

15th November 1944

**THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

Official Report

Volume V, 1944

(14th to 21st November 1944)

**TWENTY-FIRST SESSION
OF THE
FIFTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,
1944**



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

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Mr. GOVIND V. DESHMUKH, M.L.A.

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Sardar SANT SINGH, M.L.A.

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 15th November, 1944

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

STARRED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(a) ORAL ANSWERS

COMMUNAL COMPOSITION IN HIGHER POSTS OF OFFICES UNDER DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

398. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state the number of posts carrying monthly salaries of Rs. 500 to Rs. 750, Rs. 750 to Rs. 1,000, Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500 and Rs. 1,500 and above in (i) his Department, (ii) the office of the Director General, Indian Medical Service, (iii) the office of the Director General of Archaeology in India, (iv) the office of the Surveyor General of India, (v) the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, (vi) the Central Agricultural Marketing Department, (vii) the Imperial Institute of Sugar Technology and (viii) Miscellaneous?

(b) How many of these posts under each category are held by (i) Europeans, (ii) Anglo-Indians, (iii) Hindus, (iv) Muslims, (v) Sikhs and (vi) others?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). A statement furnishing the required information is laid on the table of the House. Since the scales of pay for services and posts under the control of the Department of Education, Health and Lands do not correspond strictly with the categories of pay mentioned by the Honourable Member, it has not been possible to indicate in the statement the number of posts. Instead, the number of officers drawing pay falling within the said different categories has been shown.

Statement showing the number of officers drawing monthly salaries of Rs. 500 to Rs. 749, Rs. 750 to Rs. 999, Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,499 and Rs. 1,500 and above in the Department of Education, Health and Lands and the offices attached and subordinate to it, and the communities to which they belong.

Officers drawing pay between	Total number of officers	Community of Officers					
		Euro-peans	Anglo-Indians	Hindus	Muslims	Sikhs	Others
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>I.—Department of Education, Health and Lands</i>							
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	10	..	..	8	1	1	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	4	..	..	3	1	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	7*	..	..	5	1	1	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	11†	4	..	4	..	1	2
<i>II.—Office of the Director General, Indian Medical Service (including that of the Public Health Commissions with the Government of India)</i>							
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	10	..	2	6	2	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	5	4	..	1	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	4	2	..	1	..	..	1
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	13	8	..	3	1	..	1
<i>III.—Archaeological Department</i>							
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	8	1	..	3	4	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	6	1	..	3	2	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	1	1	..	..	..	..	..

*The names of Mr. J. McIntyre, D.A.P. (Manures) and Sir Datar Singh, Cattle Utilisation Officer, have not been taken into consideration as both these officers have been appointed on a nominal salary of Rs. 1 p. m.

†This includes R. B. G. C. Sen, Deputy Secretary, as his pay plus pension exceeds Rs. 1,500.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>IV.—Survey of India Department</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	24	5	6	8	4	1	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	13	2	6	3	1	1	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	19	5	4	7	3	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	25	22	2	1	..	..	..	..
<i>V.—Imperial Council of Agricultural Research</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	3	..	..	2	1	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	4	3	..	1	..	..	..	..
<i>VI.—Central Agricultural Marketing Department</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	5	..	..	3	1	1	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	2	..	..	1	1	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
<i>VII.—Imperial Institute of Sugar Technology</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	4	..	..	3	1	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
<i>VIII.—Imperial Agricultural Research Institute</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	6	..	..	5	1	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	2	1	..	..	..	1	..	..
<i>IX.—Imperial Veterinary Research Institute</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	6	..	..	5	..	1	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	3	..	..	2	1	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	3	3	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>X.—Imperial Dairy Department</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
<i>XI.—Forest Research Institute and College, Dehra Dun</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	11	..	..	6	4	1	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	6	1	..	4	..	1	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	5	2	..	1	2	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	9	6	..	3	..	..	..	..
<i>XII.—Botanical Survey of India</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>XIII.—Zoological Survey of India</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	2	..	..	2	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>XIV.—Imperial Record Department</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499 . . . . .	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>XV.—Imperial Library, Calcutta</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999 . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
<i>XVI.—Indian Central Cotton Committee</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749	7	..	..	7	..	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499	2	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above	2	..	..	..	1	1	..	1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>XVII.—Indian Central Jute Committee</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749		1	..	..	1	..		..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999		3	..	..	1	1		1*
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499		1	1	..	..	..		..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above		1	1	..	..	..		..
<i>XVIII.—Indian Lac Cass Committee</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749		4	..	..	4	..	..	..
(2) Rs. 750 and 999
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499		1	..	..	1	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above
<i>XIX.—Delhi Polytechnic</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749		1	..	..	..	..	..	1
(2) Rs. 750 and 999
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above		1	1	..	..	..	..	..
<i>XX.—Central Quinine Office</i>								
(1) Rs. 500 and 749
(2) Rs. 750 and 999
(3) Rs. 1,000 and 1,499		1	..	..	1	..	..	..
(4) Rs. 1,500 and above

*Indian Xian.

BLACKOUT ON PRINCIPAL THOROUGHFARES OF NEW DELHI.

399. *Sardar Sant Singh: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands state the reasons for having complete blackout on the principal thoroughfares of New Delhi even in dark nights?

(b) Is he aware that Government servants when going to their homes after late office hours have met with several accidents due to complete darkness?

(c) What steps does he propose to remove this grievance of the New Delhi residents?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Owing to difficulties in obtaining electric light bulbs, the streets in New Delhi have recently been inadequately lit, but it is an exaggeration to speak of a complete blackout. The lighting has been improved since the receipt of a consignment of bulbs in the middle of September last.

(b) During the period from January 1943 to August 1944, 23 accidents involving motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrian are known to have occurred at night in New Delhi. No information is on record to show how many Government servants were involved or in how many cases the accident was due to the inadequate street lighting.

(c) Further improvement in lighting will be effected as soon as more bulbs become available.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if it is a fact that all these days the American buildings situated in Queensway were fully lighted, rather over-lighted, throughout the night, while the municipal areas were in darkness?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I do not know how the American buildings are lighted or where they get their bulbs from.

Sardar Sant Singh: The American buildings are situated in Queensway and they are completely lighted from evening till morning.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The Honourable Member has not put any question.

Sardar Sant Singh: If the lack of bulbs is the excuse for not lighting New Delhi streets, how is it that the same lack is not felt by the Americans?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: As I said, Sir, I do not know from what source the Americans get their bulbs.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: What arrangement has been made to prevent thefts of bulbs during the nights?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I understand that locks are now fitted to the tops of the lamps.

CONTROVERSY RE LINE SYSTEM INTRODUCED BY ASSAM GOVERNMENT.

400. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Has the attention of the Honourable the Leader of the House been drawn to the controversy between the Government of Assam and the Government of Bengal on the line system introduced by the Assam Government?

(b) Have the Government of India considered the ultimate effect of such controversy which leads to the starvation of the people?

(c) Did the Central Government intervene in this matter; If not, why not?

(d) Have the Government of India a joint responsibility for the supply of food to the people of this country and save them from dying on account of starvation?

(e) If the answer to (c) is in the affirmative, why did the Government of India shrink from their responsibility of enforcing the production of rice in places where it could be grown and by labour which is available?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The Government of India are aware that objections have been raised in certain quarters to the so-called "line system" in Assam but they are not aware that it has been the subject of controversy between the Governments of Assam and Bengal.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

(d) The Government of India recognise a responsibility in the matter of the supply of food in the present emergency.

(e) Does not arise.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know if the Honourable Member is aware of the fact that there were 200,000 labourers present in Assam, who were willing to cultivate land in Assam in order to produce rice and this was denied, with the result that it led to the starvation of the people of Bengal?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am not aware of that at all.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: What is the Line System?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: If I might read about three sentences from a Resolution of the Government of Assam, dated 6th March 1942, I think that will explain the Line System:

"District Officers.....adopted such measures as seemed most likely to prevent, or at any rate check, the spread of immigrants to areas where their entry would have had these detrimental results. In pursuance of this policy, the submontane areas were more or less closed to them elsewhere where there was a demand for land from both the immigrants and the local people, areas in individual villages open to each were delimited by means of "Lines" and, where the demand for land from the local people was negligible, large blocks extending over several square miles were constituted into 'Colonisation areas' for settlement with immigrants. This is in general outline what is known as the 'Line System'."

I understand the reference to "Lines" is to lines both on the map and on the ground.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: What is the reply to part (c) of the question; viz., why did the Government not intervene in this matter?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: It does not arise, because we are not aware of any controversy between the Government of Assam and the Government of Bengal.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: May I know whether the Government of India are aware of the fact that the Government of Bengal did apply to the Government of Assam to allow the land to be cultivated and that the request was refused with the result that it led to the shortage of rice in Bengal and elsewhere?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: We are not aware, Sir, of any controversy between the Government of Bengal and Government of Assam, neither are we aware of any reference to the Central Government from either of them indicating that there was such a controversy between these two Provincial Governments.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Is it not a fact that the Department of Agriculture ought to be aware of the fact that there is a shortage of rice and when this opportunity offered itself no advantage was taken by the Government of India nor did they intervene in the matter?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: We are quite aware of the shortage of rice. The Honourable Member is, I think, begging the question when he assumes that rice can possibly be grown on these lands in Assam.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: If the Honourable Member doubts whether the rice of the quality which is consumed in Bengal does not grow in Assam, then I have nothing more to say.

POLICY RE RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION.

401. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Has the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands seen the report of the President, Board of Education, laid before the Parliament and the Bill laid before the House on the basis of the report?

(b) Are the Government of India contemplating to modify their policy about religious and moral instruction?

(c) Will the Government of India consider the expenditure under religious instruction as an approved item in the consideration of the grant?

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

(b) The Central Advisory Board of Education have appointed a Special Committee to examine the question of religious education in schools. The Government of India await the recommendations of the Board.

(c) The Government of India will consider the question in the light of the recommendations that the Board may make.

Sardar Sant Singh: What is the personnel of this Committee?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I want notice of that. It is a Committee of the Central Advisory Board.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if Sikhs are included in this Committee?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I cannot say, Sir.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I know whether the Government of India will consult the Legislature before they accept the principle that they should pay for the religious education of the communities in India?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: We can certainly bear that in mind when we receive the report.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Do the Government make any distinction between theology and religion. Are religious and theological education one and the same thing?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am not quite sure that any theology is taught in schools.

LEGISLATION ON BASIS OF SARGENT REPORT.

402. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state whether the Government of India are contemplating to introduce a Bill in the Legislature on the basis of Sargent's report?

(b) If the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will the Government consider the proposal of the selection of candidates for Secondary Schools?

(c) Have the Government of India devised any method to avoid the danger that selection may lead to the monopoly by few classes?

(d) Have the Government of India ascertained that the scheme of selection will be resented by those classes who are educationally backward?

(e) What steps, if any, are the Government contemplating to take to help these persons?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education on Post-War Educational Development in India is still under the consideration of the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

(c), (d) and (e). The Government of India are fully alive to the question they recognize that pending the complete establishment of the comprehensive system of education, which would cater impartially for all, special measures may be necessary during the transitional period to safeguard the interests of educationally backward communities and there is nothing in the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education which precludes Educational Authorities from taking such measures as they may think necessary in this connection.

DESIRABILITY OF INCREASING THE NUMBER OF MEDICAL MEN.

403. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please lay a statement on the floor of the House about the number of

(i) Medical practitioners;

(ii) Pharmacologists; and

(iii) Nurses;

in (1) India, (2) the United Kingdom, and (3) the United States of America per ten thousand population?

(b) What steps are the Government of India taking to increase the number of medical men in all branches?

(c) Are the Government of India preparing any plan for the expansion of medical education in this country?

(d) Are the Government of India aware of the fact that in these days instruction in the prevention of diseases is more important than instruction in curing of diseases?

(e) What steps have the Government of India taken to modify the courses of instruction on these lines in the existing medical colleges and in the proposed colleges they want to establish?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) A statement is laid on the table of the House. Information regarding Pharmacologists is not available.

(b) Medical teaching institutions are under the control of the Provincial Governments. Many of the Provincial Governments have taken steps to increase the number of admissions and others have proposals under consideration.

(c) The Health Survey and Development Committee are examining the question. Plans will be drawn up after their report has been received and considered.

(d) The Government of India are aware that competent authorities attach great importance to the instruction of medical students in the social and preventive aspects of medicine.

(e) The Government of India have no authority to modify courses of instruction in medical colleges and schools.

Statement showing the number of Doctors and Nurses in the United Kingdom, United States of America and India.

	Number of doctors per 10,000 of population	Number of nurses per 10,000 of population
United Kingdom	10 : 10,000	27 : 10,000
United States of America	13 : 10,000	16 : 10,000
India	1 : 10,000	02 : 10,000

NOTE.—The figures are approximate.

Mr. Manu Subedar: May I know why Government have not considered the advisability of adopting, for creating civilian doctors, the same procedure by which army doctors are created in the course of about two years, instead of five years as at present?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I am not aware of the procedure to which my Honourable friend refers by which army doctors are created in two years instead of five. It is not possible.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will my Honourable friend make an inquiry and get the details and go into it whether it is not possible, in order to create medical men for normal rural areas in a shorter number of years than at present in the medical colleges?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I think this matter is under constant examination, but the Honourable Member will appreciate that we cannot allow medical institutions to put out on the countryside with a certificate of competency to practise, people who in fact have not attained that standard. We must protect the public.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: With reference to part (b) of my question is it not a fact that the Government of India have got direct responsibility for at

least three universities. What have they done for medical education in those three universities?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: That, I think, is for the universities themselves.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: That means that medical education will always be given in universities, not outside; and there are three universities under the direct control of the Government of India. What has the Government of India done for imparting medical education in these three universities?

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

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: There are three universities—Delhi, Benares and Aligarh. Have Government done anything to spread medical education or help medical education in any of these three universities?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: I think there is a proposal under examination for the creation of a medical faculty in Delhi. At present our medical teaching institutions in the Delhi area are affiliated with the Punjab University. But I know there is a project to have a medical faculty in the Delhi University, to which of course they will then be affiliated. I am not quite sure what stage the matter has reached.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Has the Government of India not heard of the establishment of a medical faculty in Aligarh, for which Rs. 4 lakhs has already been secured?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: Yes; the Honourable Member himself has spoken to me about it.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I know if any suggestions or proposals have been received from Benares or Aligarh universities to ask the help of the Government of India for creating medical colleges there?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: In regard to Benares I have no information off-hand. As regards Aligarh, I know they have been collecting money; whether they have actually asked us for money for that specific activity I do not know. The Aligarh University is always asking for money.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: But I should like to know whether the Government of India has ever accepted a recommendation within the last fifteen years.

STANDARD CLOTH.

404. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state the proportion of the standard cloth to the total production by the Indian mills in the year 1943-44, 1944-45 and the first six months of 1945?

(b) Is it not a fact that the mill-owners reduced the prices of other quality of cloth lower than the prices of the standard cloth and subsequently raised the prices when the standard cloth was sold out?

(c) What is the cause of the diminution in the proportion of the manufacture of the standard cloth?

(d) Is the Honourable Member aware that certain quality of cloth which is mostly used by the people, such as long cloth or *lattha*, *malmal* is not available in the market at standard prices but these clothes are available only in black markets?

(e) What is the forecast of the Honourable Member about the supply of piece-goods in the year 1944-45?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The proportion of Standard Cloth to the total production by Indian mills in the year 1943-44 was 14.7 per cent. In 1944-45 it has been 8 per cent. I regret I cannot give the Honourable Member the information he desires about the first six months of 1945, since I am unable to say what will be the extent of the demands which Provinces and States will be placing in early 1945.

(b) No.

(c) As prices of ordinary cloth have come down the demand for Standard Cloth has diminished.

(d) It is not correct to say that certain qualities of cloth such as long-cloth and *malmal* have been available only in black markets. It is quite true

however that there has been a serious shortage of this and other types of fine cloth throughout India recently. This state of affairs has been imposed mainly by the limits of production, and not so much by mal-distribution. The loomage in India for production of finer varieties is now, as it always has been, limited. Before the war much of the finer types of cloth consumed in India was imported. These imports have now practically ceased. The shortage of finer varieties of cloth has come to the forefront recently partly because, owing to the increased purchasing capacity of the people of India as a whole, people are now demanding finer cloth who before the war were quite content with coarser cloth.

(e) If all goes well, and only if coal supplies and imports of millstoes come up to expectations, I have hopes that the quantity of cotton textiles available for the civil market in India in the year 1944-45, after deducting Defence requirements and essential exports, may reach 5,000 million yards, inclusive of handloom production.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Have Government any information that, taking advantage of the reported shortage of fine cloth in India, manufacturers in the United Kingdom and in the United States are making arrangements for the export of finer cloth to India?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware that they are making arrangements for export of finer cloths to India: they cannot do so without getting import permits from this country.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Have the Government of India been giving any import permits for the import of finer cloth from the United Kingdom and the United States?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Almost negligible.

Sardar Sant Singh: May I ask whether in view of the fact that the Sikh community uses this fine *malmal* for their *puggrees*, he will be pleased to make arrangements by which the Sikh community can get preference in obtaining this cloth?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I thought that in textile matters at least, communal questions are out of place.

Mr. R. R. Gupta: Will the Honourable Member please state whether he will take steps to increase the production of fine cloth in India by allowing the import of suitable machinery immediately?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes, if they are available and if shipping space is available.

Prof. N. G. Banga: Is the Honourable Member aware of the widespread prevalence of black markets in regard to the sale of cloth and what steps is he taking to put down or at least to minimise the nuisance of these black markets?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: All I can say is that if any Department has done its level best to control the black market activities, I can claim credit for the textile Department of the Government of India.

LINE SYSTEM INTRODUCED IN ASSAM.

†405. ***Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad:** (a) Has the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands, seen the letter of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru on the Line System in Assam addressed to Sjt. Gopinath Bardoloi in which he suggested that the Government should try the experiment of organisation and planning agriculture and the conditions under which holdings may be given to individuals?

(b) What steps, if any, have the Government taken on this suggestion?

(c) Is it not a fact that over 5½ million acres of land is lying waste in the districts of Assam Valley and no attempt has been made to grow more rice in spite of the fact that labour is available?

(d) What is the cause of such indifference?

†Answer to this question laid on the table, the questioner having exhausted his quota.

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) Yes, but only on the 8th November 1944.

(b) The suggestions are under examination.

(c) I have been unable to confirm the Honourable Member's estimate of the total area of waste land in the districts of the Assam Valley. Our information is that much of it is not capable of being brought under cultivation on a short-term basis, but the possibilities of extending rice cultivation are under urgent examination.

(d) Does not arise.

ESTABLISHMENT OF ALL-INDIA HANDLOOM WEAVERS BOARD.

406. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are contemplating to form an All-India Handloom Weavers or Weaving Control Board or any other such organisation for the protection of handloom weavers; if so, whether they have formulated the objects for which this organisation is to work;

(b) how this Board is to be constituted;

(c) what will be the proportion of representation to be given on it to (i) handloom weavers, (ii) to Provincial Governments, and (iii) spinning mills;

(d) who is to preside over the Board—an official or non-official—, and if he is to be an official, who is he to be;

(e) whether Government propose to place at their disposal any additional funds apart from the present rupees five lakhs annual subvention to finance the working of the Board and also to give additional support to the handloom weaving industry; and

(f) whether Government have received the suggestions of the Madras Presidency Handloom Weavers Federation that weavers ought to be granted at least 2/3rd representation on this proposed Board, and that the over-representation proposed for mill-owners be reduced, etc., and, if so, the reactions of Government to these suggestions?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a), (b) and (c). The Honourable member is referred to my answer to question No. 248 answered on the 10th November 1944.

Sir, I am afraid this question was not orally answered and I think it is only fair that I should read out the first portion of that answer.

(The Honourable Member then read out the first portion of that answer.)

(d) I am not yet in a position to reply to this, as the matter is under consideration.

(e) It is not at present contemplated that any sum over and above the present Rs. 5 lakhs subvention should be made available.

(f) I take it the Honourable Member is referring to the Madras Provincial Handloom Weavers Association, of which he is the Honorary President. Government have the proposals of this Association under consideration at present.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: What is the answer to part (c) of this question?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is covered by the answer I gave to the first part where I answered (a), (b) and (c) together.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Why is it that the question of prices of yarn is not included in the proposed objects of this board, specially when the Government is proposing to include the question of prices of dyes; chemicals and other things for this industry?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not prepared to enter into details of the scope of work of the Board. I have merely mentioned the general outline of the proposal. All these matters will be taken up when the Board will be constituted.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will he also keep in his mind, the question of the prices of yarn also, to be included in the scope of the Board's work?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I will do my best to remember it.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Trade Unions of Weavers will be represented on this Board?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is not possible for me to answer that question for the time being.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask whether the Honourable Member will remember this question of representation of weavers when he considers this question?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Yes.

TEXTILE CONTROL BOARD.

407. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the members of the Textile Control Board, and the quotas of representation granted to various interested interests, such as the weaving and spinning mills, the Provincial Governments, the consumers, and the cotton growers and handloom weavers?

(b) why only one membership has so far been granted to the one crore and odd handloom weavers;

(c) whether Government propose to increase the representation given to (i) cotton growers, and (ii) handloom weavers either by reducing the overweightage given to mill-industrialists or by increasing the total strength of the Board; and, if not, why not?

(d) whether Government received any protests against the present constitution of the Board and the comparative neglect of the handloom weavers from (i) South Indian Handloom Weavers Federation, and (ii) any other organisation; and

(e) what has so far been the assistance given by this Board to the handloom weavers?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) On the Textile Control Board itself there are 25 members of whom 15 represent the Cotton Textile Industry, three the distributors, two consumers' interests, two labour interests, two the cotton growers and one represents the handloom Industry.

(b) While there is only one member of the Textile Control Board itself who represents the handloom weavers, there is a Handloom Committee of the Board which represents handloom interests and has ten members. The reason why the representatives of the Cotton Textile Industry predominate on the Board is that the most important, intricate and numerous of the problems which confront the Board are problems connected with matters such as the increase of production, the import of textile machinery and mill-stores, and so on. Problems such as these call for the expert attention of the members of the Cotton Textile Industry. Government are of opinion that, if the Board is to function efficiently it should not be unwieldy in size.

(c) There is a Cotton Committee also of the Control Board which represents the interests of cotton growers and numbers 15 members. Government do not consider it necessary to increase the numerical strength of the Board.

(d) Government have not received any protests from the South Indian Handloom Weavers' Federation but they have naturally enough received protests from plenty of other organisations of all kinds.

(e) On the recommendation of the Board handloom cloth has been exempted from the provisions of the Cotton Cloth and Yarn (Control) Order, 1943. Prices of yarn have been reduced very substantially since the institution of the Board, and the margin between the ex-mill and retail prices of yarn has been reduced from 20 per cent. to 15 per cent. Government have at present under consideration the formation of an All-India Handloom Board to advance the interests of the handloom industry.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: In view of the fact that consumers, labour and cotton growers have each got two memberships for their representation on these committees, will the Honourable Member consider the advisability of increasing the quantum of representation given to the handloom weavers from one to two?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: If the increase from one to two would have been a solution of the entire problem of the hand loom industry I would have been prepared to consider it.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: You can make a beginning.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: My friend is labouring under a misapprehension. As it is, because we are anxious to do the fullest justice and do the utmost benefit to the hand loom industry, we are proposing to constitute a Hand Loom Board separately for the hand loom industry.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: May I ask what is the proportion of the production of hand looms to the production of the mill industry?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: As far as I remember, it is roughly 27 per cent. to 30 per cent.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Have the Government received any representation regarding the inadequacy of the representation of consumer interests on the Board?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have said that we have received enough protests of all kinds.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: How many members of this House are there on that Textile Board?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I think two members of the Legislature, as far as I remember.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Does the Honourable Member feel satisfied with the way in which this Textile Control Board has been constituted in view of the increasing number of protests that he is receiving?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have received protests but I fear most of them are based on a misapprehension or a wrong appreciation of the facts. But for the constitution of the Cotton Textile Board, the Indian cotton cloth position, so far as price is concerned, would have reached such a position that it would have been very difficult for anybody to control it.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Is the Honourable Member aware that if such a badly formed Board he could reduce the price by 10 to 12 per cent., if the Board had been properly formed, the prices would have been reduced still further?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I entirely controvert that. I do not think any other Board could have done better than what the Textile Board has done.

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FIXATION OF YARN PRICES.

409. ***Prof. N. G. Ranga:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

- (a) the basis or criteria on which yarn prices are being fixed and regulated;
- (b) the rate of profit or margin allowed to the yarn manufacturers; and whether Government will consider the advisability of reducing such margin;
- (c) whether there is any proposal to further reduce the yarn prices in view of the sufferings of handloom weavers and the huge aggregate profits being made by spinning mills;
- (d) the justification for further raising the prices for finer yarns;
- (e) whether Government have taken the trouble to enquire about the adverse effects that such a procedure, *i.e.*, raising of prices of yarn of finer counts, is having upon handloom weavers; and
- (f) whether Government propose to reconsider the basis on which these yarn prices are being fixed and to reduce the prices of yarn of finer counts?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Yarn prices are fixed so as to yield a fair return to all mills for production of the type of yarn in question of good quality.

(b) There can be no constant margin of profit allowed to yarn manufacturers. They vary from mill to mill according to the quality of their manufactures, local conditions particularly rates of wages and dearness and food allowance and the standard of efficiency.

†The question was postponed to be answered on the 20th November, 1944.

(c) Yarn prices were reduced in December 1943, March 1944 and June 1944 and I hope Prof. Ranga will hear the latter part of the reply carefully. The general effect of these operations may be seen from the example of 20's yarn; the *ex-mill* price of this before control was Rs. 30 or more per 10 lbs.; and its present selling price is Rs. 11-5-0 per 10 lbs. I do not understand the Honourable Member's reference to the sufferings of the handloom weavers. While handloom weavers are obtaining yarn at greatly reduced control prices, there is no control on the price of their products. Government's information is that the earnings of handloom weavers are now far higher than they have ever been.

(d) Fine Yarn ceiling prices were readjusted in September last as a result of a review. The review disclosed that the prices of Egyptian cottons used for spinning finer yarns, *viz.*, 60's and upwards, had risen steadily, and this rise made an increase in the ceiling price for finer yarns necessary. As prices of handloom products are not controlled, the handloom weaver is in a position to recover in the selling price of his goods any reasonable increase in the price of yarn.

(f) A periodical review of Yarn with ceiling prices will continue to be carried out.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Is it not a fact that the prices of cloth of finer counts have been reduced recently?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Do you mean hand loom made or mill made cloth?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Mill made cloth, of course.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: Prices of every variety of cloth, as I have been saying, have been reduced during the last year and a half.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: When the hand loom weavers are obliged to compete with the mills in regard to the cloth of finer counts, if the prices of yarn of finer counts have been raised and the prices of cloth of finer counts have been lowered, it hits the hand loom industry in competition with the mills?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have to learn my economics once again if I believe that in war conditions, hand loom productions are not able to stand the competition of the mill products.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Is the Government aware that the mills are paying huge amounts as excess profits tax and the rates fixed for yarn today are certainly not the rates that go to make up the cost of the yarn?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is very difficult for me to answer that in reply to a supplementary question.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: Did the Honourable Member say that the prices were reduced only in December, March and June and not in September last?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have said that in September last also prices were reduced.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: Government have controlled the price. Have they also controlled the stock of yarn?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am unable to understand the question.

†410.*

†411.*

POWER ALCOHOL INDUSTRY.

412. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state the Government policy, if any, regarding encouragement of the growth of a Power Alcohol industry in India?

(b) How many power alcohol plants are now in operation in India and what is their total manufacturing capacity?

†The question was postponed to be answered on the 20th November, 1944.

(c) Have any orders been placed abroad for power alcohol plants? If so, when were these orders placed, and when are they expected to arrive in India, and to which parties are they to be allocated for operation?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The question of the development of Power Alcohol industry is under the consideration of Government.

(b) Four. The total capacity is estimated at between one and three-fourth and two and a half million gallons per year.

(c) Yes. Orders were placed in September 1941 in America; but the plants have not as yet been released by the American authorities. If they materialise, they will be allotted to the firms which originally placed the orders.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member throw some light on why the Government's interest in regard to the importation of manufacture of power alcohol plants was kept in cold storage from November 1942 up till now?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: They were not kept in cold storage.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to indicate the time that the Government expect to take in coming to a final conclusion in the matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: So far as we are concerned, we have given fullest facilities to get these plants and, as the Honourable Member will see, orders were placed in September 1941. But if the plants are not released, all we can do is to take necessary steps to press the matter.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I want to know the Government policy in the matter? The Honourable Member said that the matter was under consideration.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: So far as the question of policy is concerned, as regards the post-war it is still under consideration. Under existing conditions, the policy has been to encourage the development of power alcohol industry as will be understood from the fact that we have given help and facilities to import those commodities.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member tell the House what happened to the proposal submitted I believe to the Commerce Department through official channels by a Syndicate of manufacturers belonging to the United Kingdom that they will undertake the supply and erection of power alcohol plants in this country for a small commission on the capital and for royalty rights on the power alcohol produced.

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am not aware of it, but I will make an inquiry in the matter.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member make it clear to this House whether it is not true that Government have discouraged the production of power alcohol in this country and are encouraging the use of the charcoal plants to be attached to motor cars and lorries?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is not correct.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member be pleased to state whether any representation has been made to the Government since November 1942 by the oil interests that are now trading in this country in regard to power alcohol?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir.

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

NOTIFICATION FIXING MAXIMUM PRICES OF FOOD GRAINS IN JHARIA COALFIELD MARKETS.

413. ***Mr. K. C. Neogy:** (a) Is the Honourable the Food Member aware that the Additional Deputy Commissioner, Manbhum, in the Province of Bihar, issued a Notification, dated the 9th February, 1944, under the Defence of India Rules fixing the maximum rates of price of rice and other foodgrains in the local markets of Jharia coalfields?

(b) Is it a fact that under the said Notification all collieries in the Jharia coalfields are required to get foodgrains for their labour forces from either of two private "pools" of the Coal Trade Organisations?

(c) Is it a fact that the collieries participating in the Joint Pools have to deposit an amount as security with the Pool authorities? If so, what is the said amount, and in what manner is the money thus collected utilised?

(d) Is it a fact that in violation of the aforesaid notification, the Government of Bihar is supplying rice to the Pool at rates of payment (including the cost of transit to the coalfields), which are higher than those fixed by the said Notification?

(e) Is it a fact that the Additional Deputy Commissioner is also permitting the Pool authorities to levy an extra charge of Re. 1 per maund over and above the aforesaid payment on those collieries which are not members of any of the Pools?

(f) Is the Honourable Member aware that in the Province of Bengal collieries employing less than 1,000 labour daily are free to secure their foodstuffs for their labour from the local markets at controlled rates? Do Government propose to take steps to see that similar facilities may be allowed to small collieries in the Province of Bihar?

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

(b) Yes.

(c) It is understood that the two bodies required their members to make a deposit to finance their operations but full details are not readily available.

(d) The Bihar Government have charged the Associations the actual cost of rice supplied upto the 1st November, 1944. Bulk of these supplies originated in Nepal where prices were higher than the controlled rate in Bihar. From the 1st November the Bihar Government have decided to charge the local wholesale controlled rate plus annas four administrative charge.

(e) Exact information regarding supplies to non-members is not available but has been called for.

(f) Yes, but it is not possible to allow similar facilities to the small collieries in Dhanbad-Jharia area as local supplies of rice are quite inadequate to meet their demand.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member received a telegraphic representation of late from the Indian Collieries Union in Dhanbad in which, among other things, a statement is made that the local market prices of rice are lower than the control prices in some places and that the prices actually charged to the collieries are even higher than the control prices, which fact perhaps was admitted by the Honourable Member himself?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I have not yet seen the telegram.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I have received a copy of the telegram which has been sent to Honourable Members of Government as well. It may have gone to some other Department. But do I take it, with reference to the reply to part (d) of the question, that the attitude of the Government of Bihar in this matter had the fullest approval of the Government of India, in charging prices at a higher rate than the control prices to the collieries when the Government were expected to give every facility to the collieries for the purpose of increasing their output?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I would not like to say that the policy had the fullest approval of the Government of India, but the Bihar Government strongly felt at that time, under the circumstances prevailing then, that this was the best way of assuring full supplies to the numerous collieries in Bihar.

REGISTRATION OF POST WAR CAPITAL GOODS REQUIREMENTS.

414. ***Mr. Manu Subedar:** (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member be pleased to state if it is a fact that Government have asked new as well as old enterprises in India to register with Government their requirements for capital goods after the war?

(b) How many companies have given these particulars, and what is the approximate value of the capital goods required by those who have registered their requirements?

(c) Has the response to this request been satisfactory, or do Government think that a considerable number of enterprises have not indicated what they will be wanting in the way of capital goods?

(d) What is the object of Government in getting this information? How do they propose to use this information?

(e) Are any priorities going to be fixed, and, if so, on what principle?

(f) Is it intended to use the information in order to canalise orders to the United Kingdom? If not, what steps would Government take to see that capital goods for India are purchased in the best and the cheapest market?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) Not yet.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

(d), (e) and (f). The outlines of the scheme will be explained in a press communique which it is hoped to issue shortly.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Will the Honourable Member tell this House whether Government propose to fix priorities at all either through the system of import licences or through any other system and choke off private enterprise in the matter of importation of capital goods?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am afraid I am not in a position to answer the question as the proposal has not taken its final form.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Are Government considering in this proposal, which they propose to publish, which will be the best market for India to make purchases of capital goods and which will be the cheapest? May I ask further if they have considered whether Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium, France, Germany and Japan, however much they may be reduced after the war, will be able to produce at a cheaper price than the United Kingdom can give us?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: These questions are already under consideration and I cannot say anything on them, but I can say this much as my opinion that so far as I am concerned I will be the last man to go to Japan or Germany after the war is over.

Mr. Manu Subedar: Not even if the material is cheaper?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh: Not even during the war?

(No reply.)

COUPLAND REPORT AND INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS.

415. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable the Leader of the House please state:

(a) whether the Government of India have considered the recommendations for Indian Constitutional reforms submitted to the Nuffield Endowment by Professor Coupland;

(b) the attitude of the Government of India to these proposals; and

(c) whether the systematic weekly broadcasts given in the All India Radio on the Coupland Report for some time past was in pursuance of any policy adopted by the Government of India on this report?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: (a) and (b). I have seen Professor Coupland's Report on the Constitutional Problem in India. The policy of His Majesty's Government, as has been repeatedly declared, is to leave the framing of the future constitution of India to Indians themselves. In view of this, no question arises of the Government of India either considering the recommendations or defining their attitude with regard to them.

(c) Whatever views may be held as to his conclusions, Professor Coupland's Report is undoubtedly a comprehensive study of the Indian constitutional problem; and the broadcasts on the subject arranged by the All-India Radio were intended only to stimulate thought and discussion on constitutional problems among the public.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member if he or any of his colleagues have had any part in shaping these proposals of Professor Coupland?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that a secret and a very select non-official Committee under the auspices of the Government of India is sitting at Delhi for the purpose of developing a scheme of constitution on the lines of the Coupland report?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am not aware of it.

Sardar Mangal Singh: May I know if the Government of India contemplate to appoint a small Committee to collect materials to frame the future constitution of India?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Government have not yet considered that question.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: May I ask the Honourable Member with regard to his answer to part (c) whether his Department exercises any scrutiny on the persons chosen to make these broadcasts and whether those who hold opinions which are not considered to be desirable so far as this Government of India is concerned are excluded from such broadcasts?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No, Sir.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will Government consider the advisability of giving an opportunity to those people who do not agree on purely political and scientific reasons with the conclusions drawn by Professor Coupland to broadcast from the All-India Radio?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Yes. As a matter of fact certain broadcasts have already been made contradicting the views of Professor Coupland.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member give Professor Ranga a chance?

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Yes.

INDUSTRIALISTS MISSION TO BRITAIN.

416. ***Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari:** Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed non-official industrialists mission is being sent at the request of His Majesty's Government or on the initiative of the Government of India or because of a request received from the industrialists in India;

(b) whether arrangements have been made for this mission to visit other countries besides the United Kingdom like the United States of America;

(c) whether the Government of India have requested His Majesty's Government or is His Majesty's Government on its own initiative arranging a reception to this mission in the United Kingdom by the organisation of agencies similar to those reported to have been organised by Sir George Schuster; and

(d) What is the policy of the Government of India underlying the sending of such missions?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) On the initiative of the Government of India.

(b) The Government of India are making every endeavour to enable the industrialists to visit the United States of America also.

(c) His Majesty's Government cordially welcome the visit of the Indian industrialists and are arranging facilities for them to contact leading industrial interests in Britain.

(d) The advancement of Indian Industrial Development.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With reference to part (c), will the Honourable Member say whether the Government of India requested His Majesty's Government to move in the matter and arrange for the reception of the Industrialists?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir, it was a spontaneous act on the part of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to a newspaper report that a similar roving Mission is likely to be sent to Australia in the near future?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: There has been a newspaper report. The matter is under consideration at this stage.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: On the newspaper report?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What will be the agenda for this Mission?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: The nature of the work will be to study the conditions abroad under war conditions and to find out to what extent Indian industrial interest may be served. There may be some who may consider knowledge a sin, but we consider knowledge will be power.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Are any instructions given by the Government of India to this Mission?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Do they go at Government cost or at their own cost?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: At their own cost.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Will the Honourable Member give an assurance that the Government of India or His Majesty's Government will not take any steps to disintegrate such cohesion as might exist amongst the Members of this Mission?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: If this question calls for any reply I would simply say that I consider it impossible that any Government will ever think of doing it.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: How long have they been waiting to embark?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It is not a question of waiting to go. We are anxious to send them as quickly as possible, but the conditions in Europe and in this country do not make it possible for them to go, not for the fact that the Government of India were not anxious that they should go.

Mr. Hooseinbhoj A. Lalljee: For the past how many months have they been waiting?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: For some months.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Was the personnel of this Mission chosen by the Government or by the individual Members themselves?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: No, Sir, by the Government of India.

SUPPLY OF FOODSTUFFS TO LABOURERS ON MILITARY WORKS AT CHITTAGONG.

417. *Shaikh Rafuddin Ahmad Siddiquee: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that a very large number of labourers employed on military duty are consuming foodstuffs of the civilian people in the Chittagong Division;

(b) whether Government have issued instructions to supply foodstuffs to military labourers from military stocks;

(c) if the answer to (a) be in the affirmative, whether Government proposes to direct the military authorities to feed their men from their own stores; and

(d) if the answer to (b) is in the affirmative, whether Government also proposes to see to the enforcement of the instructions which are more honoured in the breach than in observance?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: Under existing arrangements the Q.M.G. is responsible for supplies of foodgrains to labourers engaged on military works and Defence installations in non-rationed deficit areas. Government have no reason to believe that these arrangements are not working in the Chittagong Division. As regards foodstuffs, other than foodgrains, an enquiry has been made from the Army Authorities and the result will be communicated to the House in due course.

RELEASE OF RAW BUILDING MATERIALS FOR CIVILIAN USE AT CHITTAGONG.

418. *Shaikh Rafuddin Ahmad Siddique: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands be pleased to state:

(a) if Government are aware that raw materials necessary for the construction of houses and their repairs from the forest area have been reserved for the military and that the civil people who absolutely depend on these materials for the construction of their huts and their repairs have now been absolutely stranded so much so that they are now unable to repair their huts; and

(b) whether Government be pleased to issue necessary instructions to the civil and military authorities at Chittagong to release at least some percentage of the raw materials to the civil people to enable them to repair their huts and dwelling houses?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: The Honourable Member for Supply will answer this question on the appropriate date.

DELHI ELECTRIC SUPPLY AND TRACTION COMPANY.

419. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable the Labour Member be pleased to state whether it is a fact that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited, is a company incorporated outside India? How long has this Company been operating in the Delhi Province and what is the area served by it?

(b) How many units of electricity did this Company use for traction purposes, how many units did it sell to consumers in its area of supply during the past twelve months or so, how many units out of its total supply did it generate from its own power station, and how many units did the Company buy from the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited?

(c) Is it a fact that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited has not increased the supply of current from its generating station to any considerable extent for a number of years, and has been for some time, for all practical purposes, dependent upon the Government power station at present under the control of the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited?

(d) Is it a fact that the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited is a company sponsored by Government and works on a no-profit basis?

(e) What is the price that the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited pays per unit of electricity supplied by the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited, and what are the different rates at which the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited sells electricity to its different classes of customers?

(f) Is it a fact that the Government have an option to purchase the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Company Limited in February, 1947, when their present licence expires, provided a notice is served on the Company in February, 1945? If so, has the question of exercising the option been considered as yet, and with what result?

(g) What is the amount that the Government will have to pay in case they decide to purchase this undertaking, and to what extent will the purchase enable the Government to utilise the sterling balance held to the credit of India in England?

The Honourable Dr. B. E. Ambedkar: (a) Yes. The Company's licence runs from the 2nd March 1905. The area of supply now includes;

(i) the whole of the area in the jurisdiction of the Delhi Municipal Committee;

(ii) the whole of the Delhi Civil Station Notified Area;

(iii) the whole of the West Delhi Notified Area; and

(iv) a tract of land in the jurisdiction of the Delhi District Board.

(b) During war-time it is not in the public interest to supply the information.

(c) Yes. The Company's generating plant is now used more or less as a stand-by.

(d) Yes.

(e) A statement is laid on the table.

(f) Yes. The question is now under the consideration of the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

(g) Under the first proviso to sub-section (1) of section 7 of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910, the price to be paid for the property of the licensee, if the option of purchasing were exercised, would be its fair market value at the time of purchase as determined by arbitration. It is not possible to answer the second half of the question till the amount likely to be involved is known.

Statement

The Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Co., Ltd., are charged at 69 anna per unit of electricity supplied in bulk by the Delhi Central Electric Power Authority Limited.

Rates charged by the Delhi Electric Supply and Traction Co., Ltd.

Lighting and fans—Three annas per unit less 3 pies discount per unit for prompt payment of bills.

Domestic power. (Cooling, water heating, refrigerators, radiators and air conditioning).—One anna per unit nett.

Battery charging.—Two annas per unit less ten per cent. discount for prompt payment of bills.

Industrial—

A. *Consumers with connected load up to 75 K.V.A.*

Restricted hour supply.—1·1 anna per unit less a discount of 1 anna per unit for prompt payment of bills.

Unrestricted hour supply.—Rates as for Restricted hour supply and in addition a charge of Rs. 5 per H.P. per month less ten per cent. discount for prompt payment of bills.

B. *Large Power Consumers.*

Special rates are quoted.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member aware that a few years ago, the Delhi Municipal Committee applied for a licence for the purpose of enabling itself to supply electricity in the area concerned or at least part of it and that as a result of that application, an enquiry was held into the position of this company by a Committee over which perhaps Sir James Pitkeathly presided or the Electrical Adviser to the Government of Bengal, presided? Is the Honourable Member in a position to give this House an idea about the comments made by this Committee or these individuals, in regard to the affairs of this company?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: If the Honourable Member will put down a specific question, I shall certainly be glad to give the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Has the Honourable Member tried to ascertain the total amount of profits earned by this company? Has the attention of the Honourable Member been drawn to a statement in a recent article in the *Hindustan Times* in which it has been stated that the total profits earned by the company was already about five times its capital?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: Yes, Sir, I have noticed.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is the Honourable Member in a position to say whether that is a fact or not?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I cannot say anything about that now. If the Honourable Member wants information, he will give notice of a question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With reference to part (b) May I know the proportion of units actually produced by this company to the units purchased by the company at cost price from the Government undertaking?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I have already answered that during war time, it is not in the public interest to give the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I know. Is the Honourable Member in a position to deny that it is a very small proportion of the units actually distributed by this company that is produced by it?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That, I am afraid, will be circumventing the provisions of the Act which prohibits me from giving the information.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: I did not know that the Honourable Member was prevented even from giving the proportion. However, I give up that point. As regards the point that the matter is under consideration of the Chief Commissioner, having regard to the important policy involved do Government propose to direct the Chief Commissioner in regard to coming to any particular conclusion, or do the Government of India merely propose to carry out, or rather endorse, the decision of the Chief Commissioner in this behalf?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: The Government of India themselves are considering this matter.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to part (f), having regard to the shortness of time during which notice is to be served, if at all, will the Government come to a very quick decision in the matter? Will the Government be pleased to take this House into their confidence at the earliest possible opportunity in regard to this case?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I can assure my Honourable friend that Government will certainly come to its own conclusions before the time expires.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Having regard to the fact that this Legislature is virtually in the position of a Provincial Legislature so far as Delhi Province is concerned, does the Honourable Member propose to let this House have an opportunity to consider and discuss this matter?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: I shall bear the Honourable Member's suggestion in mind.

Mr. B. B. Gupta: Do the Government propose to increase the capacity of the electric power house situated in New Delhi under the Government control?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: That question does not arise. I cannot give an answer.

COTTON TEXTILES.

420. *Mr. K. C. Neogy: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to make a statement showing:—

(i) the total quantity of cotton textiles that are expected to be manufactured in the cotton mills of India in the current year, as also in the next year;

(ii) the quantity out of the above figure which is likely to be taken up for Defence Services within the country, and the quantity that may have been earmarked for purposes of export; and

(iii) the details of the export quota for the different countries to be supplied, and the grounds on which the export quota has been agreed to by the Government of India in each case?

(b) Is any quota going to be fixed for consumption in the different Provinces? If so, how does it work per head of population in the case of each province, and how does it compare in each case with the pre-war standard of consumption of cotton textiles in the years immediately preceding the war? In the case of the provinces of Bengal and Assam, is the quota likely to be increased in view of the possibility of consumption of a comparatively large quantity of textiles by military and semi-military personnel employed in increasing numbers in these provinces in the shape of ready-made garments and otherwise? Is it a fact that Red Cross and hospital requirements in these Provinces are also to be met from the Provincial quota?

(c) Is it a fact that an appreciable quantity of cotton textiles has in recent times found its way out of the Provinces of Bengal and Assam through smuggling? If so, what steps do Government propose to take to ensure that the provincial quotas in the case of these two Provinces are definitely available for consumption within their borders only?

(d) Have Government any information regarding the gradual falling off in the production of cotton cloth by hand-looms in the Provinces of Bengal and Assam? Is it proposed to make up for this deficiency of supply, by granting an increased quota of the mill-made textiles pending the restoration of the maximum production of the hand-loom industry?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) (i) The total production of cotton textiles in India in the current year will be about 6,300 million yards, and I am hopeful that, if all goes well, the figure may increase to about 6,500 million yards next year. Of this total production about 1,500 million yards is handloom production, and the rest mill production.

(ii) Not more than 900 million yards will be taken for Defence Services, and another 600 million yards for civil exports.

(iii) As a result of Japan's entry into the war the previous source of supply of the requirements of countries east and south of Suez has ceased, and for that reason the Government of India as part of their effort in aid of the United Nations undertook to help them as far as possible in meeting their minimum essential needs.

(b) I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement but will do so next Session if the Honourable Member asks me.

(c) I understand that the Provincial Governments concerned are seeing to it that Provincial supplies are not dissipated by smuggling.

(d) Government have no information regarding any falling off in the production of handloom cloth in the Provinces of Bengal and Assam, though our attention has been drawn to the shortage of yarn in these provinces.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: With regard to the Indian States, has the Honourable Member made sure that they do not encourage any smuggling?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am afraid I cannot answer that question.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that smuggling has not only taken place into the different provinces of India but that cotton textiles from Bengal have found their way into Tibet and ultimately to China?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have seen one or two reports about that but we have had no authentic information on the subject.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have Government ascertained the reasons for the falling off of handloom woven cloth in Assam and Bengal?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I have no information as to whether it has been falling off.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the export quota mentioned in part (iii) of clause (a) of the question, the Honourable Member stated that it had been decided to come to the help of the United Nations. Was this decision come to by the Government of India independently or under any suggestion from H.M.G.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: So far as I am aware, it was the decision of the Government of India. But surely in a matter like this H.M.G. also make from time to time their views known to the Government of India and that was certainly taken into consideration. I may also add that one of the reasons which was behind the decision of the Government of India was that it would be suicidal, as a post-war policy, to close the export market in textiles altogether.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: Is it a fact that the trade concerned does not at all think that this export market is likely to continue after the war because these countries are likely to revert to their original sources of supply?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: That is not correct, because this decision as to quota and quantum of export was taken after consulting the Textile Control Board.

Mr. K. C. Neogy: With regard to the different countries to whose help we have gone in this matter, did these countries approach the Government of India direct so that they might come to an independent conclusion in this matter without the intervention of H.M.G.?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: I am afraid that took place some years back and I must ask for notice of this question. But I am aware that some at least of those countries made representations from time to time and make them even now.

Mr. Mann Subedar: What steps have Government taken to see that quantities larger than the quota do not go out by way of direct exports or permitted or illicit exports from the Indian States?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: We have taken every possible precaution to see that quantities of cloth are not smuggled out by some of the coast lines of India.

Mr. Manu Subedar: What is the nature of those precautions?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: It will not be possible for me to state them now but all customs protections have been taken, and not only customs protections but other steps have been taken in order to ensure it, which I am not prepared to disclose.

Sir Vithal N. Chandavarkar: What about illicit export of cloth from the North West Frontier?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: We have taken steps with a view to see that there is no smuggling out through the land routes.

Babu Baijnath Bajoria: Has any representation been received from the Bengal Government to increase the quota of cotton textiles for Bengal?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: When I was last in Calcutta there was a representation that there was very great shortage of cloth in Calcutta. We took steps to send cloth to Calcutta; but I also heard that the dealers had plenty of cloth with them which they did not release at the time.

†421*.

CAPACITY, ETC. OF HAJ PILGRIM SHIPS.

422. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state:

(a) the carrying capacity and the actual number of Haj pilgrims carried by the first, second and third steamers of the first batch of pilgrim ships, separately;

(b) The carrying capacity and the actual number of Haj pilgrims carried by the first, second and third steamers of the second batch of pilgrim ships, separately;

(c) the number of Cabin class berths reserved for or occupied by Government servants or other persons not being pilgrims or master or crew of the ship in each of the six pilgrim ships;

(d) the respective dates on which pilgrims were embarked on the first, second and third steamers of the first batch of pilgrim ships;

(e) the respective dates on which pilgrims were embarked on the first, second and the third steamers of the second batch of pilgrim ships; and

(f) whether Government will place on the table copies of name, roll and ship's manifest of all the six pilgrim ships?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: For reasons of security the information asked for cannot be disclosed.

EMBARKATION ARRANGEMENT FOR HAJ PILGRIMS AT KARACHI.

423. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a Press statement issued by Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin and published in the *Dawn*, dated the 20th October, 1944, regarding embarkation arrangement for Haj Pilgrims at Karachi;

(b) whether a copy of the telegram will be placed on the table of the House which Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin sent to the Government from Karachi regarding the conduct of the Pilgrim Officer;

(c) how many of the first batch of pilgrims were left behind in Haji's Camp at Karachi;

(d) how many of the pilgrims died in Haji's Camp at Karachi during October, 1944, for reasons of (i) heart failure, (ii) insanitary conditions in the Camp and (iii) other causes;

(e) whether it is a fact that owing to inadequate arrangements, in Haji's Camp at Karachi no water was available for the Hajis in the early morning

†This question was withdrawn by the questioner.

and that many Hajis missed their morning prayers until after sunrise for want of water; and

(f) whether it is a fact that the building in Haji's Camp at Karachi primarily meant for first class pilgrims was occupied by the staff of the Government of India Haj Offices for office and residential purposes?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) A copy is laid on the table.

(c) Ten persons to whom tickets had been issued failed to embark.

(d) Information is being collected.

(e) There was water shortage, but I have no information about water not being available for early morning prayers.

(f) No building is primarily meant for first class pilgrims.

Copy of a telegram, dated the 4th October, 1944, from Khan Bahadur Haji Wajihuddin to the Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare, Member in charge of the Department of Commonwealth Relations.

Since my telephone Honourable Banerjee and Dr. Gore twenty ninth September found Saharanpur bogie load pilgrims from Bengal. Bogie was detached from Calcutta Mail. Reason load exceeded while lady pilgrims carried Lahore. Noticed state uneasiness at Lahore. None cared to assist despite repeated demands. Immediately on arrival Karachi informed Yaqub Butt of difficulties uneasiness unhelping attitude of railways. Visited Pilgrims four times on Monday. Found unhelping and unsympathetic attitude of Yaqub Butt Steamer authorities and Executive Officers. Last night offered our services to Yaqub Butt to issue tickets to Bengal pilgrims who arrived second October according Reservation Cards. Visited today Camp twice personally and twice by Maulana Mohd. Saleem tickets issued today at fourteen hours for my party no date and time intimated for embarkation despite enquiries at 18/30 went to Keamari personally for purpose enquiring time date embarkation Paqub Butt told me to come with party within one hour for embarkation whole party with luggage in six taxis arrived exactly 19/28 but admission at gates refused Yaqub Butt informed no assistance given. Request institute enquiries immediately we suffered heavy shock and seek your guidance and assistance in this serious matter. About one hundred other pilgrims ordered presence second October refused tickets. Believe ample accommodation were available.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With regard to part (c), may I know why ten people were left out?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: For the last steamer of the first batch the shipping company had issued a hundred tickets to pilgrims of whom 84 embarked. Of the remaining 16, six pilgrims did not present their reservation cards and collect their tickets, and a party of ten arrived too late to embark.

RETURN OF BENGAL HAJ PILGRIMS FROM KARACHI.

424. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations please state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that 175 Haj pilgrims of Bengal had been compelled to return to Bengal from Karachi disappointed;

(b) whether Government propose to compensate these disappointed pilgrims; if not, why not;

(c) whether it is a fact that certain intending Haj pilgrims who were definitely asked to go on pilgrimage in the second batch were compelled to go in the first batch failing which their steamer fares were liable to be forfeited; and

(d) whether it is a fact that in consequence of this act of the Haj Officer some of them had to face unbearable difficulties and hardships, and, if so, what action Government propose to compensate the loss and inconvenience caused to such pilgrims?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: Information is being collected.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: In part (a) it is stated that 175 pilgrims were compelled to go back. Why cannot that be replied to?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: When the information is received I will give it.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: When did the Honourable Member ask for the information?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I shall require notice of that.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: But surely the Honourable Member should know it.

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: I do not remember the exact date on which the letter was addressed.

LEVY OF TRANSPORT CHARGES ON HAJ PILGRIMS FOR VISIT TO MECCA, ARAFAT ETC.

425. *Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Mecca, Arafat, Muzdalafa, Mina, etc., are quite neighbourly places which are ordinarily visited by the poorer section of the pilgrims on foot;

(b) whether it is a fact that for the first time in the history of Holy Haj Pilgrimage only this year every intending pilgrim was compelled to pay in advance at Karachi for transport charges to these places either by camel or by lorry without which steamer tickets were not issued;

(c) whether it is a fact that in the Hedjaz the value of a sterling pound is fixed at 40 Riials of Saudi Arabia and that offers of sterling pounds by certain pilgrims were refused and they were made to pay amounts in excess of the above rate;

(d) whether Government are prepared to refund the excess amount through the British Ambassador at Jeddah;

(e) whether it is a fact that Government notified that every pilgrim should take sufficient money to meet his expenses in the Hedjaz and in addition to that a deck passenger could take Rs. 1,000 and a first class passenger Rs. 2,000 for charity purposes there;

(f) whether it is a fact that certain deck passengers in Karachi were not allowed to take with them more than Rs. 1,000 in all, and, if so, what action Government propose to take against the staff who were directly responsible for hardship and inconvenience caused to the pilgrims;

(g) whether it is a fact that the articles allowed to every pilgrim during voyage were inadequate and all suggestions for necessary additions were ignored, thereby causing considerable hardships to the pilgrims;

(h) if it is a fact that each pilgrim was allowed to take 600 bidis, 500 cigarettes and 300 cigars but no matches for lighting the same;

(i) whether it is a fact that the Haj Officer appointed to look after the interests of the pilgrims was directly responsible for many of the discomforts, hardships, inconveniences and losses to the pilgrims; and

(j) whether Government propose to appoint a Senior Officer of the Department to investigate into these matters and submit recommendations to safeguard the interests of the pilgrims for the future?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, payments could not be received in sterling pound owing to restrictions on the export of gold. Payments had therefore to be made in rupees the exchange rate of which was higher.

(d) No.

(e) Pilgrims were no doubt advised to take sufficient money, but Rs. 1,000 (in addition to 12 guineas) and Rs. 2,000 (in addition to 15 guineas) were prescribed as the maximum that each deck or first class passenger respectively could carry.

(f) Amounts in excess of the maximum prescribed were not allowed to be taken and no action is therefore necessary.

(g) No; all special facilities warranted by the exceptional circumstances of the pilgrimage were provided.

(h) Each passenger was allowed to carry six boxes of matches.

(i) No.

(j) No.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With regard to the second part of (c), why were payments in sterling refused?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: At the instance of the Minister, Jeddah and H.M.G., Saudi dues and transport charges payable in the Hedjaz were collected in advance from pilgrims in Karachi in Indian currency. The same procedure was followed in other countries. The pilgrims represented that they should be collected at the prevailing rate of exchange between Rupee-Sovereign-Rial. The matter was referred to His Majesty's Minister, Jeddah and he was asked to obtain the decision of the Government of Saudi Arabia. He replied that he could not see any ground for approaching that Government since the suggested refund to Indian pilgrims would be unfair to pilgrims of the other countries who would naturally complain that preferential treatment was accorded to Indians. He therefore stated that there was not the slightest chance of that Government agreeing to the proposal.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: But why were payments made by some pilgrims in sterling refused?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: That was because of restrictions on the export of gold.

(b) WRITTEN ANSWERS

DELAY IN ISSUING INSTRUCTIONS FOR HAJ PILGRIMS.

426. *Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a letter published on page 4 of the *Ittehad*, Patna, dated the 8th October, 1944, from a Haj Pilgrim who has been stranded in Karachi;

(b) if it is a fact that Government's instructions for pilgrims were not prepared immediately after Government's declaration of arrangement of sailings;

(c) if it is a fact that Instruction and Reservation Cards were not sent to a great majority of pilgrims in time; if so, why; and

(d) what the number of pilgrims was who arrived at Karachi without the Receipt and Reservation Cards, for first and second batches separately?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) Instructions were prepared as soon as possible after Government's general announcement that Haj sailings would take place. Copies of Instructions were sent along with the cards reserving passages to intending pilgrims.

(c) No.

(d) Information is being collected.

†427.

RICE MILLS AND GROUND-NUT DECORTICATORS.

428. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies be pleased to state:

(a) how many rice-mills and groundnut decorticators there are actually at work in each of the Provinces of British India;

(b) what arrangements Government have made with them to ensure timely hulling of paddy and decorticating groundnuts;

(c) what percentage of the price fixed for a bag of paddy of 164 pounds without gunny or a bag of groundnut of 164 pounds without gunny used to be charged before the war and in 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1944 is being charged by the mills concerned for their services;

(d) how Government propose to explain the inordinate rise in the charges allowed to these mills;

(e) whether it is not a fact that in areas where paddy and groundnut are liable to be compulsorily requisitioned and acquired and where price control prevails, all that these mills are expected to do is to take charge of the produce acquired by Government and also hand over the processed product to the specified wholesale dealers of the prescribed places or areas;

†This question was postponed to be answered on the 20th November, 1944.

(f) why, under such circumstances, such high margins of profits are allowed to the millers over and above their legitimate charges for their processing charges;

(g) whether Government have considered the advisability of requisitioning these mills and thus preventing them from exploiting as at present both the producers of foodgrains and their ultimate consumers; if so, why Government have so far failed to requisition them;

(h) whether Government are not aware of the growing discontent among the peasants producing paddy and groundnut, due to the treatment meted out to them, as compared to these millers; and

(i) whether Government propose to consider the advisability of extending their control to every aspect of production in food products, especially the rice and decorticating millers?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) It is not possible to give the exact number of rice mills and groundnut decorticators that may be at work at any given time in each province. The Marketing Report on Rice (1940) estimated the number of rice mills in the country at about 10,000 and the Report on the Marketing of Groundnuts (1942) disclosed the existence of approximately 1,450 decorticating establishments.

(b) The Government of India have made no direct arrangements with them.

(c), (d) and (f). Hulling and decorticating charges vary considerably in different parts of India. As regards paddy in 1938-39 the hulling cost ranged from Re. 0-1-6 per maund to about Re. 0-4-0 per maund and represented five to ten per cent. of the cost of paddy.

These charges increased in 1940 with the increase in the prices of fuel, lubricants and spares. The latest information available for 1944 is that the proportionate cost of hulling remains much about the same as before the war.

(e) The precise terms and conditions under which rice mills operate in the different provinces are within the discretion of the Provincial Administrations concerned.

(g) This is a matter for the Provincial Governments.

(h) Does not arise.

(i) The question of Government control is under constant examination with reference to the exigencies of the situation and the interests of consumers, producers and general foodgrains production as a whole.

PURCHASE OF PADDY AT PENALTY PRICE BY GRAIN PURCHASING OFFICERS OF MADRAS PRESIDENCY.

429. *Prof. N. G. Ranga: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state:

(a) if it is not a fact that Grain Purchasing Officers in the Madras Presidency claim the right of compulsorily acquiring peasants' paddy at a prescribed low price, if that paddy is not already sold at or below the ceiling price to the local rice mill-owners before a date fixed by himself and made known only to the miller or millers and not to the peasants concerned;

(b) how much per bag of paddy of 164 pounds this margin is between this low price—supposed to be the penalty price—and the ceiling price, and what percentage of the ceiling price it comes to be;

(c) whether it is not true that when paddy is acquired at the low (penalty) rates by the Grain Purchasing Officers, the party that is benefitted is neither the ultimate consumer nor the paddy-grower but the miller who does nothing special to either of them to deserve such a windfall or unearned profit;

(d) whether Government are aware that such a diversion of the penalty margin or fine to an undeserving party is against the principle governing the utilisation of fines imposed on labour under the Payment of Wages Act;

(e) whether Government propose to consider the advisability of creating a special fund for the post-war reconstruction of the paddy-growers and groundnut producers from out of the proceeds of such penalties or fines imposed upon such peasants; and

(f) whether Government propose to order an enquiry with the assistance of suitable and representative non-official peasants into this whole question of relations between the paddy-growers and groundnut producers on the one hand and millers on the other, with a view to do justice to the producers and restrict, if not to prevent the profiteering by the millers?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: An enquiry has been made from the Madras Government and the information will be laid on the table of the House when received.

CLOSING OF HAJ OFFICES ON EMBARKATION DAY.

430. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if his attention has been drawn to an editorial of the *Adil*, Delhi, entitled "Musalmanon ke Shaaer-i-Mashabi men khuli madakhilat"?

(b) What were the circumstances under which the Haj Office, the Haj Booking Office and the Port Haj Committee Offices were locked up on the day of departure of the first batch of steamers?

(c) What action has been taken against the officers responsible for closing down the Haj Offices? If none, why?

(d) What are the circumstances under which pilgrims in possession of valid pilgrim passes are not permitted to come out of the Dock area to see their friends or relatives after once entering the Dock areas?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). I understand that on the last day of the sailings after the bookings had closed, the staff were on duty at the embarkation shed where their presence was more necessary.

(d) The dock area is a protected place. Entry into and exit from it are controlled by regulations under the Defence of India Rules.

ENQUIRY OFFICE AT KARACHI HAJ CAMP.

431. *Mr. H. M. Abdullah: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations be pleased to state if it is a fact that an enquiry office was opened at the Haj Camp, Karachi, in open air?

(b) Is it a fact that no arrangements for the delivery of telegrams and post were in existence in the Haj Camp?

(c) Is it a fact that all incoming post used to be placed at the Enquiry Office table uncared for?

(d) Is it a fact that no responsible person was put in charge of the Enquiry Office table?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Yes.

(b) and (c). All telegrams and letters were placed on a table at a prominent place in the Enquiry Office in charge of the staff on duty from where pilgrims could take delivery of them. Names of payees of money orders were announced on the microphone. This is the best arrangement that could be made.

(d) No.

INDIA'S ART TREASURES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

432. *Mr. Manu Subedar: (a) Has the attention of the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands been drawn to the fact that a great many art treasures belonging to India are in public and private collection in the United Kingdom?

(b) Have Government considered the advisability of repurchasing these as one of the means of the settlement for the sterling balances accumulated in the United Kingdom?

(c) Do Government propose to ask His Majesty's Government to make a compulsory acquisition of all these for despatch to India? If so, will Government see that the prices paid are not very high, and will they instruct the High Commissioner to take the responsibility for refusing all items for which fancy prices are asked?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) It is probable that a number of articles of art of Indian origin are in collections in the United Kingdom.

(b) and (c). The answer to clause (b) and the first part of clause (c) are in the negative. The latter part of clause (c) does not arise.

CONSUMERS' COUNCIL.

433. *Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state the policy behind the constitution of a Consumers' Council?

(b) What is the basis of the selection of the constitution of Consumers' Council?

(c) How many meetings of the Consumers' Council have been held since its formation?

(d) What has been the cost to the Government of India of these meetings?

(e) What were the resolutions and suggestions in the Consumers' Council which have been given effect to by the Government?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) The Council was set up as an advisory body to keep Government informed of the types of consumer goods required by the public, on the working of price control measures and about the manner in which distribution and control arrangements could be improved.

(b) Prominent men and women were appointed to the Council to represent the views of the different classes of the consuming public in different parts of India.

(c) Two.

(d) Rs. 5,746.

(e) Resolutions were passed at the first meeting recommending paper economy in Government Departments, an increase in staff for the enforcement of control orders, stiffer punishments for offences against control orders, wider publicity for control measures, provision of better facilities for lodging complaints against profiteers and the grant of all possible assistance to Indian industries in order to assist them to meet the demand for consumer goods. Whatever action was called for has been taken on all these resolutions.

At the second meeting resolutions were passed requesting Provincial Governments to introduce rationing schemes for kerosene and to provide quotas of stationery to principals of educational institutions. Action is being taken on these resolutions.

NON-RECOGNITION OF MEDICAL DEGREES OF ANDHRA UNIVERSITY BY GENERAL MEDICAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

434. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Is the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands aware of the fact that the medical graduates of the Andhra University were not permitted to sit for the preliminary M.R.C.P. (London) Examination held in India on the 17th March, 1944, on the mere ground that the medical degrees of the Andhra University were not recognizable by the General Medical Council of the United Kingdom?

(b) Have the Government of India received any communication on the above subject from the Andhra University, the old Boys' Association of the Andhra Medical College, Vizagapatam, and the Medical Council of India? If so, what action has been taken by them with regard to the above representations? If none, why?

(c) In view of the fact that the Government of India had once recognized the Andhra Medical Degrees in their Notification No. 52-60/33-H., dated the 5th October, 1933; under Section 3 of the Indian Medical Degrees Act of 1916 and again recognized them in their Notification No. F-43-16/39-H, dated the 4th May 1939 [amended by Notification No. F.A3-4/A1-H(c), dated the 17th July, 1941, under the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933], what additional advantages were conferred on the above medical graduates by the fresh recognition under the Indian Medical Council Act of 1933?

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

(b) The reply to the first part is in the affirmative. As regards the second part the Medical Council of India is competent to negotiate direct with the

General Medical Council for the recognition by that body of British Indian medical qualifications. The Medical Council of India has already taken up the matter with the General Medical Council.

(c) The Indian Medical Degrees Act, 1916, and the Indian Medical Council Act, 1933, serve different purposes. The notification of the Government of India under the Indian Medical Degrees Act was to authorise the Andhra University to confer medical qualifications stating or implying that the holder of such qualifications is qualified to practise Western medical science. The recognition under the Indian Medical Council Act was to indicate that the qualifications recognised conform to that standard of higher education in medicine necessary to secure such recognition. I may add that without such recognition it would not have been possible for the Indian Medical Council to request the General Medical Council to recognise this degree.

RESTRICTIONS ON EXPORT, ETC., OF CARDAMOMS AND PEPPER.

435. *Sir F. E. James: Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please state:

(a) if he is aware—

(i) that present restrictions on the export of and trading in cardamoms and pepper have caused a sharp recession in prices, with resulting hardship to the growers of these products in South India;

(ii) that cardamom and pepper are the only money crops possible in the climatic conditions of certain areas of the Western Ghats and their foothills;

(iii) that in the case of cardamoms, since the restrictions referred to have been imposed, price levels have fallen by 60 to 70 per cent since 1948, and are now lower than before the war; and

(iv) that as a result many growers are faced with acute distress, and those with little or no resources are abandoning their estates, and allowing them to revert to jungle?

(b) if the Government of India propose to consider the advisability of relaxing the restrictions on export and internal trading, and of taking such other steps as may be necessary to alleviate the distress caused by present price levels?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: I will answer first as regards cardamoms:

(a) (i) Government are aware that there has been a sharp fall in prices.

(ii) Yes.

(iii) Yes.

(iv) Complaints to this effect have been received in respect of cardamoms and an inquiry has been made in the matter from the Government of Madras.

(b) Yes. The matter is already under the consideration of Government.

As regards pepper there has been no sharp fall in prices and there are no restrictions on internal movement. As regards export we have agreed to allow export to the full amount available and Food Department is making the necessary purchases by negotiation and tender from the Trade.

HAJ PILGRIMS.

436. *Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations please state:

(a) the latest figures as to how many Hedjaz pilgrims have so far arrived at the ports;

(b) how many have actually secured passages;

(c) how many are still waiting for their passages; and

(d) whether steps have been taken to give timely warning to others who may not be able to get accommodation in ships not to proceed to the ports?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) and (b). I am afraid this information cannot be given for security reasons.

(c) None.

(d) Instructions issued by Government made it clear that no accommodation could be guaranteed for persons applying after the 15th of October. Such persons were also asked not to proceed to the port.

PAPER PERMITS TO NEWSPAPERS IN CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR.

437. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state if permission in writing of the Central Government under the Paper Control Order, 1942, Clause 3(a), is necessary for the publication of any newspaper?

(b) How many applications from Central Provinces and Berar were granted under the above order?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No. Permission is now necessary under clause 10(a) of the Paper Control (Economy) Order, 1944, for starting the publication of a new newspaper, provided it is proposed to print it on paper other than newsprint.

(b) No new newspaper was allowed under the Paper Control Order, 1942, to start publication in the Central Provinces and Berar. Two periodicals which had suspended publication were allowed to restart publication under the provisions of this Order.

REFUSAL OF PAPER PERMIT TO MR. HASHMI OF NAGPUR FOR STARTING A MAGAZINE.

438. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Will the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies please state if it is a fact that Mr. Shahidul Hashmi of Nagpur had applied on the 18th March, 1944, for the supply of paper to publish an Urdu magazine from Nagpur?

(b) Is it a fact that on the 18th August, 1944, Mr. Hashmi was informed by the Government of India that, in view of the extremely acute supply position of paper, permission could not be granted to him to start the magazine?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) No, but Mr. Shahidul Hashmi of Nagpur applied for permission to start a new Urdu magazine from Nagpur.

(b) The request was refused.

REFUSAL OF PAPER PERMIT TO MR. HASHMI OF NAGPUR FOR STARTING A MAGAZINE.

439. *Nawab Siddique Ali Khan: (a) Is the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies aware that there are only two Urdu newspapers *Al Farooq* and *Alburhan* in Central Provinces and Berar for about 6,00,000 Urdu knowing public (*vide* recent census report for Central Provinces and Berar)?

(b) Is the Honourable Member, in view of the fact that after the enforcement of the Paper Control Order permission was granted to start two Hindi papers in Nagpur, prepared to reconsider the application of Mr. Hashmi?

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

(b) No permission to start new newspapers in Hindi from Nagpur was given. The Government of India is always prepared to consider reasonable requests.

SCARCITY OF KEROSENE IN RURAL AREAS.

440. *Mr. K. S. Gupta: (a) Is the Honourable Member for Industries and Civil Supplies aware of the hardships that a villager in the rural areas is undergoing to secure an ounce of kerosene oil?

(b) Is Government aware that rationing of kerosene in rural areas is a total failure?

(c) Are the Government of India aware of the inadequate supply of kerosene to the villages and their increasing struggle to procure even a small quantity to illumine their homes?

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

(b) The internal distribution of the quotas allotted to Provinces has been left to Provincial Governments. The Government of India have no reason to believe that the rationing of kerosene in rural areas is a 'total failure'.

(c) In order to alleviate hardship, the Government of India have increased supplies during the winter months by about 10 per cent.

APPOINTMENT OF MR. JAMNADAS MEHTA AS INDIA'S HIGH COMMISSIONER WITH BURMA GOVERNMENT.

441. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable Member for Commonwealth Relations please state:

- (a) whether the news report that Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has been appointed as High Commissioner for India with the Burma Government in India is true;
- (b) whether it is true that he will be allowed to retain his seat in the Assembly when he has taken this office of profit under the crown; and
- (c) under what law he is allowed to do that?

The Honourable Dr. N. B. Khare: (a) Mr. Jamnadas Mehta has been appointed Representative of the Government of India with the Government of Burma.

(b) Yes, if he so desires.

(c) Under clause (c) of section 2 of the Indian Legislature (Prevention of Disqualification) Ordinance, 1942 (Ordinance LXII of 1942), the Central Government has certified the Office of the Representative of the Government of India with the Government of Burma to be an office created for a purpose connected with the prosecution of the war.

PROHIBITION OF DOWNWARD JOURNEYS IN ELECTRIC LIFTS OF THE COUNCIL HOUSE

442. *Mr. Ananga Mohan Dam: Will the Honourable the Labour Member please state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Members of the Central Legislature are prohibited from making use of the downward journey of lifts (Electric) installed in the various sectors of the Council House;

(b) whether it is a fact that the staff of the Central Public Works Department in spite of the notice prohibiting the use of electric lifts for downward journey do use it;

(c) if the replies to (a) and (b) or any of them be in the affirmative, the extent of economy achieved during the past for running these lifts without passengers; and

(d) if the replies to (a) and (b) or any of them be in the negative, the correct fact and the reasons for differential treatment?

The Honourable Dr. B. R. Ambedkar: (a) As stated in the notice exhibited in lifts officers are requested to avoid the use of lifts except for going up more than one floor at a time. A copy of the notice is laid on the table. There are no specific orders of prohibition, and the notice makes the request only to the officers of Government.

(b) No such cases have been brought to notice.

(c) The saving occurs by reason of lifts not being summoned for downward journeys. It is impossible to estimate the amount of saving effected by the request not to use lifts for downward journey.

(d) The facts have been stated. As the number of journeys by lift likely to be made by members was few, it was not thought necessary to address the request also to them.

By Order of H. C. Prior, Esquire, Secretary, Government of India, Department of Labour.
USE OF LIFTS.

1. It is necessary to economise as much as possible in the use of lifts. If economy is not secured it will probably be necessary to close down all lifts.
2. Officers are requested to avoid the use of lifts except for going up more than one floor at a time. Lifts can, however, be summoned when required for any special purpose.
3. Bells on the first floor and second floor have been disconnected.
4. Lifts will not be available after 6 P.M.

DETERIORATION OF FOODGRAINS STOCKED IN SIBPORE BOTANICAL GARDEN.

443. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Is the Honourable the Food Member aware of the fact that huge quantity of foodgrains stocked in the Sibpore Botanical Garden had become soiled and unfit for consumption? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to make a statement regarding the following:

- (i) what was the tonnage of the whole foodgrain stocked in the Botanical Garden and how much was rice, wheat, maize, and millet;
- (ii) under whose charge was it kept and how it was allowed to be soiled so badly;
- (iii) what was the price of the whole stock; and
- (iv) was any officer responsible for this sort of negligence and loss prosecuted and punished?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that the whole stock of foodgrains was used for levelling the Pyne park in Howrah? By whose order was this stock removed for the aforesaid purpose? Did the Howrah Municipality pay anything for the soiled foodgrains used for the purpose?

(c) Who was the purchasing agent? How long was the whole stock allowed to remain there and why was not this stock kept in godowns, and if godowns were not available why was it not placed under a shed constructed there even for temporary use? Why was it not distributed when it was found impossible to find shelter?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b) and (c). Out of one hundred and twenty thousand tons which passed through the depot 3,000 tons or two and a half per cent. had to be destroyed. Some of this grain was defective when placed in the depot and some was affected by damp and insects while there. The grain was properly stacked and every effort was made to avoid deterioration, but grain stored in such conditions in the climate of Bengal must inevitably suffer damage. It had to be so stored as the volume of grain arriving in Calcutta was greater than the storage accommodation available to the Provincial Government, and immediate distribution was impossible. The depot was opened in December, 1943 and closed in August, 1944. The grain which had to be destroyed was placed in compost pits to be used for manure. So far as I am aware the grain was not used for the purpose suggested in part (b) of the question but I have made further enquiries to which I have not yet received a reply and the information will be placed on the table of the House in due course.

BAD QUALITY OF RICE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH RATION SHOPS IN CALCUTTA.

444. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state if soiled foodgrain specially rice and wheat had been thrown into pits in Calcutta in August last? If so, will the Honourable Member be pleased to make a statement on the matter?

(b) Has the Honourable Member come to learn that fine quality of rice stacked in godowns is substituted by bad and coarse quality of rice which is distributed through Government and ration shops in Calcutta? Is he acquainted with general complaints regarding supply of bad quality of rice to consumers not only in Calcutta but in mofussil as well? Has the Honourable Member any scheme to improve the situation in Bengal regarding the quality of rice and the classification of rice?

(c) Is the Honourable Member aware of the fact that where there is rationing, fine, medium and coarse quality of rice is sold for Rs. 16-4 per maund? Will the Honourable Member be pleased to reduce the price according to the quality of rice, and will the Honourable Member be pleased to see that the distributors are supplied with rice without being adulterated with stone chips, stone dusts and street dusts to keep up the weight?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to his question No. 443 today.

(b) No case of substitution of fine quality rice by bad rice in godowns has been brought to my notice, but I am aware of complaints regarding quality. The Government of India have already pressed upon Provincial Governments, the necessity to take adequate steps to ensure good quality of rationed foodgrains.

(c) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. The Government of India have already suggested the classification of rice into different grades to the Government of Bengal and their reply is still awaited.

SETTING UP OF CO-OPERATIVE STORES IN BENGAL.

445. *Mr. Amarendra Nath Chattopadhyaya: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether he has encouraged co-operative system of distribution in Bengal in order to curb profiteering through black market? If so, how many such Co-operative Stores have been set up district by district in Bengal?

(b) Is it under contemplation that a Co-operative Producers and Co-operative Distributors Society will be set up ere long? Is not the Honourable Member aware that the normal trade channels had proved themselves to be profiteering concerns during the famine season in Bengal and in all Provinces as well?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. Information regarding the number and location of Co-operative Stores in the Districts of Bengal is not readily available.

(b) The Bengal Government have under active consideration proposals for the greater use of Co-operative Societies.

INDIAN STUDENTS STRANDED IN ENGLAND, OWING TO NON-AVAILABILITY OF PASSAGE FACILITIES.

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

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a Reuter's message from London, dated August 26, 1944, that a large number of Indian students who completed their studies long ago are unable to return to India owing to non-availability of passage facilities;

(b) whether he is aware that a large number of these students have qualified as first-class engineers and technicians and that their return to India now would assist the war effort as well as the plans for post-war development;

(c) whether he would take any steps to urge the British Ministry of Transport to grant the students priority in allotment of passages; and

(d) whether the High Commissioner has been in communication with Government in this matter?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: This question relates to the Defence Department and will be answered by the War Secretary.

LOSS OF FOODGRAINS DUE TO DETERIORATION IN BENGAL.

447. *Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state the total loss of all foodgrains both in storage and transit including loss due to deterioration and decomposition in terms of quantity and in monetary terms during each of the years 1940-41, 1941-42, 1942-43, 1943-44 and 1944-45 up to October in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: No data in terms of volume or money exist which enable me to give a specific answer to the Honourable Members' question nor is it possible to obtain the information and assess it.

INFLUENCE OF ARMY PURCHASES ON FOOD SITUATION IN BENGAL.

448. *Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta: (a) Will the Honourable the Food Member be pleased to state whether the recommendation of the Gregory Committee to investigate the impact and influence on the food situation of the presence of overseas forces has been implemented so far as Bengal is concerned?

(b) Is the Honourable Member aware that the price of all foodstuffs other than foodgrains has increased to the extent of 100 percent to 200 percent over the price which prevailed during the Bengal famine of 1943?

(c) What are the categorical reasons for that increase?

(d) To what extent has the increase in price been influenced by army purchases?

(e) Has any step been taken or is proposed to be taken to safeguard the position of the civil population in this behalf?

(f) Have the Government come to any decision as regards remedies for the increase in the price of foodstuffs in Bengal?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) and (c). The Foodgrains Policy Committee drew the attention of the Military authorities, as well as the Food Department, to a matter which was already engaging the attention of Government. Prices have risen because of increased local demand combined with difficulties of movement. The military authorities have given their fullest co-operation to the Civil Administration in reducing the effect of the presence of additional troops in Bengal on available supplies of foodstuffs by taking their own measures to produce what they need.

(b), (d), (e) and (f). The Honourable Member is referred to the reply given to starred question No. 49 by Mr. K. C. Neogy on 2nd November 1944.

RULES FOR PROCUREMENT OF FOODSTUFFS FOR CIVIL REQUIREMENTS.

449. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state :

(a) whether the rules for the procurement of foodstuffs for civil requirements are made by the Provinces or by the centre;

(b) whether complaints have reached him from the Provinces that these rules have been applied indiscriminately on ryots who have had good crops and on others who had not crops owing to want of water in the wells and the failure of rain;

(c) whether he is aware that this is due to want of proper statistics in the villages; and

(d) whether Government have any proposals to improve these statistics?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a) By the provinces.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Government are aware of the need to improve statistics. In permanently settled areas steps are being taken to obtain correct acreage statistics by field enumeration. Experimental schemes have been carried out by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research to determine the yield of wheat in the Punjab and U. P. and to check other methods in force. Random sample surveys have been tried in Bengal and Bihar with considerable success.

FIXATION OF PRICES OF FOODGRAINS.

450. *Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Will the Honourable the Food Member please state:

(a) for what foodgrains prices are fixed by the Centre and for what by the Provinces;

(b) the basis of this division; and

(c) the factors which Government take into consideration while fixing these prices?

The Honourable Sir Jwala Prasad Srivastava: (a), (b) and (c). The prices of the principal foodgrains in the primary wholesale markets are fixed by the Provinces in consultation with the Government of India. In reaching its decisions the Government of India is advised by the Price Advisory Committee, and takes into consideration:

(i) the maintenance of production, involving a fair price to the producer;

(ii) the cost to the consumer;

(iii) the size of the crop;

(iv) current market prices;

(v) the general price level of other commodities; and

(vi) price levels in neighbouring regions.

ANTI-EROSION MEASURES FOR SIND AND OTHER PROVINCES.

451. *Mr. Lalchand Navalrai: (a) In taking effective anti-erosion measures for the future well-being of India, has the attention of the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands been drawn to the constant recurrence of such happenings on the Indus in the portion which runs through the Sind Province and which causes immense loss and damage to crops and affect the food products not only of Sind but even of other provinces deficient in food? If so, what proposals has he on the subject? Have any experts been engaged or are proposed to be engaged to meet the situation?

(b) Does the Honourable Member propose to take this matter in the plan for the agricultural development of the country as a whole? If not, why not?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) and (b). Government are aware that erosion is taking place in many areas. The Policy Committee on Agriculture recommended the setting up of a Land Utilisation Board and a committee is being appointed to advise as to the lines on which the Board should be organised and the functions it should perform. In the meantime Government are also considering the question of the appointment of an anti-erosion officer.

POSTPONED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(Postponed from 10th November, 1944)

TOUR OF INDIAN SCIENTISTS IN UNITED KINGDOM AND AMERICA.

224. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Secretary for Education, Health and Lands please lay on the table a programme of the tour and visits of the deputation of scientists to the United Kingdom and the United States of America?

(b) How long will the tour last?

(c) Will these scientists be given an opportunity to order for Indian Laboratories some of the latest instruments prepared during the war?

(d) Has the Government of India assured that these scientists will cover among themselves all important branches of science?

Mr. J. D. Tyson: (a) The detailed programmes of the tours are being drawn up in the United Kingdom and the United States of America in consultation with the visiting scientists. Copies are not available in India.

(b) The scientists are expected to spend about 6 weeks in the United Kingdom and about the same period in the United States of America.

(c) The scientists will have opportunities of establishing contacts with scientists and scientific instrument makers and of ordering laboratory equipment if they have been authorised to do so by any laboratory in India. Government have no information that they have been so authorised.

(d) The party is a small one and could not be expected to cover the whole field of scientific research. The subjects in which the nine gentlemen to whom His Majesty's Government extended an invitation may be considered to have specialised include medicine, especially Physiology, Gynaecology and medical education: Cotton Industry: Industrial Chemistry: Physical Chemistry: Radio Research: Astro Physics: Colloids and Soil Chemistry: general agricultural and Veterinary research on the organisational side.

WORK OF POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

226. *Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad: (a) Will the Honourable the Commerce Member please lay on the table of the House a full statement giving a summary of the work done by various committees appointed by his Department in connection with post-war reconstruction?

(b) What would be the tariff policy of the Government of India after the war?

The Honourable Sir M. Azizul Huque: (a) A statement is being prepared and will be laid on the table of the House when ready.

(b) Government's post-war tariff policy is at present under consideration.

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Mr. Essak Sait
12 NOON. wishes to move for leave to amend the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly by adding to them a Standing Order in the following manner:

"A Standing Committee shall be constituted separately for every department of the Government of India to advise on the activities of the department concerned. These Committees shall be constituted from among the members of the Legislative Assembly together

[Mr. President]

with such members of the Council of State as that House may determine. The mode of constitution of these Committees, their strength, the duration of these Committees and whether the membership shall be confined to a particular class of members (*i.e.*, official, non-official, elected or nominated) shall, from time to time, be determined by the Legislative Assembly on motions made by Government Members for the constitution of such Committees."

I would like to know if the Honourable Member has leave of the House to move this motion.

Several Honourable Members: No objection.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan):
Sir, I move:

"That the draft amendment to the Standing Orders be referred to a Select Committee."

Sir, I want briefly to explain.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed (Leader of the House): No speeches are to be made at this stage.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: With regard to that, the ruling is that no speeches are allowed at the time of asking for leave. I do not know whether there is any ruling which prevents a Member from speaking at this stage, but the ruling that I have here at page 1011, Vol. V, 1935

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: No speech.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Not that I am very anxious to speak.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): If the Honourable Member wishes to speak, I should like to know if there is any Rule or Standing Order which stands in the way of his making a speech at this stage.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: The ruling given in 1935 was to the effect that no speeches were to be made whether at the time of leave or after that.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member wanted in that case leave to amend the Standing Order and it is only at that stage that no speech is allowed.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: There is nothing further to be done.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): It is a motion and he wants to speak in support of the motion.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am not opposing reference to a Select Committee. All I wanted to make perfectly clear was that we oppose the amendment

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member may have something to say in support of his motion?

Dr. P. N. Banerjee (Calcutta Suburbs: Non-Muhammadan Urban): He must make out a *prima facie* case in favour of it.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: So far as Government position is concerned, I want to make it perfectly clear that we do not oppose reference to a Select Committee, but we certainly oppose the amendment.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait: Sir, I would like briefly to explain the amendment that I want to move, because so many Members have been asking what it is about.

So far as I know, there is no provision in our Standing Orders for constituting Standing Committees for the various departments. It is all done under a Notification of the Home Department. It is only by the kindness of the Home Department that this House is allowed to have these committees. So, I want this House to have the power to form the committees under our own Standing Orders. That is one object. The other is that the House should also have the right to say whether the membership of these committees shall be confined to a particular class of Members of the House alone. There is a ruling on this question—and it has been reiterated in 'A Selection from the Decisions of the Chair'—*vide* paragraph 253 on pages 170-171—that under the Notification of the Home Department under which these committees are being formed, this House has got no power, even if the House wants unanimously, to restrict the membership to a particular section of the House. Last Session, Sir, I asked

for your guidance and you suggested that the only way to do it was to amend the Standing Orders, so that the House may have the power. These are the two objects of my motion, which I commend to the acceptance of the House.

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

“That the draft amendment to the Standing Orders be referred to a Select Committee.”

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I am not going to make any speech but as I have said before I want to make it perfectly clear to the House that we are opposed to this amendment and we shall try our level best to secure a recommendation from the Select Committee that this motion be not proceeded with.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): I was not prepared for the statement made by the Leader of the House today. We have many surprises in store and this is one of them. As the Government have themselves been moving every year for Committees to be elected by this House, attached to the various departments, I thought that a statutory provision like this would be liked. But I see the Government would like to choose the departments for which they would have Committees. Even an innocent measure like this is being opposed, and having in view the present sort of Government that is going on in this country—absolutely irresponsible and irresponsive—, I thought the Government would take the public into confidence at least in this measure and that they would like to place some important subjects in the departments before some Committees. But what do we find? We find that they are not prepared to place it not only before the House but also before Committees of this House. Today the greater portion of this country is ruled under Section 93. Similar to the Central Government today most of the Provinces are ruled by Governors and their Advisers, and in these circumstances the influence of the Central Government upon the Provinces is much more than it was ever before, and even in the few places where any nominal form of elected representatives are carrying on as in Sind, it is virtually the Governor that rules. The influence of the Central Government is felt much more than it was ever before and today it is more necessary than at any other time that Committees at least should be set up for every department in which Members concerned can put forward what they have to say to the Members of the Committee.

We have been on these Committees all these years. I have myself experience of two of these Committees. I have been in the Standing Finance Committee for many years and I have been in the Commerce Committee and my experience was that the things brought forward before us in these Committees are very little. We have seen discussions in this House for the election of the Standing Finance Committee. Suggestions have been put forward by the various Members of this House that the scope of the Committee should be enlarged, that many more things should be brought before the Committee and the Committee should be taken into the confidence of the Finance Member and the Department concerned. But to all these representations, till today, we have seen no satisfactory replies.

Sir James Grigg, when he was here, made suggestions about an Estimates Committee, but that fell through after he went away and to this day we have yet to receive suggestions about the reconstitution of the Standing Finance Committee. It is all done in the old way. In the Commerce Committee the subjects that were brought before us were of a most trivial character. Matters of small legislation might be brought before us. Matters of importance will never and have never been brought before these Committees. And I ask you, why? I see only one reason, and the one reason is that the Government and the Members of the Government as they are constituted are well aware that this Government is run not in the interests of the people of this country but in the interests of the alien rulers under whom they take orders. You will have seen in the press reports about the copy of Mr. Phillips' letter to President Roosevelt.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I submit that this is irrelevant.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: If you will hear me further you will then hear the relevancy of my remarks.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I missed the point.

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: Reference to Mr. Phillips' letter.

Dr. G. V. Deshmukh (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): That is by way of illustration.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Even in matters of little detail the Government of India

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member must not refer to these matters.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I do not want to quote this letter. It is not necessary. This is the conclusion we have come to after many years.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): What is the conclusion?

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: The conclusion we have come to is that this Government is dictated to even in the smallest detail by the Government of Great Britain.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): A very old complaint!

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Oh, yes: and that is the only reason that this Government have to object to even innocent measures like this.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think that on this motion the Honourable Member need not go into all these things.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: That is the only reason that they can have to object to innocent measure like this. I wholeheartedly support this motion.

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: I rise to give my wholehearted support to this motion. Time and again have I urged that the composition of many of the Committees was unsatisfactory and I have also urged again and again that the functions allotted to many of the Committees of this House were not what they should be. Very unimportant functions are often assigned to these Committees and the more important functions are kept away from them. It is therefore desirable that this Legislative Assembly should frame its own rules with regard to the composition of every departmental Committee and with regard to the functions which should be assigned to it. Then, again, I must say that certain sections of the House predominate on these Committees. I will give you an instance. If you take the Standing Finance Committee, you find that the Committee is packed in such a way that the independent Members thereon can have very little say in regard to matters put before them for their deliberation. The Members selected for each Committee as representatives of certain sections of the House depend entirely on the will of the Member in charge. This is a very unsatisfactory state of things, and the time has come when the Assembly should decide as to the composition of every Committee and as to the functions which should be assigned to each one of these Committees.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): I had no desire to intervene in this debate but the remarks which fell from the Leader of the House have prompted me to say something. The attitude of the Honourable the Leader of the House to this amendment,—which proposes to add one more Standing Order to the existing Standing Orders, is very strange indeed. Before a Select Committee of the House has had time to go into the matter and discuss all the pros and cons relating to this particular amendment, he has felt the necessity of getting up in the House and saying that he is going to oppose it whatever happens. By doing so the Honourable the Leader of the House was acting very much like the gentleman whom his Department, the Broadcasting Department, is never tired of abusing in season and out of season. His attitude was really a typical Fascist attitude.

Sir, the Government of India, as we all know, is an irresponsible body. They would not listen to the country-wide demand that there should be a National Government in this country responsible to the people of the land. That being the case, even in a small matter like the composition of Committees,

Government of India is not prepared to accede to the verdict of the House, they are not prepared to listen to the advice which is to be tendered to them by the elected Members who represent the people of this country, and they insist that the present practice should be retained whereby even in a Standing Committee they can have their nominees to advise them.

It is a ridiculous situation indeed that people who do not represent anybody, that people who have got absolutely no voice in this country, people who are merely the nominees of the Government of India and are kept here simply to vote for them in the manner they are ordered to do, in spite of their conscience, in spite of what may be passing in their mind,—it is really ridiculous indeed that such people should be brought into committees to advise the Government of India, and that is why the Government of India insist that the present position should be retained. You are not even prepared to listen to advice

The Honourable Sir Sultan Ahmed: I never said that we will not be prepared to listen to the advice tendered in the Select Committee. We are quite open to conviction but we, at the same time, hope that the other members of the Select Committee will also be open to conviction.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: This is exactly the position which I am going to oppose. After all what is the advice which the Nominated Members, if they are members of these committees, are likely to give to the Government or to the various departments of the Government? Therefore it should be left to the House to decide that in important committees which have to advise the various Departments of the Government of India, the decision should be left entirely to the elected Members of the House, and that the nominated Members should be entirely excluded. But the language of the Standing Order which has been proposed is not very rigid: There is scope left

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Is the Honourable Member aware that the Governor General can frame a rule which can nullify any Standing Order?

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: I know that the Governor General is all-powerful but, at the same time, we are bent upon expressing our opinion and carrying it on the floor of the House, and we will leave it to the Governor General to ride rough-shod over our opinions, if he is so minded. At the same time, as I was suggesting, the language of this Standing Order is not so rigid indeed. We know that there are certain interests like Labour interests and certain minority interests in this House and the discretion will be still there for the elected Members of the House to see that those interests do have a voice in these committees. But as far as other nominated Members,—who are here merely to register the decrees of the Government, are concerned, it is the desire of this side of the House, it is the desire of the majority, I may say even the unanimous desire, of the elected Members of this House to see that such Members are excluded from the committees which are going to be set up to advise various Departments of the Government of India.

Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj (Nominated Non-Official): Mr. President, if I rise to speak at all, it is only to nip the mischief in the bud. My friend, Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar, suggested that this was a very innocent motion. I personally feel, and from the point of view of the interests I seek to represent, that it is not merely a mischievous motion but also a motion which insinuates against people like me. Whether my friends like it or not, whether they call themselves elected or otherwise, whether they belong to the Congress or the Muslim League, the fact remains that the House today is so composed that they must come in along with others like me to compose this House and it is not my fault that I am here to represent my community by the process of nomination. How many members sitting on the Congress Benches opposite, who say that they represent cent. per cent. of the elected Members of the House, ever choose to think of the fact that they themselves have not chosen to elect a member of the Depressed Classes to come to the Legislature? What chance is there, unless it is by nomination, that my people can ever get represented here? That being so, and it is necessarily rightly so, provision for nomination

[Rao Bahadur N. Siva Raj.]

has been made for the representation of interests like ours. Actually we have already made a complaint against the method of nomination that was resorted to by the Government of India. We always thought and we still think (it is also the recommendation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report) that nomination ought to be resorted to for the purpose of securing representation of interests for which no provision has been made by the process of election or to seek to redress or make adequate representation of elements possible, which otherwise is inadequate. For the way it has been done so far by the Government is such as to give increased representation to people who are already here, like the Muhammadans, Sikhs and others, thus to shut out the representation of the Scheduled Castes except to the extent of giving them a token representation by nominating a member or two at the most. That is the position.

Apart from the fact that I consider the motion insulting I must protest against the insinuation that lies behind, *viz.*, the position of the nominated Members with reference to the formation of the Standing Committees. I therefore want to oppose this motion at its very inception.

Mr. K. C. Neogy (Dacca Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I venture to think that I have a sort of special claim to participate in this discussion. It may not be known to most of the Honourable Members of this House that the constitution of Advisory Committees attached to the different departments of the Government of India came up for consideration in the first Legislative Assembly at my instance. I had the honour of moving a Resolution in the Legislative Assembly on the 19th January, 1922, recommending the appointment of Standing Committees to be elected by the Members of the Legislature and to be associated with the Departments of the Government of India. I based that resolution on certain recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which again was supported by certain observations made by the famous Montagu-Chelmsford Report. On that occasion the Government of India was opposed to the constitution of these Committees and the Resolution had to be pressed to a division and it was carried by a large majority. I am afraid I have thus been responsible for not a little of the agony that I find is being caused to the Government in their effort to dodge these committees and the agony which is felt by the non-official Members who are members of these Committees in trying to do a little more useful work than they are permitted to do. I do not want to take the House through all the various observations made by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on this subject or the observations made in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. But then I should like to point out that it was definitely intended that the Members who would be associated with the different administrative departments of the Government of India would be consulted on all important matters of policy and on all new questions that may arise from time to time. The recommendation with regard to similar committees in the case of the Provincial Legislatures went a little further than that. But then the authorities to whom I have referred were a little cautious in referring to the committees of the Central Legislature. They said, having regard to the distances involved, these committees might not be summoned at very frequent intervals. And then, again, having regard to the character of the Central Government, the functions proposed for these committees would not also be of the very same character as those of the committees of the Provincial Legislature. But subject to these considerations the Montagu-Chelmsford Report said:

"There should be no difficulty ordinarily in obtaining their views on important new projects, whether legislative or administrative."

I want to ask those Honourable Members who have served on these committees to say whether this expectation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report has been fulfilled. I was a member of one or two of these committees in the olden days, and it is because of the utter futility of membership of such committees that I have not consented to stand for election to any of these committees of late. I have every sympathy with my Honourable friend, Mr. Essak Sait, in the proposed amendment that he has put forward, because the time has arrived

when we should try to place these committees on a more or less statutory footing and assign proper duties to them, subject, of course, to some of the considerations which the Joint Parliamentary Committee mentioned; but then, subject only to the minimum possible safeguards, I do think that these committees should be allowed to play their part in advising the departments concerned in the manner in which they were expected to do by the Joint Parliamentary Committee and in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.

Some Honourable Members: The question may now be put.

Mr. N. M. Joshi (Nominated Non-Official): May I say a word or two? It seems that there are some Members who by framing this Standing Order want to exclude the nominated Members from some of the committees. That seems to be one of the objects of this motion

Dr. P. N. Banerjea: Not necessarily.

Mr. N. M. Joshi: Personally as a nominated Member, I am not prepared to part with any of the privileges which belong to a Member of this Legislature, and I do not think that any Select Committee of this House will deprive nominated Members of their privileges. So far as dissatisfaction with some of the advisory committees is concerned, I share the dissatisfaction as regards the working of these committees, along with all Members. These committees are not treated properly by the various Departments of the Government of India. They are treated as a sort of plaything. They call one or two meetings in the whole year, and the agenda placed before these committees is also in my judgment, if I may say so, very trivial. But I would like to ask the House how they can secure the object by this amendment. You propose to form committees by your own standing orders to advise the Government; will the Government seek your advice? I do not know of any section of the constitution by which a committee of this House can force its advice upon Government; and I therefore feel that if the Government is opposed to this standing order the appointment of these committees will not serve its purpose.

Sir Syed Raza Ali (Cities of the United Provinces: Muhammadan Urban): Why should the Government be opposed?

Mr. N. M. Joshi: As regards the function of these committees, I myself have said several times in the Legislature that if the Government insists upon the proceedings of these committees being confidential, the House should refuse to appoint its representatives on these committees. When the Legislature should appoint its Members for a committee which functions as a general rule confidentially weakens the Legislature. The Legislature does not know how its representatives do their work on the various committees, and unfortunately on account of the Members being on various committees an impression is created that the Government of India have consulted the committees. The Government of India will not tell the House whether the proposals on which they have consulted the committees were approved by the committee or not. The House does not even know whether the proposals were approved or not but the Government of India can always say that they have consulted the committees. I feel this fact itself weakens the control of the Legislature over the executive Government, and I have several times suggested to the House that if the Government insists upon the proceedings of these committees being confidential, the House should refuse to elect its Members on these committees.

There is one more question. Some people expressed dissatisfaction with these committees on account of their composition. My Honourable friend Dr. Banerjea did so. I do not see why Dr. Banerjea should throw the blame of the weakness of the elected Members upon the nominated Members. This House consists of 140 Members, out of whom only 39 are nominated. 101 are elected. (*An Honourable Member:* "Including the Europeans.") Including Europeans—the Europeans are 11 or 10. (*An Honourable Member:* "9.") In a House of 140, then, you can exclude 48 and you have got 92. If, now, 92 Members remain present and do their duty honestly, then they need not complain about the nominated Members at all. They have got a clear majority. So long as

[Mr. N. M. Joshi.]

the committees are elected on proportional representation, you have no right to complain. If you are complaining, you should have a complaint against the elected Members. You should expose those elected Members who do not do their duty or who are unwilling to do so. If there are 92 elected Members in this House and only 48 Members against them, if the elected Members complain that their voice is not heard, it is their fault. I would therefore suggest to my Honourable friend Dr. Banerjee that they should combine in the first place for elections. They do not. If they combine, 92 Members can certainly get a majority of two-thirds in any committee. If they do not combine, it is their fault. Therefore let them first learn to combine and do their duty honestly. If the Members do not attend the Legislature it is their fault. I therefore suggest that the elected Members should have some more introspection and try to find out where the weakness and the fault lies. Certainly you may exclude the nominated Members: if you have the majority you can do so, and personally, so far as I am concerned, if you do not elect me, I certainly will not complain. If you have a committee without me, try to do your best without me. I shall not therefore oppose this motion. Let the Select Committee be appointed; let the report come before the Legislature and let that report be considered, and I have no doubt that this question is a very important one and therefore it is worth while our considering this question in Select Committee.

Some Honourable Members: The question may now be put.

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

"That the question be now put."

The motion was adopted.

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

"That the draft amendment to the Standing Orders be referred to a Select Committee."

The motion was adopted.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Standing Order 56(2) of the Legislative Assembly Standing Orders requires that the Select Committee to which the draft amendment of the Standing Orders shall be referred, shall consist of the President, the Deputy President and seven other Members selected by the Assembly by means of the single transferable vote.

I have accordingly to announce that the Notice Office will be open to receive nominations for this Select Committee up to 12 Noon on Friday, the 17th November, and that the election, if necessary, will be held on Monday, the 20th November. The election, which will be conducted in accordance with the principle of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote, will be held in the Assistant Secretary's room in the Council House between the hours of 10-30 A.M. and 1 P.M.

THE PUBLIC DEBT (CENTRAL GOVERNMENT) BILL—contd.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now resume further consideration of the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Government securities.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman (Finance Member): I merely wish to say that in accordance with what I said yesterday I have consulted the Honourable Members principally interested and amendments have been put in which will be found to be acceptable to Government.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The House will now deal with the Bill clause by clause. The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 2 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 3, 4, 5 and 6 were added to the Bill.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That to clause 7 of the Bill, the following proviso be added:

'Provided that nothing in this section shall bar the recognition by the Bank of the manager or the sole surviving male member of a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law as having a title to a Government security, when the security appears to the Bank to stand in the name of a deceased member of the family and an application is made by such manager or sole surviving member for recognition of his title and is supported by a certificate signed by such authority and after such inquiry as may be prescribed to the effect that the deceased belonged to a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law, that the Government security formed part of the joint property of the family and that the applicant is the managing or sole surviving male member of the family.'

Explanation :—The expression 'Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law' shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed to include a Malabar *tarwad*."

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer (Bengal: European): Sir, I want to ask for your ruling on a point of order. I received notice of this amendment last night. I do not know whether this is the one which has been put forward as the result of consultations with the Honourable the Finance Member. If it is an agreed amendment, I do not suppose that we on these Benches would want to oppose it. I am raising this point now because there is an increasing tendency in this House for amendments to be moved by Honourable Members notwithstanding that they contravene Standing Order 46 and we in this Group feel unanimously that this is a very bad and dangerous practice.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: This is an agreed amendment.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I understand that an amendment to the same effect was tabled two days ago.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: An amendment to the same effect was tabled, as soon as the Select Committee report was presented to the House and this amendment is an agreed amendment between the Honourable the Finance Member and some of the Members who have proposed similar amendments.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Objection was taken before the Honourable the Deputy President who was in the Chair that this motion should not be moved, as the Report of the Select Committee had not been before the House for full seven days. The Deputy President apparently did waive the Standing Order and allowed the motion to be moved. In those circumstances the amendments of which notice had been given for less than two days could be moved. I do not see that there is any serious objection to this amendment.

Mr. T. Chapman-Mortimer: I just want to make one observation, with reference to what you have said. We on these Benches do not want in any way to obstruct or oppose the proposal now before the House but what we do want to emphasize is the tendency which always arises when Government and the Congress are here in force for the Congress and the Government to make arrangements over the head of everybody else and then we are expected to waive the Standing Order. I am not suggesting that in this case there is anything wrong at all. I do not want that impression to get about.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I quite agree with the Honourable Member that when any amendment is placed before the House as a result of arrangement between the Government Member and certain Members of the Opposition it is only fair that other Members should have notice of the amendment and if it is an agreed amendment, there could be no objection to its being moved.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): It was with the consent of the House.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I have nothing to say in amplification of this amendment. It is an agreed amendment and in this particular amendment. . . .

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, I rise to a point of order. It is merely in order that a wrong precedent may not be set that I rise to a point of order. This amendment, as it

[Sir Cowasjee Jehangir.]

stands just now, was received by us late last night. It is not the same amendment exactly as was moved by the Honourable Member or was given notice of by the Honourable Member himself some days ago. It is now an agreed amendment between the Honourable the Finance Member and the Honourable the Mover. But we received notice of it late last night. I have no objection to the amendment being moved at all but I do think that the permission of the House should be obtained before this amendment is allowed to be moved and the Standing Order should be waived in all these cases so that a wrong precedent may not be set. Today we are all agreed and today all of us want it to be moved. Next time the Honourable the Finance Member and some other Honourable Members may come to terms. . .

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member did not follow my ruling. I said that it is expected that other Members of the House should be taken into confidence and they should have notice. As the Honourable Member (Mr. Chapman-Mortimer), who raised this point of order, did not press it so far as this amendment was concerned, I allowed the discussion to proceed. There ought to be no misunderstanding. I have laid down time after time that whenever amendments are moved, sufficient notice to all the Members of the House should be given and I repeat that now.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: Then the vote of the House should be taken that this amendment should be allowed to be moved.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): There is no need to take the vote of the House. In fact no objection has been taken to this amendment being moved.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Sir, I have nothing further to say except that I do maintain that this amendment is substantially identical with the amendment of which I had given notice. The alterations are of a more or less verbal nature. My Honourable friend Mr. Chapman-Mortimer knew fully well about it when this matter was raised in the Select Committee. Anyway, so far as the procedure is concerned, I have nothing more to say. The fact that the House has discussed this amendment threadbare prevents me from saying anything further without unduly taking the time of the House.

Sir, I move.

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

“That to clause 7 of the Bill, the following proviso be added:

‘Provided that nothing in this section shall bar the recognition by the Bank of the manager or the sole surviving male member of a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law as having a title to a Government security, when the security appears to the Bank to stand in the name of a deceased member of the family and an application is made by such manager or sole surviving member for recognition of his title and is supported by a certificate signed by such authority and after such inquiry as may be prescribed to the effect that the deceased belonged to a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law, that the Government security formed part of the joint property of the family and that the applicant is the managing or sole surviving male member of the family.

Explanation:—The expression ‘Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law’ shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed to include a Malabar *tarwad*.’”

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar (Salem and Coimbatore *cum* North Arcot: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, this is an agreed amendment and so there is no need for a speech. I would only make a suggestion to the Finance Member. The certificate mentioned in this clause must be signed by such authority and after such inquiry as may be prescribed to this effect by the Government. The District Magistrate has been prescribed as such authority by the Rules made under the present Act. We would suggest whether it would not be better that this should be a summary inquiry by a judicial authority in the District. I would like the Finance Member to bear this point in mind when he considers the making of rules under clause 28 for this purpose.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, the amendment in its present form is one which has been agreed with me and therefore it is acceptable to the Government. I would like to say with reference to some of the apprehensions that have been expressed by Honourable Members that my sole concern was that if a provision of this nature was to be embodied in the statute, it should be technically in order and therefore I was anxious to have it properly examined and put in in the correct form by the Draftsman. That is the only reason why the ordinary procedure was slightly departed from. But I think it was in the interests of the House and in the interests of securing good legislation.

As regards the question asked by my Honourable friend Mr. Avinashilingam Chettiar, I am not quite sure that I understand the point of his suggestion. As I understand it, the whole desire for this amendment arises from the fact that instead of going to the courts in order, for instance, to obtain a succession certificate, it was desired that, as under the existing rules, the applicant should be able to get a certificate from the District Magistrate after due inquiry, certifying that he was the *karta* and that the security was the property of the joint Hindu family and so on. That I understood was regarded as a more convenient and expeditious mode of substantiating the claim than the normal method of going to the ordinary sub-judge or whoever might be the judicial authority. It was not the case that the applicant would, alternatively, have to go to the High Court or anything of that kind. I understand that the alternatives were proceedings in the local courts or this certificate from the District Magistrate. So, I am not clear what the Honourable Member is now suggesting. On the passing of this amendment and when the Bill becomes law, Government would naturally proceed to frame the rules very much in the sense of the existing rules.

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

‘That to clause 7 of the Bill, the following proviso be added:

‘Provided that nothing in this section shall bar the recognition by the Bank of the manager or the sole surviving male member of a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law as having a title to a Government security, when the security appears to the Bank to stand in the name of a deceased member of the family and an application is made by such manager or sole surviving member for recognition of his title and is supported by a certificate signed by such authority and after such inquiry as may be prescribed to the effect that the deceased belonged to a Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law, that the Government security formed part of the joint property of the family and that the applicant is the managing or sole surviving male member of the family.’

Explanation:—The expression ‘Hindu undivided family governed by the Mitakshara Law’ shall, for the purposes of this section, be deemed to include a Malabar *tarwad*.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 7, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 8 was added to the Bill.

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: Sir, I move:

“That in clause 9 of the Bill, after the words ‘is not produced to the Bank’ the following be inserted:

‘or proof to the satisfaction of the Bank that proceedings have been instituted to obtain one of these is not furnished.’”

Sir, this is an agreed amendment and nothing more need be said on it. It only gives the parties a little more time.

Sir, I move.

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

“That in clause 9 of the Bill, after the words ‘is not produced to the Bank’ the following be inserted:

‘or proof to the satisfaction of the Bank that proceedings have been instituted to obtain one of these is not furnished.’”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 9, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 10 to 13 were added to the Bill.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Clause 14:

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I move:

"That in sub-clause (1) of clause 14, the following words be omitted: 'or any Magistrate of the second class subordinate to him'."

I have very few words to say in support of this amendment. It may be that this particular sub-clause was introduced with a view to help those people who are supposed to come under clause 9. **I P.M.** What I wish to say is this. If you give this very important right of recording evidence to such low paid officers as second class Magistrates, then there is very great fear that many of these people may not do justice to the duty entrusted to them. It may also happen that some interested people may get at the second class Magistrates more easily and try to prejudice the recording of this evidence with a view to jeopardise the interest of the lawful party. Therefore, I suggest that these words should be dropped so that this function of recording evidence will be left only to first class Magistrates, who may do greater justice to the duty of recording evidence. I hope the Government will accept my amendment. Sir, I move.

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

"That in sub-clause (1) of clause 14, the following words be omitted: 'or any Magistrate of the second class subordinate to him'."

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, this provision already exists in the present law and it has always been there. I would suggest that there is a good reason for it. This clause is for the convenience of the claimants, to have their evidence recorded conveniently. If you restrict the recording of evidence to District Magistrates or First Class Magistrates, it means that the claimants are involved in making a journey at least to the headquarters which may not after all be necessary. After all, the main enquiry is being held by the Reserve Bank itself, possibly at the Provincial headquarters. The recording of the evidence is in the nature of a commission or by whatever name you call it, and the only object is to suit the convenience of the party concerned and enable him to have his evidence recorded locally. I would also draw the attention of the House to another point. It is not every second class Magistrate who is to record evidence, but second class Magistrates empowered in this behalf by general or special order of the Provincial Government, that presumably would restrict the power to certain selected second class Magistrates. I would ask that the Honourable Member should not press his amendment for another reason. I am not sure whether, if his amendment is made, the further words 'empowered in this behalf by general or special order of the Provincial Government' will have to go. I do not know whether First Class Magistrates also are to be empowered to record evidence.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: No.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: That is not a matter which you can know merely by reading the section. It is to be enquired and found out whether every First Class Magistrate has this power or whether he has to be specially empowered, so that the effect of the amendment would be to create a doubt in my own mind as to whether the provision was appropriate. For these reasons, I oppose the amendment.

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

"That in sub-clause (1) of clause 14, the following words be omitted: 'or any Magistrate of the second class subordinate to him'."

The motion was negatived.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Gharfi (Tirhut Division: Muhammadan): Sir, I move:

"That at the end of sub-clause (3) of clause 14 the following words be added: 'but an affirmation if the witness is a Muslim or Hindu.'"

[Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani.]

Sir, it is laid down here that "A Magistrate or an officer of the Bank acting in pursuance of this section may administer an oath to any witness examined by him". Sir, 'oath' sometimes includes special oath also. Under the Indian Oaths Act, it sometimes happens that if an opposite party challenges and calls upon the complainant to swear by Koran Shariff or by water of the Ganges, then if the party agrees, he may do so and the Court will administer the special oath. But in case the party does not agree, then the court has power to make certain observations which may affect the case of the party. In this case there is provision in the Indian Oaths Act that a Hindu or a Muslim shall not be compelled to take oath. The law gives facilities to Hindus and Muslims to make a solemn affirmation instead of an oath, and in the absence of such facilities not only the Magistrate but the Bank also will compel them to take the oath. Therefore all I want is that the safeguards already in the Indian Oaths Act should be provided here. I hope the Honourable Member will accept this harmless amendment.

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

"That at the end of sub-clause (3) of clause 14 the following words be added: 'but an affirmation if the witness is a Muslim or Hindu'."

Mr. Sri Prakasha (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, so far as I know, the general law on a subject like this will apply to this case also. The general law, if I am not mistaken, is that wherever an oath is prescribed, solemn affirmation can be made by the person concerned. But if that law does not apply to this case I would suggest that the privilege of making a solemn affirmation instead of taking an oath should not be confined only to Hindus and Muslims but should extend to all persons of all faiths, because I think every one should have the privilege of making a solemn affirmation if they have any conscientious objection to take the oath. I hope the Finance Member will be able to satisfy the House on this matter.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I do not know whether the Mover of this motion has read the report of the Select Committee, but we did go into this matter in the Select Committee, and as we understood it, the answer is provided by the definition in the General Clauses Act, "that 'oath' shall include affirmation and declaration in the case of persons by law allowed to affirm or declare, instead of swearing". It seems to me that that provides a complete answer and that no further provision is necessary.

Maulvi Muhammad Abdul Ghani: Sir, in view of the observation just made I do not press my motion, and beg leave to withdraw it.

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

Clauses 14 to 23 were added to the Bill.

Mr. Sri Prakasha: Sir, I beg to move:

"That for clause 24 of the Bill, the following be substituted:

<p>24. Where no shorter period of limitation is fixed by any law for the time being in force, the liability of the Central Government in respect of any interest payment due on a Government security shall terminate on the expiry of six years from the date on which the amount due by way of interest became payable."</p>	<p>Period of limitation of Central Government, Liability in respect of interest.</p>
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Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member can speak after lunch.

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

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

Mr. Sri Prakasha: Mr. Deputy President, Sir. Just as the House rose for lunch I had moved my amendment to clause 24. The House will remember that the subject matter of clause 24 was hotly debated in the House and it was agreed at the end . . .

Mr. D. K. Lahiri Chaudhury (Bengal: Landholders): On a point of order. Sir, there is no quorum.

(On a count being taken, it was found that there were 25 Members present.)

Mr. Sri Prakasha: I am glad that at least 25 Members of the House are interested to hear the debate on a subject like this.

During the course of the debate, it was pointed out that it would not be fair for Government to try to swallow up all capital and interest on Government securities simply because a certain number of years had elapsed before a demand for payment was made; and in the end it was decided that the matter should stand over and that, if possible, an agreement may be come to between the various points of view. The amendment that I am putting before the House is the result of the conversation that some Members of the House, interested in the amendments, had with the Honourable the Finance Member; and the House will see that there is a change in two directions. The original clause said that on the expiry of twelve years neither the capital nor the interest would be payable. Now there would be no limitation for the payment of capital; but there would be, unfortunately, a limitation for the payment of interest, and if the interest is not paid within six years, then, according to this amendment, the interest would no more be payable. Honestly, Sir, my own idea in matters like this is that when a sum is payable to a person it should be payable for ever; but, as I said before, the law of limitation has come in our country; and there is limitation in the matter of payment in various directions. While the Honourable the Finance Member has conceded to us the very important and necessary point of being able to demand the principal till the end of time—till at least the end of his Government, which I would be glad to see go even if I lose all my securities—he was unwilling to concede the same privilege in the matter of interest: and not only that but even the limit of 12 years has now been reduced to six. I pleaded in vain with him that at least the figure 12 should be left in the matter of interest; but he was adamant; and I did not want to press the matter to a breaking point, because I found that he had at least yielded in the matter of capital which was, in a way, more important.

There is one thing that I should like to say and I say this in all seriousness, and I do hope that the Honourable the Finance Member will be able to give some satisfaction to us in this matter. It so happens that at the present moment there is a law, or so-called law, prevalent in the land under which Government can catch hold of a person and keep him indefinitely in jail. The letter that Dr. Syed Mahmud, Member of the Congress Working Committee, published the other day after his release . . .

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): How does that come in here?

Mr. Sri Prakasha: I am coming to that. That letter, showed that while in jail, he was not allowed to communicate with his lawyers or even to sign a power of attorney to enable somebody to look after his property. Now, Sir, in a case like that, it is quite possible that Government may keep a person in jail for over six years; not give him any facilities to communicate with persons outside; keep even the place of his confinement secret as was done in this case; deprive him of every possibility of managing his affairs; and then at the end of six years he would stand to lose interest on his securities. If Government keeps a man in detention for six years—as they very well might, seeing how long the war is dragging on—and then he comes out and finds that interest on his securities had not been drawn, then he may be in danger of losing a fair bit of his property. I think that some provision must be made by the Finance Department in such cases where flagrant piece of justice, not due to laches on the part of the person concerned, may be perpetrated. In the hope that the department will look at this problem in an understanding and accommodating spirit, and also in the hope that the law will be administered with leniency and with sympathy, I commend my amendment to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Amendment moved:

"That for clause 24 of the Bill, the following be substituted:

"24. Where no shorter period of limitation is fixed by any law for the time being in force, the liability of the Central Government in respect of any interest payment due on a Government security shall terminate on the expiry of six years from the date on which the amount due by way of interest became payable."

Period of limitation of Central Government's liability in respect of interest.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: As I indicated in the House the other day, my understanding of the position is that the law, as it at present stands, provides for no limitation in the case of claims for payment of the principal sum due on a Government security, but that the limitation of six years operates in the case of claims for interest due on a security. But I would like to be clear that it is not Government's intention in any way to depart from its practice in regard to these matters. The real necessity of limitation arises from the fact of disputed claims and our main object was to facilitate the administration of the public debt and to prevent items being kept on the books for decades after the records relating to particular issues had been cleaned up.

The main effect of a limitation as I understand it is that no second claim for the payment of the interest which in most cases will already have been met could possibly be initiated in any Court, at any rate after a period of six years. From what I have said it would follow that in cases such as that referred to by my Honourable friend, the Administrator of the Public Debt would be unlikely to refuse to entertain a reasonable representation. I am surprised that my Honourable friend should think himself free to argue against the amendment which resulted from agreement and which he himself has moved.

The amendment as moved by my Honourable friend is acceptable to Government.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: What is the significance of "shall terminate"?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: It is the liability that will terminate. But my Honourable friend referred to a case where he himself received interest for a much longer period than six years from which it would seem that in cases where there is no dispute or doubt Government do not always stand on the letter of the law even at present.

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir: And will not in the future?

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: I have already spoken on that point.

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

"That for clause 24 of the Bill, the following be substituted:

"24. Where no shorter period of limitation is fixed by any law for the time being in force, the liability of the Central Government in respect of any interest payment due on a Government security shall terminate on the expiry of six years from the date on which the amount due by way of interest became payable."

Period of limitation of Central Government's liability in respect of interest.

The motion was adopted.

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

"That Clause 24, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 24, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clauses 25 to 27 were added to the Bill.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): There is an amendment to Clause 28 by Mr. Krishnamachari.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Sir, I move:

"That in sub-clause (2) of clause 28 of the Bill, after item (n), the following be added:

'(o) the authority by whom the certificate referred to in the proviso to section 7 is to be granted and the manner of making the inquiry therein mentioned'."

This is consequential to the amendment to clause 7 and finds mention in the original Act which it seeks to amend.

Sir, I move.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Amendment moved:

"That in sub-clause (2) of clause 28 of the Bill, after item (n), the following be added:

'(o) the authority by whom the certificate referred to in the proviso to section 7 is to be granted and the manner of making the inquiry therein mentioned'."

Mr. T. S. Avinashilingam Chettiar: I would like to say a few words on the way in which the Honourable the Finance Member has tackled this problem. It is very good of him to have accepted our amendments and to have assured us that he would administer the law as it stands today. We owe it to him that we have avoided so many divisions and speeches and also saved the valuable time of this House.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Sir Jeremy Raisman.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: The amendment is acceptable and I appreciate the kind words in which my Honourable friend has referred to the procedure by which the time of the House has been shortened.

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

"That in sub-clause (2) of clause 28 of the Bill, after item (n), the following be added:

'(o) the authority by whom the certificate referred to in the proviso to section 7 is to be granted and the manner of making the inquiry therein mentioned'."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): There is another amendment to clause 28 by Mr. Sri Prakasa.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: Sir, I move:

"That to clause 28 of the Bill, the following new sub-clause be added:

'(3) A copy of all rules under this section shall be laid on the table of both the Chambers of the Indian Legislature as soon as may be after they are made'."

It is just a formal amendment and by passing this the House will make it incumbent on Government to place before the Legislature the rules they make so that we may all know what the rules are and not have them thrown upon us by surprise. Sir, I move.

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

"That to clause 28 of the Bill, the following new sub-clause be added:

'(3) A copy of all rules under this section shall be laid on the table of both the Chambers of the Indian Legislature as soon as may be after they are made'."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 28, as amended, was added to the Bill.

Clause 29 was added to the Bill.

Clause 1 was added to the Bill.

The Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

The Honourable Sir Jeremy Raisman: Sir, I move:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

I feel, Sir, that I would like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the work of the late Sir James Taylor, who originally did most of the spade-work underlying this useful and necessary measure. His death was a great blow to all those of us who worked with him and it also was, I have no doubt, a very great loss to India. It is not easy for members of the general public to appreciate the amount of useful work that is done in the quiet of his office by a man of the type of the late Sir James Taylor. He was constantly engaged in trying to improve the regulations and the arrangements relating to various matters of this kind and the fruit of his work will be appreciated, I have no doubt, for very many years to come. This measure is only a very small part of the outcome of his labours.

Sir, I move:

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): Motion moved:

"That the Bill, as amended, be passed."

Mr. Muhammad Ashar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions; Muhammadan Rural): Sir, being a member of this Committee I would like to put in a word or two. In fact it was the name of Sir James Taylor that conjured up too much in our opinions on this Bill. Whenever there was any objection

from our side, the popular side, in the Select Committee, his name was mentioned and we all knew perfectly well that Sir James Taylor was a very clever and up-to-date hard-working man so far as Banking Law is concerned. In fact whether in this House, when he was a Member, or outside I had found him to be one of the nicest gentlemen in my life. Sir, I associate myself with the tribute that has been paid by the Honourable the Finance Member.

Sir, the efforts of my friends on the opposition side to make the law more in conformity with public interest are also to be congratulated. Our friends on this side have really taken great interest in persuading the Government to conform to their views. It is very seldom that I find Government agreeable on such occasions. But this time I do not know how, but I believe it is because the principles enunciated were such that the Government could not oppose the popular opinion on this side of the House.

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

“That the Bill, as amended, be passed.”

The motion was adopted.

THE INDIAN RICE COMMITTEE BILL—*contd.*

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The House will now proceed with the further consideration of the motion moved by Mr. J. D. Tyson.

Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait (West Coast and Nilgiris: Muhammadan): Sir, yesterday, when the House rose, I had made the point that Mr. Tyson himself in one of his observations had supported me in my demand for circulating the Bill, when he stated that by the departmental circulation that he had of this Bill he received very useful suggestions, which he incorporated in this Bill. Therefore I argue that if further circulation is allowed and if the Bill is placed before the people as a whole, people who are interested in the development of agriculture and in the attainment of the object that we have in view, (our object, which I summarised as more rice, better rice and rice easily produced) such people will surely be able to give us many more useful suggestions and therefore circulation will only be of further help.

With regard to this question of circulation, I have one or two suggestions to make. First, I request my Honourable friend to see to it that the circulation of this Bill at least is as wide as possible. What happens in this circulation business is that it is published in the official gazette of the Province and people are expected to express their opinions. Generally, the official gazette is read in very limited circles. I would therefore request my Honourable friend to see that with regard to this Bill, in which almost everybody in the country is interested, he issues instructions to the effect that the Provincial Governments should send copies of this Bill duly translated in vernaculars to the vernacular press, especially that section of the press which is widely read in the rural parts. In sending the copies, which is usually done, to certain associations he will see that the circle is widened sufficiently to include all the associations which are expected to take an interest in this question.

Then I find that in circulating these Bills it sometimes happens that opinion is invited upon particular points only. With regard to that I would request my Honourable friend to instruct the Provincial Governments that in inviting opinions, they should not be very strict about the opinions being confined to the provisions of the Bill alone. If, for instance, some association or some body can give us some suggestions which do not pertain to any of the provisions embodied in the Bill but which will prove of very great use, then certainly they should not be barred from expressing those opinions.

With particular reference to what I have just now said certain things have struck me. In the Bill itself there is very little co-ordination between the departments of the Central Government which are concerned in this matter. For instance, there is Irrigation. I do not know what this Rice Committee is going to do without proper arrangements for irrigation throughout the

[Mr. H. A. Sathar H. Essak Sait]

country. So far as the provisions of the Bill are concerned this Committee will have nothing to do, not even have the right to express their opinion with regard to a comprehensive scheme of irrigation that will be needed.

Then there is this great and wonderful Council of Agricultural Research. It is true that its representatives are on the Committee but having representatives on the Committee alone will not do. There must be better co-ordination between these two. Then there is the Food Department. What will be the relations between the two? How will they work? As a matter of fact there

3 P.M. was a suggestion that all these departments should be brought under one head. I will not detain the House long on this but this is what is in our minds when we support the motion for circulation. That is what I meant when I said that all these departments should be brought together, at least, under the purview of this committee, and this should be the one central body which will deal with the problem of production of food in India. But if my Honourable friend has in mind the kind of committee we have under the Coffee Cess Act and the Tea Cess Act and so on, then certainly I do not think anybody in this House will support this measure because our experience of these committees is very sad. I have here—and I will detain the House only for a minute or two—the third annual report of the Indian Coffee Board. The one point on which I want the attention of the House to be focussed is this: that during the three years to which this report pertains, the income of the Board and the expenditure bore the ratio of 100 to 50: when the income was a lakh and odd, the expenditure was 44,000; when the income was 2 lakhs odd, the expenditure was 1,26,000: this expenditure on administration alone—not on research work and not on the work of propaganda—was 50 per cent.: 50 per cent. of the income was spent on secretariat, control headquarters and control inspectorate alone. So, though it may not be the intention, I feel that these committees develop into bodies where people may find very happy and fat jobs. Then, when there is a committee working the House generally does not get many opportunities of going into what the committees are doing: even if questions are asked, the reply given is that this particular committee is dealing with it. Therefore I am not very happy about these committees and I would warn my friend that the House may not be very willing to accept this measure if all that he envisages, when the measure comes before the House next time, is the formation of a committee like those that he mentioned in his speech.

That is almost all that I have to say. The result of carrying out my observations may be that my Honourable friend may be called upon probably to recast this Bill in a much wider form. That may become necessary, but I think that will be a very good thing and a thing which the House will approve. The purpose that we in this House have in view is the removal of want, so far as food is concerned. I believe this is one of the freedoms that is being very much talked about now—freedom from want of food; and that object I say should be before us when we proceed with this Bill. With these words I commend my motion to the acceptance of this House.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh (Member for Education, Health and Lands): Sir, I rise to explain the broad principles of agricultural improvement of which this Bill is the forerunner. Before I do so, I wish to assure my friend Prof. Ranga who, I know, is a friend of the peasant, and I have a high regard for Mrs. Subbarayan and admire her becoming garments of patriotism—I am sure she will have the grace to countenance patriotic acts though such acts may for a moment cast a glow of patriotism over the unworthy persons who sit on these Benches: I should also like to tell my friends that I and my forefathers have lived on land or followed the profession of arms. . . .

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari (Tanjore *cum* Trichinopoly: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Why do you not go back to it?

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I am there—I have never left it. I can claim some direct knowledge of agricultural conditions and what materially can help the growers. There is this difference between me and my

two friends—they are content with the glamour of words enamoured of reasoning in the abstract of agricultural economics and retired to the realm of unrealities, leaving action to some distant future when they have shattered the present order and remoulded it nearer to their hearts' desire. We are concerned with the needs of the immediate present and do our poor best to improve the living conditions, thus preparing the way for larger measures of reconstructions which it may be given to my friends in the future to implement. My friends here demur because we are taking measures which are for the good of the people; and I am sure Gandhiji would not demur if his constructive plan is implemented even by the lowliest of the lowliest. I thought that in matters of vital importance our friends are here to render full support. I am disappointed that Prof. Ranga of all men should spend all his eloquence to oppose that which would serve the best interests of the peasants whose cause is so dear to his heart. I leave the Mover of the Bill to deal in detail with some of the points raised by the Honourable Members. I will just dwell on two or three of the principal objections which have been raised.

The urgency of improving the rice crop is evident from the existing scarcity. No one can realise the consequences of this prolonged scarcity better than my two friends, Prof. Ranga and Mrs. Subbarayan. Madras like Bengal can no more draw on surplus supplies from Burma. I am sure they will agree that India in no case should depend on imports of food from outside. How can we then wait and ignore the urgent need of increasing the production of rice and other foodgrains. I may inform that Burma, even when the war ends, will no more be in a position to meet our needs. We must therefore depend and exploit our own resources immediately and without delay if we are to meet our permanent and future requirements. It has also been asserted with much emphasis that rice research committee will imply an incursion by the Centre in the provincial domain. I have been a Minister in a province myself, and I can tell you the eagerness with which we received any financial assistance from the Centre.

Then it has been said that the cess of less than a pice on rice husked in mills only, would be a new and crushing burden. If the growers only knew that the research on rice may give them at least two maunds of additional rice per acre, they would be prepared to contribute something corresponding to the cash advantage they would get. I am confident that research on rice will at least increase production by four maunds an acre. This cess is not a burden. It is an investment which will give an assured return which no other investment can bring to the cultivator. We have the example of the working of the Cotton Committee dealing with an important and extensively cultivated crop. During its short period of existence, the research staff of the Committee have produced long staple cotton which covers now many millions of acres. They are on the way of improving staple still further so that India may no more import cotton from abroad. Professor Ranga confessed that he failed to secure from Central revenues adequate funds for the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. Now that we are attempting to provide special resources for research he asks us to knock at the door which refuses to yield it to the powerful knocking. The Central and Provincial revenue—where do they come from but from the farmer, the manufacturer or the consumer? These revenues have many demands to meet, while funds raised to meet particular crops can be used for no other purpose by a self-governing committee on which I have provided the adequate representation of growers.

An Honourable Member: Question.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Now, what are the methods which have enabled some of the advanced countries to obtain at least twice the yield which we obtain per acre of rice in India. They have conducted research and produced high yielding and disease resisting seed. They have carried out soil analysis and made arrangement to enrich it with the fertilisers needed for the crop. They have taken measures to avoid and overcome crop diseases and insect pests. What have we done so far to improve the rice crop?

An Honourable Member: Nothing.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I am not sure even 1 per cent. of the areas is under the improved seed. Our rice yield at present compared with some other countries happens to be the lowest. It is to provide for immediate research for improving this most important crop which has been in permanent short production that the cess is needed and the Committee is to undertake this research. Yet our friends are pleading for postponement of work which, if they were serious about it, they should have pressed for immediate action. After all what we in this Committee attempt is to bring the producer, consumer and trader together and provide them with funds. We invest them with the power of ordering research to the best possible advantage. We make it possible for the Rice Committee when it is formed to start research with the object of producing high yielding and disease resisting seed, to study soil conditions and water and manure requirements of this important crop in areas where rice is extensively grown, to find out means how to resist the invasion of insects and pests. As I am on the point the House will be glad to know that we have for the first time defeated two invasions of locusts by an organised campaign under the leadership of Hem Singh Pruthi and saved crores of rupees worth of crops. There is an enormous field for improvement all along the line, I may say, for all major crops, including wheat and it is my purpose to place all crops under committees, to organise proper research so that modern science may be brought to the help of the producer and the consumer under market conditions favourable to both. It would serve our food problem within a limited number of years. The Honourable Mr. Sait pleaded that the activity of the committee may almost embrace the whole food problem. I am sure he will admit that the rice crop, if we improve its production and yield, would only be a beginning in the direction of other crops being similarly treated and in the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research we have a co-ordinating authority which deals with all the corps and now in the Centre also we have a Department of Agriculture which would exclusively devote itself to the food problem but it is not possible that in the case of a single crop we should provide all that is required both regarding production and distribution of food. I would appeal to the House to support this measure and not only the formation of this Committee but also other committees which must follow if the food position is to be placed on a firm foundation.

Mr. Sami Vencatachalam Chetty (Madras: Indian Commerce): I wish to make a few observations on this motion. Sir Jogendra Singh, traditional farmer as he is, has entirely misunderstood the criticism which has emanated from these Benches. No elected representative or representatives are less vitally interested in rice than the Honourable Member who spoke last. In spite of that, criticism has been made against the present motion, it is due to the unsatisfactory nature of the Bill that has been presented to this House. I grant that this Bill has been actuated by good intentions, though they are jumbled. It appears that the intention of the Government is to achieve them by methods which have been proved more than once to be inadequate, unsatisfactory and even to a certain extent obstructive. It is in order that the Government might take suggestions not only from this House but from the general public as to what extent the scope of this Bill could be enlarged and improved that this motion has been made by my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga.

In the first place it looks as though the Government wants to run away with the cheap credit of fostering agricultural development by passing an Act constituting a committee. We are not unused to such methods of the Government. As has been already stated, this Bill is more or less on the lines of the Coffee Board, the Tea Board or the Cotton Committee. There is not any indication of the earnestness of the Government to foster the agricultural

development; they are not themselves anxious to contribute financially to the funds of the Fund that is intended to be instituted under this Bill. Therefore, if the Government merely want to lay the flattering unction to their souls that they did their best for rice, they can do so; but if they want to convince us that they are going to foster the agricultural development, particularly in rice by means of this Bill, I think they are terribly mistaken. Neither this House nor the outside public is in a mood hereafter to be deluded by such empty promises. It is the desire of this part of the House and I daresay of every section of the House that the Government should show their earnestness of fostering agricultural development by promising an equal amount of contribution of such an amount as may be raised by the levy of the 6 annas cess per ton. I grant and I do not myself think that 6 annas per ton for a purpose of this sort is a heavy levy and that it was going to affect either the producer or the consumer either way, but even the 6 annas levy would probably bring about 9 million rupees. If about 24 million tons of rice are produced, then the cess at the rate of 6 annas per ton will come to about 9 million rupees. But the objects for which this Bill is introduced are very wide. Undoubtedly such a body would require much larger sum of money at least in the early stages of the development of the rice products. Therefore, the first prerequisite for the acceptance of this Bill by this House is a promise by the Central Government that they would put in as much as the amount raised by the Fund in the coffers of this Board.

The second is this. I see that this Bill contemplates the Committee not only to deal with the productive branch of rice but also the marketing side. It is there that I say that there is a jumble of good intentions. I must impress the necessity of separating this marketing side from this productive side.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: May I explain what we mean by the marketing side? We mean provision of proper storage, grading and bulk marketing.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: Marketing is marketing. I should think that activities of this body must stop with the reaping of harvest. Thereafter, you may, if necessary, institute a marketing body for taking charge of the crops for proper storage, proper grading, packing, transport and marketing, etc., etc. Once you jumble marketing side along with the productive side, there is bound to be a certain amount of conflict of interests. On the body of this Committee you have naturally to put traders, merchants, representatives of the Associated Chambers of Commerce who, I take it, have nothing to do with this product and also the representatives of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce who cannot see eye to eye with the agricultural side or with the productive side of this product. I think one reform that we must do is to separate marketing from this productive aspect.

Thirdly, this body must be given powers of acquisition of large tracts of land from Provincial Governments in order to run agricultural farms on more modern methods and on scientific lines. They must run those fields by well-known methods of collectivization and by ploughing them with tractors and getting as best as possible from the rice. They must also have certain powers with regard to the zoning of the crops, so that there might not be overlapping or there might not be unsuitable crops being raised on fields. In fact, what I am aiming at is that opportunities should now be taken by the Central Government for agricultural planning all over the country and place these plans before the respective Provincial Governments with perhaps legislation under the concurrent list, so that such provinces as want to take advantage of that kind of planning might usefully do so.

Unless some such improved methods of paddy cultivation, soil examination and soil improvement, even perhaps the manufacture of fertilisers in order to develop the soil and also to have some sort of control, at least so far as these farms are concerned, for irrigation works—unless some such really useful powers are given to this body, it would do nothing except merely to col-

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lect this fund and spend, as other Committees are spending, over the executive staff of those bodies.

I would also like that one of the objects of this Bill must be to devise certain measures by which the livestock necessary for the purpose of cultivation of paddy should also be attended to by this body.

And I wonder why other grains are not taken into consideration along with rice. There is no use of framing legislation for every cereal that we think of from day to day. We now know how this country is deficient in many articles of foodstuffs. We also hope that whether Burma is recaptured or not India should be self-sufficient in at least so far as the foodstuffs are concerned. It may be that even if Burma should become part of the British Empire, we do not want to import rice from that place. Let us develop our resources in such a way as to be self-sufficient in so far as the foodstuffs for man and the feed stuffs for cattle are concerned. It was with the view of enlarging and improving the scope of the Board that the criticism has been levelled against this Bill. I hope now that the Honourable Member for Education, Health and Lands has understood the import of our criticism, he would promise to this House that the Bill would be recast on some such lines of modern improvement and development—earnest development and not merely pseudo-development by passing an Act from the Central Legislature.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Mr. Deputy President, after having heard with the attention that is due to my Honourable and Venerable friend Sir Jogendra Singh, I still feel unconvinced that this Bill is at all necessary. Hearing him, I felt that he wanted to placate this rather troublesome baby, Prof. Ranga, with a toy to play with and he has intended to do nothing more than that by commending this Bill to the favourable consideration of the House. Sir, my objection to this Bill is not political. It may be that my venerable friend Sir Jogendra Singh has left that very useful occupation of a farmer and come to the rather unproductive business of Executive Councillor. . .

Nawabzada Muhammad Liaquat Ali Khan (Rohilkund and Kumaon Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): But profitable.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I do not know; it may be profitable or it may not be. It is the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh that should tell us if it is profitable or not. If my Honourable friend the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Party thinks that these gentlemen are attracted merely because of the salary that they get, I do not agree with him. The bulk of the salary goes in the shape of house rent, entertainment and taxes. There must be other incentives, other things that attract them but in the case of the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh, I must say that he has left a very useful occupation useful just at this time when this country is engaged in the 'grow more food campaign'.

That apart, I am in a position to say that within the four corners of this Bill, I find enough material to condemn this Bill with bell, book and candle, leaving out of the question politics altogether. Sir, the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh and the Honourable Mover of this Bill had mentioned something about the incentive to this Bill having been created by suggestions made at the meeting of some Committee in India, I think they called it by some funny name, 'Agricological committee'—that Committee seems to have recommended that there should be a Rice Committee.

An Honourable Member: What is the meaning of 'Agricological'?

Mr. Sri Prakasa (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Consult the Oxford Dictionary.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: You must ask the author of the name, the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh. I understand that they have since dropped that name. I strongly resent the suggestion that a measure, which is supposed to be beneficial to this country which this House has been asked to accept, should come from some pet hobby of a Member of the Executive Council,

through some kind of Star Chamber which the Government have nominated and which they summon at their will and pleasure and in which they discuss all things under the sun in *purdah*, and then we are told that the matter has been discussed, and that wise body had suggested such and such a thing, and that this House had better accept it. That is what all that has been said really comes to. Sir, my objection to this Bill is many-sided. My claim to object to this Bill arises out of the fact that I represent in this House one of the two principal rice producing zones in my Province. I am not devoid of any knowledge how rice is produced either.

Mr. Sami Vencatachelam Chetty: You eat rice.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: Yes, I eat rice. One eats many things the origin of which one never knows and probably if one knows it, one will never eat them.

If this is a company prospectus and if I am asked to subscribe to the shares of that company, I shall say, no. The prospectus is bad, it does not reveal the objects of the company, it does not assure me that the Directors of the company are going to use its funds in the proper manner, it does not tell me that the shares of the company will find a marketable value at any time and therefore the floatation of the company is bad and is a fraud.

Mr. Sri Prakasa: It is another East India company.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: In the East India company Britain struck a gold mine and very successfully built the British Empire out of it. What is it that we have been asked to approve of? We are told that a Rice Committee will be constituted with 51 Members. Why 51? Because it is one less than the number of people who waited on individually on Lord Linlithgow soon after the war broke out. Fifty one men are expected to get together and work for the improvement of rice production in this country and to achieve the other objects for which this fund will be applied. Having constituted a Committee, the Bill next provides to find the finance for it. The Finance is found in a very peculiar way. It is not got from the grower, it is not got from the Provincial Government, it is to be got from the man who owns a rice mill, the fund is to be accumulated at a particular rate per ton of rice hulled. I cannot see the logic of it. It may be that perhaps Mr. Tyson is the best Government official from the point of view of Legislature, because he is the only official who takes the Legislature seriously and produces at least one Bill every Session for us to discuss here and send it to the Select Committee and ultimately the Bill gets on to the Statute Book. The other Members of the Government totally ignore this House. They get their work done through Ordinances. It may be that next year not finding any Bill to bring before this House and being in charge of the portfolio of Education, Health and Lands, he will come forward with a Bill to do propaganda for birth control. If he does it, I can make rather a rough guess how he would like to collect funds for that purpose. He will say that for every child born, the parents will have to pay six annas and at this rate he will collect five million six annas per year and then it will be a very comfortable fund at the end of a year. In fact, it appears to me that the logic of this measure does not appear to me to be anything more, in fact, it is much less, than the logic of the Government of India taking up the question of doing propaganda for birth control.

There is another aspect of this Bill which deserves mention. The provocation for this Bill seems to be the success of the Indian Central Cotton Committee. My Honourable friend the Deputy Leader of the Muslim League Party told us a story the other day in the Food Debate. I think it was a trifle misapplied. He told us about the story of that man who having pulled many hundreds of men, women and children from out of wells with a rope tried to pull out a boy from the top of a tree in the same manner with disastrous results. I think that story, if it is related now and in connection with this measure will be much more suitable than during the Food debate. Something was successful in the matter of cotton, something was successful in the matter of

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lac, therefore the same thing must also be successful in the matter of rice. Sir, my Honourable friend Prof. Ranga very appropriately quoted from the report of the Indian Agricultural Commission. I do not want to steal his thunder by reading it over again. Am I to understand that this Report is relegated to oblivion and it is much less of an authority on agricultural matters, since the departure of Lord Linlithgow from the shores of India.

An Honourable Member: Even when he was here, that Report had no value.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I am not sure. That particular report seems to have discountenanced completely the constitution of committees for particular types of food crops. I will ask the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh and his Deputy in this House, do lands grow only rice? In my own part of the country, they do not grow rice only. The lands that grow rice grow other things also. The problem of food crops is one and indivisible, it cannot be tackled by the formation of a rice committee by itself. Is it at all the way to do it? The Food problem is a very serious one. Everybody agrees with that. Being a serious matter, it has got to be dealt with by the local authorities of the Provinces. It may be that we have not succeeded in any eminent degree in improving the quality of our rice, or in increasing the quantity of its output. The causes that stand in the way of that improvement being effected is not because an Indian Central Rice Committee has not been constituted with fifty-one people with a fund to be raised in a very queer manner which the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh appears to say is the only thing that stands in the way of improving the food position in the country. Sir, so far as rice in my Province is concerned, let me tell the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh that Government finances depend on the growth of rice in the Province. The bulk of the revenue of Provincial Governments excepting perhaps during war time, happens to be from land on which paddy is grown, and land tax is assessed on the value of the product from the land; and the settlement is not of a permanent nature except in certain areas. There is periodical resettlement and the resettlement is made on the basis of the value of the crop and of the improved value of the land and the crop therefrom. So there is intimate connection between the production of rice and the provision of finance for the carrying on of the administration in my province, because rice fields provide by and large the largest quantum of revenue to the Government. And my Provincial Government have got a department of agriculture. It may be that it is not very active, it may be that it is not as successful as it should be; but it is maintained out of the revenues of the province and out of the revenues provided by the agriculturists. But my Honourable friend wants a committee of 51 to do this work; my Honourable friend wants to provide travelling allowance and *batta* for a number of people with no special qualifications to talk hot air either in Simla or in Delhi. If all that is needed is money for this purpose, cannot the provincial Government pay a quota of what it gets as land revenue on the lands that produce rice principally? If the committee that is going to be formed is in reality going to help to increase the output of rice, would not the Government revenue be augmented thereby? Would not therefore the Provincial Government be all the more interested in providing funds for the purpose which is dear to the heart of my venerable friend Sir Jogendra Singh?

That, Sir, is my principal objection. If really you want a co-ordinating committee, you want to co-ordinate the work done in the various provinces, I do not see how the function now performed by the I. C. A. R. could not be usefully extended to serve that end. I do not see why there should be a separate rice committee. If at all you start a rice committee, if at all you start putting into operation the sub-clauses of clause 9(2) from (a) to (j), it has to be done in the provinces; and much as my Honourable friend Sir Jogendra Singh is willing to help, he will not be able to help. Let him recollect what happened in that conference in Simla, that Agricultural Conference; was he

able to prevent a person incessantly talking about the importance of the *babul* tree? One of the members whom he had summoned got up and persisted in saying *ad nauseam* that for the improvement of agriculture in this country it is important to develop the *babul* tree, which happens to be the chief food of sheep and goats. (*A Voice*: "And camels"), Camels are a species of animals unknown in Southern India.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I can tell my Honourable friend that the *babul* tree does improve arid soils. It is a leguminous plant which improves and fertilises the soil.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: If it is talk of that nature which will go on in this committee of 51, by the very nature of its constitution it will not help to produce one sheaf of paddy more than is being produced today. And I suggest that my Honourable friend is approaching the problem from the wrong end altogether. If he wants really to do something about it let him approach the provinces to constitute such committees and let the provinces take up this work. And if he wants finance for the I. C. A. R. to do the coordinating let him put an application to his colleague the Finance Member. I think the Finance Department will not, as they are at present constituted and in the frame of mind in which they are today, refuse to give further aid to the I. C. A. R. for purposes of research.

Sir, my next point is this fund and the manner in which it is collected. As I said before, there is no need for provision of a fund. My Honourable friend thinks first of constituting a committee and immediately he feels he has to make it self-sufficient. India has to be self-sufficient, the provinces have to be self-sufficient, every committee that is constituted by the Centre has to be self-sufficient. There is no special and particular merit about this manner for self-sufficiency; and in order to make this committee self-sufficient he devises a fund in a very peculiar manner. I am not either ignoring or denying those charges made against the manner of the collection of this fund by my Honourable friend Mrs. Subbarayan. But I will say this. Leave alone the question of harassment, leave alone the question whether six annas per ton is a thing which is very heavy or low, whether the incidence of that tax will be borne by any particular set of people or will be distributed in such infinitesimal small units that it will not be felt at all. But my Honourable friend and his advisers who sit in rooms in the North Block Secretariat realise that they are putting an extra load on the provincial administration, an extra harassment on a type of person who is not accustomed to keep records and furnish returns,— apparently so difficult even to contemplate for people who are sitting out here in Delhi. Some Deputy Secretary who is of an imaginative frame of mind, who is completely unaware of the realities of the situation, thinks that he can forge another link in the system of oppression that is being carried on by administrations in the country in the name of tax collection. And my Honourable friend, thinking of the farmer and his future good, does not realise that it is a positive harassment to a rice-mill owner to have to keep accounts and furnish returns of a number of transactions. And let me also tell him that the cess that he proposes is not quite so equitable as he seems to imagine. Sir, I have before me a book published under the auspices of his own department, "Report on the Marketing of Rice in India". It tells me that in Bengal machine-milled rice is 16 per cent. of the output, in Madras it is 62 per cent., in the Central Provinces it is 30 per cent., in Bombay it is 55 per cent., in Sind it is 90 per cent.; and this varying percentage of machine-milled rice is going to be taxed, and a varying type of burden is going to be cast on the people of various provinces. My Honourable friend thinks it is an equitable tax, a thing which would not cause any hardship and which would be easily collected. If you really want to devise a fund for your pet committee, a committee which will give your department some importance because such a committee has been organised in your department and you want to create more work either for your department or for the future agricultural department which is going to come into being, either find the money from the Finance Department or ask

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the Provincial Governments to pay a portion of the expenses to be incurred on this toy in relation to the land revenue that they are getting. In fact, supposing my Government is asked to pay 25 lakhs, for this purpose I would not object. I am not looking at it from the point of view of a person who is interested primarily in the provincial finances as such. If possibly I am in the provincial Assembly I shall fight tooth and nail before they give 25 lakhs to the Central Government to be wasted on the Secretariat officials in the North and South Blocks. I shall probably ask them to find the money themselves. But speaking from here it does not appear to be a serious matter. The Government of my province was giving a rebate of 75 lakhs for some years to agriculturists, they have recently done away with it, and if you have to ask them to pay 25 lakhs for this or any other purpose it may not be too much to ask provided you give them some value for the money. But, this committee of 51 people will be liable to be asked whether they are producing some value for money, if the Provincial Government are asked to give a contribution. But as things are Sir Jogendra Singh's pet theory about research is not going to produce anything more in Madras, and we refuse to contribute.

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Sir, I may point out that in Madras Sir Venkataraman's work on sugar has produced crores of rupees for this country. He cannot deny that Coimbatore cane has produced crores of rupees, and that research was carried out in the province of my Honourable friend.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: I should like to ask my Honourable friend what relation this has to the point on which I am speaking. In my province we often say,—I hope it will not offend my Muslim friends,—“What relation is Ghulam Kadar to Gokulashtami?”. Similarly, what relation has sugar production got to a rice committee? Rice stands on an entirely different footing; it is not a cash crop. And if after hearing me all this time shout at the top of my voice to make the Honourable Member listen and at the end of it all he says something funny which has no relation to the subject, I will say that he has been reading the Ramayana and at the end saying, “What relation was Rama to Seeta?”

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: The Honourable Member said that research has produced nothing, and I can quote cases not only from Madras but from other provinces where research on agriculture has produced tangible results. Research on wheat has given 3 to 4 maunds more per acre. Similarly, with regard to other crops also it is well known that by research you can improve seed, you can increase production, you can ascertain fertilizer requirements, and so on. These are the ways by which the food of this country can be improved, and not by merely saying that this cannot be done.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: My Honourable friend has completely misunderstood me. Apparently the language that I speak is not the language that he understands. I have never said that research was wrong, I have never said that research produced nothing. I have continually said that research would produce a lot more, that research would produce more sugarcane, that research would produce more rice; it will produce a better Government if they made research in the capacity of Indians to govern themselves.

Sir F. E. James (Madras: European): Perhaps bigger, but not better.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: That is a matter of opinion. It would be true if I were to accept the words of my Honourable friend, Sir Frederick James, the Governments of the past were perhaps better Governments. I do not agree. He and I are not in the same boat, and I certainly will not be in the boat in which he will be if my wishes could be enforced.

So far as this Fund is concerned, I say that the conception is illogical, and the manner of collection is inequitable. It is asking the provinces to bear a burden which they ought not be asked to bear. I am not saying anything against Bengal or any particular provinces, but I say that if you really want a contribution from all provinces, it shall have to bear some relation to the ultimate advantage they will get. If my Honourable friend speaks of sugarcane

I would like to tell him that Madras has not benefited to the extent to which the United Provinces and Bihar have benefited. The benefit in regard to research should go in some equitable proportion province-wise. It is the primary duty of the Provincial Government to look into its food problem. You might be able to allot to them a part of the Fund which you propose to collect, you might be able to take over the surplus from one province and hand it over to the deficit provinces, but the obligation to produce more food and better quality of food and to make the cultivator happy is that of the Provincial Government. This obligation the Provincial Governments have got to discharge, and I say that this Bill is by-passing that obligation. The obligation will remain. This committee will not help the Provincial Governments in any way in fulfilling their obligation. It is a costly toy, and it is you here sitting in the Government of India, which is a thing I object to. Have you approached the Provincial Governments before bringing in this Bill? Has Madras agreed to your taxing the rice millers? Will the Honourable Member or his Secretary get up and say yes or no?

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: Yes, Madras has agreed.

Mr. T. T. Krishnamachari: If Madras has agreed, it would not have agreed if I were there. It has agreed because it is Section 93 province, and it certainly will not agree once the Bill is circulated, once the motion of my Honourable friend, Mr. Ranga, is accepted. The people of the province will certainly object to their rice millers paying a tax out of all proportion to the total rice output of the province besides being harassed in so many ways. They will be harassed in the matter of maintaining returns. I can tell this House that I remember very well some time back in the matter of fixing the price of rice on a uniform basis a committee was summoned to meet in Delhi and the provinces were asked to send some representative of rice millowners. I remember the Provincial Government were in a hurry, having no time, and Secretary rang me up, and said 'can you tell me of some rice millowner in Tanjore who could be sent?' I told him that there are not many mills working at the time, as at present due to the shortage of coal and kerosene oil most of the rice millers are not working and it would be very difficult to suggest anybody who could come out here. So I wonder whether they know that they are being taxed most inequitably, because of the fact that certain provinces have not been able to take advantage of the machinery, or they do not have electricity or other facilities for it. We have not been promised that this is going to do something wonderful. In spite of all that my Honourable friend has said I do not think that this Bill is going to achieve something really wonderful in the near future, and I do maintain that if the Provincial Governments have given their assent to the formation of a committee and to the method of collecting fund for it in this manner, they must have done it perfunctorily without any examination, and I know that even a Section 93 Government—as my Government is—is wise enough ordinarily to resent an imposition of additional work on it like the collection of this cess will impose. Sir, the only decent thing the Government can do today is not to persist in trying to make this toy live because Professor Ranga will not in any event be satisfied. It will not satisfy anybody excepting perhaps the feeling of the Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh and Mr. Tyson by reason of the fact that they have given some work to the Legislature. The most decent thing for him to do is to accept Prof. Ranga's motion for circulation, and if it comes back with the peoples blessing go ahead and 'good luck to you'. If it does not, then you are rid of a really bad job. Sir, I support the motion of Professor Ranga.

Mr. Hoosainbhoy A. Lalljee (Bombay Central Division: Muhammadan Rural): Sir, in the original motion the date which was fixed was the 14th of November, 1944. Since then we have had some other business and I thought that the 17th of November may be convenient, but I do feel now that it would be better to substitute the words 'before the end of the present Session'. With

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the permission of the House my amended amendment would read thus:

"That in the original motion for the words '14th November 1944' the words 'before the end of the present Session' be substituted."

Mr. Deputy President (Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta): The amendment can be amended only with the consent of the House. Is there any objection to the amendment being amended?

Some Honourable Members: No objection.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Thank you, Sir. After what I have heard from my friends on the opposite side, I must say that the task before me is rather a heavy one, but all the same I do feel that I would be failing in my duty if I did not tell my friends on the opposite side what I feel on this question.

Dr. Sir Zia Uddin Ahmad (United Provinces Southern Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): Which is the opposite side.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Although I belong to that side, I am sitting on this I will say "my Honourable friends on the other side".

We have been clamouring for years that a large portion of our people do not get a square meal. We have been feeling that the health of our people is suffering very much owing to lack of sufficient food. The very recent occurrence in Bengal and in other places indicates greater need for foodstuffs in this country.

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

After what we heard last year and the condition that is prevalent in the greater part of India in the South, I did feel that there would be nobody in this

House who would not call upon the Government to take immediate action, whatever that action may be, provided that that action would lead to a little increase of foodstuff. My friend Prof. Ranga has three main objections. First of all, I am sorry to say he considers the sum of Rs. 30 lakhs which the Honourable Member wishes to collect at six annas per ton to be too big a sum to be given for research, development, marketing and what not of rice. I feel, Sir, that even ordinary industrial concerns, if they really wish to be successful, they must have first of all a research department. Just imagine a country like ours not having a research department for rice! And Prof. Ranga to say that Rs. 24 lakhs in that direction is a heavy burden!

Prof. N. G. Ranga (Guntur *cum* Nellore: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Who is to pay for it? Will the Central Government help us?

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: I am coming to that. It has been made clear by Mr. Krishnamachari that the rice seller will pay. Prof. Ranga says the rice grower will pay. If the taxpayer pays I hope the rice grower and rice seller are also included. Let us go further and see what it is that you are going to pay. From the latest figures that have been supplied, there are altogether 30 million tons of crops: out of that 11½ millions are in Bengal and 5 millions in Madras. If you calculate at six annas per ton and if you agree to 27 per cent. of our produce going through the mills, the contribution of the whole of Madras Presidency will not be more than Rs. 5 lakhs and not more than Rs. 10 lakhs from Bengal with a population of six crores. Can it honestly be said that these sums are too large for these two provinces when we are being told that people are starving? As a matter of fact the Government can very well say that it is not only we but also the popular side who have never carefully looked into the question of agricultural products nor have they brought them definitely before any Legislature as to what steps should be taken to get more food for the people. All that we have said is that we have not sufficient food. We have never pressed them to find out ways and means.

By that I do not say that the responsibility of the Government is lessened. Their responsibility is much more. In fact during the Budget Sessions of 1935, 1936 and 1937 I pointedly drew the attention of the Government of India to tell us what they have been doing for the agriculturists and with regard to the

education and health of the people. The Government of India did nothing and has been doing nothing.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Have they been doing it now?

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: They are not doing it from their own purses. But they are attempting to do something from your own monies and with your help. But you have not even done that and even now you do not want any research. At the moment production per acre is three times more in the United States and six times more in Japan than in India. When I speak of production, my friend Prof. Ranga raises another bogey and I have not forgotten it. He says if we have large production what will be the condition of the labourer. In 1937 and 1938 he said that when we had large production we still had to import wheat from Australia, rice from Siam and we asked for protection. Therefore we should not try and produce more.

Prof. N. G. Ranga: Who said that? No. Question!

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Order, order. Let the Honourable Member go on.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: We did import rice and wheat and we did impose duties against those imports because our agriculturists did not get sufficient for their production. But what is the reason? How can Australia and Siam, after paying freight, sell in my country, in Madras cheaper rice and dump rice against my own produce? The reason is that my production from my land is half and one-sixth of other countries, and so long as the cost of production in this country is high this state of affairs must continue.

Then, Sir, Prof. Ranga brought up another thing. If you produce more what is the labour going to do? They will starve. That is not right. If you produce double the quantity, the cost of rice at Rs. 2-8-0 before the war may come down to Rs. 1-8-0. True if you use good manure, tractors and fertilizers the cost will be slightly more but the yield will be 50 to 100 per cent. more, and in that case having brought down the cost by 50 per cent. you will be able to avoid all imports and be able to feed your people with cheap rice. With regard to the future of the labourer, don't you think that if you produce double the quantity you will need more labour to carry those things?

Prof. N. G. Ranga: You are labouring in vain!

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: Why?

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

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: We may not be able to employ more labour because of using tractors and other up-to-date implements but he forgets that the more you produce the more labour you will require for it. I do feel that we have come to a stage when we must point out clearly to Government that this condition of malnutrition cannot be tolerated. What is Rs. 5 lakhs or Rs. 10 lakhs to Madras or Bengal when lakhs of people have died and many lakhs are in a pitiable condition of existence. Let me remind my friends from Madras of the many more crores of rupees that they are now paying for their rice on account of the present shortage. I believe there are people who have made crores, simply because the Rangoon rice was not available. Please consider that aspect of the question and do not only look to the rupees, annas and pies side of the matter. Five lakhs with the consent of the people, is it a great thing?

Then, Sir, he says that our Government has got the revenue on the value of the crops. If you have not made your Government realise that it is much better to produce more, reduce the cost of production and sell it cheaper, it is not somebody else's fault. Better late than never. I do not say that the Government of India are justified in bringing it now. They ought to have brought it long ago, not only regarding rice but also wheat and other products. My friends mentioned cotton. Certainly India has made crores in the supply of cotton, by having long-staple cotton. We are today able to produce finer cloth than what we used to import. Is not that a saving? Is not clothing as important as food? With regard to sugar, we were pay-

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ing 70 crores out of India when we had no sugar. With research today India is the country which produces the largest quantity of sugar of all the countries in the world. This has been the result of research.

Then, Sir, we have got to draw the attention of the Department to the real wants of the agriculturists. Very recently we have come to know that during 1935 to 1938 we imported manure from 30,000 tons to 60,000 tons annually but during 1940—44 we have not imported anything, as if it was not needed. All the time the Grow More Food campaign has been going on. The figures I have quoted are customs figures. Then with regard to implements, after a great deal of trouble (all credit to the Agricultural Department) they have found out that the agriculturists want implements and steel to the extent of 36,000 tons a year. When the agriculturists began asking for that they were not able to get 6,000 tons of steel. Yet, Sir, we will grudge this 24 lakhs of rupees and say that we must go on in this condition for sometime longer. I feel very much that it is high time and I do appeal to my friends on the other side that we ought not to take the blame on ourselves by delaying even by a minute the research and development of agriculture, specially in relation to rice, on which we depend so much. With these words I do hope my friends will seriously consider the amendment that I have moved and I think that they ought to leave all other work and sit on the Select Committee and do something to show to the Government that we are much more eager than they.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): I think the Honourable Member's amendment has been put to the House?

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: With the permission of the House I got a little change made.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): Has the Honourable Member moved it?

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: I moved it yesterday: yes, it was put to the House.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum (North-West Frontier Province: General): Mr. President, the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Hooseinbhoy Lalljee, indicated that the Government was going to do something really good, beneficial and useful for the producer as well as for the consumer of rice in this country, and that it is the elected parties on this side which stood between the Government and this very laudable object which they profess to have in view. That if only we cease opposing this move of the Government something wonderful will happen, there will be no shortage of rice, and hunger will disappear from this land altogether. This is not a true picture of the situation, and all that we on this side of the House are concerned with is this: that we are anxious that on an important measure like this,—which deals with the production and the marketing of rice and research work which has to be carried on in connection with the improvement of rice production in India,—on a measure like this, which deals with a crop on which a very large number of people in this country depend for their very existence,—such a proposal as the one before us should be sent round and circulated for eliciting public opinion, before we sit down to legislate on it. The idea is not to delay the thing, the idea is not to whittle down the thing. The idea is merely to have public opinion on a very important measure, which affects so many people in this country.

Mr. Hooseinbhoy A. Lalljee: At a time when lakhs are starving!

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: My Honourable friend says that when lakhs are starving, we are trying to delay this measure. May I know from the Government of India, if they were absolutely ignorant of the fact that long before the war began, a small country like Japan was producing something like 3,000 lbs. paddy to an acre, while we in India had only 800 lbs. to our credit? May I know whether the Government of India were ignorant of the fact that a very large number of people in this country depended for their very existence on the

import of rice from Burma? The political separation of Burma carried with it the possibility of Burma becoming economically independent, setting up customs barriers against us, and refusing to send any rice to this country. What were the Government of India doing, while we were absolutely on the brink of starvation, and face to face with a famine which ultimately overtook Bengal last year and lakhs and lakhs of people had to die before some sort of sense entered the head of this Government of India and they began to think of improving the production of rice in this country? Therefore the charge of delay cannot be laid at the door of the Opposition, but Government is guilty of culpable neglect in having ignored the interests of the producers of rice, in having altogether ignored the fact that we in this country were deficient in the matter of rice production, and had to depend on Burma and other outside sources for feeding the millions of people in this country. Therefore this motion is not a dilatory one, but it is with a view to ascertaining the wishes of the people who are vitally interested in the rice industry.

Then we want to be sure of another thing. It has become the fashion for the Government of India to come forward with a proposal to set up a certain committee demanding some more money. It may be a tax on cotton, some tax on coffee, some tax on lac or some other commodity, and the object is really very laudable. They want to improve the state of things in this country as far as production, marketing, distribution and the rest of it is concerned. But we on this side of the House are really not sure that the Government of India has at all succeeded in achieving the objects for which previous measures similar to the one now before the House were passed. We are not sure that beyond setting up a committee, beyond bringing together a number of people on that committee, and beyond giving them some travelling allowance, salaries, etc., whether any money was at all left for purposes, which this particular Bill professes to have in view.

Having said this much, I shall now turn to another little grievance of mine, *viz.*, that while the Honourable Member in charge of this Bill, who incidentally happens to be a next door neighbour, has set up a committee of 51, in which he has taken very good care to include all sorts of interests and some interests which should not have been there,—he has altogether ignored my province in the matter of representation on this committee. Sir, I want to inform the Honourable Member that the Frontier Province cannot be ignored like this and that he will have to make provision for including representatives not only of the Provincial Government, not only of the Department of Agriculture but also of the producers of rice in that part of the country. In the matter of numbers, and in the matter of acres under cultivation, we may not be able to compare favourably with the other provinces of India. But I think the Honourable Member is well aware that even though we cannot, in the matter of numbers and acres, compare favourably with the other large provinces in India, what we lack in quantity we certainly more than make up for it in the quality of rice which we produce and the quality of men we have in that province. For some time there has been a tendency on the part of the Government of India, and that tendency still lurks in their brains, that when the question of reforms came, the Frontier Province was ignored at the time of the Minto-Morley reforms; then again in 1919 when another instalment of reforms came my province was ignored; but then in the year 1930 the Government of India was face to face with a very serious rebellion in my part of the country. What was the cry which rallied the people to the cause of that rebellion? The cry was that the Frontier Province must be treated absolutely on terms of equality and on par with the rest of the Indian provinces, and it was to acquire that status which was rightly our due that we rebelled against the authority constituted by law; I therefore inform the Honourable Members that if the Government of India still persist in that attitude, we have every right to retaliate, and we will be able to show that we can give a much better account of ourselves than we gave in the year 1930. As the grievances which I have ventilated and voiced are just grievances, I am sure that I will have the support of all the

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elected Members of this House, and I will make it impossible for Government to carry this Bill through, unless they put right this very just grievance . . .

The Honourable Sir Jogendra Singh: I will certainly put it right.

Mr. Abdul Qaiyum: There are one or two things more which I shall refer to in passing and then I will conclude my speech. There are two schools of thought in this world: one school of thought which believes in private ownership of the sources of production, and another school of thought which believes in communism or the common ownership of all the sources of production. In this country also people are divided into two camps and there is a sort of intellectual war going on, though the physical war has not yet begun between these two vital schools of thought. Now, I want the Government of India to start an experiment right away, by buying up all the waste land which can be brought under rice production in the various states and provinces and to set up big farms, experimental farms, which will be owned by the state and the benefit of which will go directly to the people in the form of lesser taxation, more food, and freedom from hunger, from which Bengal has terribly suffered in recent years. Let us therefore experiment with State-owned rice farms side by side with the present system which we have, whereby private property is recognised by law, and very powerful vested interests are entrenched in this country. Lastly I must tell the Honourable Member that we have decided to support the motion for circulation which has been moved by Mr. Essak Sait, that is, circulation by the 28th of February 1945, and I hope that he will accept it. There is no desire to sabotage this Bill.

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh (Nagpur Division: Non-Muhammadan): Sir, the House must be quite familiar with the maxim "No taxation without representation." There is great political wisdom in it. Similarly there is great wisdom in the maxim that there should be no representation without taxation. In the constitution of the Rice Committee, the bodies which have been given representation do not contribute a single farthing and they have been given very large representation. Persons who have no responsibility to contribute are not likely to take much interest in what happens: very likely they will be very careless with the funds which would be kept at their disposal. It is therefore very necessary that if you wish to constitute a committee those elements which constitute the committee should be responsible to contribute very largely for the fund. The scheme of the fund at present is merely to collect cess from the millers. The millers may have their representation. The growers are vitally interested and they should have representation; but what poor representation they have got! The man who produces rice and who labours day and night and takes all possible risks and provides you with food—he has been given merely 14 out of 51 seats; while persons who do not contribute a single farthing have been given a very large percentage. Why should the chambers of commerce be there. Why should the Provincial Governments be allowed to nominate persons when they do not contribute anything for the fund? I therefore say and lay emphasis on it, that unless these bodies which are proposed to form part of this committee contribute funds according to the representation that this Government proposes to give them, they should not be on this Committee.

Another thing which I wish to say is this: the method of representation of the growers is really faulty. You do not allow persons who are interested in the welfare of the agriculturist to come in the ordinary way: you have made provision here for instance—14 persons representing the growers to be nominated by the Government. Would a person like my friend Prof. Ranga be nominated by any Provincial Government?

Sir Cowasjee Jehangir (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Will he contribute towards this?

Mr. Govind V. Deshmukh: But he is a grower; he is not merely an outsider who comes here and gets on this body without any responsibility and says "I

will spend the money as I like'. He is a grower. Similarly a person like me has no chance of getting nominated by any Government—there are many persons who work for the welfare of the agriculturist, but because they are agitating they are unpopular with the Government and such persons have no chance of getting nominated by any Government. Any person who is agitating constantly and has suffered as my friend Prof. Ranga has suffered in the cause of the agriculturist has no possibility of getting nominated on this body by any Government. Therefore it is not only about the number that I complain, but I complain as regards the method by which these persons have to come on this body. That is the principal and main objection as regards the constitution of this committee.

Now, if you follow my idea that you will give representation to such bodies or such persons who contribute then certainly there will be no objection to the method of collecting funds. You are creating a fund. Why do you lay emphasis on the cess merely? That particular clause should be amended. Therefore I say that if this method of composing a body is to continue, then this Bill might be given the go-bye; but if, as I say, there are chances of improving, then I would certainly go to a certain extent and a great extent in supporting the motion for circulation to elicit public opinion which has been moved by Mr. Essak Sait. I cannot say that Prof. Ranga's motion for circulation is a wise one having regard to the circumstances: there I have my difference of opinion with him. It is really a very dilatory motion. It refers to 31st January, 1946. We have not heard any arguments as to why the objects we have in view cannot be achieved by the 28th February, 1945. As a matter of fact, on several grounds, on matters of principle, he has expressed strong objection to this Bill and I suppose he would very much like this Bill to be dropped. I very strongly object to this Bill being dropped, because our experiences are such that we must grow more food. More food is needed now and hereafter. I therefore strongly support this motion about the 28th February for eliciting public opinion. I hope that Government will show its willingness to accept this amendment which is a very wise one. The matter is not postponed to a very long date and by that time you will get the information from the public which is very essential. You are governing many of the provinces under section 93 and you cannot have the views of the public as reflected in the popular Legislatures. It is therefore very necessary to have this Bill circulated and I hope that the Bill will come back with opinions on the 28th February, 1945.

Mr. J. D. Tyson (Secretary, Department of Education, Health and Lands): May I intervene to say that we, on our side, are willing to agree to Mr. Essak Sait's motion for circulation for a short date. I do not want to stifle discussion as the House is obviously enjoying itself but we are agreeable to circulation with the date 28th February, 1945. It is only fair to tell the House what our attitude is.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): In view of this statement, I should like to know whether the House will wish to continue the debate.

Several Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali (Lucknow and Fyzabad Divisions: Muhammadan Rural): It is a great pity that Government takes the view that the opinions expressed on this Bill are inimical to the Bill and that we on this side are opposed to the principles of the Bill. It is nothing like that. The motive for opposition is not for the sake of opposition. My friends on the other side always press the point that we on this side are taking more of the time of the House by opposing all measures, not on very good grounds. I am only telling the truth when I say that today Government has been forced to see the wisdom of the opposition and the arguments that have been advanced from this side. It is only because of that that Mr. Tyson has got up and made a statement agreeing to the circulation motion of my friend Mr. Essak Sait. Those friends of ours on the Government Benches should not think that we are opposing the measures they bring forward in any spirit of antagonism. We are always prepared to support anything which is for the good of the country. It must be

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remembered that we on this side are more interested in the people of the country, and their welfare than the Government servants who are paid servants. We as the representatives of the people claim the right to inform the Government of the shortcomings of every Bill which they bring forward and we do that only for safeguarding the interests of the people of this country. It is a very sad index of the mind of those members who are on the opposition side or the side of Government, who impute such bad motives to this side of the House.

When Mr. Hooseinbhoj Lalljee spoke, he said something which we do not consider to be worthy of a representative of the people. He said 'If you do this and that, if you produce' and so on. There is a great 'if' in everything that Mr. Lalljee said and if that 'if' is to be followed by us and the Government what will happen. He says the country will be benefited. Certainly the country will be benefited but we object to the methods by which these objects are sought to be achieved. We know that the Government wishes to make us to agree to a cess which is to be imposed on the people of India. We know that the way in which the money will be spent will not be fair and it is for this reason that the 'if' and similar conditional phrases do not appeal to us.

The question before us is whether we could produce more rice or wheat at some future time. The present question is how to get more food for the people who are famishing. It is not a question of research. Research may take hundreds of years but the question is how to produce food urgently for the people who are dying of starvation now. People are dying like anything in the country and still you say 'If you produce, if you do this, that and the other' and so on. How is it possible to translate these conditional phrases into action, when we find that there is no food at all? Rice has stopped coming from Burma and other places from which it used to come. If we start research today, may I ask Government whether it will be possible to complete it in three or four years? The war may last for a year or two more. You have got a post-war plan. Why do you not include this in it and why do you want to tax the people? My charge today is that these taxes are imposed by the backdoor. When the time comes for the presentation of the Budget, you impose taxes of every kind. The producer, the cultivator and the industrialist have all been taxed to the limit which can be imagined in this country. Every year, the Government comes forward with proposals for setting up this committee and that committee and what is the cumulative effect of all these taxes on the cultivator? It is very easy to say that one or two pice does not matter but who is ultimately to bear the burden? It is the poor man, it is the cultivator who has to pay all these taxes in the end. Those people who own mills will not be taxed in any way; it is the producer and the consumer who will be taxed and who will be burdened by this taxation. The industrialist who has got the hulling mill will simply charge his profit from the producer and the consumer. So, we have to consider this question. It is not an easy matter that we should let it go in such a hasty manner as my friend Mr. Lalljee or the Government wants it. What I say is that this is not the time for the Government to make experiments. It is time for action. This is not the time for taxation, but it is the time for you to be liberal in extending your help to the cultivators, consumers and everyone who is in need.

Sir, there is no paucity of money. Government can print any number of notes at any time they like. So, why do you want this tax to be imposed at this moment? Is it only for experimental purposes? I submit that the time for experiments is past. It is time for you to help the cultivator, the consumer and the producer.

Sir, the objects which are mentioned in this Bill are very laudable. They are undoubtedly in every way high-sounding. They say that we will have research; we will have development and we will have this and that. But this is more a question of the production of rice, the marketing of rice and the development of rice, but every province is not a rice producing province.

Besides the various provinces have got their own systems. They have got their own Agricultural Departments and what are those Agricultural Departments of the different provinces doing? My submission is that it was the duty of the Agricultural Department of every province to have set up such a committee before the war began or about 50 years back. They have failed in their duty and today the Government wants to supplement the works which the Provincial Governments and their Agricultural Departments should have done by imposing cumulative taxes everywhere and every time through this House. My submission is that the Cotton Committee, of course, made a very great experiment and the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research is also trying its best to have experiments. The Honourable Member also said that he has saved the country from the inroads of locusts. I am sure next year when we come here for the autumn Session there might be a cess for the prevention of locusts. So, this is not the time to make such experiments. It is time when you should have every sympathy and every kind of consideration for feeding the Indian people and bring more food from outside. It is not the time to impose taxation and cesses.

I am really sorry that Government is not taking advantage of co-operative banking which was at one time helped by the Government for a very long time and very good results were secured. I submit that even now the Provincial Governments could take up this business of marketing and producing of the rice through the co-operative societies and expand the business of co-operative societies. If the Provincial banks in all the provinces by the help either of the Provincial Governments or the Central Government could help the cultivators, then you will see how the crops will improve. It is very easy to say for my Honourable friend Mr. Lalljee that if we get fertilizers and this and that, we will get very good results. But is it possible to get all these things at present? We know the shipping conditions that are prevailing today outside the country. There is nothing in our hands. If there were a National Government, I am sure we would have done things for the benefit of the country, but at present we are helpless. As I said before, the resources of the agriculturist have now been practically tapped. I would say that it is an exploded theory now that the agriculturist is making money. Does the Government know what the agriculturist has to pay for oil, cloth and for ever so many things that he has to buy? He cannot even afford to buy proper *kafan* for the dead bodies of his relations. This is the condition of the cloth in the market.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member had better leave all this.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I simply want the Government to provide

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): The Honourable Member need not dilate on constitutional questions.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: Now, Sir, I come to the point as to how these hulling mills work. I find that in my own province there is no paper to be had. Even the Patwaries of the villages and the clerks in the Collectorate say that there is no paper even to give the receipts from the landholders to the tenants, which is the incumbent duty under the Rent Act. This is the paucity of the paper and still you want that these hulling mills should have a regular office of their own with books. They must employ somebody to write their accounts. The section says that he should provide a register and produce it before the Collector of the district every month. Is it feasible? There may be so many hulling mills in a district or in a town. What a great difficulty they will have in getting the necessary paper. But the Government does not consider these hardships of these people. It is very easy for me to say in this House that I would like to subscribe to this cess, but you have to remember the difficulties of the hulling machine keeper. It would be for him to provide paper for the registers and then take them to the authorities of the District. It all shows you cannot imagine the difficulties of the poor people. Besides, all of them are not literate and highly educated in accounts. These are the matters which we wanted to ventilate on the floor of the House. And

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it is for this reason that my Honourable friend Mr. Essak Sait has brought his amendment that the Bill be circulated.

Sir, there is another point in this Bill. I see that in clause 12 provision is made for the assessment of the Collector to be made final. I ask Honourable Members who have to pay income-tax whether in case of wrong assessment, there is no provision for appeal first to the Department, and then to the Tribunal. There is no provision in this Bill against the decision of the Collector.

Babu Baijnath Bajoria (Marwari Association: Indian Commerce): There is provision in sub-clause (2) of clause 12 to apply to the Central Government.

Mr. Muhammad Azhar Ali: I know there is such a provision, but there is no appeal to a Civil Court. Just imagine the position of the owner of a mill being dragged to the seat of the Central Government to get the Collector's assessment altered. He has to produce the papers before the Department to prove his case. Is that a feasible course? It may be said that he can send the papers by post. Everyone knows what happens to papers and letters sent by post. It will be incumbent upon him to come to Delhi and prefer his appeal. If he is a literate man, he can draft his application himself, otherwise, he will have to engage a lawyer for pleading his case. All these things mean extra cost and inconvenience to the poor owner of the mill. These are my reasons for sending this Bill for circulation. Of course, it is left to the Government to get this Bill passed with the majority that they may command in this House. They can pass this measure by hook or crook, but I am sure, it will be the cause of great grievance to the poor people. These are not days when Government should aggravate the trouble which the people are already undergoing. These are days for conciliation. I therefore ask the Government to get this Bill circulated for eliciting public opinion.

Mr. Akhil Chandra Datta (Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, at this fag end of the discussion, I should not like to take up much of the time of the House. I welcome the principle of research. There are no two opinions about it. We also welcome the principle of taking steps to improve the methods of cultivation and so on. So, Sir, we welcome the principle of the Bill. At the same time, allow me to say that I cannot induce myself to support the Bill as it stands in the present form. Almost all the provisions of the Bill are unacceptable to me. I shall say at once that I support the motion for circulation and I do so in the hope that after circulation, after receipt of opinions from all quarters, the Bill will be improved and will be acceptable. May I invite the attention of the House to clause 16 which gives the Central Government the power to dissolve the Committee. Now, Sir, I consider this provision to be very extraordinary. The clause says:

"The Central Government may, by notification in the Official gazette, declare that, with effect from such date as may be specified in the notification, the Committee shall be dissolved."

This is one provision in clause 16. Another provision is:

"And on the making of such declaration all funds and other property vested in the Committee shall vest in His Majesty for the purposes of the Central Government."

Then follows another provision which is still more unacceptable:

"and this Act shall be deemed to have been repealed."

So, Sir, the power of repealing this Act, if passed, is given to the Central Government when they think it fit to do so. As soon as the Central Government issues a notification dissolving this Committee, the funds go and the Act is repealed. Here is a Bill which is put forward before the Legislature and the Legislature is asked to enact this legislation, and at the same time power is taken by the Central Government to repeal the Act. Ordinarily according to the first principles of jurisprudence, this power of repeal cannot be given to the executive. When an Act is passed by the Legislature, the power of repealing it must be exercised by the Legislature itself and not by the executive. This is a very obnoxious provision in the Bill which I am afraid has not received proper attention at the hands of Honourable Members who

preceded me. Having regard to the nature of the Committee, we can well imagine a time may come, when all research work will have been finished, when all improvements in cultivation, production and marketing will have been adopted and when there will be no room for further improvement in this direction. There may come a time when such a Committee will be unnecessary. But certainly the power of dissolving the Committee cannot be given to the Central Government. I have not gone into the question very carefully, but I am told that a provision for dissolution of a Committee like this can only be given to the Committee itself. If for instance, three-fourth number of Members of a Committee by a Resolution decide that there is no further utility for the Committee and that it be dissolved, in that case, it will be dissolved, but not at the caprice of the Central Government. So, Sir, this Committee is really a creature of the Central Government. There are many other provisions which make the Committee a creature of the Government. For instance under clause 7(2):

"The Central Government shall appoint a person to be the Secretary of the Committee and such person shall be paid by the Committee such salary and such allowances as may be fixed by the Central Government."

The position is this: that the Secretary will act under the orders of the Committee, but he will be appointed by the Central Government. His salary and allowances will be fixed by the Central Government. In view of this, the Committee becomes an absolute non-entity.

Mr. President (The Honourable Sir Abdur Rahim): As it is 5 o'clock the Honourable Member may continue his speech tomorrow.

Before adjourning the House I should like to mention that tomorrow between 10-30 and 1 P.M. there is going to be election of members to serve on the Indian Coconut Committee; and I must point out that section 4(g) of this Act (X of 1944), relating to this Committee provides as follows:

"six other persons of whom two shall be persons elected from among themselves by the elected Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Central Legislature."

So the election will be by Members who have been elected to this Assembly and the other Members cannot take part in that election.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, the 16th November, 1944.