at the Centre absolutely essential for the fullest measure of co-operation between the State and the masses of people of India?

(f) Are the Government of India prepared to place the memorandum of the fifteen-year plan prepared by the prominent industrialists before the General Policy Committee on Post-war Reconstruction at its next meeting in the near future?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (b). The Government have seen copies of the plan but no memorandum outlining the plan has been received by it.

(c) The Honourable Member is presumably aware of the contents of the plan.

(d) The Government of India will take into consideration the plan as well as any other suggestions which may be put forward for post-war development.

(e) This is a matter of opinion, Sir.

(f) Agenda for the next meeting of the General Policy Committee has not yet been settled.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Are the Government contemplating to take action on the lines suggested by Sir Frederick James in his speech in this House, the day before yesterday?

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

SCHEME OF EDUCATION BY THE EDUCATIONAL ADVISER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

574. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Does the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands propose to distribute to the Members of the Assembly the scheme of Education made by the Educational Adviser to the Government of India for their study and circulate the scheme through newspapers for the information of the educated public?

(b) Has the Honourable Member received any other education scheme from institutions and public bodies not related with the Government institution? Have any of the different universities submitted any scheme for future education in India? Are Government ready to get such schemes from outsiders, private persons and institutions for comparative study before giving effect to the Education Adviser's scheme?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) No, but six copies of the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education based on the Memorandum of the Educational Adviser to the Government of India on Post-War Educational Development have been placed in the Library of the Legislature. Copies of the scheme have already been sent to the principal newspapers of this country.

(b) None. The Central Advisory Board invited the views of the Inter-University Board and the observations of that body and of the Indian Universities Conference were duly considered by the Central Advisory Board in formulating their final recommendations. Any scheme submitted by non-official bodies in this behalf will be considered on its own merit.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the refusal of the Government of India to supply copies to the Members of the Legislature is due to their policy of economy or to the contempt which they feel for the Legislature?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Certainly not the latter. I think it is in the interest of paper economy.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India will consult the Legislature whether such economy is in the interest of the country?

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: How many copies were printed?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Probably between 2,000 and 3,000.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether copies are available for sale?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes, they are available at twelve annas per copy.

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: May I know how are they distributed?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: 160 copies of the report are given to newspapers and a large number of the copies have been distributed to Provinces and Indian States.

UNANI AND OTHER SYSTEMS AS PART OF SCHEME FOR IMPROVING MEDICAL HELP TO MASSES.

575. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state if in the scheme for improving

the general medical help to the people of India, he has considered it advisable to accept *Unani*, Homœopathy and *Ayurvedic* systems of treatment to collaborate with Allopathic system?

(b) Has the Honourable Member made any scheme to implement other systems of treatment as collaborate with the allopathy system and with that in view, has arranged for State recognition of other systems? Does the Honourable Member propose to consider if Homœopathy might be accepted as a post-graduate study for medical students?

(c) Has the Honourable Member arranged for any research on medicines used by the *Ayurvedic* system and the *Unani* system on scientific basis by appointing or calling practitioners and scholars of the aforesaid systems for doing research work? If not, when would the Honourable Member come to a decision about accepting such systems as useful to Indian people and implementing them for getting facilities for treatment of the vast Indian population who cannot afford costly allopathic treatment?

(d) What is the number of physicians (allopathy) in different provinces and their ratio to the population of each Province? Does the Honourable Member consider the number sufficient for the purpose of coping with the number of patients in India? Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that a vast population in India suffer and die without any treatment? If so, what arrangement is he making for improving this condition?

(e) Has the Honourable Member any idea of the number of passed licensed Doctors (physicians and surgeons, registered and unregistered) in India who have got Indian Degrees and European Degrees, and also the number of *Ayurvedic*, Homœopathic and *Unani* practitioners who are not licence-holders and registered practitioners?

(f) Is he aware that allopathic treatment has become too costly for the poverty stricken people of India and for the petty middle class people of India? If so, has the Honourable Member considered any scheme to get cheap treatment and cheap medicines for the aforesaid class of Indian people?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The question of future health development has been referred to a committee designated the Health Survey and Development Committee and the question to which the Honourable Member refers will fall within the scope of the Committee's inquiry.

(b) The answer to the first part of the question is in the negative. As regards the second part the matter is for consideration by the authorities of medical colleges and universities having medical faculties.

(c) The answer to the first part is in the negative but research on drugs not included in the British Pharmacopœia has been conducted over a number of years under the auspices of the Indian Research Fund Association. As regards the second part the question of providing medical facilities is a matter for Provincial Governments.

(d) A statement showing the number of registered medical practitioners in each Province is laid on the table. The number of doctors is insufficient to provide medical attendance and treatment for the whole population and it is a fact that many persons do not receive adequate treatment. The Government of India have appointed the Health Survey and Development Committee to review the present position and to make recommendations for future development.

(e) As regards registered medical practitioners the information available is contained in the statement laid on the table. Government have no information regarding the number of *Ayurvedic*, Homœopathic and *Unani* practitioners.

(f) It is a fact that the cost of treatment according to modern scientific medicine is beyond the means of a section of the population. The means by which medical treatment can be made available for those who are unable to pay for it is a matter which the Health Survey and Development Committee will consider.

Statement showing the number of registered medical practitioners in each province and their ratio to the population of the province.

1 Name of Province	2 Total number of Registered Medical Practitioners	3 Population (as shown in the Census report of 1941)	4 Population per doctor
Madras (including Coorg)	7,414	49,510,536	6,677
Bombay	8,760	20,849,840	2,380
Bengal	11,734	60,306,525	5,140
U. P.	3,883	55,020,617	14,170
Punjab (including Delhi)	4,180	29,336,758	7,019
Bihar	3,244	36,340,151	11,202
C. P. & Berar	1,038	16,813,564	16,198
Assam	1,411	10,204,733	7,232
N. W. F. P.	270*	3,038,067	11,252
Orissa	646	8,728,544	13,512
Sind	641	4,535,008	7,075
Other areas including Indian States—Ajmer-Merwara, Baluchistan and Panth Piploda	1,378†	94,279,824	68,518
	44,597	388,964,187	..

*The figures are approximate.

†This includes 501 medical practitioners registered in Hyderabad and 875 registered in Mysore. Information in regard to other states is not available as there are no separate Medical Councils in them. Generally medical practitioners residing in states where there are no medical councils get themselves registered with the medical council of the nearest Province.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member give us some more details about this Health Survey and Development Committee, *i.e.*, when it was appointed, what its personnel is, who its President is, etc.?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: It was appointed last October. The composition of the Committee and its purposes are described in a press *communiqué* published on the 18th October. It is very long and I do not think the Chair would wish me to read it out.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): No, the Honourable Member need not read it out.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member place a copy of the report in the Library of the House?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: There is no report yet; they are still sitting.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Will the Honourable Member place in the Library of the House any information that he has already issued to the press?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: A copy of the press *communiqué* about the setting up of the Committee will be placed on the table, if desired.

LEGISLATION FOR FREE MEDICAL TREATMENT OF MASSES

576. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** (a) Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware of the proposed Bill in the British Parliament for free treatment of all people of the United Kingdom and getting them free medicines? If so, has he in his contemplation any such Bill for introduction in the Legislature at the Centre in India?

(b) Is it not possible for the Honourable Member to adumbrate such a scheme and place it before the Post-war Reconstruction Committee in charge of improvement of sanitation and health of India, and to introduce a Bill of this nature in the Legislature?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). The Government of India have seen press reports of the scheme for reorganisation of the health services in the United

Kingdom. As the Honourable Member is aware, the Government of India have appointed a Committee, designated the Health Survey and Development Committee, to make proposals for the future development of the health services in India and that Committee will no doubt consider to what extent the United Kingdom scheme can and should be adopted in India.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What is the number of doctors per thousand of population in this country?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: There are 44,600 registered medical practitioners and the population as shown in the census report was approximately 389 million, and I leave it to my Honourable friend to work it out.

SCHEME FOR CONTROL OF PRICE AND DISTRIBUTION OF COAL, ETC.

577. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Ohattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state if it is a fact that a scheme for control of distribution and price control of coal and for encouragement of increase of output has been made? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to state and lay on the table as well a statement giving detail of the policy forming the background of this scheme?

(b) Is it a scheme which does away with the middlemen between colliery owners and actual consumers? If so, what are the advantages accruing in consequence of the scheme, and the disadvantages created by the scheme to the present coal suppliers?

(c) Why should a bonus be paid to collieries for excess raising of coal, or why should a commission of 0-4-0 be paid by collieries and consumers to any middleman when collieries can supply to consumers directly?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. A statement regarding the scheme, is placed on the table. The scheme consists of five parts: (a) an estimation of the monthly output of each colliery, (b) the formation of a Coal Control Board to advise Government on the working of the scheme, (c) the distribution of all output by Government at fixed prices, (d) the encouragement of production by the grant of bonuses on increased output free of Excess Profits Tax, and (e) control of mining operations. The intention behind the scheme is (i) to ensure that all the coal available is properly distributed at fair prices to the consumers who require it and (ii) to afford every encouragement to the maximum production of coal.

(b) No. The second part of the question does not arise.

(c) The bonus is paid to encourage production. The amount of the commission has not been fixed. It will be fixed by the Government of India. A middleman will only be employed if a colliery and consumers mutually agree that he should be employed.

COAL CONTROL SCHEME

BEING A SCHEME FOR THE CONTROL OF THE DISTRIBUTION AND PRICE OF COAL AND FOR ENCOURAGING INCREASED OUTPUT

The Scheme comprises five parts:—

- A. Estimation of the monthly output of each colliery.
- B. Coal Control Board.
- C. Distribution of all output by Government at fixed prices.
- D. Encouragement of production by grant of bonuses on increased output free of Excess Profits Tax.
- E. Control of Mining Operations.

NOTE:—Where Government is used in this Scheme it refers to the Government of India and it includes any officer to whom powers are delegated under the Scheme by the Government of India.

A. Estimation of monthly output of each colliery.

A notification will be issued requiring all collieries to furnish to the Coal Commissioner by the 5th of each month—

(a) a statement in such form as may be prescribed of the raisings, the despatches and the colliery consumption during the previous month. (Estimates are to be given when delay would be caused by waiting for information in regard to actual results);

(b) an estimate of the raisings and colliery consumption for the month then current and for each of the succeeding three months.

B. Coal Control Board.

(1) There will be a Coal Control Board with the following membership :—

(i) Two members nominated by the Indian Mining Association;

(ii) One member nominated by the Indian Mining Federation;

(iii) One member nominated by the Indian Colliery Owner's Association;

(iv) One member nominated by the Central Provinces & Berar Mining Association;

(v) Two nominated members to represent consumers—one each nominated by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry;

(vi) One member nominated by the Indian Coal Merchants' Association, Jharia; and

(vii) The Coal Commissioner, the Chief Mining Engineer and the Controller of Coal Distribution as *ex-officio*, members.

(2) The Chairman of the Board will be nominated by Government and will have power himself to nominate a Chairman to preside at those meetings at which he is himself unable to preside.

(3) The functions of the Board will be to advise Government generally on matters connected with the working of the Scheme and in particular in respect of the matters falling under C(1) to (7) and "E" of the Scheme.

C. Distribution of all output by Government at fixed prices.

(1) Government will with effect from 1st April 1944 control the distribution of all coal, whether consigned by rail, despatched by road or stacked on Government account, at prices fixed by Government and such orders for distribution and fixation of prices will thereafter form the basis of contract between the colliery and each consumer of its coal.

(2) The price of all coal, hard coke and soft coke will, with effect from the same date, be fixed by a notification by Government on the advice of the Coal Commissioner.

(3) For "stacked coal" an additional sum over and above that paid for coal despatched by rail will be allowed.

(4) Government will as soon as arrangements to that end can be made issue to each colliery an order in regard to the distribution of its estimated output during the ensuing month. Where despatch to more than one consumer is included in such order, the priority of each of the consumers will be given in the order.

(5) Where a colliery has coal available for despatch in excess of the amount covered by its order or wagons are not available for despatch in accordance with the order, the colliery may, with the general or special permission of Government, stack such coal on Government account.

(6) Where coal is stacked on Government account, such coal shall be paid for at the fixed price determined under (2) plus the sum for stacking fixed under (3).

(7) It will be open to Government at any time to limit—

(a) the quantity of coal to be stacked on Government account; and

(b) the quantity of any particular description of coal or coke to be stacked on Government account.

NOTE.—It is not the intention of Government to stop the purchase of coal for stacking until the stocks of coal so stacked exceed 5 million tons, but the quantity of low grade coal may, if found necessary, be separately limited.

(8) If it is mutually agreed between a colliery and a consumer that a middle-man shall be employed, the amount of the commission to be paid to that middle-man by the colliery and by the consumer respectively shall be determined by Government as in C (2).

D. Encouragement of production by grant of bonuses on increased output free of Excess Profits Tax.

(1) The target for all coal despatched for sale or stacking under the orders of Government will be 22,500,000 tons.

(2) This 22,500,000 tons will be divided by Government into six-monthly target tonnages for each colliery undertaking.

(3) The bonuses will be paid six-monthly to each colliery undertaking on the excess of the tonnage disposed of under the orders of Government over the target tonnage for that colliery undertaking. The bonus will be calculated by adding together,

(a) 10 per cent. to the price of the first 10 per cent. of such excess coal.

(b) 20 per cent. to the price of excess coal over 10 per cent. but not over 20 per cent. and

(c) 25 per cent on the price of excess coal exceeding 20 per cent.

(4) The amount of this bonus will not be liable to Excess Profits Tax but will be liable to income tax.

(5) A fund will be created by a cess on all coal and coke despatched under the orders of Government to meet the estimated cost of such bonuses.

NOTE.—It is proposed to fix the cess for the period from 1st April to 30th September 1944 at 4 annas per ton.

(6) If Government are satisfied that two or more colliery undertakings have conspired to increase output above the target tonnage of any undertaking by diverting labour and/or equipment from some other undertaking to the detriment of the output of such other undertaking with the object of increasing the total bonus payable by Government then Government at their sole discretion may withhold all bonus payments from all or any of the undertakings who in their opinion have so conspired.

E. Control of Mining Operations.

(1) Government already have power under the Defence of India Rules—

(i) to exercise control over any mine and make such changes in the methods of operating the mine or in the preparation of any coal or coke as they may consider necessary to increase the quantity or improve the quality of the coal or coke;

(ii) to requisition any mine or coke oven and require the owner to hand over all existing equipment, tools and plant in use for the working of the mine or oven to any other agency that Government may prescribe for the temporary operation of the mine;

(iii) to prohibit mining operations in any mine or part of a mine the production of any particular coal or the manufacture of coke or the opening of any new mine. Government is, however, prepared to state, as part of this Scheme, that Government will carefully consider, in cases where compensation is not payable under those rules, the grant of *ex-gratia* payments where it is established that any such orders cause loss to the mine-owner and that in each case or group of cases the Control Board will be consulted before orders in exercise of these powers are issued.

(2) Government will prohibit the opening of any new mine otherwise than with their concurrence. When an application to open a mine is received, they will, before issuing orders, consult the Control Board.

LEVY OF CESS ON COAL FOR BONUS FUND PURPOSES.

576. ***Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya:** Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state whether it is a fact that cess will be levied on coal for creating a fund to meet the bonus to be paid to collieries? Is it not a double tax on consumers?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The answer to the first part is that that is the intention. As regards the second point the imposition of the cess would mean in all probability a tax on consumers—but the bonus is itself for the benefit of consumers as tending to increase the production of coal which at present is insufficient for consumer's needs.

SENIOR CLERKS IN MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE DELHI PROVINCE.

†579. ***Sardar Sant Singh:** (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state the total number of (i) senior, and (ii) senior grade clerks in the Medical Department of the Delhi Province as in the year 1939 and at present, showing at the same time the different communities to which the incumbents in 1939 and at present belong?

(b) If the communal representation shows a preponderance of Muslims what are the reasons for it and for the neglect of the interests of other communities?

(c) How many vacancies in the clerical grade occurred during the year 1943? How many of them were filled by Muslims, and how many by other communities?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Six. Of these two were filled by Hindus, two by Muslims, and two remained vacant for want of suitable candidates.

	Statement.	
(1) Senior Clerks	1939	1944
Hindus	..	1
Muslims	..	2
Other communities
	Total	3

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

	1939	1944
(2) <i>Senior Grade Clerks</i>		
Hindus	2	2
Muslims
Other communities	1 (Sikh)	1 (Sikh)
	Total	3
	3	3

ALLOWANCES OF DOCTORS AT THE JAMA MASJID DISPENSARY

†580 *Sardar Sant Singh: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state how many allowances are attached to the posts of the two doctors posted at the Jama Masjid Dispensary, and what allowances are being drawn by the two-doctors, respectively?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Two allowances—one of Rs. 20 per mensem sanctioned by the Government of India for attendance on Government of India staff resident in Delhi: this allowance is drawn by the senior sub-assistant surgeon: the other Rs. 30 per mensem is paid by the Delhi Municipal Committee for anti-rabic work and is drawn by the junior sub-assistant surgeon.

QUININE PRODUCTION

†581. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Has the attention of the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands been drawn to the statement made by the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Amery, sometime back to the effect that "Quinine is produced in India and supplies there are adequate"?

(b) In which parts of India is quinine grown, and under whose management?

(c) What was the total production of quinine during the years 1941, 1942 and 1943, and what was the consumption in the whole of India at the end of each of those three years?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes.

(b) In Bengal and Madras under the Provincial Governments.

(c) A statement giving the information so far as it is available is laid on the table.

Statement showing production and consumption of quinine in India during the three years 1940-41 to 1942-43.

Year.	Production	Consumption*
	(lbs.)	(lbs.)
1940-41	86,453	135,694
1941-42	85,181	131,965
1942-43	118,550	121,691

*The figures represent the quantities issued by Provincial Governments from the stocks produced by them and by the Government of India from their reserve. Figures of consumption of quinine imported by the trade are not available, but it has been estimated that the normal total annual consumption of quinine in India is about 210,000 lbs.

POOR LIGHTING OF ROADS OF MINISTERIAL QUARTERS, NEW DELHI

†582. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware that most of the roads running round the quarters of the ministerial establishment of the Government of India in New Delhi are very badly lit, and that some of them have not a single light for hundreds of yards?

(b) Is it a fact that the roads round the Council Chamber, Secretariat, North Block and Viceregal Lodge and south of South Block are fairly well lighted?

(c) Why are not proper arrangements made to provide the ministerial establishment with one of the most essential civil amenities, *viz.*, street lighting?

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

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (c). Owing to the serious shortage of electric lamp bulbs, the street lighting in all parts of Delhi has had to be reduced to a level which is apt to cause inconvenience.

(b) No.

REPRESENTATION OF DISTRIBUTORS ON CLOTH CONTROL BOARD

583. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) why only two distributors were taken in the Cloth Control Board in comparison to more than twentyfive members from the millowners when distributors were equally important in the cloth trade;

(b) if it is a fact that even the two distributors who have been taken are not representatives of the Northern India trade;

(c) if the answer to (b) be in affirmative, whether he proposes to redress the grievances of the Northern India cloth traders;

(d) if he is aware that the Cloth Control Board does not attach any importance to the recommendations of the Distribution Sub-Committee of the Board, and that in more than one instance it has ignored the recommendations of the said Sub-Committee; and

(e) if the answer to (d) be in the affirmative, whether he proposes to intervene in the matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The Textile Control Board is composed of 25 members, of whom 15 represent the Textile Industry and the remaining represent other interests, such as distributors, labour, etc. The Textile Control Board's functions are numerous, such as rationalisation of production with a view to increasing the output of cloth, fixation of prices, import of millstores and machinery, etc., and the distribution of cloth is only one of those important duties.

(b) The two members of the Board representing distributors, interests were recommended by the only organised body which claims to speak on behalf of dealers and merchants all over India, viz., the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. For obvious reasons representation could not be given to each province or geographical area.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

ANOMALOUS ALLOCATION OF PROFITS OF CLOTH DEALERS

584. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) if it is a fact that the allocation of profit between dealers within 100 miles of the manufacturing centres and those beyond 100 miles under the Cloth Control Order has created an anomaly with regard to the profit of the commission agents;

(b) if it is a fact that cloth dealers of manufacturing centres are charging more than four per cent. over the ex-mill price, and that black market has been created; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to take steps against the malpractice?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No.

(b) and (c). Government have received several vague allegations that their ceiling prices are being exceeded, but so far with no definite evidence. Where evidence is obtained that prices above the ceiling prices have been charged their intention is that the offenders will be prosecuted under the Defence of India Rules. They have already addressed all Provincial Governments and States in the matter.

LOWERING DOWN OF PRICES OF CLOTH TO BE MANUFACTURED.

395. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) if it is a fact that Government are contemplating to lower down the price of cloth that will have been manufactured after the month of February, 1944; and

(b) if it is not a fact that under the contemplated move of Government, cloth manufactured before March, 1944, will be sold at a higher price?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The ceiling prices for cloth packed in March 1944 or later or contracted for delivery in March 1944 or later has been reduced by 9 3/8 per cent.

(b) Possibly, as the statutory ceiling price of cloth packed or contracted for delivery in March or later is lower than that of cloth packed or contracted for delivery before March, but there is nothing to prevent any one from selling cloth below the ceiling prices.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon: Has the Honourable Member lowered these prices in consultation with the Finance Member?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I do not think it is necessary.

NEW TRADE CHANNELS FOR DISTRIBUTING CLOTH.

556. *Mr. Kailash Bihari Lall: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) if it is a fact that mills are opening retail depots and, in some cases, setting up new channels of trade for distributing cloth to the detriment of the normal trade channels; and

(b) if the answer to (a) above be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to take steps to safeguard the normal trade channels which were in existence before the Cloth Control Order came into force?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (b). Some mills have opened retail depots since the institution of the Cotton Cloth and Yarn (Control) Order in June, 1943. Government are not aware that this has had any detrimental effect on normal trade channels. In any case, Government's main concern is the well-being of the consumer, and Government have no intention of protecting trade channels where such protection would be to the consumer's detriment.

DEDUCTION FROM OVERTIME OF MUSLIM EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI, FOR FRIDAY PRAYERS.

587. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that one hour is deducted from the Overtime of the Muslim employees of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, who go on Friday to offer Friday Congregation Prayers?

(b) Is it a fact that previously no deduction was made for this one hour?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice or in the alternative to consider that one hour as a part of the casual leave or leave on average pay?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) Yes.

(b) Prior to 1931, no deduction was made, but this practice was irregular and was abolished.

(c) In view of the reply to part (b), the other questions do not arise. Under the Indian Factories Act, an employee is entitled to overtime for the hours worked in excess of the normal working hours fixed under the Act. In calculating overtime, prayer intervals are deducted from the total hours worked by the employee.

Seth Yusoof Abdoola Haroon: Does the Honourable Member know that this trouble has arisen because the Government of India have advanced the time by one hour?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I do not think so.

Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon: Does the Honourable Member suggest that prayer time can be changed because Government have changed their time?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: It is not a question of prayer time being changed. The question relates to whether prayer time should be allowed as overtime work.

WAGES IN THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI, FOR WORK ON SUNDAYS AND OTHER HOLIDAYS.

568. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that on the instructions of the Manager of the Government of India Press, New Delhi, employees come on Sundays and other festival holidays to cope with the urgent work of Government but after the day's work they are given only four hours' wages, but previously twelve hours' wages used to be paid to them?

(b) Have Government considered the advisability of resuming the old practice of paying twelve hours' charges to those who receive regular pay after working for eight hours on closed days, or at least increase four hours to eight hours?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, in accordance with the Indian Factories Act, men working on Sundays are allowed, in lieu of a compensatory holiday, an extra payment for 4 hours' work, that is, their day's pay *plus* an additional 50 per cent. For attendance on other closed holidays, an additional 25 per cent. of their day's pay is allowed. Twelve hours' extra wages (that is, a day's pay *plus* 150 per cent.) instead of the 4 hours' permissible were paid by mistake some years ago.

(b) No.

NON-SUPPLY OF STOOLS TO LINO-MACHINE COOLIES.

589. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that the coolies who are working Lino Machine, are not provided with stools and they have to keep standing throughout the day and that they submitted applications, but no attention has been paid to them?

(b) Is it a fact that the work of Barmen is taken from the Coolies and that the posts of Barmen have been abolished?

(c) Have Government considered the advisability of removing these grievances of the coolies?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The coolies working Lino Type Machines do not really work standing. They are required to release obstructions in the distributor bar of the Lino machines, for which purpose they have to climb on Lino machines for attending to them. A stool would, therefore, be useless for the purpose of their duty. For resting, labourers usually sit on the floor.

(b) and (c). There are no posts of Barmen in the Government of India Presses and no such post ever existed in the New Delhi Press. The questions do not, therefore, arise.

SUPERSESSION OF CERTAIN BINDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, NEW DELHI.

590. *Seth Yusuf Abdoola Haroon (on behalf of **Qazi Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi**): (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that some Binders in the Government of India Press, New Delhi, were appointed after trial in the year 1935 and were confirmed in 1936?

(b) Were some more Binders appointed in 1936 and 1937 and were confirmed after 1937?

(c) Is it a fact that men who were appointed as mentioned in part (b) above have been allowed to supersede the men referred to in part (a), if so, why?

(d) If the answers to (a) and (b) are in the affirmative, is the Honourable Member prepared to examine the case and remove the dissatisfaction of the many of the affected staff, if not, why not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to the reply given to his starred question No. 481 asked on the 17th March, 1944.

APPOINTMENT OF NON-INDIAN AS CONTROLLER OF RAW MATERIALS

591. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the Textile Directorate an employee of Messrs. Greaves Cotton and Company has been appointed as Controller of Raw Materials;

(b) if the reply to (a) is in the affirmative, whether Government of India tried to find out a suitable Indian national to work as Controller of Raw Materials if not, why not; and

(c) whether it is a fact that this Controller of Raw Materials has decided that imports of dyes and chemicals should henceforth be confined to "accredited agents" of manufacturers in Britain and other countries and not to the various importing firms of this country?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Mr. J. B. Greaves, senior partner of Messrs. Greaves Cotton Co., is Honorary Chief Controller of Raw Materials in the Office of the Textile Commissioner.

(b) Yes.

(c) No.

IMPORTS OF DYES AND CHEMICALS THROUGH BRITISH CONCERNS

592. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of India have decided to confine the imports of dyes and chemicals for the current season through only a limited number of British concerns,

(b) whether it is a fact that a quota of imports comprising of 90 per cent. of the total imports has been granted to one British concern; and

(c) if the reply to (b) is in the negative, the amount of quota given to each importer of dyes and chemicals in the country?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No, except to some extent in the case of Zinc chloride and Hydrosulphite of Soda, in regard to which the Honourable Member's attention is invited to the replies given to starred questions Nos. 410 and 499.

(b) No.

(c) I regret that it is not in the public interest to disclose this information.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With regard to part (a) of the question, is it a fact that these are supplied through a limited number of British concerns?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir. There are a number of Indians on the list.

EXPORT OF BENZOL MANUFACTURED IN INDIA

593. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a huge quantity of Benzol manufactured in India is exported from this country; if so, the quantity exported per month;

(b) whether it is a fact that this Benzol manufacture was undertaken in this country with original intention of utilising this as motor fuel in combination with petrol to meet the motor fuel shortage;

(c) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, how Government are managing the transports, both railway wagons and fuel tankers; and

(d) why this Benzol is not utilised in India as motor fuel and in the manufacture of Aniline, which is one of the essential ingredients to manufacture sulphanilamide group of drugs?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The question will be answered by my Honourable colleague, the Supply Member.

HIGH PRICE OF TEXTILES AT BARPETA

594. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the Associated Press news published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 7th March (Dak edition) regarding the high price of textiles at Barpeta, and to the fact that the fixing of prices by Government has not produced any result there; and

(b) the reasons for this state of affairs there?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) and (b). No, not until the notice of the question put by the Honourable Member was received. Government have no information as to whether these statements are correct in respect of Barpeta nor, if they are correct, what the reasons are for such a state of affairs.

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

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Sir, it is extremely difficult in a vast country like India to go on enquiring as to whether a particular system has failed in a particular village or town, and in this case it is specially so because this is a matter which comes within the responsibility of the Provincial Government.

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

Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: But how is it that in Assam

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

REPORT ON EDUCATION BY EDUCATIONAL ADVISER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

595. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state whether the report on education by Mr. Sargeant, Educational Adviser to the Government of India, has been published in full? If so, when?

(b) Is the Honourable Member prepared to distribute free copies to the Members of the Central Legislature?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The report of the Central Advisory Board of Education on Post-War Educational Development, based on a Memorandum prepared by the Educational Adviser, was published on the 4th of March.

(b) No; but copies have been placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether this Report will be placed on the table of the House?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Sir, it is a very long report and if it is placed on the table of the House it will have to be printed *in extenso* in the proceedings of the House.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask if the Report is for sale?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Two thousand copies have been put on sale at twelve annas a copy.

Sir F. E. James: Is the Honourable Member aware that this edition has been exhausted and that Honourable Members of this House and even Members of Government are not able to obtain it?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Sir, I am not aware that it is out of print.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government of India will reprint this Report?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I hope so, Sir. I am all in favour of greatest possible publicity for it.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I wonder.

RE-PRINT OF THE PAMPHLET "SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN RELATION TO NATIONAL WELFARE"

596. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) how many copies of the pamphlet "Scientific Education and Research in relation to National Welfare" (a reprint from London publication) were printed by the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies;

(b) how they were distributed;

(c) why this pamphlet was not sent to the Members of the Central Legislature; and

(d) the purpose of printing this pamphlet?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) 500 copies have been printed so far. A further edition of 2,000 copies is being prepared for sale to the public.

(b) Copies have been distributed to Universities, Ministers or Directors of Industries in Provinces and to certain Indian States, various scientists, industrialists, educationists, Press, etc.

(c) Because of the prevailing acute shortage of paper of all kinds, distribution had to be strictly restricted.

(d) The pamphlet has been printed with the object of furthering the cause of industrial and scientific development of the country by making available information regarding how people's minds are working in the United Kingdom in the matter of scientific research to those interested in India.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Central Assembly is not included in the list of bodies which are supposed to be important in this country in the eyes of the Government of India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is not a fact, but I do not think that everyone is interested in scientific research. If there is any Member who is interested and wants a copy, I shall certainly see that he is supplied one.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I inform the Honourable Member that I am interested in scientific research?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: If the Honourable Member writes to me, I will certainly supply him a copy.

UNITED STATES FOREIGN ECONOMIC ADMINISTRATOR AND PURCHASE OF COMMODITIES IN INDIA.

597. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a note appearing in the *Commerce* (Bombay), dated the 4th March, 1944, wherein it is stated that Mr. Leo T. Crowley, the United States Foreign Economic Administrator, recently stated that Missions have been sent to countries, amongst others, India, to expedite purchases and provide assistance, where required, to increase production;

(b) whether the local office of the United States Economic Administration has approached the Government of India, in order to implement the policy outlined by Mr. Leo T. Crowley; and

(c) if the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, the commodities in which the United States Foreign Economic Administration is interested?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The question will be answered by my Honourable colleague, the Supply Member.

DISCRETION TO REGISTRARS OF JOINT STOCK COMPANIES TO REFUSE INSPECTION, ETC., OF ACCOUNTS OF CERTAIN UNDERTAKINGS.

598. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a note appearing in *Capital*, dated, March 2, 1944, under the heading "Reports from Special Representatives" to the following effect:

"Registrars of Joint Stock Companies have been given discretion to refuse to inspect or grant copies of any accounts, reports or documents relating to electric supply, inland water transport, port, harbour or pier undertakings"; and

(b) whether the Government of India have taken any initiative in this matter and issued any instructions on these lines to Provincial Governments?

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

(b) The attention of the Honourable Member is invited to sub-rule (5) of rule 45-B of the Defence of India Rules as recently revised by Defence Department Notification No. 5-DC (2)/48, dated the 26th February, 1944, and published in the *Gazette of India* of the same date. It has not been considered necessary to issue any instructions to Provincial Governments so far.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to the answer given to part (b) of my question, may I ask the Honourable Member why the Government of India have not taken any initiative in this matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The question has not arisen. The rules have been published and I take it they will be observed by every one concerned and, therefore, the question of initiative does not arise.

REVIEW OF WORK OF ECONOMIC ADVISER TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

599. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state whether Government have had an opportunity of reviewing the work of the present holder of the post of Economic Adviser to Government in the light of the recommendations made by Professor Bowley and Mr. Robertson in 1934?

(b) What were the investigations that have been conducted by the Economic Adviser since he took office and how many reports of them were published?

(c) What are the new features introduced in the monthly survey of business conditions and in the *Annual Review of Trade in India* by the Economic Adviser?

(d) What are the departments of Government that make use of his services?

(e) Is the Consultative Committee of Economists a suggestion that emanated from him?

(f) Is he employed on a contract basis? If so, when does the term of the present contract expire?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Government see no reason for any such review.

(b) It is not possible to give a list of the investigations conducted by the Economic Adviser. A large number of them are of a confidential nature and some of them were carried out in collaboration with others. The Office of the Economic Adviser has so far issued four publications, in addition to the Monthly Survey of Business Conditions and the annual Review of Trade.

(c) The statistical and other information contained in these publications has been amplified in several respects. It is not practicable to summarise briefly the numerous changes which have been made.

(d) Departments of the Government of India requiring expert advice on economic and cognate matters have availed themselves of the Economic Adviser's services.

(e) The Consultative Committee of Economists was set up by Government.

(f) Yes. His present contract expires in January 1947.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to part (d) of my question, does the department concerned ask the Commerce Department for the services of the Economic Adviser?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is entirely a departmental matter. But the real position is that many Departments of Government in the present circumstances of economic upheaval in the world do require the advice of the Economic Adviser and his advice is always available to the different Departments concerned.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: May I ask the Honourable Member whether the Consultative Committee of Economists is functioning, and if so, when was the last meeting held?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is still functioning. It was called two months ago and it is proposed to hold a meeting very soon.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member whether he feels justified in ignoring the basis of appointment of the Economic Adviser, and whether he will take an early opportunity of examining the work done by the present holder of the post in the light of the recommendations made by Professor Bowley and Mr. Robertson in 1934?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of the recommendations of Professor Bowley and Mr. Robertson. But I feel that so far as the Economic Adviser's work is concerned he has more than enough for the time being. When the necessity arises, certainly the whole question will be reviewed.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Since the Honourable Member himself referred me to the recommendations of Professor Bowley and Mr. Robertson, may I ask whether the Honourable Member is really unaware of the recommendations made by these two distinguished economists?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir. I myself gave evidence before that Committee.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Is the Honourable Member then merely a sort of post office communicating the views of his Department to this House?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That does not require any answer from me.

SCARCITY OF SALT AT BARPETA.

600. ***Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam:** Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the Associated Press news published on page 4 of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of the 7th March (Dak edition) regarding scarcity of salt at Barpeta and sale of salt at one rupee a seer and scarcity of kerosene oil; and

(b) what the Government of India propose to do to prevent the recurrence of such shortage in future?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As regards salt, local movements from neighbouring districts are in hand, and the position is improving.

As regards kerosene, there is a shortage all over the country as its supply is restricted to 50 per cent. of the volume of sales in 1941. Efforts are being made to get additional imports of kerosene.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

PRICE CONTROLLED ARTICLES.

150. **Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state:

(a) the name and the number of articles on which price control has been exercised;

(b) the maximum amount of profits allowed on those articles in fixing prices;

(c) in fixing the prices of articles what percentages of profits have been allowed; and

(d) whether Government contemplate controlling of any other article; if so, what those articles are?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) A statement showing the names of articles which are subject to price control (statutory and informal) by the Department of Industries and Civil Supplies is placed on the table of the House.

(b) and (c). The margin of profit varies in each case and has, as far as possible, been fixed in consultation with the Trade or Industry concerned.

(d) Government's intention is to bring progressively as many articles as possible under specific control.

Statement showing certain articles prices of which have been controlled.

1. Certain varieties of paper.
2. Shellac.
3. Drugs and medicines except Ayurvedic and Unani.

4. Scheduled Radio Sets.
5. Matches.
6. Coffee.
7. Kerosene Oil.
8. Motor Spirits.
9. Cotton cloth and yarn manufactured in India.
10. Hydrosulphide of Soda.
11. Zinc Chloride.
12. Millstores such as Bobbins, Shuttles, healds, Reeds, Card clothing, etc.
13. Certain brands of cigarettes.
14. Certain brands of Wines and liquors.
15. Certain Brands of Boot-polishes
16. Certain brands of Razor Blades.
17. Photographic materials.
18. Bicycles and cycle parts of certain makes.
19. Arms and ammunition.
20. Fountain pens of certain makes.
21. Leather and hides.
22. Japanese Staple Fibre yarn and Japanese Artificial Silk Yarn of Certain varieties.
23. *Sports Goods* -Playing cards (American, Caravan), Pedal Cars for children (English), Roller Skates (American) Steel Expanders (English), Meccano Sets and Hornby Trains (English), Football Bladders (English), Tennis Balls, Golf Balls, Ping Pong Balls, and Squash Balls.
24. Watches clock, time-pieces, their parts and tools.
25. Imported books, magazines and periodicals.
26. Motor vehicles and spare parts.

IMPORT OF ESSENTIAL ARTICLES FROM BRITAIN.

151. **Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar:** Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please state:

(a) whether, in view of the availability of shipping space, what articles have been imported into India from Britain, and to what extent, in the last six months;

(b) whether these articles are being sent with any understanding between the Government of India and England; and

(c) whether, in view of the smallness of shipping space available, Government propose getting only such things as are necessary and essential; and if so, what the things are that they are getting?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) A list showing the principal classes of goods imported from the United Kingdom during the period July-December 1943 is laid on the table. I regret that it is not in the public interest to disclose the actual quantities imported during the period.

(b) Six-monthly programmes of India's requirements are drawn up by the Government of India and forwarded to His Majesty's Government. Within the limits of availability of supplies and of shipping tonnage, shipments are arranged in accordance with these programmes.

(c) Subject to availability of supplies, only such classes of goods are imported as are in essential demand in this country.

The second portion of the question is covered by the reply to part (a).

List containing names of the principal categories of articles imported from the United Kingdom during the period July—December, 1943.

1. Chemicals.
2. Electrical machinery, goods accessories and fittings.
3. Machinery, e.g., Jute machinery and parts, Pumping machinery, Rubber manufacturing machinery, Tea machinery, Cotton Textile machinery, Locomotive parts and spares and boiler parts.
4. Metals and Ores.
5. Other miscellaneous industrial requirements, e.g., Crucibles, Miscellaneous Accessories, nuts, bolts, rivets, nails and tacks, etc.,
6. Paper, e.g., Packing and wrapping paper, Currency Note paper, Printing paper and tissue paper.
7. Consumer goods, e.g., Cycles and cycle parts, Drugs, medicines, Glass and Glassware, other miscellaneous hardware, paints, photographic goods, stationery and toilet requisites.

CONTINUOUS AND INTERMITTENT WORKERS ON EAST INDIAN AND NORTH WESTERN RAILWAYS.

152. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Labour please state:

(a) the number of employees on the East Indian and North Western Railways, separately, classed as continuous and intermittent workers under the Hours of Employment Regulations, 1931; and

(b) if it is a fact that wages for overtime earned by the workers under those regulations have not been paid to them?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) The information upto the year 1940-41 is given in the annual reports of the Conciliation Officer (Railways) and Supervisor of Railway Labour on the working of the Hours of Employment Regulations on Railways. These are available in the Library of the House. The number of employees classed as 'continuous' and 'intermittent' on the East Indian and North Western Railways during the year 1941-42 was:

	Continuous	Intermittent
East Indian Railway	66,172	13,468
North Western Railway.	56,316	13,215

The information for the year 1942-43 is not available.

(b) The Government of India are not aware of any cases where overtime earned by the workers has not been paid to them.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE OF SHAHDARA-DELHI MUNICIPALITY.

153. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please lay on the table of this Honourable House a statement of the incomes (giving their source or Heads) and the expenditure (under each Head) for the preceding three years of the Shahdara Municipality, Delhi Province? If not, why not?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The information has been called for and a reply will be furnished to the House when it is received.

FOODGRAIN MARKETS FOR SHAHDARA-DELHI.

154. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Honourable Member for Food please state the names of markets or *mundis* in the surrounding rural area from where the Shahdara Town gets its supplies of foodgrains?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: With the exception of Delhi there are no regular markets or *mundis* in the neighbourhood of Shahdara. Shahdara itself is a market, to which the produce of the neighbourhood is brought for sale. As regards foodstuffs and articles not locally obtainable, permits are issued to cover export of these commodities from Delhi.

DESIRABILITY OF INCREASING ELECTED ELEMENT IN SHAHDARA-DELHI MUNICIPALITY.

155. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) if it is a fact that in the new Constitution of Shahdara-Delhi Municipality the number of nominated Members will be six and the number of elected Members will be four;

(b) the principle or criterion on which the percentage of nominated and elected Members is based; and

(c) whether Government now propose to increase the number of elected Members by decreasing the number of nominated Members; if not, the reasons therefor?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The information has been called for and a reply will be furnished to the House when it is received.

DESIRABILITY OF A HIGH SCHOOL FOR SHAHDARA-DELHI.

156. Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) the arrangements made by Government for the education of the civil population at Shahdara-Delhi in standards higher than the eighths; if no arrange-

ments have been made as yet, the reasons therefor, and whether Government propose to establish a High School there in the next financial year or thereafter; if not, why not;

(b) the arrangements made by Government with the Railway Authorities for the conveyance of students from Shahdara to Delhi by morning trains during the summer; if no arrangement has been made, the reasons therefor; and whether Government propose to arrange with the Railway Authorities for stopping morning trains at Shahdara for the conveyance of girl and boy students reading in schools at Delhi in standards higher than the eighths; if not, why not?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The question of opening a High School in Shahdara is engaging the attention of the Local Administration.

(b) None; Government do not propose to approach the Railway authorities in the matter as they are advised that the proposal is impracticable.

AMENDMENTS TO THE INSURANCE RULES.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Commerce Member): Sir, I lay on the table a copy of Notification No. 597-I(4)/43, dated the 12th February, 1944, re amendments to the Insurance Rules, 1939.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NOTIFICATION

INSURANCE

Simla, the 12th February, 1944

No. 597-I (4)/43.—In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 114 of the Insurance Act, 1938 (IV of 1938), the Central Government is pleased to direct that the following further amendments shall be made in the Insurance Rules, 1939, the same having been previously published as required by sub-section (1) of the said section, namely:—

1. In the said Rules for sub-rule (3) of rule 10, the following shall be substituted, namely, “(3) The Bank shall publish as soon as may be after the 1st January in each year in such manner as the Central Government may direct a list in Form IV of deposits made with it under the Act, as at 31st December of the preceding year”.

2. In the Forms set out in the Schedule annexed to the said Rules, for Form IV, the following Form shall be substituted, namely,
“FORM IV.

(See Rule 10.)

List of deposits under the insurance Act, 1938, held in the custody of the Reserve Bank of India on the 31st December 19

Name of Depositor.	Loan or nature of deposits.	Amount.	Total face value.	Cash	Total book value of securities and cash.

S. R. ZAMAN, Joint Secy.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE SUPPLY DEPARTMENT.

The Honourable Dewan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar (Supply Member): Sir, I move:

“That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, five non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects with which the Department of Supply is concerned, during the financial year 1944-45.”

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

“That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, five non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects with which the Department of Supply is concerned, during the financial year 1944-45.”

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division, Muhammadan Rural): Sir, my Party has not been taking any part in the elections to this Committee, and we have always urged and we want to place it on record even now that until the

[Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan.]

Parties who have got the greater following in the country take up the responsibility of the Government, we cannot take any part in any Committee which is connected with the war. We think that the war is not properly conducted and it can never be until those who have the larger following in the country take up the reins of Government. Therefore, Sir, I am sorry to announce that my Party will not take part in any of these Committees at all.

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

“That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, five non-official Members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects with which the Department of Supply is concerned, during the financial year 1944-45.”
The motion was adopted.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE DEFENCE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi (Secretary, War Department): Sir, I move:

“That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, six non-official Members to serve on the Defence Consultative Committee for the financial year 1944-45.”

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

“That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, six non-official Members to serve on the Defence Consultative Committee for the financial year 1944-45.”

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agra Division: Muhammadan Rural): My remarks as regards this Committee are the same as on the Supply Committee, with a little addition that the appointment of this Committee is an absolute waste of time, and economy should be effected by not setting up this Committee at all. It is merely an eye-wash. It has done nothing and will do nothing, and I want to ask the Honourable Member who has moved it to tell this House what action this Committee has taken, on what matters their advice has been taken and on what matters connected with the defence of India this Committee has been consulted and on how many occasions. Since the Committee elected by this House has not been properly treated, it is no use keeping it at all.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): There is no arguing about tastes and, therefore, I do not mind my Honourable friend, Sir Yamin Khan, criticising the election to the Defence Consultative Committee. In the first place, as he himself has never taken part in its work, he cannot know what the Committee is doing. Therefore, his statement that the Committee is doing nothing . . .

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I have asked him to tell us.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You don't know. Without knowing what the Committee is doing he talks of wasting public money when he wasted the time of the House on the Delhi University Bill.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member ought not to refer to anything that is not before the House.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am illustrating.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): You cannot illustrate like that.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: There have been instances in the past when my Honourable friend had swallowed camels from the point of view of public economy and now he is straining at the gnat. After all, the Defence Consultative Committee is one of the Committees of the House. It is nothing more nor less, and since my friend is thoroughly ignorant of what it is doing, let me tell him that the recent announcement of the Commander-in-Chief raising the salaries of Indian soldiers is decisive and primarily due to the debates in the Defence Consultative Committee. It is going to cost Rs. 9 crores. Well that is what we have given to the Indian soldier who is fighting for the freedom of this country and when you are sulking in your tent. It does not lie in your mouth to talk ignorantly when 20 lakhs of my countrymen are fighting to keep you secure. We members of the Consultative Committee also fought to get the soldiers' family some

more monetary compensation during these hard times. If we did that alone we would deserve the thanks of this House. I can say honestly that this Committee consists of men who take genuine interest in defence. Its name shows that it is a consultative committee. We have no share in starting or maintaining a campaign against the Japs. If we were asked, we would not understand it. Therefore, it is better that the authorities do not ask this of us. Otherwise we would give away secrets in ignorance which might be of use to the enemy. But we do discuss in the Committee everything that can make the people acquainted with what the war is, how it is going on, how it should be conducted on broad principles. I honestly tell my friends that I bring to bear what little intelligence, common sense and patriotism that God may have given me, and I do wish that the House will unanimously elect this Committee and that even my friend, Sir Yamin Khan, will give me his vote if I stand.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): My Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, put a direct question to the Government Member responsible for moving this motion. Sir Yamin Khan was speaking on behalf of a party which has a very large following in this country, and he was entitled to get a reply from the Honourable Member who moved that this Committee be set up.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): He may yet get a reply!

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: I want to make the position of my Party clear. Mr. Mehta got up and started defending the Government. Well, he is entitled to his own views.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am a member of the Committee. So I am bound to defend myself when attacked.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: But you do not belong to any particular party. You are an unattached Member.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I belong to the people.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: On behalf of the Congress Party I wish to state that it is high time that these ornamental committees were scrapped. After all, defence is a matter in which the Government of India is flouting the wishes of the people. The manner in which they are carrying on the defence of this country is resented and strongly objected to by the Congress, by the Muslim League Party, and by all other nationalist elements in this country. When the majority of elected Members on this side of the House demand that such ornamental committees—which involve a mere waste of public money—(they may afford employment to some people, or some people may exercise their debating talent)—are not required, it is the duty of the Government to pay respectful attention to the wishes of the people who represent the millions in this country. They cannot just go on setting up such ornamental committees and lean upon independent, solitary Members to support such committees which they set up. On behalf of the Congress Party I associate myself with the remarks of Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, and we demand that this useless, worthless committee should be scrapped. The country does not want it. The Government have got their national war fronts and so on, which can afford employment to those who wish to show their debating ability, but the House is not interested, almost the entire elected portion of the House, is not interested in the setting up of this Committee.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): The remarks which my Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, made has done one good. It compelled my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, to give this House some information regarding the work done by a committee appointed by this House. I am sure Mr. Jamnadas Mehta will agree with me that if the members of this committee insist upon a report being made to the Legislature of the work which they do on these committees, the House will be in a better position to judge of the work which the committees do. It would not have been necessary for my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, to speak so loudly and so vehemently in defence of the committee, if he had insisted that a report of the work should be made. I know that the Government of India has not got much respect for this Legislature. They want committees to be appointed,

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

and I am in favour that the Legislature should remain in touch with the details of the administration through committees appointed by the Legislature. But I think I shall be justified in saying that this Legislature cannot hold itself responsible for the work which the committees do unless the committees make a report to the Legislature. I, therefore, feel that the Government of India should give up their practice of showing disrespect to the Legislature and not telling the Legislature what a committee of the Legislature does. I, therefore, propose to the members of the Committee that they should insist—I also propose to the Legislature that they should insist, that these committees should make a report to the Legislature. I am a member of one or two committees. I do not see that 90 per cent. of the work which comes before the Legislature need be kept confidential at all. Therefore, a report can be made, but I feel and feel very strongly that the Government of India is deliberately showing disrespect to the Legislature. I shall give you one illustration which has taken place only this morning. The Honourable the Labour Member placed a scheme regarding coal control on the table of the House this morning. Before that scheme was placed on the table of the House, that scheme was published in the newspapers this morning. I want to ask Government whether a practice of this kind is not showing disrespect to this House. The reply was published in the papers before it was given in the Legislature.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Was it in reply to any question?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: That scheme was placed on the table of the House this morning, but that had been published in this morning's newspapers.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But that was not in reply to any question.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: That was in reply to a question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member, I think, is making a mistake.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: But the scheme was placed on the table of the House.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I know but it was not in reply to a question asked.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: A question had been asked. However, I leave it to you whether the dignity of the Legislature is maintained under a practice of this kind. Personally, I do not think that it is right on the part of the Government to publish matter in advance before it is placed on the table of the Legislature.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is it the suggestion of the Honourable Member that any scheme or any other matter ought not to be so published before a question had been answered in this House with reference to it?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: With reference to this scheme, it was with reference to a question. The Government of India had ten days notice of the question and that scheme was prepared in reply to that question.

Some Members on the Treasury Benches: No, no.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I say, yes. I will suggest to you to read the question and see what has been done.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is raising a question as regards the privilege of this House. I am not satisfied so far that any such privilege has been violated or any disrespect has been shown in this particular matter.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: It is a matter of opinion. I am quite sure that your opinion in this House must prevail and not mine. I, therefore, feel that the Government of India should give up their practice of not telling the House what these committees do. They should prepare a report and submit that report to the Legislature.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has said that more than once.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: I also suggest that the Government of India should distribute copies of the report to the Members of the Legislature. They are incurring enough expenditure and a large expenditure over other matters. They publish copies of reports and distribute them to all people in the world, but their sense of economy suddenly becomes active only when copies of these reports are to be circulated to Members of the Legislature.

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): As far as the attitude of my friends of the Congress Party is concerned to this or any other committee connected with the war, it is understandable. They have declared their policy in this House of taking no part in war activities, of being disinterested in the war, and indeed of doing all they can to obstruct those who are assisting in its prosecution. Therefore, the Leader of the Opposition cannot be expected to show any particular interest in the election of this Defence Consultative Committee. I come to my Honourable friend, the Secretary of the Muslim League Party. I was sorry to hear him express the view that this Committee was a complete waste of time. I can assure my Honourable friend, who is a member and an esteemed colleague of mine on other committees, that the work of the Defence Consultative Committee is not a waste of time. When, however, my Honourable friend asked for information, I think he was justified. I can now tell the House that more than a fortnight ago, as a member of this committee, I requested the Secretary of the War Department, when moving this particular motion, to make some reference to the work which this committee has done during the past year. I very much regret that he did not accept my advice on that occasion. I hope in future he will arrange with His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that this House shall be supplied with information as to the work of this Committee in the course of the year. This House is supplied with copies of the proceedings of the Standing Finance Committee for Railways, of the General Standing Finance Committee, and of the Central Advisory Council for Railways. There is, therefore, no reason why the House should not similarly be informed as to the proceedings of what I regard as one of the most important committees at this juncture. I may say that this committee has been consulted on a large number of matters. It has tendered advice, most of which, I am glad to say, has been accepted and it is certainly unfortunate that this House is not in possession of some of the information which is made available to the members of the Defence Consultative Committee. I, therefore, hope that in future this procedure will be adopted and that the House will be given a report each year on the activities of the committee, to which it is now being asked to elect its representatives.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, I am not in the habit of taking any part when motions of committees are made and I had no desire to take any part in the discussion of this motion. But the remarks of my friend, the Deputy Leader of the Congress Party, compel me to say a few words. He said that these committees, especially this committee, are ornamental bodies. Now, I may be pardoned for pointing out that this committee has done substantial work. Let me say that I had been to the Middle East, and when I went there I mixed with all the ranks and officers. As a matter of fact, some of the members who accompanied me, whether elected or nominated, must have observed that several times hundreds of people clustered round the members—both the ranks and the officers. At a particular place, when I was held up for over two hours in a gathering with the officers and ranks, the military officer used to come and tell me 'Mr. Deshmukh, you are much behind the schedule time'. I said 'If you like, you can go ahead and I will catch you at the last point at which you have fixed up the engagements. But I must speak to these people. There has been nobody who has talked to them'. At one place we were with the ranks and officers for about two hours and I addressed gatherings at different places. I have been very particular in getting information. As a result of the information I had collected in the months of May and June, I had given notice of a Resolution which

[Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh.]

embodied all the complaints but unfortunately I was not favoured by the ballot box. 101 complaints were made to me and as a result of that I was enabled to put lot of questions in this House. The first thing I came to know, and which the House probably does not know, is that the Indian soldier is worse paid than the Somalis, the Soudanese, the Afrikander and so on. The Soudanese are paid Rs. 75 per month and our soldier was paid barely Rs. 18. We kicked up a row and as a result of that and putting questions and so on, the pay has been increased to Rs. 37. We would not have been able to do this if we were not on this committee and these would not have come to light. Where are our men compared to these men? There were 101 complaints even as regards racial discrimination. I had mentioned them in my Resolution.

Sardar Mangal Singh (East Punjab: Sikh): What is the basic pay of the Indian soldier? Does the allowance make up this Rs. 37?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: You want to know the basic pay?

Sardar Mangal Singh: The basic pay is Rs. 18. The allowances have been raised.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: What I am saying is that, taking the total, the Indian soldier is now getting more than what he used to get.

Sardar Mangal Singh: These are temporary allowances.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: May be. As a result of our discussion and pressing the claims of the Indian soldier, they are now getting more. We were told that this could not be done, that there were financial difficulties and so on but when we insistently pointed out that the Somali soldier was paid Rs. 75 and asked why the Indian soldier should be paid Rs. 20 or so, conditions have been improved now. I mixed with all sorts of people among the ranks and the officers. There are educated men in the ranks and among officers. They felt this inequality in pay and racial discrimination that was shown between them and other officers. I do not wish to take up much of the time of the House but we found racial discrimination in conditions of service, entertainment, recreations and so on, and I made all sorts of suggestions and all these suggestions were put in a long Resolution.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: And not accepted?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: As a matter of fact, the Resolution was not favoured by the ballot. I asked several Members also to send in similar Resolutions so that it may get a place at the top but unfortunately the ballot did not favour it. I am glad to find that some of the suggestions have been accepted and I was given assurances that steps will be taken to see that no racial discrimination was observed, because we found out that not even the Indian King's Commissioned officers were respected by the British Commissioned officers. That fact was also brought to the notice of the authorities, because the officers felt it very much. I was assured that instructions would be issued to see that there was no racial discrimination. We took a very intelligent interest in the affairs

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Why do you say 'we'?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: I mean that I could not have gone but for the Committee which was appointed. If there would have been no committee, we would not have gone there and we would not have had any opportunity to examine these things and suggest remedies. I had mentioned all the grievances in my Resolution. Therefore, I submit that a committee like this is very useful. I had also said that publicity should be given to what we do. As a matter of fact, the proceedings of the National Defence Council get more publicity than those of the Defence Consultative Committee. I brought it to the notice of the Member in charge. In the newspapers not a word is mentioned about the meetings of the Defence Consultative Committee and its proceedings. I agree

with my friend Mr. N. M. Joshi that some publicity should be given to what transpires in the meetings.

Sardar Mangal Singh: Take their film next time!

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: You will also be included in the film. Whatever you may say, your sympathies are with the Indian soldier and you would like to see his condition improved and racial discrimination removed.

12.Noon. If you want all these things, you can trust me to do it and I cannot do it unless I am on the Committee. You may rest assured that members like Mr. Kunzru take a great deal of interest in the work of this committee. I, therefore, submit that some of the suggestions made by Mr. Joshi may be adopted. I hope the House will do its best to support this motion.

Mr. C. M. Trivedi: Sir, I am sorry that when moving the motion for the election of this Committee, I did not give account of its work. I did not do so because my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, had himself referred to the work of the Committee in his speech on the Finance Bill and I myself was going to mention the activities of the Defence Consultative Committee in some detail when replying to the speeches of the Honourable Members on the Finance Bill in so far as they concerned defence matters. This debate has taught me that I must repair that omission and I will now give a brief account of the activities of the Committee ever since it was started. The Committee was started at the insistent request of the Central Legislature and it was established in 1941. The Committee meets once a quarter and it discusses matters of interest to the defence services. Its advice is taken on many important matters and I will give some account of the matters discussed by it.

The question of the pay and allowances of the Indian Commissioned Officers—and the House knows there are several thousands of Indian Commissioned Officers—was discussed by the Committee at a very early stage. Its recommendations were accepted and the pay and allowances of the Indian Commissioned Officers were revised. The next important subject which the Committee discussed was the question of the improvement of the training facilities of the University Train Corps. The University Training Corps have been re-organised and they have been made more efficient bodies than they were before. We regard the University Training Corps, whom we now call the Officers' Training Corps, as recruiting grounds for officers and this new measure largely owes its origin to the advice which the Committee gave to the War Department. Another important question which the Committee discussed more than once was the shortage of recruitment to the I. M. S. and the I. M. D. The question of pre-cadet schools was also discussed by the Committee. The question of rations for Indian troops was discussed by the Committee more than once and certain improvements in the rations were made at the request and on the advice of the Committee. The Committee has discussed several times questions affecting the recruitment to the armed forces, such as, the recruitment of technicians, the recruitment of officers, the method of recruitment and the new system of selection of officers, which has now been introduced as an experimental measure, was started after taking the approval of the Committee.

My Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh, and my Honourable friend, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, have referred to the visit of the Committee last year to the Middle East. The Committee after its visit produced a very valuable report containing many suggestions. The Committee met for two days to consider the report and action has already been taken on a number of suggestions made.

I think I have said enough to convince the House that there is no truth whatsoever in the statement made by My Honourable friend, Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan, that the Committee is a waste of time and money. The Committee is performing a most useful function and I take this opportunity of paying my tribute to the work which the Committee has done and to the advice which it has offered us from time to time. In future, while moving a motion for the election of this Committee, I shall give an account of the activities and the work done by the Committee during the previous year.

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

"That this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Honourable the President may direct, six non-official Members to serve on the Defence Consultative Committee for the financial year 1944-45."

The motion was adopted.

ELECTION OF A MEMBER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE TUBERCULOSIS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands).
Sir, I move:

"That the Members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, one person from among their number to sit on the Central Committee of the T. B. Association of India."

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

"That the Members of this Assembly do proceed to elect, in such manner as may be approved by the Honourable the President, one person from among their number to sit on the Central Committee of the T. B. Association of India."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I have to inform Honourable Members that the following dates have been fixed for receiving nominations and for holding elections, if necessary in connection with the following Committees, namely:

1. Standing Committee for the Department of Supply	Date for nominations.	Date for election.
2. Defence Consultative Committee	23rd March	28th March.
3. Central Committee of the T. B. Association of India	24th March	29th March.
	Do.	Do.

The nominations for all the three Committees will be received in the Notice Office upto 12 Noon on the dates mentioned above for the purpose. The elections which will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote will be held in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House, New Delhi, between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M.

THE INDIAN FINANCE BILL—*contd.*

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Before the House resumes consideration of the Finance Bill, I consider it my duty to inform Honourable Members how the debate has proceeded so far. This is the fourth day of the debate and I find that eleven Members have spoken so far. From the Congress Party, two Members have spoken, occupying 2 hours and 51 minutes. From the Muslim League Party two Members have spoken, occupying 1 hour and 25 minutes. From the Nationalist Party two Members have spoken, occupying 2 hours and 20 minutes. From the Independent Party one Member has spoken for 1 hour and 5 minutes. From the European Group two Members have spoken, occupying 1 hour and 34 minutes. And from the Unattached Group two Members have spoken, occupying 2 hours and 19 minutes. As I have mentioned, this is the fourth day of the debate and so far as I am aware no Government Member has spoken yet on behalf of the Government. I must also mention that there is a feeling in the House, I am informed, that there had been a certain amount of repetition and irrelevant matter in some of the speeches. I must confess that there has been some repetition and some talk which was not wholly relevant to the Finance Bill even having regard to the large scope that has been allowed in such debates in practice.

I must also point out that even in a debate of this nature, that is on the Finance Bill, Honourable Members are not expected to repeat arguments which have already been advanced either by themselves or by others, not only on the Finance Bill itself but also in the Budget Debate—that is, General consideration as well as Demands for Grants. This has been the limitation laid down hitherto and has regulated the practice of this House. As regards the scope of the Debate on the Finance Bill, as I have said, it is fairly wide, it may cover not only all relevant matters so far as the Bill is concerned, but also

matters of general administration for which the Government of India is responsible. Matters other than these do not come within the scope of this debate.

As regards the selection of speakers, the duty undoubtedly lies on the Chair, whoever may be occupying the Chair at the moment—the President, the Deputy President or one of the Chairmen—to regulate the debate as best as he can. It is also incumbent on Honourable Members of the House to give him all the assistance they can in regulating this debate. I wish to remind Honourable Members that there are many interests which the Chair has to take into account in making a selection of the speakers. There is not only the Opposition proper, there are several Groups, five or six of them, there is also the Government—and no Government Member has spoken till now—there are eleven Provinces to be considered, the eleven Provinces represented by different Honourable Members, there is the European Group, there are other interests, such as labour, there are the representatives of Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and the Scheduled Castes and so on, the House will realise that it is not an easy task for the Chair to regulate such a debate, bearing in mind all the different interests concerned. I may point out that while the Chair always bears in mind that the different Groups of the House would like to put up speakers to participate in the debate, there are also Honourable Members who do not belong to any Party, and they are also entitled to participate in this debate. The claim that the number of speakers must accurately represent the strength of each Group has never been recognised as a valid one, though the Chair undoubtedly tries its best to see that there is a proper balance in the debate. I shall, therefore, ask for the co-operation of all Honourable Members to enable the Chair to regulate the debate in a proper and reasonable manner.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, on the question of relevancy may I ask whether the Food question is relevant to this debate or not. We, particularly those coming from Bengal, are keenly interested in debating this question.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It depends upon how the food question is brought up in this debate. There must be no repetition of the arguments that have been already advanced during the general debate.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Not exactly the same arguments. This is a very important matter and it will have to be thoroughly discussed.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Certainly, as the question concerns the administration of one of the Departments of the Government, it is relevant, but there must be no repetition.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta (Bombay Central Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have taken your admonition in all humility and I shall do my best to co-operate with the Chair in doing what you have just been pleased to ask us to do. Sir, when the House adjourned yesterday, I had just stated three methods about financing the war. One of them was taxation, the other borrowing and the last was inflation. I had submitted that each of which was according to the sequence, good, bad or indifferent. Then, I mentioned that since the war broke out, the indebtedness of the country has gone up by 800 crores and several Honourable Members were inclined to think that I had just missed the figure. I have since looked up those figures and I find that I was right. If Honourable Members will refer to page 28 of the Explanatory Memorandum on the Budget, they will find that in 1938-39 we had a total interest bearing obligations of 1,205 crores and under the Budget they will be nearly 2,000 crores.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): But the Honourable Member said that the national debt has already gone up by 800 crores.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If that is any consolation, I am willing to modify it.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is taking into account the balance at the end of that period which will be an asset against the debt.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I was referring to this particular item, that the indebtedness of the Government and of the country which was 1,205 crores in the year the war began will be, during the Budget year, increased by nearly

[Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta.]

800 crores. I am not saying that it is too much or too little. I was simply stating the figures and all this amount is in some way or other borrowed. It is not a small amount. It works out at the rate of nearly 200 crores, 175 crores per year in addition to taxation. What is more, this borrowing could have been less. This large amount has become necessary because the rise in the cost of living compels Government to spend more where they might have spent less, if they had been careful. Here comes not only the direct consequences of inflation, but the danger to the country in the future. The rate at which my Honourable friend the Finance Member has inflated the currency has sent prices soaring over and today he is getting for one rupee, one-third rupee worth of goods and services; he would have got three times as much if there was no inflation. So, the increase of 800 crores of indebtedness of this country has really brought to the Government for financing the war not 800 crores of goods and services, but barely 266 crores. The nation has spent 800 crores and got 266 crores worth of goods and services. All the rest is the result of his inflation. If he had not inflated the currency as prodigiously as he has done, the financing even by borrowing would have been much less. But that is not the only danger of this. Sir Joshua Stamp in one of his speeches once said, "If I said that as a result of inflation the national debt has increased by 200 million £, nobody seems even to understand that point". This is what Sir Joshua Stamp meant when he said fluctuations in purchasing power of the unit of currency result in consequences which its authors never anticipate. One of the consequences is that we have only got one-third of the goods and services for Rs. 800 crores borrowed; and when the war is over, these 2,000 crores of indebtedness and what we might hereafter borrow will have to be paid for if the prices fall to the pre-war level to the extent of 6,000 crores of rupees in goods and services. We have got 266 crores and these 2,000 crores will have to be paid for in terms of goods and services to the extent of 6,000 crores. What a horrible prospect!

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Will the Honourable Member kindly state in what way he himself has tried to exercise his influence in order to counteract inflation? I know of several ways in which he has done the other thing.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I can assure my Honourable friend that I would have done it quite differently from him. I would first of all have taxed the highest, then borrowed and then if necessary resorted to inflation. He has reversed the whole procedure and brought this calamity on himself and myself. It is not a pleasant thing for me to say these things but it is he whom I am helping by making my submissions.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: And charging me with having done it.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: And now he is furiously trying to reduce inflation results. As the *Economist* or some other journal has said, when the fever is high it is not reduced by plugging the thermometer. If the fever is there it will remain; you raised the inflationary fever by reversing the process of financing the war. I do not blame you because circumstances might have compelled you to do it. I am only trying to show where we have drifted.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: But my Honourable friend has repeatedly said in the course of his speech that the Finance Member has done this and done that, the rate at which the Finance Member has inflated, and so on. Will he kindly explain what exactly he means by that?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am now on borrowing. When I come to deal with inflation I am going to explain it at the biggest possible length.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: But that is the essence of the argument.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I will not allow my Honourable friend to leave this House today without saying what I want to say as regards inflation. But I am also pledged to the Chair not to take any point which has been taken by others, and even on a new point not to labour it any longer than necessary. But I shall continue until this inflation disaster is brought home to him in the clearest possible manner, and that with the best of good will in the world

Therefore, Sir, I was submitting that when these 2,000 crores will have to be paid for in goods and services they will amount to six thousand crores worth of goods and services. It will have to be extorted from the humblest of my countrymen who are asked to tighten the belt in the course of the war so that you may make every sacrifice. But we have tightened and tightened and tightened until no slack is left. That is the position as a London journal has testified. But there are other consequences. This huge indebtedness which is being piled up will lead to the hampering of industry and will also be a check to development in future. I am, therefore, telling him that he might still take the right course if he can. In the future this indebtedness will need the payment of huge amounts of interest year after year, and that will be a further drain on the humble resources of this country. Mr. Hartley Withers whose authority I need not dilate upon has said in one of his books that borrowing is a great mistake so long as you can tax, and the mistake is often made of thinking that by borrowing you are passing the burden of the war on to posterity. That belief again is not true; it is pure delusion to say that the burden passes to posterity. Nothing of the kind. War needs guns, food, clothing, munitions, lorries, tanks. They must be all new; they must all be produced now. Somebody must produce them; somebody must pay for them. So the idea that posterity will pay simply because the loan is repaid at a future date is pure delusion. It is paid from current production. No doubt afterwards those who have given the money will take the future produce out of the future generation and enjoy it for themselves; but the country pays for the war as it goes on. You cannot pass on the burden of producing a present tank to a grandchild born 30 years hence; it is impossible. Therefore, I still say that the only right course for the Finance Member should have been to tax first, borrow afterwards and inflate later on if necessary. The only thing for which I would allow borrowing without any fear is a productive enterprise in which the country may be engaged. Barring that, particularly during the war, the whole burden should fall, in my humble opinion, primarily on taxation.

Having made this submission on the question of borrowing I will now pass on to taxation. I have held the opinion and strongly hold the opinion that the burden of the war should have fallen on the present generation so that it may realise that it is no fun to fight a war, particularly a modern war. And the Finance Member would have had my fullest co-operation, even now he has my fullest co-operation, in taxing wherever the tax can be reasonably imposed. But in the initial years of the war he was depending on taxation only to a small extent, and as he has proceeded he has taxed without looking to the right or to the left. He has taxed the people whose shoulders are the weakest; and I am again giving them an authority of recognised economists that according to the main principles of taxation and according to the classical economist Adam Smith, no citizen is bound to pay any taxation who does not enjoy an income and he can pay only out of the net income which he enjoys after making a decent living. That is the first of the four fundamental principles of taxation which are known to my Honourable friend as they are known to everybody else. Has my Honourable friend followed that canon of taxation? He has not.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I should like the Honourable Member to tell me what proportion of the people of this country should be subjected to any taxation at all on his criterion.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I will not leave my Honourable friend in doubt in the least. Hartley Withers along with Adam Smith and other economists have said that taxation must fall as a legitimate demand of the State on the net income of the citizen. But in order that it should get legitimate taxation it will have to rely on a wholly equitable system of taxation which will curtail the power of the richest to waste money in luxury and idleness, and at a national crisis not to tax those by taxing whom you will take the food from their mouths and clothes from their ill-clad children. After five years of the war I am seeing great equipages crowding into every place of amusement and people are spending relentlessly in the enjoyment of luxuries. In fact, the greater the inflation the greater is the zest of those who have made money to enjoy and waste money

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 which is obviously superfluous. And Government are not without their share of blame in helping them to spend in that way. If he had taxed as I wanted him to tax, I would have no objection. But what has he taxed? I maintain that the net income of a citizen alone can be taxed subject to any reasonable sacrifice and self-denial that he can be called upon to make; the net income can only be taxed

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has said that more than once.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am now showing what he has done.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is repeating himself.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You will find that it is not the least part of my intention to indulge in repetition. I was simply leading to the details of what he has taxed. I have generally stated that he has taxed those who have the least ability to bear. What has he taxed? He has taxed last year the only kind of *ghee* left to the poor,—the genuine *ghee* is gone from the use of the poorest in my country, and particularly those who are not meat-eaters, their only nutritive food was milk and *ghee*, and both of these things have now gone out from their breakfast tables or from their meals. That offends against the first fundamental canon of taxation, that you must not tax the fundamental needs of the people—the needs of existence. But he has taxed. There are many more things that he has taxed in the past which are not legitimate from the point of view of the first fundamental principle of taxation that the burden must fall on the shoulders which can bear it. And this year he has come again with a similar cut in the budgets of the people: Tea, coffee, betel nuts have been taxed. If he had ever tasted betel nuts, he would find that it is really a necessity in this country.

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (East Central Punjab: Muhammadan): He smokes though. Sir Jeremy Raisman is a blazing furnace!

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I did not know that. He is a pugilist and a boxer when it comes to argument. I have not seen him smoking much, and being a smoker myself I do not mind paying for what I smoke. Yesterday my Honourable friend said that England is the country which taxes tobacco most. I want him to tax that tobacco most which involves luxury

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): Where is the margin?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Margin is in your pocket. *Biri* smoking is not a luxury my friend. What did it cost to the poor man before? 12 *Biris* for a pice. I remember the days when 25 *biris* were sold for one pice—although I don't smoke *biris*, I know the market. Therefore, I say, that is the only "luxury" left to the poor people of this country.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Luxury!

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Yes, if you choose to call it luxury. I cannot approve your method of taxing those who cannot bear the burden, because, as I have told you, your Government's methods are regressive taxation and regressive taxation is fundamentally wrong: Its incidence is not equal. If I buy a pound of tea and a rich man buys a pound of tea we shall have to pay the same tax—two annas are superficially equal. As I explained the other day, a poor woman with six children having a cup of tea for them without milk shall have to pay two annas and my Honourable friend Sir Cowasjee Jehangir will also pay two annas.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: She doesn't pay his super-tax.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Because she will never get any opportunity to pay it.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is the adjustment.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You cannot adjust like that; that is not sound. This indirect taxation, particularly on the necessities of life, is so regressive and

therefore so unjust and inequitable in its incidence that my Honourable friend, Sir Jeremy Raisman, has gone entirely wrong in pursuing that policy. And because inflation is already in operation, he needs more than he would have needed if originally the inflationary spiral had not been set in motion by him. Therefore, I do not wish to repeat . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is in fact repeating every argument time after time.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am sorry, but the argument cannot be sustained if you do not link one with the other.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is repeating too much. I must ask him to exercise some self-restraint.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am not going into the details in respect of taxation on tobacco, tea, coffee, betel nuts—that would have been repetition. I am trying to the best of my ability not to repeat.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member talked about betel nuts yesterday.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am not today going into it. You admonish me for using an argument which has been used by anybody. I humbly say that one argument has to be linked with the other argument and some kind of reference back is almost inevitable. I shall, however, in all earnestness leave the question of taxation except to say that this burden would have been lesser if the inflation had not been forced in the beginning.

Now, I go to the third method of taxation, which is the worst method, and there, with your permission, I shall certainly develop my submission so that the Finance Member may not any longer be in doubt of the horrors which this inflation has perpetrated and is perpetrating.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): So the Honourable Member is going back to inflation.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, I have not referred to inflation so far. The Honourable Member has given me an invitation and it is my duty to say that inflation has been the cause of his present difficulties. If he had carefully guarded himself against inflation from the very beginning, I would not have at all objected to the little inflation which must follow as a result of this war. Today what has happened? Every day two crores of rupees are added to the volume of currency notes. As they are being added—at the rate of 3 to 4 crores every week, until we have now reached 884 crores—all my friend's anti-inflationary measures are being stultified to the extent that he keeps the door open for the horse to be stolen on the one side and closes the stable at the other end in order to save it.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I must ask the Honourable Member not to go on repeating.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Shall I drop inflation?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member should not indulge in needless repetitions.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Shall I drop inflation or any particular argument? I am sorry I have been asked by the Honourable Member and I must say how dangerous this inflation is. Sir, I am not going to use one argument which has ever been mentioned in this House and which is not new.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: What I would ask the Honourable Member to do is to indicate exactly what he would have done, which is a very different thing from describing inflation. We all know what the effects of inflation are, I have described them myself.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: At one stage the Honourable Member was not willing to admit that there was inflation. He has been slowly driven into admission and now I cannot allow him to run away so easily. This inflation is increasing every day. If you have a ten-rupee note everyday he is stealing two pice out of it by inflation.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Will the Honourable Member do as he promised and tell me what he would have done?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Yes, I am coming to that.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: But the Honourable Member says he is in favour of the war effort and I want to know what he would have done. (Thumps on the desk.)

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I will tell you what I would have done: (Thumps on the desk.)

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: I hope you are not coming to blows!

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If this is a desk for him it is a desk for me as well. I will tell him what he should do provided he is not impatient. But I want him to realise, though at one stage he would not admit it, that there are enough countrymen of mine who are profiting by this inflation and who are behind him in saying that there is no inflation. There are people who are rolling in money due to inflation outside this room. Perhaps they are in this room also. They are co-operating in the exploitation of the poorest of my countrymen by supporting inflation. This commodity inflation and scarcity inflation are all words. The real thing is that it is patent to every tyro of economics that if the volume in currency grows the purchasing power of the unit goes down.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Too elementary!

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: So it is, but it is challenged by people who are making money. I will now tell him what I would have done. I would have first of all started from the first day of the war to see what is the taxation that I can impose on the shoulders that can bear. I would not have looked to the small humble man for financing my budget. I would have thought of imposing a capital levy. According to the authors of the 15-year plan, the amount of capital in this country—I do not know whether their figures are right or wrong—is 48 thousand crores. I am making my calculations as I go. If 48 thousand crores is the national wealth today, then roughly about 25 hundred crores is the national dividend. I would, therefore, exempt those who have wealth below 10,000 from any capital levy and then I would have started in a most merciless manner to make it steeper and steeper until no man would have possessions which he does not need while the war is on. Therefore, do not say that I have no scheme. This would have given you money which would have lasted you five years and the children of the poor would not have gone without anything. If he wants one day to argue this point at a place where the Chairman would be kinder, I would go into the whole gambut.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the Chair has been very indulgent to the Honourable Member.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I have said kinder, not that you have not been kind. I am grateful for all the opportunities that the Chair has given me. But I claim that I have always something to say.

Now, I shall leave the inflation question because the time is working against me, although I hope I have made some contribution to the financing of the war in a manner which would have fallen less on the burdens of the poorest and would have fallen more on shoulders that are broad enough to bear the burden. That is my submission to the Honourable the Finance Member on the question of financing the war. The osculatory method I denied the other day.

Now, I come to three more points out of the Honourable the Finance Member's speech. They have been gone into by this House. I shall give a new point of view on each of those questions. I won't give an old hackneyed point of view. About the gold sales I do not want to say much, but I do wish to correct one impression, which the Honourable the Finance Member thinks legitimate. I say first of all that these gold sales are a matter of interest to this country. Why is he so secretive about giving information? It is my country that is buying gold and it is my country whose Government should be getting the profit. But I do not know what happens. I tell the Finance Member that he should make the most explicit public statement about the sale of gold. the quantities that he is selling, the price that he is buying at, the price that he is selling at. These are matters of the greatest public importance and if he thinks that the prices are reasonable, I shall not object. But I do say that

there is a public suspicion that the prices paid are Rs. 35 less than the prices charged. I do not know how far it is true. It is not good for the State which is behind this. This Rs. 35 profit is either taken by America or England, or by both, and they are using this money for financing their war needs in this country. Why should we not get the benefit? That is the point which I wish the Honourable the Finance Member to answer in the straightest and clearest manner possible. I do not agree with my Honourable friend that if this is done it will simply add to the sterling balances. No, it cannot. I heard him say so yesterday.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is literally correct.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: In either case it is not anti-inflationary.

Now, I come to the sterling balances. I am not one of those who believe that if sterling balances were not there we would be in a less inflationary position. Some sterling balances are bound to remain there. Nor do I believe that the inflation is due only to the sterling balance being located in England. Even if you had gold in this country, gold can lead to inflation. So I am not in the habit of believing that if our balances are held in other countries there is necessarily inflation. The inflation is due to the large volume of currency, not to its location; the absence of any necessity for increasing that volume. If all money values were increased or decreased by 10 per cent., nobody would be better off or the worse off for it. Therefore I have no objection to the location of the sterling balances. The Honourable the Finance Member has given the promise that there is going to be a dollar account in the Bank of England for the Reserve Bank and the demand by Indian public opinion for a dollar balance against a sterling balance will be appreciably met. I want the Honourable Member to explain to me a catch which I fear is lurking there. I think I am right, but I won't take it for granted until I put it to him. Supposing my country has got 10 crores of dollars in the Bank of England to the credit of the Reserve Bank, my Honourable friend will say, here is the dollar reserve for which this country has been asking. The Federation of Chambers have already thanked him. But I always look a gift properly and up and down before I thank the donor.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: But they do not usually hand out thanks so lightly.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: They have handed out to-day, it is still doubtful whether they should have done so. I put a poser to my Honourable friend, and it is this. Instead of sterling there will be a dollar credit for India, which means that if I want certain goods from America they will be financed out of the dollar account. If Government allows me to bring heavy machinery or machinery for heavy industries, so much of our balances will be available in U. K. for being sent to America. To that extent India will get heavy machinery from America on account of the dollar balance. But what will England do? England will give credit to America for so much sterling. "You are entitled to so much sterling." All right. You can send for so much goods. You can get so much sterling." Dollars can not be exported. It will simply be a mere book entry.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: You are confused.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: There is no confusion, Sir Cowasjee. It will take you three years to understand.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: It has taken you a life time.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You are still a baby. Because you are a merchant, it does not mean that you are a student. Don't talk before you know.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: You have betrayed your ignorance so thoroughly that nothing more can expose it.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You do not know. You think that ignorance is knowledge! I won't take it because you are a millionaire. You have to study hard, Sir Cowasjee. I put it to the Honourable Member whether that amount will not be credited to America as sterling for the goods which America may buy from England—whether there is any other way of paying America for the

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dollar for which we have got credit. I am asking the Finance Member. I ask how will America get money which you are paying to her for our importation of heavy machinery in terms of dollar?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: She will be paid in actual dollars. She will be paid in dollars which are at the disposal of India at that time.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Dollars are there in England. You are not going to export. You have got no dollars; it is a paper entry, and I tell you what you will do. And then if you tell me that I am wrong, I shall accept it. What you will do is to export so much British goods to America and thereby wipe out your dollar debit. That is what will happen. India will get goods from America. America will get goods from England and accounts will be cleared.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is really the ordinary description of how these things are done. It may be that at a particular time there are already dollar credits which can be utilised, but dollar credits can only be earned by selling goods or services to America.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Having earned dollars from us, America will get payment in British goods and not in dollars. That is the poser I am putting to the Honourable the Finance Member. You can certainly explain to me whether what I am telling you is not the normal process.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member should address the Chair.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: The dollar balances about which the Honourable the Finance Member has given so much consolation to this country are not in that sense dollar. They will be given to us if America buys the equivalent of British goods in exchange for the dollar which we give. When you explain that to me I will certainly be glad to accept it.

Then there is one point in his speech which I want him to explain, it has reference to mutual and reciprocal aid. It is not quite clear and that is why I want him to explain. Paragraph 52 of his speech has this:

"This aspect of India's post-war problem was discussed with H. M. G. in connection with the acceptance by India of the general principle of the extension of reciprocal aid to raw materials and foodstuffs."

What is the general extension of the reciprocal aid to raw materials and foodstuffs? I understand it in this way that at the end of the war, as a measure of reciprocal aid India will give all the assistance in raw material . . . (Interruption.) This is post-war reconstruction paragraph.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: No.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: This is not a war business at all.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: If you refer back to paragraph 87 of the Budget speech it describes reciprocal aid to the United States during the war.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am aware of that, but now you are asking in a paragraph on postwar reconstruction about the extension of the principle of reciprocal aid. I am referring to paragraph 52. It is not the principle which is already in force. You are referring to reconstruction paragraph.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is not a reconstruction paragraph. It is a paragraph before reconstruction section of the Budget speech. It is in the Ways and Means section.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Here is a paragraph which says:

"His Majesty's Government fully sympathise with the desire of the Government of India to make such advance provision as may be practicable during the war for the requirements of post-war development."

Provision for what?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the Honourable Member had better go on with his arguments. He will have the reply afterwards. Every argument cannot be replied at once offhand. The Honourable Member will go on with his speech.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If the Honourable Member feels . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Finance Member will give a reply when he speaks. The Honourable Member cannot put a question every minute.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am simply putting him a question through you.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member is putting question after question expecting answers straight away.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am putting questions to him through you.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must not wait for a reply being given at once to every question, he may put in the course of his speech.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am not waiting for the reply. I am telling him that he may reply to me in his reply, but he chooses to reply earlier and the Chair's displeasure falls on me a humble person.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member had better go on.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am asking the Government to explain to me whether paragraph 52 does not relate to post-war reconstruction. The whole thing is on post-war reconstruction and therefore I ask him to explain what it means. I take it in my ignorance, I presume, it refers to post-war reconstruction, and I want him to tell me what exactly that means.

Having said so much about inflation and other relevant matters I will refer to the Honourable Member's paragraphs of his speech about post-war reconstruction. I am fully in agreement with him about not forcing the pace. I think the post-war plans which he is visualising in the three paragraphs in his speech are on the right lines. I therefore want him to be on his guard not to accept any other scheme without thoroughly examining it. Both His Excellency the Viceroy and the Honourable the Finance Member have paid compliments to the 15-year plan. I am also thankful to them for giving us something to bite on. I find that I must warn the Government against two points in the 15-year plan. There is too much propaganda in favour of that plan. Being rich men its authors will always be able to find very highly qualified men to boost their scheme. I am not ready nor have I

1 P.M. the time to go on with the exposition of the entire scheme but I want to point out that their figures about housing are all wrong and the Government should work out their own figures about housing. The figures which are given in the 15-year plan about housing are . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): That scheme is not under discussion now.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: This plan has been discussed by the Finance Member in his Budget speech. I am only telling that he should beware. I shall not go into the whole plan. I shall deal only with two points which are striking me as very material. I shall only deal with the figure of housing and one other point—nothing more. It is too big a scheme to be discussed in half an hour. One is that the figure for housing is Rs. 2,200 crores. That figure is, in my opinion, entirely wrong, as I will show. According to their figure, the amount of money required is Rs. 2,200 crores. For accommodating even the people of the city of Bombay in 100 square feet space, per tenement the cost will be 750 crores—in the city of Bombay alone—and there are other places such as Ahmedabad, Sholapur, Hubli, in the Bombay Presidency which is 22 per cent. an urban province. I am afraid that the amount that they have estimated does not take note of the actual cost. One instance will suffice. The taxable value in the city of Bombay is nearly 250 crores, because we get nearly 15 crores as taxable rent per year. We take taxation on 15 crores rental. At 16½ per cent. purchase, this property will amount to 250 crores. According to the figures in the plan, the people of Bombay are today housed only in 27 square feet space, which is about one-fourth of the 100 sq. ft. Therefore, if the city of Bombay is to be housed according to their scheme, in 100 square feet space per tenement, then the

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'immoveable property' will have to be multiplied three times and that would cost 750 crores. *Pro rata*, Ahmedabad will cost the same scale. Between Sholapur and Ahmedabad, it is difficult to say which is worse overcrowded. If you take these cities and the rest of the province, the amount of money which will be required will not be 2,200 crores for the whole of India, but for Bombay Province only. Therefore, plan's figures are very risky. These gentlemen have obliged us by publishing their figures. I submit this for their consideration and also submit to Government that they should be on their guard.

My next point is that the Government should prepare these figures and not laymen like ourselves. We have not the resources. We have not the staff and we have not the time. Only Government can prepare this statistical information which non-official members have to depend on. I, therefore, do hope that the special officers whom Government are employing will produce at an early date the figures I have asked for not merely on housing but on other things.

The only other point about the 15-year plan on which I wish to say something is that the way in which they have proceeded to find the finance is highly objectionable. In the first place, some of the finance does not exist on their own showing. For instance, they have taken 4,000 crores as the national savings in 15 years. Now, if it is a national saving, it does not matter where that amount is; it is immaterial where it is located but they go on claiming credit for 600 crores. In my opinion, they have counted it twice. 4,600 is wrong. Either they must say that the national savings in 15 years will be 4,600 or they should deduct 600 which are in England or take credit for internal finance only to the extent of 3,400. That is my point against their financial figure and the second point about financial figures is that they propose 3,400 crores as created money. This to my mind is the most astonishing thing.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must leave that scheme alone now. It is not relevant. The Honourable Member will now go on to his next point.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am sorry to be a drag on the Chair and I would not go into this if the Chair

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must accept my ruling. He must go on to the next point. I do not want my ruling to be discussed.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I bow to it and will proceed to the next point and in my armoury there are six other points, because I think this is the only opportunity when I can review the activities of the Government of India at one stretch.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member has spoken enough, has repeated enough.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I will not repeat a single thing.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member goes on repeating, I will have to ask him to discontinue his speech.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I will not repeat. I tell you that I am only linking one argument with another. I am profoundly sorry that the longevity of speeches. . . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Because it is full of repetition. I do not want the Honourable Member to discuss this so-called plan at length in this House. I have given my ruling and the Honourable Member must accept it.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If the Honourable the Finance Member refers to this, am I wrong in discussing

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must accept my ruling. Otherwise I shall have to ask him to discontinue his speech.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: I am not going to repeat, I assure the Chair that I am not going to repeat it. I shall now go on to the next point about the War Department and I want to say that the War Department has got certain improvements to make in their policy. The War Department is the biggest spending department today and in England, although the total amount of taxation for financing the war is 56 per cent. of the annual revenue, in India it goes even higher. The war according to the Finance Member's own statistics is going to cost 800 crores this year, both revenue and capital. We find that in England the percentage has been found in 1943/44 to be 56 and in this country which is not so much affected by the war as the United Kingdom our share of revenue for war is even much more. I would like the Honourable the Finance Member to compare the taxation income and the revenue expenditure of the war both in England and here. I ask him to satisfy himself that the percentage of the annual revenue which goes into the war in this country is not larger than in England. I will ask him to examine that and to satisfy himself that England is spending less of its revenue on war than we are spending. I have requested H. E. the Commander-in-Chief to give better salaries and allowances to the soldier until his family feels no anxiety when the bread-earner is away at the front. I will not refer to the question of discrimination. I know that the racial discrimination cannot be altogether avoided in this country as things stand. Government will go on promising that there will be no racial discrimination and I will go on pressing that there is racial discrimination. But so far as the War Department is concerned, I do appeal that there should not be given the slightest ground for feeling that the Indian soldier is being differentiated against and that the Indian officer is being differentiated against, as the fear was voiced by my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh.

There is a regiment or a division here—I do not know its technical name—which consists of 6,000 Rajput soldiers and I am informed on the most authoritative ground that the Brigadier who is in charge of it is proud and grateful and fond of every one of these 6,000 Rajputs. He tells to his friends that in other countries and even in this country soldiers are soldiers by profession. But to this regiment of Rajput soldiers, war is a creed and they bear arms not as profession but because the defence of their country is their creed. What a glorious opportunity this Government has for recruiting and encouraging people who consider war as a creed in times of national crisis. Therefore, I would suggest to the Honourable the Finance Member and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief that within the limits of our finance the soldier and his family should be looked after as tenderly as possible.

I now go to the Department of Food. There is no separate debate for food, yet I shall not refer in the least to the food debate controversy that has been already debated more than once in this House. I shall simply say this: What has been the result after twelve months of the Government measures for taking food, clothing and the other necessaries of life to the people of this country?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is now quarter past one and I must adjourn the Assembly for lunch. The Honourable Member can continue his speech after lunch.

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

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Half Past Two of the Clock, Mr. K. C. Neogy (one of the Panel of Chairmen) in the Chair.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Sir, I was referring to the Food Department's activity when the House rose for lunch. I do not wish to repeat the arguments that have been advanced in the two or three days debate on the Food question. I want simply to see what the results of the policy have been of the policy that

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was declared in the last session, even where that policy has succeeded, whether that policy is being implemented, and what is the present position. As the House will remember, His Excellency the Viceroy in a speech in Calcutta, I think it was, reiterated the policy of his Government on the food question. He said that food was not a provincial question. It was an all-India question, it was a world question. The second point which His Excellency made was that his Government had determined that there will be statutory price limit fixed in pursuance of the food policy, that there would be rationing, and His Excellency coupled all these declarations or reiterations of the policy by giving his opinion about those who were profiteering from food. I will only quote two sentences from the speech of His Excellency. Firstly, he said, "I am prepared, if necessary to take the most drastic action in support of our policy". I want to know from the Government what is the drastic action they have taken since 21st December. There has been no session since then. I want to know what is the drastic action. All that I think is done is that the Governments of the Punjab and of Sind have checked their rebellious tendencies to some extent. But they both continue in the same mood of profiteering at the expense of India. In fact, the Sind Government has made huge profits out of the miseries of other Provinces. I do not know what the Government of Bengal is still doing about its own food policy. The second hint which His Excellency gave was this: "to my mind, there is no condemnation too severe, no penalty too stern for those who attempt to make unauthorised profits out of food or out of drugs at a time of national crisis". This is what His Excellency says. I want to know from the Food Department what punishment they have given, the stern penalty and the stern condemnation which was promised in the Viceregal utterance. Has any substantial decline in price of food stuffs come about? Has rationing been instituted for the greater part of the country? Has this rationing been successful? - Are Government selling food in these rationed shops at a price which is commensurate with the ability of the people to pay, because His Excellency says that it is the policy of his Government to ensure that food-grains are available in adequate quantities all over the country at prices which will give the producer a fair deal and at the same time place food within the means of the poorest consumers. Now, I ask you, Sir, it is exactly three months today since this utterance was made. The utterance was made on 21st December and we are now in 22nd March and I am asking the Government whether what His Excellency the Viceroy so graciously promised has come about, has been implemented that the food has come within the means of even the poorest consumers. I submit that that consumation has not been accomplished, nor has food become available to the poor people of this country. They are labouring under a double wrong. On the one hand the prices of food, whatever little fall here and there have been in the Government's rationed shops, they have given really no relief. Rationing seems to have facilitated only distribution, but the other question of prices which substantially is the deciding factor where the poor people will get food, has not still in my opinion been tackled. Until that is done the miseries of the poor people will continue. Profiteers may have been substituted in some places by black shops which are called rationed shops. Here, I want the Government to search into their hearts whether they can call it proper distribution of food if the stuff they give contains one-third *kachra*, stones or mud. In addition, they do not give correct weight but they charge prices which include the cost of the Government obtaining the stuff, the cost of establishment for rationing shops and all other expenses which the Government incur in order to acquire the goods. This is not surely the best way of giving relief to the poor. I have an alternative suggestion to make, that is, that the time has come when food should be subsidised. It is not possible for the Government to feed the population even when rationing becomes general if the present method of acquisition and sale is not accompanied by subsidisation. My most earnest suggestion to the Government is that the time has come, it has long since been due, that food should be subsidised if the population of the country is to be fed properly. Otherwise, you are

bringing into existence a generation which will grow up, as not even the 1931 population was growing up,—under-nourished.

The next point is about cloth. The prices of cloth have been under consideration since June. In fact the Honourable the Finance Member waxed most validly eloquent in April last and he said that this was a sort of economic sabotage by the cotton interests and that it was anti-social and that he would crush them and so on. Now, Sir, if I criticise him and say that he has not been able to crush them, he would feel that I am not encouraging him. I am all willing to encourage him in anything that he does to curb the acquisitive instincts of the commercial magnates. About cloth, what is the position. If you see the enormous profits of this industry, so enormous that in one year alone the excess profits came to 78 crores, may I ask where has all this profit come from? I think another 81 crores is the corporation tax. I am quoting from memory. If all this is the result of taxation on these commercial magnates, then what must be the price they must be charging? And do you think that the prices of cotton, stores or coal or even the increased dearness allowance goes anywhere within a hundred per cent. of the original cost? It cannot be shown like that. The real cost is of cotton and manufacture; the rest comes to a very small percentage of the total cost, and I am quite willing that that price should be added to the manufacturing cost of preparing cloth. After that I do not grudge any reasonable profit. Whatever is left and whatever comes to him in the form of excess profits tax and corporation tax from these limited companies which are running the cotton mills, it must be evident to him that these are the results of profiteering. There is not either reasonable dividend or reasonable earning in this. Therefore I think that Government have not yet been able to control the prices of cloth as they honestly want to do. I am not here to say that Government's intentions are not in that direction; not only their intentions are in that direction but their efforts are in that direction and their whole policy is of that kind. But at the same time that the policy is not succeeding as best as it should is to me transparently clear. What is this reduction of 40 per cent. in the price when the price, according to the Finance Member himself, has gone up 500 per cent? Even the Gregory Committee has found that it was 493 per cent. higher, not very much earlier than August or July last year. If that is the case, 40 per cent. out of 500 per cent. does not take us anywhere both as regards food and as regards clothing. If a man has to die for want of food, whether rice sells at Rs. 40 a maund or Rs. 20 a maund he will die because he can only afford three or four rupees. Whether a man pays Rs. 20 or Rs. 40 a maund for rice may be a matter for historical research but that even at Rs. 20 he will die is certain. Similarly, with a 40 per cent. reduction out of 500 per cent. the man is sure to go naked because he simply cannot afford it.

Then I have still a grievance against my Honourable friend the Commerce Member that he is allowing these dealers to run away with hoarded cloth by giving them one extension after another. Yesterday I had an argument with my Honourable friend, Sir Vithal Chandavarkar. I mentioned the manufacturers and dealers both; my Honourable friend said that the dealers may be doing it but the manufacturers are immaculate and as innocent as the new-born baby. As a matter of fact I cannot allow that claim to be made on behalf of the mill-owners. The millowners in Bombay, at any rate,—quite a fair number,—have also their shops in the Moolji Jetha Cloth Market. They may be run either in the name of the mill itself or in the name of a cousin or a son or a partner or some such organisation by arrangement. The dealers and manufacturers are not easy to distinguish as my Honourable friend, Sir Vithal Chandavarkar, thought it was possible. I would invite the Honourable the Commerce Member to institute an inquiry whether in the Moolji Jetha Cloth Market the millowners directly or indirectly are not running the cloth shops.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque (Member for Commerce and Industries and Civil Supplies): Do you suggest that I shall find out whether they are sons and brothers of millowners?

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: You can find that out very easily only if you. . .

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): There should be less of these personal conversations.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): Sir, may I interrupt the Honourable Member? I want to know whether any representatives of the Government of India, besides the Finance Member, propose to take part in the discussion and answer the points made by speakers.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): Certainly, if only we knew at what time an Honourable Member's department will be exhausted. For instance, I do not know what my Honourable friend, Mr. Joshi, is going to say. I propose to speak immediately after Mr. Mehta, if you will permit me, Sir, to answer some of the points raised in the debate. But I do not know what will follow and that is why we have not spoken yet.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Government Members will speak on the last day?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I have asked for leave to speak immediately after Mr. Mehta and I am explaining why we have not spoken yet.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: If the Leader of the House wants to speak after me and he is waiting to do so, he will not have much to say.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am answering Mr. Joshi who always interrupts for nothing.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Not for nothing.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): In the interest of economy of time I would appeal to the House not to interrupt the Honourable Member.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Now what is the position? On the one hand these high prices remain substantially undiminished. To the extent they have come down I am grateful to Government. My submission is not that they have not come down but that they have not come down after eight months by any appreciable extent which will bring substantial relief to the poor consumer. Therefore, my suggestion is that Government should apply themselves more energetically to the question of reduction of prices because otherwise the whole bulk of the population is suffering. What they earn is not enough to enable them to buy at the current price. I will take only one example. The insurance companies dole out every year roughly 4 crores of rupees to the policyholders whose policies mature or to the heirs of deceased policyholders. They might be paying more in claims and profits but it was roughly 4 crores in 1941. Supposing a retired schoolmaster had invested in an annuity in a life insurance company and he was getting Rs. 30 a month, on account of the exigencies of the financial situation, into which I need not enter, his Rs. 30 have become Rs. 10 because they cannot buy more than Rs. 10 worth of goods. All the 16 lakhs of policyholders in this country, because after all the number of policyholders is not large, are subjected to this indirect taxation and lose all their property. A thousand rupee claim fully paid in the form of a cheque by an insurance company will give to the claimant Rs. 300 of purchasing power; and a retired schoolmaster will find all his modest competence melting away before his eyes which he cannot help. That is the position of those who invest in life insurance. The poor widow who has been left by the well-meant tenderness of her deceased husband with a modicum of an annual income of Rs. 200 finds herself at the mercy of some charitable relations or friends because Rs. 200 will not buy all that she needs. All that had been left by her husband is lost because of the high prices due to the financial policy and the failure of Government. A maiden who is heir to a large fortune and expects a good husband soon finds that all her riches are melting away before her eyes and her only value in the matrimonial market is her charm and her virtue; the money portion is gone or at least reduced to one-third. Lastly, the poor orphan. He gets the same modicum as the retired man and a fair maiden who is expecting a good husband. The poor orphans—and their number in this country must be very large—are exposed to charity of somebody, or to starvation. This is the position due to the high prices of food, clothing, fuel and other necessaries of life. Am I asking too much, Sir, that the

Government should expedite the working of their policy which has been so repeatedly announced and finally confirmed by His Excellency the Viceroy for these millions of people—all those who have got settled income, not excluding the innumerable people who are depending on fixed salaries and wages like one crore and two lakhs of Government employees in all parts of India including their wives and children. This is the economic position of the country and you have to deal rather more sternly than you have so far done with those who are profiteering at the expense of the poor. This is my submission in respect of the Food Department. I do not like the agitation against the Food Member as if he was the culprit. He is the Member who, after four years, has announced the correct policy and it is our duty, the duty of this House and the duty of the country, to support it and to demand from him a far more active policy in the direction in which we are anxious to move. But there is a tendency not to co-operate with Government in these things and to go on saying that nothing will happen until a national Government comes, which is like saying that we do not mind if the people starve until that ideal is attained. This is not a very patriotic policy. National Government may come; let it come tomorrow, but there is no reason why until it has come these forty crores of people must suffer from profiteers, adventurers and parasites. It sounds to me as a most unpatriotic thing. But I am not developing that point today. I have sent my written submission on food and other questions.

Then, Sir, the Overseas Member—I am sorry he is not here, but I am not going to say any hard things about him. All that I want to say is that our countrymen overseas, particularly in South Africa, are waiting for some action in the matter of the Reciprocity Act, which was passed by this House at the instance of my Honourable friend, Mr. Deshmukh. Then Sir, I trust that in the future interests of Indians in Burma will be properly guarded as we enter Burma as, I hope, we shall soon enter.

I think I have exhausted all that I wanted to say about the various departments. I have got one or two more things to say: In the provinces great efforts are being made by Governments to collect subscriptions for war loans. I am at one with them; I absolutely support the Government in raising loans wherever they can get in spite of their disastrous character to which I referred in the morning. That seems to me to be one way out of this wretched inflation and I am supporting them. But what I want is that the coercion that is applied should be, as far as possible, moral coercion: You can appeal to my sense of patriotism, you can appeal to my sense of self-defence, you can appeal and persuade me that in the interest of the country I should subscribe and if I have the money I shall do so. But the methods adopted by Government do not stop at persuasion. Sometimes pressure is applied which is not desirable, sometimes the pressure that is applied is illegal, sometimes the pressure that is applied is intolerable. There appeared in the press, I think today or yesterday, a statement that the Collector or some Revenue officer in Bihar had called people and had issued a written circular that those who are paying, say, 500 rupees of land revenue must pay 50 per cent. of their income by way of loans, those who are paying, say, 3,000 should pay 33 per cent. by way of loans and those who are giving, say, 1,000 should pay 25 per cent. by way of loans. Persuasion to this extent is all right, but I have seen another circular issued by the collector of a district—I think my Honourable friend, Mr. Kailash Bihari Lal may be able to give me a copy if he has got it now—in the form of an official order to the people that they must subscribe. I think Government should not go to that length. It is not necessary in the interest of the country. It creates a prejudice against them and it creates hostility in the minds of those whom they want to persuade. If really the Government want to go in for that kind of levy on the rich, let them pass a statutory measure—I would be at one with them—so that the thing may be done correctly under an Act of the Legislature. While the Act does not exist and the Finance Member is able to boast that we have so much loans subscribed, and if the methods pursued are those, I do not call it a very natural or healthy state of affairs. I, therefore, appeal to the Government

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that they should strictly countermand any activities of their over-zealous officials who try to extort money in this manner. If you want to extort money from the rich, do so by all means—not that I have any grouse or grudge against the rich man. I know that some of the taxation which is imposed upon him is not bitter, and I have every sympathy with my Honourable friend, Mr. Ram Rattan Gupta, in the manner in which he was stating his objections to the House, but the only answer to him is that we are at war and somebody must pay the money and that somebody must be the one who is able to pay.

Sir, this is the conclusion of my economic survey over the whole field of Indian administration during the war. I have only one last appeal to make to this House. My appeal is that there is a move in the House to throw out this Finance Bill. I would ask the Honourable Members on that side of the House not to do so. I would ask them to give consideration to this Bill on merits. I have tried to give consideration to it on merits. Political gestures can be made, but when a war is on, you don't want to be without any Government. The dangers of anarchy and confusion and chaos even against a most unpopular Government at the time when the Japanese are knocking at the doors of this country should be obvious to the most patriotic men and nothing will be lost if my Honourable friends on the other side realize that point and for the time being lay aside their political problems because they can be solved when the war is over. In the midst of the war these propositions are not going to be solved. We have ourselves made them more difficult. The Government is certainly justified to say that until there is some more light from us they are perfectly mystified. The original fault is theirs. They have created the situation; they are still fomenting the situation. But they are very incorrigible; you cannot persuade them. Therefore we have our duty to our country and our duty is that when an enemy is knocking at the doors of this country, political altercations must give way to the only one question and one question alone—fighting the war with all our strength, preserving the morale of the civilian population and giving encouragement to the twenty lakhs of soldiers who have drenched their all in the defence of this country. Sir, I have done.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Member for Information and Broadcasting): Sir, the only point concerning my Department which has been mentioned so far was the one which was raised by my Honourable friend, Mr. Krishnamachari. While he was dealing with the question of getting experts from outside

3 P. M. he referred to certain advertisements in the Papers concerning my Department. A number of posts which have fallen vacant in my Department have been advertised and referring to those posts he suggested and apprehended that most likely there would be an import of experts from outside for them. I may give this assurance to him and to the House that there is not the slightest idea of importing anybody from England or anywhere else outside India for any post for which the Indian taxpayer will have to pay, so far as my Department is concerned.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: You are only using swadeshi goods!

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Half of the posts which have been advertised will be paid for by His Majesty's Government. The rest will be paid for by the Government of India, and for those posts I can give the assurance categorically that nobody from outside will be imported.

There are no restrictions on applications other than those applicable to Government servants generally. It is not correct that those people who are in the Department will not be allowed to apply and their applications will not be considered. As a matter of fact they can apply subject to certain rules which are applicable to all the Departments. Those who are in the Department have got just as much chance as any person applying from outside the Department, subject, of course, to efficiency. Some of these posts will be filled in by the Department in consultation with His Majesty's Government's representatives in the Ministry of Information here. Others will be filled by consultation with General Headquarters. Others will be filled in by reference to the Public

Service Commission and the lower posts will be filled in by the Selection Board in the Department itself. That will be the position. So, I have given the assurance that there would be nobody appointed from outside as an expert for this Department for which India will have to pay, and I have also explained the methods by which these appointments shall be made.

Rai Bahadur Seth Bhagchand Soni (Ajmer-Merwara: General): Mr. Chairman, Sir I support the motion for the consideration of the Finance Bill. I support it because we are still in the throes of the war which is yet to be won. War implies sacrifice on the people and we have to make it. Fortunately there are signs of the war terminating and Government here and elsewhere are considering post-war reconstruction. Nobody knows the shape of things to come but I take the facts as they are and if I intervene in the debate, it is out of a sense of my duty towards my constituency. The people of Ajmer-Merwara are modest and, I should say, are usually content with small mercies. But when their basic needs of life are not met, they have a genuine grouse, and they expect their representative in this Chamber to plead for a fair treatment.

Ajmer-Merwara, like Delhi, is a centrally administered area. Delhi receives all the attention it requires—and very rightly. But when I find that the needs of Ajmer, its neighbour, is not attended to, I have to remind the Government. During the last two or three years, Ajmer came to the mind of the Government of India when the Agricultural Marketing Office had to be located there for want of accommodation in Delhi. Such is the measure of attention we receive.

Sir, let me mention some of our grievances. The first and foremost is in respect of foodgrains. Ours is a deficit area and we depend on the Punjab for wheat. But our recent experience has shown that the quality of wheat and other foodgrains made available has been of a particularly poor variety. The Food Department, I dare say, is aware of our troubles and it ought to be possible for them, in collaboration with the Transport Department to ensure better quality and greater quantity of foodgrains at the prices fixed by the Government. Only by this means will the Government be saved of future losses over supply transactions. In this connection, I welcome the Food Rationing scheme for Ajmer. But this presupposes that there will be an adequate supply of essential foodgrains within the reach of the people. While offering the utmost co-operation in the working out of the scheme, I trust the Government will not disturb the ordinary trade channels from functioning. I also desire to point out that there should be trustworthy personnel to inspect the food supplies from time to time and thus create a spirit of confidence in the working of the rationing scheme especially at the teething stage.

Sir, having dealt with food I have to refer to the need for water supply and drainage facilities. I mentioned this last year also and it is my misfortune to have to revert to it again because the problem is there now in a more acute form. A study of the question has left the impression in the minds of the people of Ajmer that the Government of India, who are responsible for the administration of Ajmer, have never been serious about finding a permanent solution. So far as the people are concerned, they had supported the scheme of Mr. Griffin, who had recommended taking water supply from the Saraswati Valley, and they were further prepared to bear an additional 25 per cent. of the cost for completion of the project. But for reasons yet to be furnished, the scheme has been postponed. War is no doubt an excuse, but it should no longer be an excuse for postponing a scheme for supply of the most essential requirement to a fast growing city like Ajmer. Our people can never rest, and perhaps Ajmer will have to wage war against the Central Government, if even during this war this scheme is further delayed. If money could be found and means provided for feeding Calcutta and East Bengal, the people of Ajmer can ask for water at least. What is wanted is just the will to act and not a desire to postpone.

The contribution of Ajmer to the war is by no means negligible and in spite of the severe famine that waged for about 3 years, not to talk of the last year's

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flood havoc, this small province is proud of its share in the war effort. We are also proud of the exploits of the Ajmer Regiment which are so well known to the Government. It is only appropriate in this connection if I made a reference to the zealous interest which the Commanding Officer of the First Battalion has been taking in its progress. I venture to express the hope that this regiment will not be disbanded at the termination of the war, but will continue to play its great role as part of the regular army.

There is another aspect of the war effort which Ajmer is proud of i.e., the achievements of the Railway Workshop in the manufacture of locomotives. A debate held in the other House last week has conclusively shown that with the best will in the world the Government of India cannot undertake the manufacture of locomotives in the Kancharapara and other workshops for 2 or 3 years after the war. In the circumstances, I venture to suggest that the existing workshop at Ajmer might be expanded and remodelled so as to suit the growing requirements in this direction. Indeed, this should have been done earlier during the present war. But on the principle of 'better late than never', I urge upon the Government to concentrate more and more on Ajmer for construction of locomotives so essential for war requirements as well as for civilian traffic.

Sir, I would give secondary place to questions like education and medical facilities in my survey of the needs of Ajmer, for people must get food and water in required quantity before they talk of education and health programmes which are also essential. So far as expenditure on education is concerned, I am glad to note that there has been a slight increase in secondary and primary schools compared to the budget estimates of the last year. But the increase is so much set off by the rise in the level of prices that one feels aghast at the leeway yet to be made up in making even a reasonable provision for a comparatively backward province thirsting for education. And our claim in respect of fifty per cent. of our municipal expenditure on primary education alone still remains to be met in accordance with Government's own promises. We have yet to see the fate of our small request regarding post-graduate classes in our college which is so essential. I dealt with the subject at some length last year and I do not propose to go over the same ground again. We have heard of the Sargent Scheme of post-war educational development which is good and commendable in itself. But, frankly speaking, I have a suspicion that the attention likely to be bestowed on Ajmer in post-war era for education will be no much better than what she is receiving now. This is the observation hardened by experience and I shall certainly be happy if the events turn out to be otherwise.

Sir, the same remarks are applicable to the provision made under the head "Medical". As a matter of fact, this aspect requires even more urgent attention than education, if people have to live in reasonably good health. I know that there is a committee presided over by Sir Joseph Bhore which is working hard with a view to publish a report which will be of invaluable help in solving the medical problems of the country. But we in Ajmer have not the slightest inkling of the measures that will be proposed for the centrally administered area. Sir, we are grateful to our Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands who has recently been kind enough to pay Ajmer a visit. I hope he has educated himself with regard to our educational problems and cured himself of the Government's apathy towards our health question. Perhaps more frequent visits by Government Members will be better curative. In fact, it would be better if the Members of this House were to meet at Ajmer just for once to know what it is to live without water and what it is to live on with bad food and if they suffer in health to know what medical facilities are required.

Sir, we are putting up with these things and still doing our level best for the war and it is to implement that objective that I support the motion.

Khan Bahadur Shaikh Fasi-i-Haq Piracha (North-West Punjab: Muhammadan): Sir, I do not intend to say anything on the Budget itself or any other matter, but the one, to urge the cause of which, in this House, I have taken upon myself, that is, the Haj, and the importance of which I have always tried to impress upon the Government.

I would not have taken the time of the House again today if I had been allowed to complete my say, when I had the privilege of moving a cut motion the other day, in order to discuss the need for permitting the pilgrimage to the Hedjaz, and to provide facilities for that. The House would remember that when I got up to move the cut motion I had only a few minutes at my disposal before the House adjourned and the time allotted to my Party was finished. I therefore take this opportunity to express my views further and to finish what I had to say, with the hope that full attention and consideration will be given to the matter by the Government.

Sir, I had that day discussed the unwelcome Haj stopping policy of the Government and had tried to impress upon them, to dissuade them from stopping the performance of the Haj this year, by bringing forth the lame excuses of the dangers of the route and thereby to the lives of the pilgrims. Let me make it clear, and the Muslim Members will support me, that these reasons will not appeal to the intending pilgrims when we see that hundreds of thousands of Mussalmans have undertaken to lay their lives for the sake of the King and the Crown. No Mussalman, prepared, with a religious zeal, to go to perform a pilgrimage to the Hedjaz, in obedience to his Allah's Commands, would ever hesitate to die in His path. Sir, the Mussalmans will rather take such a death as a more virtuous one. If there be some supposed dangers, let the Government make as far as possible their own arrangements for the safety of the pilgrim ship, as they did in the beginning of the war, and I assure them that if, God forbid, in spite of that, there is a mishap, they will never be blamed for that. The Mussalmans take the responsibility upon themselves.

Sir, my next point was to say something for providing the ordinary facilities of daily life to the Haj pilgrims. This question has on several previous occasions been discussed on the floor of the House, and with all our efforts as members of the Standing Haj Committee for the past several years, we have been able to achieve but little. Even when the Government agrees on some points, years are taken to bring their decisions into action and into a practical shape. The office routine for examining matters is very slow, specially when officers are daily confronted with several problems of a serious and important nature, where the question of Haj probably cannot have its position, about the tail. Sir, in order to refresh the memory of the Honourable Members of this House, I would submit that in consequence to a Resolution passed by this House a Haj Enquiry Committee was appointed by the Government in 1929 to enquire about the arrangement of facilities to the Haj pilgrims at the pilgrim ports and on the voyage and make their recommendations. The Committee toured over the whole of India and gave a detailed report with 219 different recommendations. It took Government full eleven years to examine this report and to take action only on such few of them as did not involve an extra expenditure, so much so that in setting up Port Haj Committees the Government have saved a large amount of money which they had to spend every year previous to their existence. As the troubles of the pilgrims did not end this question continued to be agitated and a Resolution was moved in this House for the appointment of a Haj Officer in the Secretariat responsible for dealing with the Haj matters. Consequent to this Resolution Mr. Rahim was appointed to make fresh enquiries into Haj affairs in the light of the present day situation. Mr. Rahim also made a detailed report and made a number of recommendations in addition to those made by the Haj Enquiry Committee. The report has been under the examination of the Government for over two years, but nothing practical has been done so far. In order to give his recommendations a practical shape Mr. Rahim strongly recommended the appointment of a Pilgrim Officer in the Secretariat who could devote his attention entirely to work concerning

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the pilgrimage. Sir, we are thankful to the Honourable Dr. Khare that soon after he took over the charge of his Department, he made the appointment of a Pilgrim Officer though a temporary one, and that even for a short period. I hope that he will make the post a permanent one and that the finance authorities will have no objection to that, as after all that will cost a paltry amount. Sir, the Government of India have made themselves responsible for two religious departments only, in the country,—the Ecclesiastical and Pilgrimage to the Hedjaz, and the House will be convinced to support my demand when I quote to them the figures of the expenditure of budget for the current year on both the departments. Demand for the Ecclesiastical Department is Rs. 6,51,000 besides the expenditure that is incurred under the head defence as compared with Rs. 65,000 only for the head, Pilgrimage beyond India. Sir, it is a pity that the Haj question is so much neglected by the Government. The status of the Pilgrim Officer should be like that of an independent adviser, appointed from the public, to the Honourable Member in charge of the Department, just as there are so many other advisers in other departments of the Government of India. He should be vested with certain powers and authority to deal with matters pertaining to the Haj independently, without performing office formalities, in order to expedite the matters relieving thereby the Secretary of the Department of a good deal of pilgrim work. Sir, since the report of Mr. Rahim was brought before the House for consideration, we have had a number of meetings of the Central Haj Committee and had also two conferences at Bombay, to take the advice of the shipping companies with regard to the proposed improvements in the present pilgrim ships and in the future ones, but we have up till now not reached any definite conclusions in all the matters. I am, however, glad to inform the Honourable Members interested in the Haj that the conference was unanimous in having berthed accommodation for pilgrims in pilgrim ships. Sir, if the Honourable Dr. Khare continues to take a personal and keen interest in the Haj affairs, as he has been hitherto doing, we can hope that much will be achieved. But if there is nobody solely in charge of the work of the Haj continuously for several years to come, the sluggish office machinery of the Secretariat will take years to give a practical shape to the recommendations made by Mr. Rahim.

In order to invoke the shipping companies that undertake Haj traffic to provide the best of amenities to the pilgrims the best way will be to create a sort of competition among them, so that they may make their steamers more attractive and equipped with all the possible facilities for the pilgrims. Pilgrims should be allowed to travel by any pilgrim ship of any company they may like and the tickets purchased by them should also be valid for travelling in any pilgrim ship of any shipping company carrying pilgrim traffic.

Sir, so far as the condition of the pilgrims at the Port of Jeddah and in the Hedjaz itself is concerned, both the Haj Enquiry reports, by the Haj Enquiry Committee and by Mr. Rahim are silent, as that was not the point of reference for purposes of enquiry and therefore none of them went there to see the affairs themselves. Sir, it was very important and extremely necessary to investigate into the affairs and condition of the Hajees in the Hedjaz, as they have to pass at least a month or two during the Haj season and where they have to face many troubles and inconveniences.

Sir, although there is a British Legation at Jeddah and we have also an Indian Consul there, they are of no great help to the Indian pilgrims. Their existence there is more for political purposes than for any help to the Indians. The staff there is so small that they cannot possibly attend to the Hajees even when they land at Jeddah. The accommodation at Jeddah is so scanty that I have myself seen thousands of Indians lying in public streets. There are no adequate medical arrangements there for the Indian pilgrims which is an essential necessity in those days. The Indians have no approach to the Saudi Government for their difficulties and when they go to their own Consul, they are not attended to, at all. Nationals of other countries enjoy special privileges in the Hedjaz which are denied to the Indians. This is because their Government

have not much regard for their own nationals and for their sentiments. There are many *rubats* or *sarais* built by Indian princes and other philanthropists in the holy places of Mecca and Medina for the use of the Indians but most of them are either usurped by the Arabs there or are in possession of the Hedjaz Government. If they be properly managed, I think they can best be utilised by the Indian pilgrims. Indian pilgrims also feel a great difficulty in taking the Indian currency notes with them. Ignorant people from the rural areas are generally not conversant with the currency notes and they are often cheated. Moreover they cannot keep the paper currency safe. It is not only lost, but is often spoiled with water. They should be allowed to take with them sufficient number of gold coins to meet all their expenses there. Gold coins are very easy to keep safe and also to get cashed at any place without any extra discount charges. The present number of gold *mohurs* allowed by the authorities to be taken to the Hedjaz for Haj purposes is very small. The number should be increased as the requirements of life have gone up so much and the prices of eatables and other commodities have risen enormously.

Sir, I would now take up the question of Kamran quarantine station which is an unnecessary burden on the Indian pilgrims. The keeping up of this quarantine is absolutely not required, since the rules of compulsory inoculation and vaccination of the Haj pilgrims were brought into force. From several years, the Hajees are not required to land at Kamran, but the pilgrim ships are required to call at the Island, perhaps to keep up the convention. The unnecessary calling of pilgrim ships at Kamran is not only expensive to the shipping companies, but is of great expense and trouble to the pilgrims in making payment of Kamran fees and also in prolonging their journey without any useful purpose. Sir, the question of abolishing the Kamran quarantine was discussed in the form of a Resolution in this House and the Government had promised to examine the question but nothing has come out so far. It is not known if any enquiries have been made in the matter or not and if they are made, what conclusions have the Government reached. Sir, the fees that are charged as Kamran Quarantine fees, from the Indian pilgrims, are absolutely unjustified, when no service is done to them in return. If the Government is bound to keep the quarantine station under some agreement with other Governments let them keep it on, and spend from the Government revenues. Why should the Hajees be held responsible for its upkeep and administration, when no service is done to them. Sir, with the courtesy of the Overseas Department, I am in possession of the Budget figure of the Kamran Quarantine station for the current and the last year. The House will be interested to know that a huge establishment of 163 persons, with monthly salaries from Rs. 22-12-0 to Rs. 1,950 is kept, with an annual expenditure of Rs. 93,325, with no work to do throughout the year.

Sir, the total demand for expenditure for the current year is Rs. 1,71,893 and was Rs. 1,72,647 from the last year. The whole annual expenditure is met from the pockets of the Hajees alone for which they get nothing in compensation. The Kamran Quarantine Fund of the Hajees, on the 1st of January, 1927 was Rs. 7,57,861-1-4 but the same was reduced to Rs. 2,65,670-15-9 only at the close of the year 1942, as the deficit budget, owing to the decrease of the Kamran fees, was met every year from this Fund. Taking into consideration the current year's demand and the last year's expenses, the Kamran Quarantine Fund, collected from the Hajees, will not only be reduced to zero at the end of this year but will be under debt to be paid by the future Hajees. It is a pity the pilgrims should be made to pay for the expenses which the British Government should ordinarily pay. To examine this question, I strongly urge upon the Government to appoint a committee of this House to visit Kamran and to examine the question of keeping or abolishing the Kamran quarantine and make a report thereon to be placed before the House for consideration. I think a small committee of the Members of this House should also visit the Holy land of Hedjaz in order to explore ways and means of making the conditions of the Hajees better, with the consultation, and co-operation and help of the Saudi

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Government. The Government should provide more funds to their Consul there in order to provide medical and other facilities to the Indian Hajees. I would also suggest that the Government should also consider the opening of the land route to the Holy land of Hedjaz and also to explore the possibilities of carrying pilgrims by aeroplanes. I understand that if the pilgrims are carried by aeroplanes there will not be much difficulty there.

Sir, if this year, as I hope, pilgrims are not stopped from performing their Haj, they should be allowed to carry for their use foodstuffs, rice, wheat, *ghes*, *dals* and other eatables for their use in the Hedjaz, for I understand that the foodstuffs there, are very scarce and dear. There are a good many rules and regulations for the pilgrims to follow, which need a wide publication for the benefit of the pilgrims. The Government have so far made no arrangements for their publicity and I would urge that all such rules and regulations and the Acts passed should be published in vernacular in a booklet. This has been a general public demand and has often been recommended by the Central Haj Committee and the Port Haj Committees. Sir, the Honourable Member in charge of the Department had, like myself, no time the other day to speak on the Haj question on behalf of the Government. I am sorry I do not find him here at present but I will request him through his colleagues to enlighten the House with the attitude of the Government on this important religious matter of the Muslims.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi (Dacca cum Mymensingh; Muhammadan Rural): Mr. Chairman, I find that neither the Honourable the Finance Member nor the Honourable the Transport Member is present in the House and I have to deal with these two Departments.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: They will be coming in a minute.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Sir, one of the points that both these Members make is that the taxes in this country are much lower than the taxes in the United Kingdom and also that the railway fares in this country are much lower and bear no comparison with other countries. Therefore, they maintain, there is a justification of raising the railway fares by 25 per cent. The Honourable the Transport Member is not here but for his information I may quote what is prevailing in the United States of America regarding the railway fares and freights.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): I realise that the question of railway fares may have a general bearing upon the economic condition of the country, but, as the Honourable Member knows, this would be strictly relevant to the discussion of the railway budget.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Sir, you yourself asked the Honourable the Transport Member day before yesterday as to what conclusion they had arrived at with regard to the 25 per cent. increase in fares. I am merely pointing out to this Honourable House what is happening in the United States of America. It is said: "We, Americans, are paying more today for most things we buy, but there is one outstanding exception, rail-road freight rates. They are the same or lower than before the war." The same is the case regarding the fares.

Now, Sir, in the name of anti-inflation the Honourable the Finance Member has been taxing us in various ways. Take, for instance, the Corporation tax. From every rupee the excess profits he takes away the whole of the income. Excess profit tax in a rupee is As. 10/8, income-tax and super-tax is As. 2/2 and compulsory deposit is As. 3/2. That makes the whole of the excess profit tax which the Corporation can make and which is being taken away. Now, Sir, what is the position of the Corporation? These are all infant Corporations in this country and they have been bled white with the result that there will be nothing left for their future development. Take the case of a company which made a standard profit of 3 lakhs in 1939-40. The tax paid was Rs. 65,625 and the amount left for distribution was Rs. 2,34,375. Today the taxes have gone up so high that it leaves now only Rs. 1,84,375. These are the figures and

I challenge contradiction. That is on 3 lakhs of rupees standard profit. Now, on a standard profit of 5 lakhs of rupees the position is this. From 5 lakhs to 18 lakhs, except that the excess profit tax deposit has been increased, the net amount available for distribution is the same, namely, Rs. 1,78,125. That has become the position. I place these figures before this Honourable House to show that the Corporations have simply been wiped out by the way they have been taxed.

Now, the argument put forward is that that is a mere deposit and we do not take it away. But you have not said in any clear terms as to when you are going to pay us back that deposit.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is in the law and it has already been stated clearly.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will you kindly say what is in the law? I am ignorant of the law.

Sir John Sheehy (Government of India: Nominated Official): It will be paid back twelve months after the war.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Are we entitled to any interest on that deposit?

Sir John Sheehy: Yes, 2 per cent.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: May I take it to be certain that 12 months after the war the forcible deposit that you are now asking us to pay will be returned to us with 2 per cent. interest?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is the law.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: And it can be repudiated.

Sir John Sheehy: Who can repudiate it?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: But why can't the Honourable the Finance Member say it in clear terms?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I said it is the law.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): If the Honourable Member desires a reply to his question, he should resume his seat.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have said it is the law. My personal assurance is not of as much value as a statutory obligation.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I am now satisfied that after 12 months after the war I will get back my money which you have forced me to deposit now.

Now, Sir, I come to the next point, the death duties. You threaten to impose these death duties if not this year next year. Now, the position in this country is quite different from that of other countries so far as death duties are concerned. We have in this country Hindus and Muslims. Under the highest Court of British law, the Muslim *waqf alal Aulad* has been acknowledged. A Muslim can make a trust for the benefit of his children which is a good trust and he becomes not the owner but a trustee and you cannot take it away. Then, under the Hindu law there is the law of *Mitakshara*. Under this law there is no death in the Hindu family in the sense that the son and the son's son and so on become co-parceners with the man who is in possession of the property. There is no death in the sense that he cannot transfer it to somebody else. They are co-parceners themselves from the very beginning. So, it will be very difficult to realise the death duty in this country. How you will be able to realise the death duty, I, for one, cannot understand.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Wait for the Bill.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Sir, too much has been said about the control of prices. The control of prices, I should like to know for whose benefit. Not for the benefit of India. The benefit is for the U. K. and for U. S. A. You have controlled the price of jute, you have controlled the price of hessian. Who are the buyers? U. S. A. and U. K. You will not allow me to sell them direct. You have reduced the price for the poor cultivator. My Honourable friend shakes his head even without knowing what I was driving at. You have controlled the price of everything that U. S. A. and U. K. want. You have deprived me of the chance of making any profit by selling the goods direct. You will not allow me to export at my price. You have forced me to sell at the

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controlled price which you have fixed for the benefit of these two countries. What is the effect of that? The effect of that is this. The U. S. A., when they sell their goods to this country, they are not controlled. They take any profit which they choose. Whereas the Government of India by controlling the price of commodities in this country allows the benefit to go to U. K. and U. S. A. I will give one example to show how the one-sided arrangement works. I refer to the sale of gold. A year ago, if I remember aright, the Honourable the Finance Member thumped the table on the floor of the House and he threatened the speculators of Bombay about the sale of gold bullion and about the sale of cotton. He said, he would teach them a lesson if they did not behave themselves and if they made such huge profits out of the sale of gold and cotton. The Honourable Member threatened that he would put the whole machinery of Government into operation to make the speculators realise that they ought not to shoot up the prices sky-high for bullion and cotton.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I did teach them a lesson.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Yes, the Honourable Member did teach them a lesson, that is only for the Indian section and not for America or U. K.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Nonsense.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I am coming to the sense. You have not controlled the price of gold which you should have done in common with the control you have imposed on other commodities like jute, cotton, etc. Why did you not control the price of gold? Why did you stop me from importing gold into this country? Why did you restrict everybody from importing gold?

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): The Honourable Member will address the Chair.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The Government have only stopped me from importing gold direct. In fact the Government have prohibited private persons from importing anything without their permission. The Government took into their hands all control. To our utter amazement, the Honourable the Finance Member, the other day, was justifying the sale of gold in this country as it was conferring a great boon on the cultivators because they were getting a higher price for the wheat which they sell. This was a curious justification. I got down his speech word for word the other day. He said that "the agriculturist whose products were selling at four or five times the pre-war prices gets more gold for his wheat or paddy today than he would have got in the pre-war period". I wonder if the Honourable the Finance Member realises the fallacy in this argument. It is merely a smoke-screen to cover the whole inequity of the transaction. Take it for granted that the agriculturist by selling the same amount of wheat and exchanging the proceeds for gold gets double the quantity today than he would have got before the war. Let me clearly analyse the nature of the transaction and see who profits and who loses. The agriculturist sells his wheat in the Indian market and gets a higher price than he would have got in the pre-war period and with this additional income he purchases gold which is sold at a price higher than the pre-war price or the prevalent price of gold in Great Britain. What does it mean? In other words, it means this: that the higher money realised by the agriculturist is passed on largely to the person who sells gold, so that while the agriculturist may profit to some extent, the Indian consumer of wheat is generally exploited both by the agriculturist and by the Government who sells gold.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Clear as mud.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Abuse is no answer.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Try it in the case of jute.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: What is the selling price of jute?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Double the prewar price.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: But how does it work out? My Honourable friend says that jute is selling higher than what it was before the war. You cannot compare the two commodities, wheat and jute. The Government have

reduced the price of jute and hessian for the benefit of U. K. and U. S. A. Don't talk of the price of jute. I am a jute man. You have reduced the price of finished products. My point is this, that the higher money realised by the agriculturist is passed on largely to those fellows who sell gold on behalf of U. K. and U. S. A. Why do not the Government put a ceiling price on gold? Whoever may be the seller, from whichever part of the world he comes, he shall not sell gold at more than the ceiling price. That would be for the benefit of India.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Have the bears been talking to you lately?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I am not a speculator myself. These bears and bulls seem to haunt my Honourable friend day in and day out.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Not me.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: It is not me. I have heard the Honourable Member more than a dozen times talking about bears and bulls and the speculative transactions in Bombay, but luckily for me I am not a Bombayman. I am not a speculator.

Mr. Jamnadas M. Mehta: Luckily for whom?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Luckily for me. Otherwise I would have been a share office rat.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Are there no speculators in Calcutta?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: At any rate not for gold and bullion. Sir, I am sure you remember, as you were a leading Member of the House in those days,—the agitation in this country during the prewar era when gold was freely allowed to be exported from this country by Sir George Schuster, the then Finance Member. And in spite of the opposition in this House and outside the reply that Government gave was that they refused to levy any export duty on such gold and put forward the argument that normal trade should not be interfered with. One realises even more graphically the inequity of the present arrangement. Furthermore if Government think that the agriculturist may obtain a slightly larger amount of gold through the foodgrains which he sells the value of the gold which he is holding in store today is bound to fall when the war is over. And this will mean robbing the poor agriculturist. When the Government of the United Kingdom wanted to buy our silver they did not allow us to sell silver at the market prices which would have prevailed if there were no control in the United Kingdom market. They controlled the prices there in the United Kingdom and we could not sell the silver at the prevailing prices in India. But see the situation today. Openly and shamelessly they tell us that for the benefit of the agriculturist this gold is sold, but under a cover so that we may not see where the benefit went; it went to the United Kingdom and the U. S. A. and not to India.

Then about Sterling Balances. With regard to these sterling balances in London which India possesses today there has been a great misconception both as regards their origin and as regards their ultimate disposal. The sterling balances represent the goods and the services which India has delivered not merely to the United Kingdom but practically to every Allied nation. They represent in part the favourable balances of the trade in merchandise which India has had during the last five years of war with many of these countries. They represent also the value of the services rendered in India by Indian workers and the goods supplied in India to the Allied nations. Again by arrangement between Great Britain and India regarding the incidence of military costs a certain part of military expenditure not directly attributable to the defence of India is paid for by the United Kingdom. The cost of the maintenance of the Indian troops beyond the borders of India, such as troops that have played such a glorious part in the Middle East and parts of which are now in Sicily and Italy, is borne by the United Kingdom. But the fact is that part of their pay is being credited in sterling in London against a rupee-disbursed

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pay to them or to their families by the Government of India. And lastly, the favourable balances of trade in merchandise with the United States, South American countries and other nations instead of being credited in the currencies of those countries have all been allowed to accumulate in sterling. By the end of this financial year these accumulated balances are expected to amount to nearly one thousand crores and in a year or two they may amount to 1,500 crores sterling. This amount represents, as I have said, the privation, the blood and sweat of India, which India has undergone in a hundred different ways, and it also represents much of the resources of India which have been freely exhausted in supplying goods to the United Kingdom and other allied nations. There should be no question about the propriety of accumulating the sterling balances on the one hand or checking of the flow of the sterling balances on the other. It is a debt which Great Britain owes to India and which India expects will be discharged in course of time. But there is a growing distrust in India about the whole future of the sterling balances, a distrust which has been mainly caused by the agitation recently started in Great Britain and to a certain extent repeated in India. The Finance Member in his budget speech last year explained at great length the nature of the details of the financial settlement arrived at between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. He pointed out the general principles under which allocation of expenditure between the two Governments was made. The Finance Member has recently explained still further, in view of the doubts expressed in this country, the justification for the burden imposed on India. He has explained fully the manner in which this allocation has been made. He has pointed out that the defence of India is purely a responsibility of the Government of India and that the cost of Indian war measures is a liability of the Indian Government. General defence, apart from purely Indian defence, is a responsibility of His Majesty's Government. The Finance Member has also pointed out that what constitutes India's war measures and other things required for the defence of India is just certified by the Commander-in-Chief. In the actual allocation it is the Auditor General who decides what expenditure, according to these general principles, should be debited to India and what to England. This expenditure is accepted both by the Government of India and by His Majesty's Government. Once the principles of general allocation have been fixed, it seems to me that having regard to the persons who are responsible for the application of these principles, Great Britain at any rate should be perfectly satisfied that the allocation is just.

Now let us see what is happening in this country as well as in the United Kingdom. In spite of these assurances and the statements made in India and the arrangement that has been arrived at between the two Governments, one is amazed to see that financial journals in Great Britain are now complaining about the hard bargain that the Government of India have made with the Government of England. Only yesterday we read in the local papers that the *Financial Times* of London has complained that it was a very hard bargain that India struck. This sort of thing has already started. The size of the Indian sterling balances seems to upset them entirely. The *Economist* raised that cry and it has been now taken up by the *Financial Times*. They have naively suggested this. We are coming to the point: Why there is fear in the minds of Indians. The *Financial Times* also has complained of the hard

bargain with Britain and has naively suggested that the inflation in this country can easily be solved if the agreement with Great Britain is altered so as to make India contribute more to the war effort, as if India has not contributed to the last pie. India has contributed their blood, their money and everything they possessed; they possess nothing else now. The attitude of some of these economic and financial journals of London, which normally reflect the opinion of the Government there and are supposed to be influential in financial matters, has seriously upset public opinion in this country. The *Financial Times* further suggests that "a still further increase in sterling

balances is unavoidable'—mind you, this is what *Financial Times* feels—and yet a suggestion has been made that somehow or other these sterling balances should be reduced. In blunt language this is virtually an attempt at the repudiation of the sterling debts if not wholly at least in part. There is no parallel to the attitude that has been adopted by these journals in England. Sir, a debtor who has borrowed large sums of money, who wants to borrow still further sums in the coming months, suggests in the very course of borrowing that he must inevitably repudiate a part of the loan. Is it any wonder that Indian opinion is gravely suspicious of the whole affair and is beginning to feel that a large part of the sterling loans will never be repaid to this country?

Now, Sir, the idea that India has not played her part financially in this war, which is being propagated by the financial journals in England and which I regret to say is being fostered by a certain section of the Anglo-Indian Press in this country, is as preposterous as it is untrue. The burden on India of the war expenditure compares favourably with the burden which any other country has undertaken viewed from the right perspective. Take the pre-war Military Budget. You will find that against the basic normal budget of 36 crores, India's military budget in the coming year is 276 crores, nearly eight times the pre-war budget figure, in addition to the capital expenditure of 24 crores—an increase of nearly 800 per cent. over the pre-war budget figure. Taking the national income of the country as a whole and the proportion of the expenditure in relation to that income, India's contribution is at least as high as that of any other country.—I should like to say that it is the highest in proportion to what India has been paying for this war. It is extremely sad to think that the contribution of India in men and money has not been adequately realized or is realized, and deliberate attempt is now being made to whittle it down. Sir, the other day His Excellency the Viceroy in his address to the Central Legislature referred to this magnificent contribution and stated: "I shall do my best to see that the debt is acknowledged and paid not only with tributes of words but with practical aid." I do not know what aid will be given to us. If His Excellency the Viceroy and the Government of India can assure us that the debt will be repaid in full, not immediately but within the next few years, it will go a long way to restore public opinion in this country. The full amount of the debt is not even appreciated. I refer to the fact that the Indian troops and Indian seamen overseas are being paid by Great Britain and that much of their pay is represented in these sterling balances or as I prefer to call them 'the I. O. U. of His Majesty's Government'.

But what is the pay that the Indian soldier and an-Indian seaman gets? Is there any other section of the Army or the Navy which is fighting on the side of the Allies which can claim to be more effective and more daring and which has to its credit a better record of gallantry than the Indian Army on the battlefield? Is there any other section of the Allied armies which Great Britain has got at such low pay? And yet while this is not even appreciated, we hear a howl from the financial journals about the much accumulated sterling balances and about the hard bargain which the Government of India has driven against the Government of Great Britain. Englishmen must, if they are not to deserve the epithet of shopkeepers, be ashamed of this agitation which is typical of ingratitude.

Sir, I shall now deal with the question of how the sterling balances should be repaid. But before doing so I should like to point out to those who do not want more sterling balances to accumulate that it is quite easy to stop further accumulation of sterling balances if Great Britain ceased to purchase anything more from India and to require the services of Indians for any such purchases. It is better to do that than complain of accumulation of sterling balances. India is perfectly willing to continue to contribute to the war effort and to supply both men and resources provided they have no fear that these debts will be repudiated later. But the main criticism and the main fear of public opinion in this country is this, and I want to put it quite frankly. Apart from the

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present attempts to re-open the agreement about military expenditure it is feared that after a few years Great Britain may quietly repudiate the balance of the debt. Its loudly advertised position of a trustee for the poor Indian may not stand very much in the way of its coming to the conclusion after five or six years of instalment payment that it can no longer afford to pay the balance. In fact, new theories may be started. A re-examination of the whole position may be suggested and the financial newspapers and economists of Great Britain may put forward the view that the whole basis of this agreement was wrong and that on the basis of a re-examination India ought really to have a share of a thousand million sterling more of the expenditure for successfully waging the war. I want to ask the Government of India, both the British and the Indian Members—for I make no distinction between those who are in charge of Indian revenues and who are expected to look after the interests of India first and foremost—whether they have thought of any guarantee which His Majesty's Government could give in respect of liquidation of this enormously growing debt. Have they put forward any proposal to His Majesty's Government as to how this debt can be redeemed? Have they made any suggestions as to what portion of it is to be redeemed in each year succeeding the year of peace? They are now lending freely to Great Britain. A lender must however take into consideration the fact as to when and how his debtor will be in a position to repay his debt. It is a matter of common sense and common prudence that one should make certain that the borrower has the capacity and the will to pay back. Have the Government of India assured themselves of this? Are they not in a position today to state categorically that they are satisfied that His Majesty's Government will pay the entire debt without re-opening any agreement and without restarting any controversies as to the mutual obligations of these two countries? I hope, Sir, the Government of India would be in a position to answer fairly and squarely these questions which are causing a great deal of anxiety to the Indian public.

Now, Sir, about the export of articles. In the Commerce Department some years ago, there were some irregularities about exports and imports so far as this country was concerned. It was unavoidable, I agree. But what is the position today? The position is this that the Commerce Department has imposed limits. They have given quotas. A man who was not an exporter in previous years is not eligible to any quota for export or import. What was the position before the war? There were very few Indians who were in the import or export trade. The whole import and export trade was in the hands of the Europeans, the vested interests. At that time there were export advisory councils in the provinces. This was about 1940. They are no longer functioning. The Commerce Department is the sole authority to say whether 'A' can export or import, not looking into the matter that in 1941 or even before the war, many things were not exported from this country. So there could not be any merchant, be he an Englishman or an Indian, who could export those things. Now India is in a position to export. If you ban them from exporting now on the plea that you require these things, you are not allowing those goods to be introduced in those countries which after the war would be very useful for trade. The Commerce Department must remove all restrictions that are not required and go through the list of the goods on which they have put a ban against export.

I will give an instance. The mother of pearl button was never exported from India. They are being made in thousands and millions by hand in Dacca and you stop me from exporting to Ceylon, New Zealand, Australia and wherever it is wanted. Your excuse is that it is wanted in India. I say it is not. We have enough to supply India. The trouble is that you will not go through the list and find out what things are available. Your statistical figures come from the various Provincial Governments who take no interest in finding out the truth. You rely on their letters and you immediately stop export without making any inquiry yourself. If you could restore those export and

import committees which were functioning before, these troubles would not arise and India would benefit from exports and imports which you are preventing them from doing.

I will, Sir, briefly deal with the coal situation and leave it to you, Sir, to deal with it yourself. The coal situation is very acute and it is getting worse. The Honourable the Labour Member is not here. He would have benefited by hearing what I have to say about it. You remember, Sir, that I used to take great interest in coal in the years 1930 to 1932 in this House. At the beginning the Government thought I was criticising them unfairly about the purchases of their coal and the rates they used to pay. This war started in 1939. What have they done? I asked the Government of India to control the coal situation. In the last war, if I remember rightly, either one of the Members of the Railway Board or the Agent of the Bengal Nagpur Railway was asked to join the Board as Coal Controller. Under him was the Chief Mining Engineer with the Government and he had a civilian Deputy Controller, probably one of the *burra* Sahebs of Birkmyre Brothers. Things went on smoothly, although one has to remember that there was not such trouble over shortage of wagons, lines and transport facilities as they are this year. But coal used to be purchased from outside and distributed to the railways and to the industrial concerns and for civilian needs. The present Labour Member has told us of some scheme that he intends to put before this House in regard to coal control. Beyond this nothing appears to have been done, first of all to fix the ceiling price of coal and to find out what quantity of coal was available. A gentleman was put in charge of Transport. He was the right man but he has no knowledge of coal mines nor does he know how to get the coal from the collieries. Suddenly the coal position worsened further in June last, due to the following facts. The labourers went away. Colliery labour is not permanent. They got better wages in the army. They got ration free, high wages, and men and women could work together if they chose. Then there was the harvesting of their own crops which were fetching much higher prices than before. Therefore, there was labour shortage throughout. That was one of the things which the Government of India had not foreseen; if they had done so, they could have easily tackled the situation. The second difficulty was the available transport. Transport was not available because there was no transport available. Most of the wagons and locomotives had gone to Iraq and Iran. Though there was 400,000 tons available, there was no transport to carry that coal to the various destinations which would have relieved the shortage from which all of us are now suffering. Then there was no organisation, it went on from chaos to chaos. Nothing doing, no man was responsible except that a Transport Officer was appointed. Railways were without coal, but the Transport Officer had nothing to do with railways; he was responsible for war transport only. And that is why 71 trains were stopped on the North Western Railway. Nobody looked after the railway coal. Before the last war, during the interim period and before the present war, the Chief Mining Engineer was responsible for coal for the railways. Now, he is not responsible, the whole responsibility has gone to the Transport Officer. He knows nothing about mining, nothing about the coal position. He did not come in contact with the colliery owners or merchants. Besides, his duty was to see only to war transport, and his duty ends there. On the top of all that, after a great flourish of trumpet, came Mr. Young. Though his name is Mr. Young he is very old. (Interruption.) He does not know his job, that is what I am told. He has not got a mining certificate, and what does he know of mines? Transport of India—he had no experience of it, except that I heard that he had been found unfit in the North Western Railway some years ago.

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: That was his great qualification—unfitness!

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: And that gentleman was brought with a flourish of trumpets on Rs. 6,000 a month.

An Honourable Member: More than an Executive Councillor?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Yes, he himself told me. I am the Chairman of the Colliery Association and I had to meet him. He cannot make up his mind one way or the other, and there is thorough non-co-operation with every one.

Pandit Lakshmi Kanta Maitra (Presidency Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What about dearness allowance for him?

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I wish him all success, but I submit that a man who wants to be at the top of something must know that thing before he can order. Otherwise his order will not be accepted by those who know that he does not know what he talks about—all tunkum. But there was a simple method which they would not adopt. There are so many Members of the Railway Board. Appoint one of them as Coal Controller here, and put the Chief Mining Engineer and this Transport Officer together, and things would have gone on smoothly. Make the Chief Mining Engineer responsible for the availability of coal, because he gives you statistics of figures of coal. He is responsible for the figures provided to Government. Make him responsible for providing the quantity of coal, make the labour position easy. If what the Labour Member said today is carried into effect I think that it will go some way in easing the situation. After all it is not jute business, that jute will come every year and manufacturers can afford to put up a lower price forcibly which the Government of India dictates for the benefit of the United Kingdom and the United States. There is a huge contract with the U. S. A. and the jute mills were forced to sell at a ridiculously lower price, much below cost price to the mills, but the mills did not make any loss, they made it up from the poor cultivators. That is how the control price works, not benefiting us, not for us, but for the benefit of the United Kingdom and the United States. Why should the colliery owner raise more coal, because the more he raises the more excess profit you take away.

An Honourable Member: No, no.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: If my Honourable friend, the Labour Member, had made that statement two years ago, things could not have come to this pass. Now, you have been taught a lesson that they would not raise any more coal only to pay the profit to the exchequer, and now you have condescended to take into account war bonus, war allowance, etc. As if you are being generous! Your heart was not so generous then, but you are forced to be generous now.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is all the blood and sweat and toil and tears of the poor colliery owner!

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal: European): I do not know whom you mean by "you". You are talking all the time of "you". Does the Honourable Member mean me?

Dr. P. N. Banerjee: The European Group.

An Honourable Member: The Europeans.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): The colliery owners.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Mr. Chapman-Mortimer once cut a joke with me about "who". I will give my reply later.

Mr. Chairman (Mr. K. C. Neogy): The Honourable Member had better proceed with his speech.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Government was forced to announce what the Honourable the Labour Member had done. If they had not done that, you cannot expect any coal mine owners to exhaust their mines and pay your exchequer and derive no benefit from the excess of coal that they produce for the necessities of war. The Honourable the Finance Member laughed at me and said that this is the sweat and blood. He forgets that in his own country the coal mine owners had done the same thing; they had extracted the same thing there.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee: This is westernised public spirit!

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I say this is from our sweat and blood, because look at the taxes you have increased since 1939, and the excess profits tax that you are levying. The position is that with the present taxation I have to pay twice over. This year I shall have to pay quarterly in advance and also pay last year's tax. If I go on like this, nothing will be left for me in the name of deflation. There will be no money in my pocket and the only way of saving myself from this taxation is to put in a petition of insolvency. I cannot make any income. What is the use of making an income and paying it away to Government. It is much better not to make any money and live on what I have made. If you go on taxing and taxing, there will be no other remedy but the one I have suggested.

Sir, I cannot be accused of taking a very long time. I will now come to the question of food but before dealing with the food question I wish to make a reference to my Honourable friend, Sir Jeremy Raisman, in regard to something which he will appreciate. I am not saying this by way of criticism but by way of assisting him and also asking him to assist us in our work. In Bengal, there is a Defence Loan Committee of which I am the Chairman and there are two Secretaries under me, Mr. Hirtezel and Mr. Singh Roy. Day in and day out, we are working to make this defence loan a success in Bengal and I am proud to say that we have succeeded beyond our expectation. I wish to pay my tribute to my committee and my two Secretaries for the work they have done in Bengal in raising these defence loans under such difficult conditions, with the Japanese raiding Chittagong and other places. In spite of these raids and these bombs which fell in Calcutta, our defence loan committee continued to work and bring in as much money as could possibly be done. Only the other day Mr. Gladstone, the Sheriff of Calcutta wrote a letter to the *Statesman* complaining that he would be the last person to advise anybody to buy a savings certificate and his reason was that the complication in the withdrawal of a savings certificate is enormous. That has been replied to by Mr. Hirtezel. In spite of that Mr. Gladstone, the Sheriff, says that these certificates are the small investor's means of saving and helping the war effort and he says that everything should be done to make things easy for him and reduce complication. I pass on this suggestion to the Honourable the Finance Member and ask him if he would help us in making these certificates less complicated, so that we can be more useful to him in getting him more money in the shape of these loans.

Now, Sir, I come to deal with the food question and I trust that every Bengalee will hear attentively what I have to say if he wants to show his face in Bengal. The famine of 1943 was worse than the famine of 1770. When I conclude my statement on the food question I will read a paragraph on what was said about the famine of 1770 and what the Anglo-Indian journal, the *Statesman* has said about the famine of 1943.

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

My first point is that so far as the food question is concerned, it must be the responsibility of the Government of India. It must be treated as an all-India question; the Government of India must not make this the responsibility of the Provincial Governments. In all provinces, the Government of India must take the responsibility for food. Whether it is a surplus province or a deficit province, the Government of India must see to the food position in the various provinces. The 'Grow more food' campaign will not help merely by saying 'Grow more food' and making speeches at the Peliti's restaurant or the Firpo's. The 'Grow more food' campaign must be followed by giving aid to the agriculturists in the way of seeds, implements and loans, so that they can grow more food. I challenge the Government of India's figures which they obtain from the provinces and from the province of Bengal in particular, saying that the percentage has been increased by so much. I question that

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because the figures you get from the provinces are not accurate and cannot be accurate inasmuch as you have got no organisation to collect the statistics in the provinces. You must remember that in England, before the war, the self-sufficiency was only 30 per cent. After the war, by means of 'Grow more food' campaign they have raised it to 66 per cent. I quote this on the authority of this book called 'Economic Intelligence Service, War time Rationing and Consumption'. I am quoting these figures from this book. So far as rationing is concerned, you have started at the wrong end. In England, basic food has not been rationed while basic food is rationed in India. I say that this is inhuman, that basic food should be rationed. They do not want to give us a morsel of food. In England, Mr. President, the basic food is not rationed. Bread and flour are free and so are the cereals and potatoes. You start rationing with our basic food, rice and wheat. Even that you do not give us enough to feed ourselves, leave alone the feeding of the labourers. Mr. Kirby, who is the Rationing Officer in India, has been quoting the rationing system of the United Kingdom and I would like, therefore, to point out to him that in the United Kingdom the basic food has not been rationed.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: You have said that four or five times now, and it is not even true.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: We are all grateful to Major-General Wakely and his colleagues because they saved Bengal last year by rushing food to the villages. We are grateful to His Excellency the Viceroy and also His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief because they have saved Bengal. I have got pictures of those days, a copy of which I shall place on the table.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member cannot do that.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: My friend laughs even at the death roll which I wanted to show.

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

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: I have lost my voice, Sir. I had influenza for six days. What we want in Bengal is this. Early in the war many officers who were engaged in the transportation service of Bengal were recruited for the army and much material such as, locomotives, steamers and barges, was sent to Iraq and other places for war purposes. The result of it has been that Bengal has been denuded of a large percentage of her peacetime transport facilities.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): All that has been said before.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: But I must mention this in connection with food.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): But all that has been said more than once.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: The food debate took place more than once and it must have been said on those occasions.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member would be perfectly relevant in referring to any fresh development in the food situation, but on the Finance Bill he cannot reopen the whole past history.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Is the Honourable Member complaining of the export of foreign experts now?

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member will go on.

Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Sir, unless the Government of India carry out the suggestions that I am going to make here and now, I can tell them that there will be another famine next year in Bengal for which we have

to be on the look out. My suggestions are these. We want at least 500 lorries to be placed at the disposal of those who are rushing food in various parts of the Presidency. We want boats which have been destroyed by the denial policy. Flats in their hundreds are required. In the interior of East Bengal no rice can go by train: it can go only by means of bullock-carts, boats and flats. Those are the only systems of transport that prevail in Eastern Bengal. At least 100 flats and 50 steamers must be procured if Bengal is to be saved from another famine. Rice will not be sent out in the interior if these flats and these steamers are not available. They are all sent out to Iraq and Iran. They can be brought back at once as they are no longer required there, but they are badly required in Bengal. No steps up till now appear to have been taken to build more steamers and barges in India for India. Steamers and barges must be built at once. We must have a long-term policy because the war is not going to end so soon as one would like it to be. The Assam Bengal Railway is badly in need of locomotives. At least 25 more locomotives are required if you want food to rush into Eastern Bengal. So, steamers, flats, barges, boats, locomotives, wagons, and even bullock-carts and bullocks are required. The Government of India can easily get a list of all these from their experts who are running their show in Bengal so far as food is concerned. The Midnapore cyclone has practically caused a heavy loss of bullocks, both for carts and for ploughs. Therefore, these bullocks have to be obtained from other parts of India and sent to Bengal if they want to save the situation. Every form of transport is required, from the primitive bullock-cart and country boat to the broadgauge locomotives if the next famine is to be averted. The main thing is that the question must be handled at once and there should be no delay. Also, the officers who are in charge of food arrangements in Bengal may be kept for another year or two and they should train the people of Bengal to avert the next famine.

I will not take up any more time of the House and conclude by saying that the famine of 1943 was a much more severe one than that of 1770. Anybody who reads the *Statesman* will find the nature of the famine that we had last year. I warn the Treasury Benches that if they do not want a repetition of the famine, they should take note of what I have said. They should take steps at once to complete the transport arrangement so that rice may be sent in the interior and in the villages.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan (Agrā Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, in 1940, when the first Finance Bill after the war was brought, I gave my full support to that measure.

An Honourable Member: By mistake.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: No, it was not a mistake. It was quite right at that time.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai (Sind: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Such mistakes are so many.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I was then quite right. The Government deserved the support at that time and I gave my whole hearted support quite rightly. We were just then within a few months after the war started and we did not know what turn the war would take and how the war would proceed and what the circumstances of the country would be. Therefore, Sir, it was a modest demand which was made by the Honourable the Finance Member when he introduced the Excess Profits Tax and when he levied the extra burden that he wanted to, on account of the war, on the country and that burden at time was limited to eight crores. At that time eight crores seemed a very big sum. When I was reading the debates of 1940 on the Excess Profits tax and on the Budget, I found that even those Honourable Members who seem to be quite willing to vote for this huge Budget thought that eight crores was a very big sum. Now that we are confronted with a Budget of over 800 crores for war purposes alone, it does not mean that we should not refer to what the people thought of eight crores at that time. I

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was surprised when some of the Honourable Members of this House—elected Honourable Members—got up and began to congratulate the Honourable the Finance Member on the presentation of this Budget and when they started by saying that this is a war and therefore they wanted to give a *carte blanche* to the Honourable the Finance Member to go on spending as he likes and tax the people as much as he likes, and take the money from people who could not afford to pay anything at all. If that was the attitude of those Honourable Members, then I do not think that their constituencies would support them in that view.

I wanted to bring certain points to the notice of the Honourable Members of the European Group, but unfortunately I find that neither the Leader nor his followers are present in the House just now. I wanted to point out to them what the Leader of the European Group said in 1940. As none of them is present on those Benches now, and as the whole Group is absent, I should like to reserve my remarks relating to them to a later stage when they will be present.

Now, I see my Honourable friend the Commerce Member is present and therefore I should like to draw his attention within the few minutes at my disposal, before the House will rise for the day, to some aspects of his Department. The other day when I asked the Honourable the Finance Member as to why he did not take proper measures to control prices in the past or earlier than what he has done, he taunted me by saying 'why did you not ask for such control before'. I want to refer the Honourable Member to my speeches since 1939, soon after the war was declared. I even then warned the Government that they should take immediate steps to control prices. I quoted then the example of certain commodities the prices of which, within the short interval after the war was declared, began to rise by leaps and bounds. This was the case with regard to several commodities. I pointed out then that there was to be effective control of price of all the commodities. I then drew the attention of the Government to the price of medicines, for example. I cited the instance of a medicine for one injection which required about a rupee at one time and which had gone up to something like Rs. 16 and this was a month or so after the war was declared. Simply the poor people could not get it.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: To which debate is the Honourable Member referring?

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: I am referring to the 1939 Debates, Simla Session and onward. You read them.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes, I have to.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Then, I drew the attention of the Honourable Member to the fact that the price of iron bars had gone up from Rs. 7 to Rs. 18. At that time, Sir H. P. Mody was also in the House, and the reply that was given to me was, "We are supplying to our dealers at the same cost, if they are making money, we are not responsible for that". I then drew the attention of the Government to this, and my Honourable friend now comes up and asks me why the attention of the Government was not drawn at that time. I do not say that the Honourable Member himself was present then at that time, but his Department and the Government of India as a whole was functioning then. I then pressed upon the Government of India that action should be taken then and there to stop the rise in prices and that proper control should be introduced. What the Honourable Member was faced with in 1943 and the results of what he wants to achieve in 1944—if proper steps had been taken in 1939, if proper precautions had been taken in 1939, probably all these difficulties with which he is faced now would not have arisen and perhaps India would not have suffered to such an extent as she did in 1942-43 and probably suffering now in 1944.

I will bring to the notice of the Honourable Member one thing. I am sorry the people who deal in this commodity are not present in the House, I am sorry that neither Mr. Chapman Mortimer nor the Honourable Sir Edward Benthall is here in the House now. I learnt yesterday that the price of cement has gone up from Rs. 3 to Rs. 4-2-0 per bag in Delhi. This is a controlled product. Cement used to be supplied at Rs. 52 a ton to the Government and that used to be the price ruling in Delhi. Now the price which the buyer has to pay is Rs. 4-2-0 a bag since day before yesterday. This works out to something like Rs. 90 a ton, instead of the controlled price of Rs. 52 a ton. This is being done under the very nose of the Control Department of my Honourable friend sitting over there.

I will draw the attention of the Honourable Member to another commodity whose price also is rising. My Honourable friend said the other day that nobody is allowed to charge more than 20 per cent. of the prewar price. What is the price of batteries now? If you want a 12 volt battery for your motor car, you cannot get it for less than Rs. 137. You could easily get batteries in 1940-41 for Rs. 50 or Rs. 60. After 1941 no batteries were imported. Now the control price is Rs. 137. How is it that the Honourable Member says that he is allowing only 20 per cent.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I never said twenty per cent. All I said was 20 per cent. of such rate as may be fixed by the Controller General.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: That may be.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is not 20 per cent over the prewar price; it is 20 per cent. over the manufacturing or landed cost.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: Landed cost. Did the Honourable Member import any batteries within the last two years? If he did not, then all the batteries were there and the landed cost must have been less than what they were selling at in 1941.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No doubt that is good logic, but that is no argument.

Sir Muhammad Yamin Khan: If the battery was selling at Rs. 50 or Rs. 60 in the market then, then certainly it must have passed through two or three hands, and therefore it must have been imported at the most at Rs. 40; now it is being sold at Rs. 137. Because several big firms are dealing in these things the Honourable Member cannot lay his hands on them. That is why he calls this control. Where is the control? There is control where a poor man is to be caught but not one big fish can he catch. They escape easily through his net.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may continue his speech tomorrow.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 23rd March, 1944.