

COUNCIL OF STATE DEBATES

Monday, 11th March, 1946

Vol. I—No. 7

OFFICIAL REPORT



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COUNCIL OF STATE
Monday, 11th March 1946

(53)

The Council met in the Council Chamber of the Council House at Eleven of the Clock, the Hon. the President in the Chair.

MEMBERS SWORN

The Hon. Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava (Food Member).

The Hon. Mr. Ambrose Dundas Flux Dundas (War Secretary)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

VEGETABLE GHEE

116. THE HON. RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH : (a) Is it a fact that Government are planning to increase the production of vegetable ghee in India by about one lakh tons in 1945-46, and for this purpose they propose to establish about 20 new factories distributed all over the country ?

(b) Are Government aware that the use of vegetable ghee for food is generally regarded as injurious to health and do they propose to obtain expert medical opinion in this matter ? If they have obtained such opinion, will they place the result on the table ?

(c) Do they propose to introduce some method of colourization of vegetable ghee, so as to distinguish it from the pure cows or buffalo's ghee, to save the public from being cheated ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : (a) It is a fact that Government are planning to increase the production of vegetable product (Vanaspati) in India. Twenty-seven parties are being assisted to put up factories. This would increase the production capacity of Vanaspati by 154,500 tons, of which a small proportion should be available for consumption in 1946 according as plants are imported and set up.

(b) Government are advised that there is no evidence to show that the use of vegetable product (Vanaspati) is injurious to health. Government have already obtained competent medical opinion, which is to the effect that Vanaspati is a wholesome food. The views of the Public Health Commissioner, the Director of the Nutrition Research Laboratories, and the Chief Technical Officer of the Food Department, are placed on the table.

(c) Government do not propose to introduce colourization of Vanaspati, as they have received competent advice that this in fact is at present impracticable and will discriminate against Vanaspati without preventing its use as an adulterant. Government are actively considering the proposal to make the addition of sesame oil compulsory with a view to detect adulteration of ghee by Vanaspati. This proposal has been accepted by the industry and details are being worked out by experts.

THE HON. M. THIRUMALA ROW : With regard to (a), have Government got any further proposals, in addition to the 27 parties to whom they have already issued licences, to give some more licences for starting some more factories ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : There is a committee sitting just now examining the long range aspect of the question. If this Committee recommends that more licences should be given Government will consider that.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Has the Committee submitted its report, Sir ?

NOTE.—Questions in the name of the Hon. Raja Yuveraj Dutta Singh were put by the Hon. Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mahtha.

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : No, I have not seen the report yet.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : How long will it take for the committee to send its report ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Committees have their own way of doing things. It is a predominantly non-official committee. I will remind them if the House wishes. But I have not yet seen the report.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Will the Hon. Member see to it that the report of the committee is published or made available to the members of the public ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Yes, certainly.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : May we know why so small part of the production will be available in the year 1946-47 ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Because of the difficulty of importing plant.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Is it a fact that applications and notings were ready about a year and two months back, but their disposal was held up by the Hon. Member himself ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I deny that allegation.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : When was the matter placed before the Hon. Member and when was it disposed of ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I am afraid my memory cannot carry me back.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Are Government making any attempts to see that the machinery required for the manufacture of this vegetable ghee is fabricated or manufactured only in India ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : No, Sir. Some machinery is now being fabricated in India ; but I understand that there are certain items of machinery which must be imported.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Are Government making any attempt to see that engineering firms in India will be able to manufacture these parts for which we rely entirely on foreign import ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Yes, Sir. The parties to whom licences have been granted are seeing to it themselves. They want to get as much of the machinery in India as they can.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Will the Hon. Member's Department see to it that they make some attempt to see that—

THE HON. THE PRESIDENT : That is not a question.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Will the Hon. Member give some indication about the time when he gave promise ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : As far as I can remember it is now about six months.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : After the Simla Conference ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I do not connect the two. It may be after or before the Conference. I would not like to connect the two.

Views of Lt.-Col. C. A. Bozman, I.M.S., Additional Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India.

In my view there is undoubtedly room for ghee, vanaspati and dehydrogenated vegetable oil in order to provide fats and oil. I doubt if a scheme to increase production and consumption of vanaspati would result in any marked diminished consumption of ghee. I think it is reasonable to assume that the latter will always be bought and used where it is available and people have the money. Should ghee production fall off it might mean that the milk used for this purpose would be used instead as an article of diet, but I admit that this is pure speculation.

Note on the nutritive value of vanaspati and animal ghee

By Dr. W. R. Ayroyd, Director of Nutrition Research in India. (His note dated 18th July 1944—on pages 12-18 of file No. V/1).

(1) The struggle—animal ghee versus vanaspati—has been raging in India for years and during its course nutrition workers have frequently been appealed to for a judgment on the nutritive value of the two products. In Coonoor I receive a query on this subject about once a month.

(2) Pure cow's ghee is a good source of Vitamin A, a good sample being just a little inferior to English butter in this respect. Vanasparti, on the other hand, contains no Vitamin A. Some Brands are advertised as "containing vitamins", or something of the sort. This means that a little pure Vitamin D (calciferol) has been added, an addition which, in my opinion, is of little nutritional significance. Vitamin A has never been added to vanaspati, as to margarine in England. Concentrates of Vitamin A are made from fish liver oils and India customers would object to this supplement. Vitamin A is also available in the form of the vegetable product carotens (pro-Vitamin A). Margarine supplied to the British army in India is fortified by carotene. The question of fortifying in a similar manner vanaspati supplied to Indian troops has been carefully considered. It was found, however, that the carotene supplement was readily destroyed when vanaspati was used for cooking and it was concluded that fortification was not worth while.

At the present time, therefore, the fortification of vanaspati by vitamin A does not appear very feasible. A supplement of vitamin D presents no difficulty, but in most parts of India the population obtains sufficient vitamin D through the action of sunlight on the skin.

(3) It has been remarked that pure cow's ghee is a good source of Vitamin A. On the other hand, buffalo ghee is a considerably poorer source. Much ghee produced in India is a blend of buffalo and cow ghee or buffalo ghee alone. The Vitamin A content of ghee fluctuates according to the season of the year, the breed and feed of the animal, etc. A high percentage of ghee as sold is adulterated. In a recent investigation in Coonoor, the Vitamin A content of a number of samples was determined. Samples obtained directly from government agricultural farms were in general satisfactory, but the value of samples bought at random on the open market was usually low. A number of samples tested were, in fact, devoid of Vitamin A and the great majority were poor sources.

If, then, we compare ghee as actually sold and consumed with vanaspati in respect of vitamin A content, it cannot be claimed that such ghee has any remarkable advantage over vanaspati.

(4) The question has often been raised whether milk fat, *qua* fat, is superior to vegetable fats in human nutrition. Much experimental work has been carried out on the subject, with inconclusive results. It is clear, however, that vegetable fat, whether hydrogenated or not, can be satisfactorily utilised by human beings and that any advantages possessed by milk fat as fat cannot be of serious importance.

(5) Vanaspati is wholesome food and there is no objection, from the nutritional standpoint to an increase in its consumption. Indian diets are in general low in fat. I agree that its consumption should not be increased at the expense of that of ghee. The quality of ghee could be improved by development in animal husbandry, by the improved feeding of cattle, and the enforcement of adulteration acts. Since the production and consumption of fats in India are low, there is room for both products.

(6) Groundnuts versus cereals. I cannot say offhand what the calorie yield of a given area devoted to cereals and groundnuts respectively would be. My impression is that more calories (in the form of fat, which yields more than double the calories per unit of weight yielded by carbohydrate) would be obtained from groundnut. Groundnut also yields cattle food in the form of cake. Taking the country as a whole the replacement in the diet of, let us say, 2 ozs. of cereals by $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of fat would be on the whole of a thing and in line with the recommendations of nutrition workers.

Remarks made by Dr. B. C. Guha before the Food Advisory Council on 15-9-44

I think that Sir Datar Singh's observations are worthy of consideration. The question of the expansion of the vanaspati industry is bound up with the question of providing good edible fats to the country in general. The fact is that ghee is not yet within the means of all the people of India. They wish to have rightly, or wrongly, a fat which looks more or less like ghee and has a flavour resembling that of ghee and which they can use for ordinary cooking.

The first question raised by Sir Datar Singh is whether vanaspati has any nutritional value. The second question is that of adulteration of ghee with vanaspati. It is indeed a fact that adulteration is extensively practised in India.

As regards the nutritional question, if the melting point of a fat is too high, it becomes less easily digestible. The fat should melt at body temperature (37°C), so that it may be easily emulsified and digested. It is therefore very desirable that, when you produce hydrogenated vegetable oils for consumption the melting point limit should be fixed. In the Army specification they have the limit at 41°C. We think that the upper limit should preferably be 38°C. for all vanaspati. It has been established in America that margarine (which contains hydrogenated oil) is almost as easily assimilated as butter fat. Hydrogenation should not be carried too far. That is the important point. If that is looked after, vanaspati has good nutritive value and it fills a distinct need. Fats are mainly energy giving foods. As regards comparative nutritional value of different kinds of fat, I must say that it is still a largely unsolved problem. Considerable work has been done in America and other countries and I have seen various reports on this subject, some of which are almost contradictory to each other. The subject is a difficult one and no clear and unequivocal have yet been arrived at. On the whole it may be said that oils, hydrogenated or otherwise are digested pretty well, provided the melting point is not too high. Further investigation should be carried out on the comparative nutritional value of different edible oils and fats and I hope that it will be undertaken in different research institutions in the country.

Sir Datar Singh : #

Do you mean to say you have no data now ?

Dr. Guha :

I say that the data available now do not help us to come to clear cut conclusions. Butter fat and ghee contains Vitamins A, D and E to some extent. Hydrogenated oil may contain a little Vitamin E hardly any vitamin D and no Vitamin A. If a man can get more pure ghee so much the better but the position is that you cannot get butter but ghee in the quantity required. Although vanaspati does not contain vitamins, it should not be said on the present evidence that vanaspati has no nutritive value or is definitely injurious. The Technical Panel of the Food Department has, however, recommended that all edible oils and fats, including vanaspati should be fortified with vitamins A, D and E and since vitamin A is destroyed on strongly heating the oil it was suggested that fortified fats should be used for such cooking as would not involve frying. . . .

Vitamin E helps the utilisation of Vitamin A and is also a protective against the development of rancidity. The Food Standards Committee of the Education, Health and Lands Department discussed at fair length the whole question of colouring vanaspati with different dyes and they have come to the conclusion, which I think is generally justified, that these colouring matters are not really a good protection. Many of them can be made to disappear simply by aeration ; some of them can be removed by simple absorption on fuller's earth. So, what is the good of colouring vanaspati, if an unscrupulous man can remove the colour fairly easily ?

Secondly we have also to consider the people's reaction to vanaspati which is coloured deep red. If we do want vanaspati to be coloured deeply. It would probably not be linked by quite a large number of consumers.

The next point is what else can we do ? We must take technical steps by which we can stop this adulteration or at least minimise it as far as possible. The use of sesamum oil has been recommended. Even if 1 per cent. of this oil is incorporated in vanaspati it may be possible to detect it in ghee adulterated with vanaspati by a simple colour reaction. It has been found that the colour reaction still persists even if further hydrogenation is carried out but this is a point which requires further investigation. I should think on the present evidence that that is the best way of stopping the adulteration of ghee with vanaspati. It is desirable that this and similar technical matters should also be considered by industrialists concerned, who may have some views on it.

DETERIORATION OF ATTA.

117. THE HON. RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH : Is it a fact that the local Civil Supplies Department, Faridpur, Bengal, notified to the public a few months ago to take free distribution of about 3,000 maunds of rotten atta, which was lying in godowns and awaiting destruction under Government orders ; and the atta should be utilized for the feeding of fishes only, which must be done in the presence of some responsible officer of the Department. If so, will Government state why the atta was allowed to deteriorate and not given to the people to save human life ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative.

The quantity mentioned by the Hon. Member represented part of direct despatches of wheat products from the Punjab in 1943. This was sent to Faridpur at a time when there was an acute shortage of foodgrains in the district. Subsequently rice supplies were reasonably adequate with the result that Government could not force the consumption of atta which is not a staple food of the people of Bengal and the stuff consequently deteriorated. Deterioration could not be prevented also because arrangements for prolonged storage did not exist in the Province at that time and the life of atta is limited.

THE HON. RAI BAHADUR SRI NARAIN MAHTHA : Why could not Government carry the atta not required by Bengal to other Provinces instead of leaving it to deteriorate in Bengal for want of people willing to consume it ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Well, Sir, it was very difficult to know at what stage it was not required. The atta was at one time wanted and very badly wanted and it was not wise to take it away from Faridpur which was starving at the time, although subsequently rice supply became available.

THE HON. SIR SHANTIDAS ASKURAN : What was the total amount of atta which had to be destroyed owing to storage for a longer time than necessary ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Where ?

THE HON. SIR SHANTIDAS ASKURAN : In every part of the country.

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I want notice of that question, Sir.

OFFER OF RICE FROM MALAYA AND BURMA.

118. THE HON. RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH : Is it a fact that Sriyut Subhas Chandra Bose made an offer, directly or indirectly, of one lakh tons of rice from Burma and Malaya for relief of the Bengal famine in 1943, but the offer was not accepted by Government? Will Government give the full facts and state why the offer was declined ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : The attention of the Hon. Member is invited to the answer given to the Hon. Mr. Hossain Imam's question No. 63 on 21st February 1944.

APPOINTMENT OF MR. KIRBY, RATIONING EXPERT.

119. THE HON. MR. SARPUT SINGH : Will Government state :—

(a) Whether Mr. Kirby, the Rationing Expert from Home, on special duty with the Government of India, has recently engaged himself in some duties different from his original work ; if so, the nature of those duties ?

(b) The reason or reasons for which Mr. Kirby has been selected for those duties?

(c) Whether the publication "Feeding the Worker" brought out recently by the Government of India has anything to do with Mr. Kirby ?

(d) What purpose or purposes that particular publication is calculated to achieve ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : (a) Reply to the first part is in the negative.

The second part does not arise.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Mr. Kirby is responsible for the quarterly publication *Canteen in Industry—Feeding the Worker*, which is a joint publication of the Departments of Food and Labour.

NOTE.— Questions in the name of the Hon. Mr. Sarput Singh were put by the Hon. Mr. M. Thirumala Row.

(d) The purpose of this publication is to bring home to employers of labour advantages of starting canteens for feeding their workers with well-balanced and inexpensive mid-day meals.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Has the Government succeeded in establishing this kind of canteens in a large number of places ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Quite a number have been established. A good start has been made.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Which is the most fortunate Province : Calcutta or Bombay ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I would not like to make such distinctions, invidious they may be.

RATIONING OF MUSTARD OIL AND KEROSENE

120. **THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH :** Will Government state :—

(a) Whether mustard oil and kerosene oil were contemplated to be included among rationed commodities from the very outset of rationing in Calcutta ?

(b) If so, what prevented those articles from being so included then ?

(c) What considerations have led the Calcutta Civil Supply authorities to have those articles brought under rationing now ?

(d) Whether it is a fact that the railway freight for a maund of mustard seed and an equal quantity of mustard oil is the same between stations U. P. and Howrah ?

(e) If so (i) the justification for such a uniform rate, (ii) whether such rate has not placed the Calcutta producers at a considerable disadvantage ?

(f) Whether Calcutta oil mills owners have not made representations to the Civil Supply Authorities about the inequity which has been brought about in the Calcutta trade by throwing open the entire supply to U. P. oil mills ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Distribution on any basis other than overall rationing was found by experience to be unsatisfactory.

(d) No.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Yes, representations were made by the Bengal Oil Mills Association but the facts showed that no inequity to them was involved in the arrangements made by the Bengal Government.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Will the Hon. Member state why they have not represented to the Railway Board to reduce freight on mustard seeds ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Sir, I submit, that this does not arise out of this question.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : It does arise out of (d), which enquires whether it is a fact that the railway freight for a maund of mustard seed and an equal quantity of mustard oil is the same between U.P. and Howrah.

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I do not know whether representation has or has not been made. I could not say.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : I mean, as the Food Member cannot the Hon. Member say that this inequity should cease ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : The matter must have been gone into. I could not say definitely without notice.

I. N. A. OFFICERS

121. **THE HON. RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH** : Will Government enquire and state whether it is a fact that after the Japanese had evacuated Rangoon in April, 1945, it was the I.N.A. who kept order in the Burmese capital till such time as the British arrived and when the British arrived, the I.N.A. officers surrendered on the understanding that they would be treated as Prisoners of War ? Will Government make a statement in this connection ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : Before the Japanese left Rangoon they had made the so-called I.N.A. responsible for the internal security of Rangoon. During the two or three days between the departure of the Japanese and the arrival of allied troops, the I.N.A. carried on this work in consultation with the so-called Burma National Army. One detachment continued its security duties for a few days under the orders of the allied commander. No assurance was given to the officers of the I.N.A. that they would be treated as prisoners of war, although they have in fact received the same treatment as prisoners of war as regards food, accommodation, clothing, and so on. Only one officer asked that they should be given the status of prisoners of war and the request was categorically refused by the Deputy Military Governor of Rangoon who replied that they were regarded as suspects awaiting interrogation.

PAYMENT OF TAXES, ETC., BY MILITARY AUTHORITIES

122. **THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH** : Will Government state :—

(a) Whether there is unusual pressure on the resources of all municipal bodies in and about Calcutta by reason of the military occupation of the properties and abnormal use of water, roads, thorough fares and open lands by them ?

(b) If so, whether usual rates and taxes have been regularly paid by the military authorities to the Calcutta Corporation and the different municipalities under whose municipal jurisdiction houses, buildings, open lands and gardens have been occupied by the military personnel within a radius of 25 miles of Calcutta ?

(c) The total amount of rates and taxes which has been paid to the Calcutta Corporation by the military during the entire period of the war for the use of the properties owned by the Corporation of Calcutta and private individuals as also of public bodies ?

(d) The total amount in rates and taxes which has been paid to the suburban municipalities on behalf of the military for the use and occupation of similar properties within their jurisdiction ?

(e) Whether any amount or amounts have been sanctioned by the Central Government for the rehabilitation of the municipal bodies whose resources have been affected by the military use and occupation of lands and properties within their jurisdiction ?

(f) Whether the Calcutta Corporation has represented to the Central Government for a grant to make good and repair the roads, drains, etc., damaged and affected by their abnormal use by the military for over six years ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS ; (a) It is correct to say that as a result of the increase on the number of military personnel in Calcutta area an additional load was thrown on the Municipal Services of the City Corporation and local Municipal bodies.

(b) Rates and Taxes remain the liability of the owners but the rent or recurring compensation payable by the military authority to the owners includes an element to cover this liability. The rates and taxes are thus paid by the military indirectly.

(c) and (d). It is not possible to state the total amount of rates and taxes paid in directly to the Calcutta Corporation or the Suburban Municipalities as no records are available showing the assessments of the many properties requisitioned.

A sum of Rs. 7,200 is being paid annually direct to the Calcutta Corporation by the military authorities in two special cases on account of rates and taxes.

(e) Financial assistance has been given by the centre to certain municipal bodies towards the cost of improvement and maintenance of roads within their jurisdiction damaged by military traffic upon specific requests received from such bodies for assistance.

(f) No, Sir.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Could the Hon. Member lay a copy of the minutes of the Municipal Corporation meeting as a result of which the amount is being paid to them ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS ; I could lay them on the table, if required, Sir.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : With regard to (e) have the Central Government made any definite recommendations to all the Provincial Governments that the loss sustained by the municipalities on account of military traffic should be made good out of the provincial funds ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : No, Sir.

SLAUGHTER OF CATTLE

123. **THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH :** Will Government state :—

(a) Whether any figures have been preserved of the number of cattle which have been slaughtered during the last four years of the war in the province of Bengal for consumption by the Army ?

(b) If so, the figures of the last four years, year by year ?

(c) If not, by rough estimate (i) the daily supply of meat in tons (excluding meatless days) by contractors to the several Issue Depots for the British and Indian Forces ;

(ii) The daily supply in tons by contractors to the American and Allied Forces ?

(d) Whether there has been great destruction of cattle stock within the Bengal Province during the last four years of the war for daily supplies of meat to the military from within the province itself ?

(e) If the answer is in affirmative (i) whether in consequence of such killing of cattle life the essential milk supply for the civil population has been adversely affected ?

(ii) what steps are being taken by the Central Government to have the cattle life so destroyed for military requirements replenished as a post-war measure ?

(iii) whether the efforts of the Agricultural Department to let the province recoup in that matter are bearing any tangible results ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS ; (a) and (b). Separate figures for cattle slaughtered in the Province of Bengal for consumption by the Defence Forces have been maintained only since the 1st April 1944. The numbers are :—

1st April 1944 to 31st March 1945—25,249.

1st April 1945 to 31st Dec. 1945—1,484.

(c) Cattle are not slaughtered for consumption by Indian troops. Separate figures of issues to British, American and Allied Forces are not available.

(d) No, Sir. The Livestock Census 1940 shows a total cattle population in Bengal of 23·7 million. Slaughter for the Defence Forces would therefore constitute a minute proportion of this total, e.g.—

During 1944/450·106 per cent.

During 1945/460·009 per cent.

(e) (i) Milch cattle are not accepted for slaughter by the RIASC. Consequently milk production is not affected.

(e) (ii) and (iii). The Bengal Government have already prepared a comprehensive post-war reconstruction scheme for livestock development in the province which aims at breeding, dairying and research. This is a matter of long-term policy which will receive financial assistance from the Centre on the basis that may be laid down for all such post-war development schemes. In the meanwhile, the Central Government have given financial assistance for a scheme for a Central Livestock Research and Breeding Station at Haringhata.

The scheme has already made a satisfactory start but will take time to produce definite results.

CIVIL PIONEER FORCE OFFICERS STATIONED AT CHITTAGONG

124. THE HON. SURPUT SINGH: Will Government state :—

(a) The names of officers (lieutenant, captain and major) under whom the Civil Pioneer Force was at the time the members of the Force committed the alleged crimes in the Chittagong village recently ?

(b) How far away those superior officers of those offenders were staying from the scene of occurrence on that day and hour ?

(c) Whether any quantity of petrol was within the easy reach of those men ?

(d) If so, the circumstances under which they could get hold of that inflammable substance ?

(e) Whether or not the offending men come under the jurisdiction of the Adjutant General at General Headquarters ?

(f) If the answer to (e) is in the affirmative, whether they do not come primarily under military jurisdiction ?

(g) If so, what prevented them from being court-martialled regimentally ?

(h) Whether those men were under any sort of bond or agreement ?

(i) If the answer to (h) is in the affirmative, in whose favour—civil or military—those agreements were given ?

(j) Whether their pay and allowances are paid from the military estimates ?

(k) The reasons why they are not to be tried by the civil court ?

(l) Whether they have been surrendered for being kept in *hajat* pending enquiry and investigation ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : (a) At the time of the occurrence—7th January—the officer in charge of the unit concerned (which it should be explained was a Provincial Civil Labour Unit and not a unit of the Civil Pioneer Force) was Captain P. C. Young, Indian Pioneer Corps. He had under him Mr. William Naik, 2nd-in-Command, six supervisors and ten assistant supervisors, all civilians.

(b) Both the Officers Commanding and the 2nd-in-Command were in the unit lines at the time of the occurrence. The unit lines were about one mile from the place of occurrence.

(c) Four gallons of petrol and four gallons of kerosene were kept in the Quartermaster's store. These quantities were checked and found correct the next morning.

(d) This matter is still under investigation.

(e) and (f). Whilst in military employ civil labour units come under military jurisdiction through the normal channel of military command from Local Commander to General Headquarters.

(g) Personnel of such units consist of labourers—not of trained soldiers—and though technically subject to military law are not normally subjected to military law. If they commit any serious offence they are handed over to the civil authorities.

(h) and (i). Members of the type of civil labour unit involved in the incident under discussion enter into an agreement with the Government of India for employment on defence or other Government works for a period of one year from the date of arrival at site of work. Although the original agreement is with the civil authorities, in the vast majority of cases employment is actually with the Defence Services.

(j) The cost of civil labour units employed by the Defence Services is paid from Defence Estimates.

(k) and (l) The incident was the subject of joint civil and military investigation, as a result of which 60 members of the unit are now on trial in a civil court at Chittagong.

NON-PAYMENT OF HOUSE RENT, ETC., BY MILITARY AUTHORITIES

125. THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH : Will Government state :—

(a) The number of cases in which the payment of monthly rents to the owners of private houses, buildings and gardens taken for the military under Defence of India Rule in Calcutta and suburbs are being suspended ?

(b) Whether the payments in such cases are being held over ?

(c) If such delay is admitted, the number of cases with reasons where such delays are occurring ?

(d) The reasons why rates and taxes for the requisitioned properties are not paid to the Municipal Bodies by the requisitioning authorities pending the suspension of the owners' dues ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : (a) and (b). In no case in which the rent has been finally fixed has the payment been suspended for property taken over by the military under Defence of India Rules in Calcutta or suburbs.

(c) After a property is requisitioned under the Defence of India Rules some delay in commencement of the payment of the monthly rental necessarily arises pending the completion of negotiations over the amount of the rent. The qualified Government staff available for this important work is limited. When an agreement cannot be reached an arbitrator has to be appointed under section 19 (1) (b) of the Defence of India Act. Information is not available as to the number of cases where negotiations between the Civil Authorities and the owners are still incomplete. On 15th February sixty cases were awaiting confirmation by the military authorities.

(d) The attention of the Hon. Member is drawn to my answer to his question No. 122 regarding the responsibility for payment of rates and taxes. No requests have been made by owners to the Military Authorities to pay rates and taxes in cases where there is delay in the commencement of payment of rent.

GIFT GIVEN BY THE SUDAN GOVERNMENT

126. THE HON. RAJA YUVERAJ DUTTA SINGH : Will Government state the main details of the scheme for the utilisation of the sum of 100,000 placed at their disposal in 1941 by the Sudan Government in grateful recognition of the services rendered by the Indian troops in defence of Sudan territory ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : The attention of the Hon. Member is invited to the press communique of the 2nd May, 1945 on this subject, a copy of which has been placed in the library of the House. It has now been decided that the gift should be devoted to the erection of a hall or wing of the National War Academy.

INCONVENIENCE TO PURCHASERS OF RATIONED CLOTH

127. THE HON. RAI BAHADUR SATYENDRA KUMAR DAS : (a) Are Government aware that both men and women have to stand for hours together in the public streets exposed to the heat of the strong sun before the cloth ration shops at

Calcutta and other towns of Bengal, due to the short period of distribution of cloth, lack of proper resting place at the ration shops and improper distribution of the quota by the authorities to the ration shops ?

(b) Have Government recently drawn up any scheme to redress the grievances of the people and to meet the acute cloth shortage in Bengal, if so, will they give an outline of such scheme?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : (a) The Bengal Government deny that this is the case.

(b) The cloth situation is no worse in Bengal than elsewhere.

IMPORT OF RICE FROM BURMA

128. **THE HON. MR. G. S. MOTILAL :** When and in what quantity Burma rice is expected to arrive in India during the next twelve months ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : No final distribution programme for the export of Burma rice during the next 12 months has yet been made by the Combined Food Board and it is, therefore, not possible to state at this stage what quantities will be arriving in India.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Has the Hon. Member any idea of the total production of Burma rice this year ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : No, Sir. The conditions there are not yet settled.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Is there likely to be any exportable surplus in Burma ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : I am unable to say at this stage.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Has the Intelligence Department of the Government of India no information on the subject ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : It does not work in Burma.

IMPORT OF WHEAT

129. **THE HON. MR. G. S. MOTILAL :** How much wheat has been imported during each of the last three years and how much is arranged to arrive during each quarter of the next twelve months?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : The amount of wheat and wheat products imported during the last three years is—

1943.....	2,30,763 tons.
1944.....	6,14,661 tons.
1945.....	7,98,291 tons.

During the first quarter of 1946 we expect to receive about 2,80,000 tons. Negotiations for the programme for the remaining quarters of 1946 are in progress.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Are these figures for the calendar year or for the financial year?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : Calendar year.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Have we in any year received a million tons of wheat from His Majesty's Government ?

NOTE.— Questions in the name of the Hon. Mr. G. S. Motilal were put by the Hon. Mr. M. Thirumala Row.

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : No, Sir. The figures are there.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Have the Government of India pressed for more ?

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA : They have done their utmost.

RELEASE OF PETROL FOR CIVILIAN USE

130. THE HON. MR. G. S. MOTILAL : What percentage of the petrol imported and produced in India has been released for civilian use during November, December 1945 and January 1946 ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : It would not be in the public interest to give the civil releases of petrol and the totals imported and produced, because this would reveal the amount of military consumption ; but I may say that the quantities released for civilian use during November and December of last year were about 5.8 and 6.2 million gallons respectively, which is about three-quarters of the average monthly pre-war release . The figures for January 1946 are not yet available.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Is the Government making any endeavour to make it up to the normal consumption ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : Government is constantly endeavouring to get it back to normal.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : When can we hope to have normal supplies ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : I cannot foretell.

CREATION OF TEMPORARY COMMISSION

131. THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH : Will Government state :—

(a) The number of temporary Commissions created in (i) Army (ii) Navy and (iii) Air Force during 1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively ?

(b) The number of Indians who have been granted such Commissions in (i), (ii) and (iii) of (a) respectively, up to date ?

(c) When all these temporary Commissions are likely to be discontinued ?

(d) The number of Commissioned Officers proposed to be retained in (i), (ii) and (iii) of (a) respectively ?

(e) The proportion of Indians who will be kept on the permanent list in (i), (ii) and (iii) of (a) respectively, when the temporary lists are scrapped ?

(f) What has become of the scheme proposed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief before the War Board in London some time ago for the complete Indianization of the Indian Army ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : (a) and (b). I lay a statement on the table.

(c) and (d). The strength of the forces required for the defence of India in the future is still being discussed, but it is anticipated that by the 1st April 1947 the vast majority of personnel surplus to peace time requirements will have been demobilised.

(e) and (f). The scheme referred to by the Hon. Member is explained in the Press Communique on the subject which was issued on the 22nd of October last, a copy of which I place on the table of the House. The policy of Government has not changed.

		<i>Statement</i>				
		1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
(a)						
(i)	Indian Army	16,400	10,650	10,700	5,550	2,300
(ii)	Royal Indian Navy	308	511	738	420	259
(iii)	Royal Indian Air Force		See footnote.			
(b)						
(i)	Indian Army	2,670	3,670	5,100	2,780	1,430
(ii)	Royal Indian Navy	89	238	321	349	199
(iii)	Royal Indian Air Force	180	405	658	228	212

FOOTNOTE.—During the years 1941 to 1945 the Government of India authorised for ground duties, other than medical, a ceiling of 1,122 officers. There was no limit placed on the number of suitable officers who could be commissioned for General (Flying) Duties or Medical Duties. The Royal Indian Air Force being a purely Indian Service, no commissions were given in it to non-Indians.

PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTORATE ;
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, INDIA
New Delhi, October 22, 1945.

Press Communiqué

New Delhi, October 22.—The Government of India have had under consideration for some time the policy to be followed in the future officering of the Royal Indian Navy, the Indian Army and the Royal Indian Air Force, and, in agreement with His Majesty's Government have made the following decisions.

The grant of permanent commissions in the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Army will, in future, be restricted to Indians and to other persons domiciled in India who are subjects of His Majesty or of a Prince or Chief in India.

The recruitment of officers to the Royal Indian Air Force is already subject to this restriction. As a temporary expedient, however, and in order to meet immediate needs, it has been decided to offer 40 regular commissions to European officers of the R. I. N. Reserves. This will enable the R. I. N. to obtain officers of intermediate seniority with war experience, a category to fill which, a sufficient number of Indian officers is not at present available.

It will be generally recognised that the three Indian Services will still require a quota of British officers until such time as there is an adequate supply of qualified Indian officers completely to fill all grades in the officer cadre. It has been decided therefore that British officers for service in the three Indian Services shall hereafter be obtained by secondment or attachment from the Royal Navy, the British Army and the Royal Air Force respectively for so long as may be found necessary.

The quota of seconded or attached British officers of the three Indian services will be systematically and progressively reduced as Indian officers become available.

Certain matters arising out of these decisions such as the duration of periods of secondment or attachment of British officers from British Services, and the terms and conditions under which such officers will serve, are being examined by the Government of India in conjunction with His Majesty's Government.

These decisions do not affect the position of regular British Officers already holding permanent commissions in the Royal Indian Navy and the Indian Army.

MAINTENANCE OF THE INDIAN RED CROSS ORGANISATION

132. THE HON. MR. SURPUT SINGH : Will Government state :—

(a) Whether the Indian Red Cross Organisation is patronised, fostered and financed by the Government of India from the Central revenues ?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in affirmative ; the nature and extent of their interest therein ?

(c) The policy and programme that the organisation is supposed to have carried on in the country ?

(d) What amounts have been subscribed by them to the organisation from Central revenues only, in 1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively ?

- (e) What amounts have come to the organisation from private subscription from (i) Europeans and (ii) Indians in 1942-43, 1943-44 and 1944-45, respectively ?
- (f) How many European office-bearers are there in the organisation with pay and emoluments of Rs. 1,000 and above ?
- (g) How many British nurses are now in the service of that organisation ?
- (h) What sort of humanitarian or relief work by the organisation has been done during (i) the storm and flood havoc in the Midnapur district, (ii) Dacca riots, (iii) bomb casualties in Calcutta and suburbs, (iv) Famine distress and deaths in Calcutta, (v) malaria and cholera havoc that followed the famine ?
- (i) If no relief or humanitarian work was done in any of these cases, whether any relief or humanitarian work was forthcoming in these instances ?
- (j) What amount the organisation has received from private charity in Bengal during 1945-46 ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : (a), (b) and (d). The Indian Red Cross Society, which is a voluntary body constituted by Act XV of 1920, is not financed from Central Revenues. The Government of India are however interested in the Society because it is recognised under the Geneva Convention as an auxiliary of the Army Medical Services and also because as a member of the League of Nations India has the obligation, under Article XXV of the League Covenant, to encourage and promote the establishment and co-operation of a duly authorised voluntary Red Cross Organisation in the country.■

Some Government officers are serving honorarily on the Society's Managing Body and are helping with advice in the development of its humanitarian activities which are of value to the medical and public health services.

(c) The Society's aims are the improvement of health, prevention of disease and mitigation of suffering in peace and war, and it has been devoting itself to this end by carrying on activities, details of which are published in its annual reports.

(e) I lay a statement on the table, but details of the amounts subscribed by Europeans and Indians separately are not available and the time and labour involved in collecting them would not be worth the result.

(f) At present eight European officers with pay of Rs. 1,000 per mensem and above are serving under the Joint War Organisation in India and overseas (including ACSEA). Most of them are shortly leaving the Organisation.

(g) None.

(h) and (i). The Indian Red Cross Society contributed over Rs. 10,000 for relief of distress caused by cyclone and flood in Midnapore district, besides the personal services of its junior members who helped in rescuing marooned villagers and in distributing rice, etc. During the Dacca riots, members of the St. John's Ambulance brigade which works in close collaboration with the Indian Red Cross gave first aid to injured students. These personnel also rendered first aid to the casualties in the Calcutta air raid in December 1942 and gave aid to destitutes suffering from cholera and removed them to hospital.

In connection with the Bengal famine the Society rendered excellent service by the provision of milk and certain protective foods to destitute children and nursing expectant mothers. The Milk Service was started in September 1943 and so far over 3,300 tons of powdered and evaporated milk to the value of about half a crore of rupees obtained from various sources have been distributed in the province. A total of approximately 150 million milk feeds have already been served through 2,000 centres organised all over Bengal. Supplies of milk were also made available to the Famine Relief Emergency Hospitals. In addition to milk about a lakh of woollen and cotton blankets were distributed to destitute people in Bengal in the winter of 1943-44.

I regret the requisite information is not available.

STATEMENT

List of contributions received by the Central Joint War Organisation of the Indian Red Cross and St. John.

Year	Contributions from H. E. The Viceroy's War Purposes Fund	Received direct from the Public	Contributions transferred from the Provincial and State Joint War Committees	Contributions received from Iraq	Contributions received from Mideast	Contributions from British Joint War Organisation	Misc.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1942	...	7,95,185	36,97,827	5,166	5,215	6,66,666	4,16
1943	*48,00,000	22,24,834	1,43,63,251	3,96,314	26,554	3,33,333	965
1944	...	15,87,386	1,13,12,295	25,868	1,10,941	...	43,856
1945	†5,00,000	8,77,684	43,74,408	9,13,463	7,252	...	3,61,935
1946 (Upto 26th February).	...	73,909	22,12,543	...	...	14,64,122	1,326

*Under guarantee from Provincial Governors these contributions were received through the Viceroy's War Purposes Fund.

†Repayable to H. E. The Viceroy's War Purposes Fund.

ITALIAN PRISONERS OF WAR

133. THE HON. FLIGHT-LIEUTENANT RUP CHAND : Will Government state :—

- (a) The total number of camps in India for the Italian prisoners of war ?
- (b) The total number of Italian war prisoners still in India ?
- (c) Whether it is the intention of Government to repatriate these prisoners from India back to Italy in the immediate future ; if not, why not?
- (d) The total expenditure incurred by Government on the maintenance of these Italian war prisoners in India ;
- (e) Whether any expenditure incurred on these Italian war prisoners during their stay in India is to fall on Indian revenues directly or indirectly ; if so, what are the details of such expenditure?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : (a) Eight camps.

(b) 26,172.

(c) All Italian prisoners of war will be repatriated as shipping becomes available but they cannot be given priority for repatriation over British troops.

(d) The total expenditure incurred on the maintenance of Italian prisoners of war in India upto the end of 1944-45 is Rs. 28.05 crores. The expenditure for 1945-46 is estimated at 3.50 crores.

(e) No portion of the expenditure incurred on the maintenance of these prisoners falls on Indian revenues.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Does it include the barracks at Ajmer in which they are detained ?

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : Sir, it includes everything that has been built or hired or otherwise used for them.

GRIEVANCES OF R. I. A. F. PERSONNEL

134. THE HON. FLIGHT LIEUTENANT RUP CHAND : Will Government state:—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that a large number of R.I.A.F. men went on hunger strike in Karachi as a protest against the insanitary conditions of living, unsatisfactory accommodation and other grievances ?

(b) The steps taken by Government to redress the grievances of these R.I. A.F. men.

THE HON. MR. A. D. F. DUNDAS : The difficulties at Karachi arose initially from purely local circumstances. Some 2,000 R. I. A. F. airmen were brought to Karachi at very short notice with the result that arrangements for their accommodation, sleeping, electric light, lavatories, etc. were, at first, somewhat makeshift. They, therefore, refused to take their meal that evening and again next morning. Immediately this became known, the Officer Commanding the Station called them together and heard their grievances. He at once gave orders to remedy most of the defects and, in the meantime, the A O.C-in-C. Air Marshal Sir Roderick Carr himself arrived by air from Delhi and heard the men's grievances. Everything possible was done to remedy the men's immediate grievances. Better tents and proper beds and blankets were provided ; a number of electric generators were flown in by air further posting of R. I. A. F. airmen to Karachi was stopped to prevent overcrowding ; haircutting arrangements and lavatory accommodation were improved ; and the Command Catering Officer was deputed to ensure that the catering arrangements were adequate.

The men at once returned to work and there has been no further trouble. The A O.C-in-C. has, however, appointed a Committee of Enquiry into the incident and certain other grievances of the men regarding their pay and other conditions of service are being given further consideration.

INDIAN ORDNANCE SERVICE

135. **THE HON. MR. V. V. KALIKAR :** Will Government state :—

(a) The strength of the Indian and non- Indian gazetted and non-gazetted officers in the Indian Ordnance Service?

(b) The scale of pay and emoluments of the Indian and non-Indian gazetted and non-gazetted officers of the Indian Ordnance Services?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS: (a) and (b). Statements are laid on the table

Strength of the Indian and non-Indian gazetted and non-gazetted officers in the Indian Ordnance Clothing and Harness and Saddlery Factories

	Indian	Non-Indian
Gazetted Officers	*99	*232
Non-gazetted Officers (Indian Ordnance Department)	13,36	729

*Including Officers belonging to the Indian Ordnance Service.

Rates of pay, etc., of officers of the Indian Ordnance Service and non-Gazetted staff of Indian Ordnance Department serving in Indian Ordnance, Clothing and Harness and Saddlery Factories

A.—Pay

Appointments	Rates of pay in force before 28th September 1931 (Asiatics & Non-Asiatics)	Revised rates of pay in force since 28th September 1931 (Asiatics)
<i>(i) Gazetted Officers</i>		
1. Superintendent . . .	Rs. 1,350—100—1,750+ Overseas pay.*	£30 Rs. 1,100—70—1,450
2. Works Manager . . .	Rs. 850—100—1,250+ seas pay.*	£30 Over- Rs. 650—35—1,000.
3. Assistant Works Manager	Rs. 600—50—800+ seas pay.*	£25 Over- Rs. 500—25—625.
<i>(ii) Non-Gazetted Officers</i>		
1. Principal Foreman . . .	†800—20—700	Rs. 475—15—535
2. Foreman . . .	†Rs. 500—20—600 (after 10 years 650).	Rs. 400—15—475 (E. B.)—25/5 —500.
3. Asst. Foreman . . .	†Rs. 375—15—435 (6th, 8th, 10th yrs. 450, 470 and 490).	Rs. 300—12—360 (E. B.)—15/2 390.
4. Storeholder . . .	Rs. 500—20—600	Rs. 400—15—475 (E. B.) at 445.
5. Asst. Storeholder . . .	Rs. 375—15—435	Rs. 300—10—350 (E. B.) at 320.
6. Chargeman . . .	Rs. 200—10—300 (after 5 yrs. 350).	Rs. 170—10—250 (E. B.)— 40/4—290.

*For officers of non-Asiatic domicile.

†Plus Rs. 75 increase in pay for those of non-Asiatic domicile.

B—War Allowance

Gazetted and Non-Gazetted officers of Asiatic and non-Asiatic domicile are entitled to war allowance at the following rates :—

I. O. S. Married	17½ per cent.
I. O. S. Single	7½ per cent.
I. O. D. Married or Single	17½ per cent.

Gazetted officers of the Ordnance Factories living in Presidency Towns receive compensatory allowance according to the usual scales.

C—Education allowance

	Non-Asiatic domicile	Asiatic domicile
Principal Foremen, Foremen, Storeholders, Asst. Foremen, & Asst. Storeholders.	Rs. 50 per child of school age .	Rs. 30 per child of school age.
Chargemen	Rs. 30 per child of school age .	Rs. 10 per child of school age.

INDIAN ORDNANCE SERVICE

136. **THE HON. MR. V. V. KALIKAR :** (a) Is it a fact that (i) before 1931 there was no difference in the scales of pay of Indian and European officers in the gazetted and non-gazetted ranks of the Indian Ordnance Service, (ii) Government have been paying since 1931 higher scales in addition to overseas allowance to the European officers than that given to the Indian officers?

(b) If the answer is in the affirmative ; will Government remove the distinction and give the Indians the same scales of pay?

(c) Is it a fact that Government is making a distinction between the Indian and European gazetted officers in the Indian Ordnance Service as regards emoluments and other facilities, such as children's educational allowance, medical allowance, leave, etc.?

(d) Will they take steps to remove these distinctions and give the Indians the same facilities? If not, why not?

(e) Do they propose to take immediate steps to completely Indianize the Indian Ordnance Service? If so, when?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government will examine this question.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Government will examine this question.

(e) The most expert and up to date technical knowledge and experience are essential in the Indian Ordnance Service, but it will be progressively Indianised as recruits of the required calibre become available.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Is the Ordnance Service not under the War Department ?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : At present, Sir, it is under this Department. The intention is that it will later return to the War Department.

NUMBER OF PRISONERS DETAINED UNDER ORDINANCE III OF 1946

137. **THE HON. MR. P. N. SAPRU :** (a) Will Government state:--

(i) The total number of prisoners detained by the Central Government under Ordinance III of 1944 ?

(ii) The number of such detenus in the various provinces ?

(iii) Whether they are aware of the general feeling in the country that they should be released ?

(b) Do they propose to release them forthwith ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : (a) (i). Two.

(ii) 2,518.

(iii) Government are aware that a demand has been voiced for their release.

(b) The cases of the two Central Government prisoners are under consideration. The release of the others is a matter for the Provincial Governments.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Have the Central Government during the past, asked the Provincial Governments to consider the desirability of releasing these people ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : There has been consultation on the subject between the Centre and the Provincial Governments.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Have the Central Government approved of the policy hitherto followed by the Provincial Governments on the detention of so large a number of them ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : The Central Government have approved a policy which we understand has been accepted in principle by the Provincial Governments and is being worked out.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Is there any chance of the men who are now in detention in the provinces being released at an early date ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : That Sir, as I have said in my answer, is a matter for the Provincial Government concerned.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : In view of the fact that a uniform policy is being followed by the Central and the Provincial Governments, can the Hon. Member give us an indication of the possibility or the probability of the release of the men who are now in detention ?

THE HON. THE PRESIDENT : That is a hypothetical question.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : It is not a hypothetical question. The Hon. Member said that agreement has been arrived at between the Central and the Provincial Governments in regard to the policy to be pursued and I asked the Hon. Member to tell us whether according to this policy a large number of men will be released soon ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : A large number of men have been released. Of the number which I have given, 2,241 are of the *goonda* class. That leaves 279 in what you might call the non-criminal class. I suggest that 279 is not a large number. The policy is to release these men gradually with such expedition as is consistent with security and the maintenance of law and order. In these circumstances I am not in a position to say when any particular number of men will be released. Inevitably, Sir, there will be a certain number of men who will have to be kept on considerably longer than others.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Are these 2,200 *goonda* in detention in Bengal ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : No, Sir. There are no *goondas* in detention in Bengal.

THE HON. MR. HOSSAIN IMAM : Could the Hon. Member indicate why they are being detained under the Ordinance and not prosecuted under the ordinary law of the land, *goondas* or no *goondas* ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : As I have said, I am concerned with two prisoners whose cases are under constant consideration. I am not concerned with the other cases. That is the responsibility of the Provincial Government.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Can the Hon. Member give us the names of the two persons with whom the Central Government is concerned ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : I can, Sir.

THE HON. PANDIT HIRDAY NATH KUNZRU : Who are they ?

THE HON. MR. A. E. PORTER : Mr. Jai Prakash Narain and Mr. Ram Manohar Lohia.

THE HON. RAI BAHADUR SRI NARAIN MAHTHA : Are they classed as *goon-las* ?
(No answer)

CONDITION OF INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

138. **THE HON. MR. P. N. SAPRU :** Will Government state :—

(a) Whether they are aware of the deep feelings in India roused by the attitude of the South African Government towards the Indians settled in that country. ?

(b) If so, what steps do they propose to take to vindicate the honour of the Indians ?

THE HON. DR. N. B. KHARE : (a) Yes.

(b) I expect to make a statement in the House in a day or two and would request the Hon. Member to await that.

PUBLICATION OF THE REPORT OF THE INDUSTRIAL MISSION

139. **THE HON. MR. G. S. MOTILAL :** Will Government state whether the Industrial Missions sent by them to countries abroad have made any report to the Government of India ; if so, when will it be published or placed before the Indian Legislature or any of its departmental or other committee ?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : The Hon. Member probably has in mind certain parties of industrialists which toured Australia, U. K. and U. S. A. last year. Two of them went at the invitation of the Government of India, but all including these two were purely unofficial in character. The party which went to Australia were guests of the Australian Government, and the others bore their own expenses. Government only arranged for the usual facilities such as priority passages, dollar exchange, contacts with their opposite numbers in the countries visited, etc. These parties were not required to submit any report on their tours to the Government of India. Statements which have appeared in the Press on the results of these tours are personal impressions of the parties and are not based on official reports.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : Have they submitted any report to the Government of India ? Have they sent any communication of their impressions and the handicaps that they experienced there ?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : No, Sir.

THE HON. MR. M. THIRUMALA ROW : They went there on your invitation. Did the Government of India ask them for a report of their experiences there ?

THE HON. MR. M. W. M. YEATTS : I cannot answer that off hand, Sir. I will enquire if you like.

CAPITAL GOODS

140. **THE HON. MR. G. S. MOTILAL :** (a) Have Government made an estimate of the amount of India's requirement of capital goods during the next four years ?

(b) Have they collected any information on the subject ?

THE HON. LT. GENERAL SIR THOMAS HUTTON : (a) and (b). It was roughly estimated last year that the requirements for the first five post-war years would be about R. 192 crores on the basis of the pre-war price level. This estimate is being brought up to date.

STATEMENTS, ETC., LAID ON THE TABLE

THE HON. SIR JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA (Food Member): Sir, I lay on the table copies of a Memorandum on the Food situation and Development of Food Policy up to 21st January, 1946.

DEPARTMENT OF FOOD

Memorandum on the Food situation in India and Development of Policy upto the 21st January, 1946

Although the War has come to a successful end, conditions which led to the introduction of the Basic Plan for distribution of available supplies, with its attendant controls, have not materially altered. The world food situation in 1946 is not likely to be less difficult than in 1945. The devastated countries in Europe will need food in large quantities from outside. Though with the defeat of Japan rice markets of Burma, Siam and French Indo-China have reopened, the quantities to be offered for export are likely to be small as compared with those in pre-war times; and, in any case, there are other countries which, owing to devastation caused by the War or for their normal dependence on imports from those areas are strong claimants to whatever is available for export. Production and movement all over the world will take time to return to normal levels and in the meanwhile, world allocations must continue to be made by the Combined Food Board, Washington. While this continues, neither the Government of India nor Indian traders can operate as free agents in procuring supplies from abroad and therefore our own resources will have to be carefully husbanded.

The elements too have not been very kind this year. The vagaries of the monsoon have adversely affected crops in certain parts of the country while cyclones have caused considerable damage to crops in other parts. All this calls for increased vigilance and greater control over our internal resources. The present controls with regard to procurement, distribution, movement, prices and rationing will have to continue for some time longer. They will be reviewed from time to time with a view to their relaxation which must, however, be a gradual and regulated process consistent with the need for establishing a permanent and fair system which will assure a market for the producer and a fair distribution of food to the consumer, and will stabilise prices at levels fair to both.

The Woodhead Commission have dealt with the question of food administration at length in their final report and have urged that Government must assume the obligation of feeding the population in India and that a policy of *laissez faire* in the matter of food would end in disaster. The recommendations of the Commission are now being examined and as a result of this examination it will be possible to formulate a programme of action which can be the basis of Government policy in the post-war period.

A. Summary of crop prospects

The monsoon, though generally adequate in total, was irregularly distributed. It did not break in full strength over several parts of the country till late in the season. Up to the end of August rainfall was below normal in South West Bengal, Bihar, Eastern parts of the U. P., Orissa, Western parts of the C. P., Mysore, Southeast of Madras and the northern coast of Madras. The effect of these unsatisfactory monsoon conditions was, that sowings and transplantation of rice were delayed especially in Bengal, Bihar and parts of Orissa. Hathia (September-October) rains were, however, satisfactory and improved crop prospects considerably. The Aman crop in Bengal is now reported to be average. In Bihar, however, the crop is expected to be somewhat below last year's crop. Cyclonic weather developed in Orissa towards the middle of October and caused damage to early winter paddy crop in Cuttack, Balasore and Puri districts.

In the U. P., rainfall was irregularly distributed and the Kharif crop is likely to be below normal.

Summer monsoon in the Punjab was generally satisfactory, but heavy rains in October caused some damage to Kharif crops in parts of Ambala and Jullundur Divisions. The total rainfall in the N. W. F. P. from the beginning of June to the end of October was considerably below normal.

Rainfall in Madras was both inadequate and irregular. Crops in Anantapur, Bellary, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Chittoor suffered seriously from lack of adequate rain. During October, strong winds accompanied by rains and tidal waves caused severe damage to the rice crop which was ready for harvesting. The districts affected by cyclone, were East and West Godavari, Kistna and Guntur which form a compact bloc of surplus rice producing areas. The damage in East and West Godavari which were worst affected was estimated at about 60 per cent. and the total loss to early and late crops was estimated at about 400,000 tons.

In Bombay, the rainfall during August was not enough for the paddy crops in Gujrat districts, while in Panchmahal, maize crop was adversely affected by excessive rains. During September, excessive rains caused damage to the millets crop in Gujrat districts, but were beneficial to the paddy crop. Rainfall was, however, inadequate in the Deccan and Karnatak areas during September, October and November and as a result, the Kharif crops have been seriously damaged and the prospects of a fair rabi crop have been ruined. It is estimated that the additional quantity of foodgrains which might be required as a result of the above mentioned damage would be in the neighbourhood of 400,000 tons.

In Madras and Mysore the north east monsoon has almost completely failed and there has been drought of unprecedented severity. Crops in large areas have failed and extensive assistance will be necessary to save the situation.

Kathiawar, on the other hand, suffered from excessive rains which damaged the bajra and jowar crops.

In the Punjab, N. W. F. P. and U. P. the absence of late December and early January Rains is causing anxiety. Unless rain falls soon, there is danger of the young shoots of the Rabi crop withering in the soil.

B. Progress of the Basic Plan

The Kharif and Rabi Plans 1945-46 taken together attempt the distribution of 3.2 million tons of foodgrains including about 0.2 million tons arrears from the preceding years' plans, from surplus to deficit areas and to the Defence Services. Against the above combined total movement target of 3.2 million tons, about 1.1 million tons have been despatched upto the 13th December, 1945. The total quantity of foodgrains despatched to each of the principal deficit areas up to the 13th December, 1945 is as under:—

Area	Quantity
Bengal	178,900 tons.
Bombay	154,800 "
Madras	33,200 "
U. P.	143,900 "
Trav. Cochin	"
W. I. States and Baroda	9,400 "

The table below gives the total export quotas and the total despatches from surplus areas (including overseas imports) to the deficit areas:—

Food Grain	Total Quota	(In '000 tons.)	
		Despatches upto 13-12-45 (for Kharif Grains from 1-11-45 and Rabi Grains from 1-5-1945).	Percentage of despatches to quotas.
Rice	1,096.7	72.3	6.6
Millets	279.0	26.3	9.4
Maize	60.7	.....	...
Wheat	1,719.8	1,057.3	61.5
Barley	61.4	37.9	61.7
Total	3,217.6	1,193.8	37.1

The Wheat quotas given above include 760,000 tons of Wheat from overseas imports (for May 1945 to April 1946).

Rabi Plan 1945-46

Wheat—The allocations made in May 1945 had to be revised shortly afterwards owing to certain changes which were brought to notice during the following two months. The Plan was, therefore, revised and re-issued in July 1945 as being effective for the year May 1945—April 1946. The declared internal surpluses under this Plan amounted to 9,11,000 tons including 35,000 tons of Central Government's stock in the depots. In addition, 7,60,000 tons of wheat was promised by H. M. G. from overseas. The total quantity available for distribution was thus 16,71,600 tons. The deficits declared to the Food Department amounted to 20,24,000 tons. As the Plan progressed, the Central India States offered, for the first time, a surplus of 15,000 tons wheat. On the other hand, a deterioration in the internal declared surpluses arose to the tune of about 40,000 tons. The position was rendered all the more difficult owing to the slow progress of procurement in the Punjab. The wheat position in the U. P. also worsened with the result that a quota very much in excess of the original deficit of 1,00,000 tons had to be provided. In addition to the 7,60,000 tons of imported wheat, the distribution of which was made under the Plan 2,00,000 tons of wheat is expected to be received by the end of April 1946 out of further imports of 400,000 tons promised by H. M. G.

Kharif Plan 1945-46

The total rice and millets surpluses offered to the Food Department by the Provinces and States for 1945-46 at the Commencement of the Kharif Plan amounted to 7,91,000 tons and 2,31,000 tons respectively, while the declared deficits of rice and millets amounted to 27,42,000 tons and 4,80,000 tons respectively. In addition to the internal surpluses 1,61,000 tons of Burma rice was also promised to India by the end of December 1945 of which only half was received. The failure of the monsoons and the damage caused by cyclones have however completely changed the picture. Bombay, Madras, Mysore, the Deccan States and the Western India States have increased their demands considerably which it is not possible for the Food Department to meet except from increased imports of wheat and rice from abroad, particularly in the next four months. The matter has been taken up with the Combined Food Board, Washington.

Experience of the working of the Basic Plan during the last two years has indicated the need for exercising more pressure on the deficit areas to relate their declared deficits more correctly to the actual requirements with a view to reducing cases of belated surrenders of allotted quotas to the minimum. Such belated surrenders besides causing inconvenience and some time a possibility of financial loss to the surplus areas, deprive the other deficit areas of foodgrains at a time when they are most needed. With the same end in view, it has been laid down that deficit areas will have to make good financial losses, if any, that are suffered by the supplying administrations due to the diversion of quotas late in the season. At the same time the surplus administrations are being persuaded to offer grain of acceptable quality so that complaints regarding bad quality may be reduced to the minimum.

C. Price Control

(i) Rabi Prices

On the 31st March, 1945, the Government of India, after considering the views of the Governments of the main wheat producing areas and the recommendations of the Price Advisory Committee, decided that there should be no change during the Rabi crop year 1945-46 in the existing statutory maximum prices of wheat nor in the statutory maximum prices of gram and barley which were in the ratio of 8/10ths and 7/10ths respectively of the statutory maximum price of wheat. It was also decided that there should be no change during the next 12 months in the guaranteed minimum price of Rs. 7-8-0 for fair average quality wheat.

In June 1945 the Sind Government approached the Government of India with a request that they should be permitted to reduce the statutory maximum price of wheat in Sind from Rs. 9-8-0 to Rs. 8-10-0. This step was necessary because dealers in Sind were purchasing large quantities of wheat at rates in excess of the Government's fixed purchasing rate (*viz.* Rs. 8-10-0) in anticipation of ultimate requisitioning for which the Provincial Government would be compelled to pay the statutory maximum rate as compensation. The Sind Government's proposal was agreed to and they reduced the price of wheat to Rs. 8-10-0 per maund from the 21st June 1945.

(ii) Kharif Prices

The question of the fixation of rice and paddy prices in Sind for 1945-46 was considered at a special meeting of the Price Advisory Committee on the 5th September, 1945, as the Sind Government represented that Sind paddy started coming to the market in the first week of October and therefore it was absolutely essential in the interests of cultivators that the price of paddy for Sind should be fixed and declared by the middle of September. After full consideration of all aspects of the case and the recommendation of the Price Advisory Committee, the Government of India decided that the Sind Government's purchase price of Kagni rice should be reduced from Rs. 9 to Rs. 8-12-0 and that of paddy, from Rs. 5-8-0 to Rs. 5-3-0 per maund. The prices of joshi and red rice were also similarly reduced from Rs. 8-8-0 to Rs. 8-2-0 per maund.

Kharif prices in the Eastern region were considered at a Regional Conference held at Calcutta on the 22nd September, 1945, attended by representatives of the various units forming the region and presided over by the Secretary, Food Department. The Conference made the following recommendations :—

(i) Continuance of existing prices in Bengal and Bihar.

(ii) Scaling down of procurement prices in Assam to the Bengal level and some reduction in prices in the Eastern States.

The above recommendations were approved by the Price Advisory Committee and the Government of India and in pursuance thereof the Assam Government made suitable reductions, with the approval of the Government of India, in their procurement prices for 1945-46.

Rice prices in the Eastern States have also been reduced in the case of hand-pounded rice from Rs. 9-8-0 to Rs. 9-4-0 and in the case of milled coarse rice from Rs. 10-8-0 to Rs. 10 per maund. The Government of Orissa have also reduced their statutory maximum prices of rice and paddy as follows :—

	Rice				Paddy			
	Common		Fine		Common		Fine	
	From	To	From	To	From	To	From	To
Puri	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Cuttack	7 12 0	7 2 0	9 12 0	8 14 0	4 8 0	4 2 0	5 12 0	5 4 0
Balasore	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ganjam	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sambhalpur	No	...	9 12 0	9-8-0	4 8 0	4 8 0	5 12 0	5 8 0

Kharif prices for the rest of the country were considered at a meeting of the Price Advisory Committee held on the 12th October, 1945, and the following decisions were taken :—

(1) Statutory maximum price for coarse quality rice should be reduced from Rs. 13-8-0 to Rs. 12-4-0 in the Punjab and to Rs. 13-4-0 in the U. P. Existing maximum prices or existing Price ceilings should be maintained in Bombay, Madras and C. P.

In view of the existing disparities in rice prices in various parts of the country and as the rice grower was assured of a ready market in the country the announcement of a floor price for rice was not considered necessary. The cultivator is however, protected by the general guarantee given by the Government of India in connection with the "Grow More Food" campaign that they would enter and support the market should foodgrain prices fall unduly,

(2) The maximum wholesale prices of bajra and jowar in primary markets should be reduced by Rs. 0-4-0 each from existing levels, the revised statutory maximum price being Rs. 7-4-0 a maund for bajra and Rs. 6-12-0 a maund for jowar.

The guaranteed minimum prices for jowar and bajra should also be reduced by Rs. 0-4-0 each the revised guaranteed minimum prices being Rs. 5-12-0 for bajra and Rs. 5-4-0 for jowar.

In October last it was decided that the price of maize need not be controlled on an all-India basis. The uncontrolled state of maize price was, however, reported to be exercising a bullish effect on the prices of other foodgrains in certain areas. It was, therefore, decided at the end of December, 1945, to fix the statutory maximum price of maize at Rs. 7 per maund in the main maize producing areas.

D. Rationing

(1) Extension of Rationing

Since the last memorandum presented in February, 1945, rationing has been extended to 40 more towns representing a population of over 3 million people. In all, 556 towns covering a population of over 53 million persons have been fully or partially rationed. It is expected that before long about 60 more towns covering a population of nearly 1½ million persons will be brought under rationing.

(2) Nutrition

The extension and intensification of rationing has brought to the forefront the nutritional aspect of the food problem in India as malnutrition and under-nutrition are widely prevalent amongst the poorer classes in this country. A new Directorate has been created in the Food Department since January, 1945 to deal with several new problems of Nutrition of a technical and semi-technical nature e.g., feeding of children, nutritional and balanced diets, provision for heavy manual workers of cooked food through Industrial Canteens, milk priority schemes, food and nutrition publicity through publications, lectures, posters, radio talks and films.

(3) Publicity

Food Department have for the last 12 months been publishing two brochures "Nutrition" and "Canteens in Industry" to stimulate popular interest in dietetics. "Canteens in Industry" is a quarterly publication directed at Industrialists and other employers of labour encouraging them to establish cheap cooked food canteens and to improve the feeding arrangements for their workers.

E. Storage

Proper storage of foodgrains has been and will always remain a question of great national importance. Food production in India even during normal times is inadequate to meet the demand of the growing population if every man is to be properly fed. The food supply of the country, however, depends not only on its production but also on the prevention of waste. The extent of loss which occurs as a result of damage to stored grains by insects, rodents and natural causes is not generally realised. Conservative estimates put this loss at 3 million tons annually which shows what tremendous scope there is for improvement in this direction.

With a view to minimize these losses as far as possible, Food Department undertook the responsibility of initiating and co-ordinating measures of improvement and set up a Storage Directorate in November 1944 with the following main functions:—

- (i) A survey of existing storage conditions and advice on conversion, adaptation or improvement of existing buildings for storage purposes.
- (ii) Dissemination of scientific advice on scientific methods of storage and grain handling.
- (iii) Preparation of detailed schemes for construction of extra storage accommodation in areas where the existing storage is inadequate.
- (iv) Training courses for Provincial and State officials entrusted with the responsibility for storage.
- (v) Liaison with trade to induce modern scientific methods of conservation.
- (vi) Research.

As a result of the general survey it was found necessary to provide extra storage accommodation at important ports for imported foodgrains and at suitable centres for transit storage to facilitate procurement of foodgrains and their transportation by rail from one inland centre to another. More storage had also to be provided in the surplus areas specially in the Punjab, Sind, C. P. and Orissa, to give effect to the policy of putting into consumption imported grain first and storing surplus indigenous produce. These new constructions fall under three categories.

(a) *Godown built at the entire cost of the Central Government*

They comprise the following :

<i>Location of godowns</i>	<i>Capacity</i>
Bombay	35,000 Tons
Visagapatam	10,000 "
Coimbatore	14,500 "
Bulk storage bins at 5 centres in Sind (Nawabshah, Shahdadpur, Mirpurkhas, Digri and Jhudo)	30,000 "
Dhamtari (in C. P.)	750 "
Bhatapara (in C. P.)	500 "
Khurda Road (in Orissa)	500 "
Sambalpur (in Orissa)	3,000 "
Bobilli (in Madras)	2,000 "
	96,250 "

The capacity at the first three places is mainly intended for the storage of imported grain, the bulk storage bins in Sind for long term storage of surplus indigenous produce and the godowns at the last mentioned 5 places for the surplus produce of the Eastern States which it was felt could not be tapped to the maximum extent in the absence of suitable godowns for its reception in British India.

(b) *Godowns constructed on the 50:50 basis*

An arrangement was arrived at with the surplus producing Provinces of the Punjab, Sind, C. P. and Orissa for the construction of additional godowns, the cost of such constructions being borne by the Central and Provincial Governments on a 50:50 basis. The following additional accommodation is being provided under this arrangement :—

Punjab	30,000 tons
Sind	25,000 "
C. P.	24,000 "
Orissa	15,000 "

The ownership of these godowns will be joint and the residual value of the assets, when they are no longer required, will also be shared by the Provincial and Central Governments on the 50:50 basis.

(c) *Godown for the construction of which a subsidy will be paid*

As there was acute need to provide extra storage within the Eastern States territory for their produce and as some of the States concerned were reluctant to undertake constructions on their own accord, the Government of India offered to some of the State (detailed below) a subsidy of 0.6-0 in the rupee on the cost of godowns constructed at locations and for capacities approved by the Government of India provided the godowns were completed before the 31st December, 1945

Name of State	Location	Capacity
Patna	Katabhanji	1,500 tons
Kalahandi	Kesinga	2,000 "
Kalahandi	Rupra Road	750 "
Khairagarh	Dongargarh	1,000 "
	Total	5,250 "

In addition, it has been possible to lease suitable godowns at other places notably at Karachi and Calcutta. As early as 1943 storage accommodation had to be secured at Karachi for the storage of imported foodgrains as well as the surplus production of the Punjab and Sind which had to be moved to the southern parts of India by sea. The necessary accommodation was leased from the Karachi Port Trust and other parties and this depot has at present capacity for 2,00,000 tons.

In February 1945 a Central Depot was formed at Calcutta. 70,000 tons of storage accommodation has been leased from two agents on reasonable terms and they have been appointed Storage Agents of the depot.

At Shamli in the Muzaffarnagar district of the U. P. cement khattis with capacity of about 12,000 tons of foodgrains have been leased from the owners.

Owing to the necessity for keeping a part of the central reserve at some of the important wheat centres in U. P. e.g., Hapur, Meerut and Muzaffarnagar, arrangements have been entered into with the U. P. Government for keeping a part of the Central Reserve in khattis owned by the Provincial Government at these places.

Besides the godowns referred to above in which the Government of India are financially interested, the Provincial Governments, States and Administrations as well as private enterprise have been encouraged to build storage accommodation at their own cost, the Food Department arranging to secure necessary supplies of controlled materials. These materials include iron, steel, cement, etc., and to date more than 1,00,000 tons of such materials have been made available. Private enterprise has been persuaded to undertake construction of god stores and marked progress in this direction has been made in Bombay, C. P. and Bihar. All the Provincial Governments have on hand a storage construction programme. Mention in this connection may be made of the Punjab who are undertaking a scheme for the construction of bulk storage bins to accommodate 70,000 tons of foodgrains spread over some 40 important mandis in that Province.

The Technical Officers of the Storage Directorate have visited almost all parts of the country and given advice to the officers and others of the Provincial and State Governments about correct methods of storage on the spot. To demonstrate to them correct and hygienic methods of storage and conservation of foodgrains a training class was held in November 1944 at Delhi at which many representatives from Provinces and States were present. A similar training course was held in November 1945 also attended by more than 100 representatives from various parts of the country. A manual entitled 'The Principles of Cereal Storage' prepared by Dr. F. P. Coyne, who was the first Director of Storage, has been made available to the public at a nominal price which contains practical advice to the layman about the proper conditions and methods of grain storage.

The value of propaganda to inculcate correct ideas of grain storage in the public mind has not been overlooked. Radio talks on the subject and propaganda through the press have been arranged. A film entitled 'Save the Nation's Food' is also under preparation. Attempts are also being made to utilise the services of the Boy Scouts Organization in the campaign for proper storage.

The experimental side of the work has also been steadily pursued. Experiments to test the insecticidal value of the two new chemicals DD1 and 666 against stored grain pests have been arranged in consultation with the Department of Agriculture and the Provincial and State Governments and the possibility of putting into general use these chemicals under Indian conditions is being explored. Work is also in progress on the best and safest methods of fumigating and recovering infested foodgrains.

Although hostilities have terminated the storage problem in India will continue to be of vital importance for a long time and can only be said to be satisfactorily solved when the present enormous wastage of foodgrains is prevented. Whatever storage accommodation has been newly constructed is merely a fraction of what is required in India. The exigencies of the situation created by the war demanded immediate constructions at ports and surplus areas but it cannot be said that all the accommodation required even at these places has been provided. A great deal has also to be done to improve the existing storage conditions in surplus areas, in mandis, in deficit areas as well as the cultivators' stores. Apart from such improvements, the importance of the hygienic maintenance of godowns, elementary knowledge about stored grain pests and the seriousness of the damage that they cause, have to be brought home to all concerned in the handling of grain. This is by no means an easy task and will require sustained efforts and attention over a long period. Countries like America and Australia have made great strides in this direction as they have looked upon this problem as one of national importance even during normal times and India must profit by their experience.

F. Sugar and Salt

(1) *Sugar*.—The total production of sugar during 1944-45 (1st December, 1944 to 30th November, 1945) amounted to 9.72 lakhs tons. In addition, a carry-over of 1,60,000 tons from 1943-44 production and 30,000 tons *khandsari* were available for allotment during the above period. After meeting demands for the Defence Services, exports, industrial requirements and carry-over, a quantity of 9,63,350 tons was allotted to various provinces and States for civilian consumption. The production of factory sugar during the current year (1945-46) is estimated at 11,14,400 tons which is 1,44,000 tons more than last year. The increase will be shared by U. P. and Bihar—1,00,000 tons by U. P. and 40,000 tons by Bihar. A quantity of 15,000 tons *khandsari* sugar is also expected to be available from the U. P. The final position regarding production will not, however, be known until the end of March. In the meantime, after meeting the usual demands for Defence Services, exports, industrial requirements and carry-over, a provisional allotment of sugar (including *khandsari*) amounting to 10,29,900 tons has been made to various provinces and States for civilian consumption during the year 1945-46. This increased allotment over that of last year has been possible owing to an estimated increase in sugar production and of about 50 per cent. reduction in the Defence Services' requirements.

The ex-factory price of Standard D 24 quality sugar, viz., Rs. 16-4-0 per maund remains unchanged except in the case of Bengal where the sugar factories have been allowed an extra price of Rs. 3 per maund to meet the higher cost of production due to conditions created by the war.

In order to secure maximum production of sugar, it has also been decided to encourage gur refineries in the U. P. and Bihar to manufacture sugar by refining cane gur. To enable the manufacturers to do so without incurring a loss, the price of D 24 quality sugar produced by gur refineries has been fixed at Rs. 22-13-0 per maund till the end of October 1946.

The Sugar Panel set up by the Planning and Development Department has recently submitted its report in draft regarding the development of the sugar industry in the next five years. This is under examination. In the meantime, action has been taken with the concurrence of the

Planning and Development Department to recommend to the Chief Controller of Imports suitable applications for import of machinery and to the Examiner of Capital Issues applications for issue of capital.

(2) *Gur*.—A total surplus of 424,120 tons gur is estimated to be available during 1945-46 in U. P., Bihar, N. W. F. P. and Madras (U. P. 295,000, N. W. F. P. 72,000 and Madras 56,720 tons) and has been allotted to deficit provinces and States.

To enable our merchants to establish connections with the Middle East countries a small quota of gur is proposed to be allotted for export to Iran and the Persian Gulf Shiekhdoms.

(3) *Salt*.—The supply position has been generally satisfactory. Bengal has become over-stocked with salt—their present stocks being equal to six months' requirements. Fresh imports have therefore been discontinued for some time. Other parts of India are being supplied from internal sources. Wartime controls over distribution are being examined with a view to their relaxation.

G. Edible Oils and Oil Seeds

As a result of an increase in peoples' purchasing power and shortage of ghee and kerosene due to wartime conditions there has arisen a general shortage of oils and fats in the country and this shortage has been accentuated in particular areas, particularly in Eastern India. There has also been an increase in the demand of oilcake as manure. Another development has been the very large expansion of the milling industry mainly in seed producing areas like the U. P.

All provinces have at one time or another instituted various degrees of control over seed, oil and cake. The U. P. imposed an elaborate control on these items as the agricultural economy of that Province is so mixed that control over foodgrains must go hand in hand with control over oil seeds. In Bengal the position became so acute that the Provincial Government had to resort to individual rationing of mustard oil in Calcutta. A planned distribution of mustard seed and oil from the U. P. to Bengal, Bihar and Assam had also to be made. Similarly in the case of ground nut and oil from Southern India, an *ad hoc* distribution plan for export and internal consumption was drawn up. This, however, sufficed to meet local difficulties only partially and it has become increasingly clear that control over oil seeds, oil and cake on an all-India basis is essential. Collection of information necessary for this purpose is already in hand and the policy as to what form such control should take and how far it should go is now actively engaging the attention of the Food Department. The Food Department propose to make a distribution of oil seeds and oil on a proper co-ordinated plan with a view to securing a fair distribution of edible oils and proper utilisation of the milling capacity. In such a plan due regard will also have to be paid to the needs of different areas for oil cake in consultation with the Department of Agriculture. It is not proposed to disturb normal trade, but the idea is to bring it under effective Government control.

H. Command Co-ordination Committees for Foodstuffs

The Command Co-ordination Committees continue to do useful work in their own limited sphere of co-ordinating Army purchases. After the cessation of hostilities the important question before the Co-ordination Committees, both in the Commands and at the Centre, has been how to meet the needs of deficit areas satisfactorily. The question of the future of these Committees was considered in consultation with the War Department who have agreed that the work done by these Committees should now be gradually taken over by civil organisations provided the Army was represented on any organisation set up and the Army demands were promptly and adequately met. Accordingly, provincial and State governments were addressed and their views invited as to what form future control over perishable commodities should take and how co-ordination should be brought about. While replies from a few governments are still awaited the majority are in favour of utilising existing Regional Food Commissioners' Organisations, in some form as the co-ordinating body in regard to allocations. The whole question of the future of controls and co-ordination of provincial policies in respect of fresh and protective foods is actively engaging the attention of the Food Department and decisions will soon be taken.

I. Imports and Exports

1. *Import*.—The full quota of 11,00,000 tons of foodgrains promised by His Majesty's Government for the period October 1943 to December 1944 arrived by 25th May 1945.

For the period from January 1945 to December 1945 a total quantity of 7,60,000 tons of wheat was promised by His Majesty's Government. Out of this quantity 621,364 tons has already been received and the balance is expected to arrive by the end of February 1946.

In addition to the above quantity of wheat, a quota of 75,000 tons of rice from Burma was allotted for the last quarter of 1945, the whole of which has been received. Negotiations regarding the import quota for 1946 are still in progress. The Government of India have urged upon His Majesty's Government with all the emphasis at their command, the necessity of allocating to this country quotas of foodgrains on a scale sufficient to meet the present difficult supply position arising out of crop failures in various parts of the country. Sir Robert Hutchings, Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Food, has been deputed to the United Kingdom and U. S. A. to place India's case before the London Food Council and the Combined Food Board, Washington.

2. *Exports*.—The ban on export of foodgrains outside India still continues.

J. Deputation of Technical Experts to United Kingdom and United States of America

Dr. B. C. Guha, Chief Technical Adviser, and Mr. M. L. Khanna, Technical Adviser, returned from deputation from U. K. and U. S. A. in March 1945 after investigating methods of food technology with particular reference to dehydration, refrigeration, canning, etc. They have submitted a report on this subject with their own recommendations regarding future development of food technology in India. The report is being printed for distribution.

K. Technical Panel

The Technical Panel of the Food Department which has been set up with a number of eminent Indian scientists representing different aspects of food and food industries has met twice during the year and has formed the following seven committees :—

1. Food Processing Committee.
2. Edible Oils and Fats Committee.
3. Vitamin Technology and Food Fortification Committee.
4. Food Standards Committee.
5. Entomological Committee.
6. Alcoholic Beverages Committee.
7. Microbiological Committee.

All the above Committees except the last have already met and made their recommendations. The Food Processing Committee set up a Sub-Committee to consider the reconversion of existing fruit and vegetable dehydration factories to peace time uses.

L. Production of Food Yeast

Food Department's report on the production of food yeast has been approved by the Planning and Development Department and is now being examined in this Department in respect of the financial and other commitments involved in establishing a factory of a 10 tons daily capacity.

M. Processed Foodstuffs

A laboratory has been set up in the Food Department for current analysis and investigation of processed foodstuffs. These investigations coupled with those carried out at the Peshawar Fruit Processing Factory are expected to lead to the improvement of the fruit dehydration industry in India. Research in respect of other food industries is also done on a small scale which may serve as a starting point for the Institute on Food Technology, the establishment of which has been recommended, and is being considered actively by the Planning and Development Department.

Food Department are also collaborating with the Agriculture Department to establish facilities for cold storage and refrigeration. As now envisaged the Agriculture Department will establish a chain of subsidized refrigerating centres, as a nucleus to a larger plan in respect of which information is to be obtained from the provinces.

N. Vanaspati Industry

To overcome the existing shortage and to correct the deficiency of fat in the general diet the planned development of the vanaspati industry was undertaken.

(a) *Immediate Expansion Scheme.*—For the immediate needs of the country, particularly areas where the fat consumption was low, it was decided to permit establishment of 27 vanaspati factories (18 in British India and 9 in Indian States) of a total annual capacity of approximately 1,36,500 tons keeping in view the availability of groundnuts which is the main raw material required. All the 27 factories have been assisted in obtaining controlled materials and import of plant and machinery from abroad.

(b) *Future Expansion.*—A Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of the Vegetable Oil Products Controller for India to examine and report on the scope and extent of further expansion of the industry. The Committee will also examine and report on other important questions affecting the industry.

O. Army Demands

The end of the war and the consequent demobilisation has resulted in a considerable reduction in the Defence Services demand for foodstuffs for 1946-47. This reduction has affected firstly the civilian economy for which a larger proportion of food taken previously by the Army is now released. Secondly Government schemes for production have been curtailed or terminated. Three vegetable dehydration factories, and the concomittent Vegetable Production Scheme in the U. P. have been closed down. The number of Ghee Centres and Controlled Flour Mills has been reduced from 6 to 3 and 9 to 3, respectively. The Fruit Canning Factory at Nasarpur has been leased to a private agency. Only the seven meat dehydration factories are unaffected and will probably work in 1946-47. Thirdly, and most important of all, has been the effect on private food industries under contract of supply to the Army. Most important of these are the biscuit

and vegetable dehydration factories. Conferences of the representatives of both industries were held. In respect of biscuit factories, it was decided that the Central Government should make an allocation of controlled materials sufficient to assure economic production to all factories. It was also decided to allow factories to export up to 5 per cent. of their production in order to enable them to make up for the loss of the Army demand and to establish themselves in new markets. In respect of dehydration, the prospects of maintaining existing production for the civil market is poor and the owners have been advised to divert their equipment to other food production for which they have been promised due assistance. In respect of other industries, Provincial Governments have been addressed to help in converting production for the civil market. At the same time, planning and development of all food industries is being undertaken by the Food and the Agriculture Departments. Every effort is being made to capitalise the development of food industries, which the war started or enlarged. This is with a view also to conserve food, which, unless processed, is liable to be wasted in some places and seasons for want of a demand for the fresh product.

INFORMATION PROMISED IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS LAID ON THE TABLE

THE HON. SIB JWALA PRASAD SRIVASTAVA (Food Member) : Sir, I lay on the table the information promised in reply to question No. 1 asked on the 15th February 1945.

Question No. 1

SELLING OF FLOUR IN BENGAL AS MANURE

Unless the locality where the sale is alleged to have taken place is indicated it is not possible to give a reply to the Hon. Member's question.

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

THE HON. MR. Y. N. SUKTHANKAR (Commerce Secretary) : Sir, I move :—

"That this Council do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Hon. the President may direct, three non-official members to serve on the Standing Committee to advise on subjects with which the Commerce Department is concerned."

The Motion was adopted.

THE HON. THE PRESIDENT : With reference to the Motion which has just been adopted, I have to announce that nominations will be received by the Secretary up to 3 P. M. on Tuesday, the 12th March, 1946 and the date of election, if necessary, will be announced later.

STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE LABOUR DEPARTMENT

THE HON. THE PRESIDENT : With reference to the announcement made by me on the 28th February, 1946 regarding nominations to certain committees, I have to announce that the Hon. Khan Bahadur Keramat Ali has been nominated for election to serve on the Standing Advisory Committee to advise on subjects with which the Labour Department is concerned. As there is one candidate for one seat I declare him duly elected.

INSURANCE—(AMENDMENT) BILL

THE HON. MR. Y. N. SUKTHANKAR (Commerce Secretary) : Sir, I beg to move :—

"That the Bill further to amend the Insurance Act, 1938, as passed by the Legislative Assembly, be taken into consideration."

Sir, this is a simple, non-controversial Bill. All such provisions as had any suspicion of controversy hanging over them have been removed from this Bill and relegated to another which will come up for consideration before this House in due course. Dealing with this Bill, Sir, I could, within my recollection think of few pieces of legislation over which so much care and thought have been bestowed by those competent to do so. You will recollect, Sir, that the Insurance Act, 1938, was last amended in a somewhat comprehensive fashion in 1941. We have had therefore nearly 5 years' experience of its working, which has revealed certain shortcomings and lacunae. Proposals were therefore got ready to remedy these defects and incorporated in a Bill which was introduced before the Autumn Session of the Assembly in 1944. I may state that this Bill in the draft form was considered more than once by the Insurance Advisory Committee and was also circulated for eliciting opinion to various insurance associations and such Chambers of Commerce as were interested in insurance matters. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee to whom all these opinions were circulated. Unfortunately, the Bill as reported by the Select Committee could not be proceeded with in the Budget Session of the Assembly and later on as the life of the Assembly expired, the Bill lapsed. Since then a fresh Bill was introduced in the other place and was again considered by a Select Committee. I therefore claim, Sir, that the Bill is a product of much care and thought and a considerable amount of consultation and discussion. As the Statement of Objects and Reasons clearly explains the purpose of the Bill and the Notes on Clauses give the grounds for various amendments, clause by clause, I do not propose to elaborate my remarks in support of the Bill. I shall only say this: that whoever studies the Bill will find that all the interests concerned—the insurer, the policy-holder, Government as represented by the Superintendent of Insurance, the insurance agent and the general public—will be considerably benefited by the Bill and will find their respective position very much improved as compared with what it was before.

Sir, while it is true that all these diverse interests are served by the Bill, the Bill itself is guided by two principal considerations: one, how to secure the financial stability of insurance companies and secondly how to strengthen the position of the policy-holder. By way of illustration, I may refer the House to clause 8, which requires that the life insurance fund should be separately invested. It also requires that the life insurance fund should be so raised as to be equal to the liabilities arising out of the policies before an insurance company can be registered for any other business, such as fire, marine, and accident. Clause 25 provides for the assessment of the solvency of the insurance companies without taking into account the unpaid capital. Finally, clauses 3 and 29 provide for the cancellation of the registration of such insurance companies or provident societies as have delayed the payment of claims adjudicated upon by a court of law beyond a period of three months.

There are just one or two matters, Sir, to which I would like to make more than a passing reference, particularly as there has been, I understand, some misunderstanding in another place. Clause 20 seeks to amend section 39 of the Insurance Act. This section gives a very valuable privilege to the policy-holder, namely nomination of person or persons to whom the sum assured should be paid in the event of death. It was found as a result of sub-section (7) of section 39 and certain reported judicial decisions that when a policy-holder nominated his wife or children the provisions of the Married Women's Property Act were attracted. The result was that these benefits were tied up in a trust and could not be drawn upon by the policy-holder himself or by his creditors. This has led to considerable administrative difficulties and the provisions of section 39 have been more or less nullified. What I want to make clear, Sir, is that we are not rendering inoperative the provisions of the Married Women's Property Act: all we are doing is to give the power to the policy-holder to choose whether he would seek the benefit of section 39 of the Insurance Act or of section 6 of the Married Women's Property Act.

The other section that I would like to refer to is section 2 (15), which is amended by clause 2. This gives power to Government for a limited period of seven years to appoint as Superintendent of Insurance a person other than an actuary. A qualified actuary, Sir, is a flower of rare growth and is not found on every bush! Our present Superintendent, Mr. Vaidyanathan, is an eminent Actuary and it was not

[Mr. Y. N. Sukthankar]

without some difficulty and readiness on his part to make a financial sacrifice that we could secure his services. I would, therefore, like to take this opportunity of expressing our gratefulness to the Oriental Government Security Life Assurance Company to give the Company its full name—for sparing his services at a critical time during the war and extending his time with us at our urgent request. Mr. Vaidyanathan is due to leave us very shortly. I have known Mr. Vaidyanathan for many years. I am myself a small policy-holder of the Oriental, although I want to make it clear that my small policy is an indication of the poverty of my resources rather than the value I place on my own life! Even in those early years, Mr. Vaidyanathan filled a highly honoured and a lucrative post in the Oriental but he was always readily accessible and helpful and, though in the field of actuarial investigation perhaps cold, calculating and efficient, outside it extremely human. These were the very qualities, Sir, which he brought to bear on his work when he took up the Government post and if during the last few years our efforts to place insurance business on a sound footing have met with some success it was as much due to the exercise of these qualities as to his industry, energy and tact. We shall part with him with real regret when he leaves us shortly and we wish him every success in his future career on his return to the realm of insurance.

Sir, I move.

The Motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 3 to 9 were added to the Bill.

Clauses 10 to 20 were added to the Bill.

Clauses 21 to 31 were added to the Bill.

Clauses 32 to 48 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and Preamble were added to the Bill.

THE HONOURABLE MR. Y. N. SUKTHANKAR: Sir, I move:—

“That the Bill, as passed by the Legislative Assembly be passed.”

The Motion was adopted.

The Council then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, the 12th March, 1946.